Turkish and Latin American World Literature Encounters

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines a corpus of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Turkish and Latin American literature in an attempt to offer fresh and innovative comparative avenues for non-Eurocentric world literature encounters. Through a multilayered analytical approach encompassing a transhistorical, transnational, and translational framework, I scrutinise Turkish-Latin American literary relations by focussing on a selection of texts that intertwine political critiques with fantastic, magical realism, gothic, surrealist, and magical realist modes. I investigate how divergent complex writings acquire and negotiate world literature status by shedding light on the visible manifold intersections between Turkish and Latin American productions. The thesis is further enriched by theoretical insights drawn from socio-cultural historiographies, aesthetics of narratology, world literature, translation, circulation, and reception, benefitting from the theories proposed by David Damrosch, Pascale Casanova, Lawrence Venuti, Emily Apter, Francesca Orsini, and Mariano Siskind, among them, as well as concepts from the discipline of translation studies.

The selected Turkish and Latin American primary sources for this study include: Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (1967; *One Hundred Years of Solitude*), César Aira's *Los fantasmas* (2009; *Ghosts*) and *La villa* (2001; *Shantytown*), Latife Tekin's *Sevgili Arsız Ölüm* (2001; *Dear Shameless Death*) and *Berci Kristin Çöp Masalları* (1984; *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*), Mariana Enríquez's *Los cosas perdimos en el fuego* (2017; *Things We Lost in the Fire*), Elif Şafak/Shafak's *İskender* (2012; *Honour*), Roberto Bolaño's 'El gaucho insufrible' (2003; 'The Insufferable Gaucho') and Orhan Pamuk's *Masumiyet Müzesi* (2008; *The Museum of Innocence*).

The primary sources I consider in this thesis are inherently plural and accommodate multiple languages, countries, and origins, and they lend themselves exceptionally well to persistent instances of relationality. Even though the primary sources mentioned in the thesis comprise texts translated into English, I adhere to their original languages in my close readings and quoted passages. Through a meticulous examination of these texts, I intend to bring two regions, Turkey and Latin America, into fruitful dialogue to explore how Turkish and Latin American authors juxtapose the real with the magical realism, fantastic, gothic, and surreal to uncover the historical and socio-political tensions, instabilities, and controversies of their countries.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved father, Muhammet Kıyak.

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INTRODUCTION TO THESIS

I. Introduction

This thesis seeks to investigate Turkish-Latin American cultural and literary relations between Turkish and Hispanic studies, thereby tracing new theoretical frameworks between periphery-periphery transnational networks. Despite the growing interest in the critical analysis of national/local literature, there has yet to be an extensive study on the connection between Turkish and Latin American studies. Therefore, I hypothesise that, despite different contexts, linguistic systems, and ethnic/cultural backgrounds, these two disparate regions have significant cultural, historical, and textual analogies. By centring a relevant corpus of Turkish and Latin American texts in my thesis, adopting comparative methodologies based on direct and indirect links between two kinds of literature and advancing new comparative models that draw on transcontinental affiliations, this thesis explores fresh avenues for comparative study within the frameworks of world literature. This approach aligns with David Damrosch's statement that 'works of world literature interact in a charged field defined by a fluid and multiple set of possibilities of juxtaposition and combination' (Damrosch 2003: 300). David Damrosch's concept of the 'ellipse' provides a generative model for understanding the dynamics of world literature—and is especially apt for framing the multidirectional exchanges between Turkish and Latin American texts. In his foundational work, Damrosch argues that 'world literature is not an infinite unbounded set of texts but a mode of circulation and of reading (Damroch 2003: 281). He introduces the figure of the ellipse to conceptualize the ways in which a literary work is transformed through its travel between cultural contexts. 'Rather than envisioning world literature as radiating out from a single center,' Damrosch states, 'it can more fruitfully be seen as an elliptical field, with two (or more) focal

points—source and receiving cultures—whose dynamic interplay shapes the work's meaning and impact' (Damrosch 2003: 283). Moreover, in this elliptical model, the act of reading, translating, or adapting a text does not simply reproduce the 'original' but refracts it, producing new possibilities and meanings through the interaction of at least two distinct cultural foci. Damrosch describes this as 'elliptical refraction,' where 'a work's home context and its host context continually reshape one another, just as the two foci of an ellipse define its ever-shifting contours' (Damrosch 2003: 283). This model moves beyond a one-way exportation of literature from 'center' to 'periphery' (or vice versa), emphasizing instead the mutual negotiation and transformation that occurs as texts circulate. Damrosch considers transcultural exchange indispensable for a literary work to access world literature and be translated and circulated beyond its cultural and linguistic point of origin. Therefore, by adopting Damrosch's elliptical perception, this thesis resists static notions of literary influence or imitation, and instead foregrounds the relational, dialogic process that occurs when literature moves across boundaries. The Turkish and Latin American comparative framework thus becomes not a matter of tracing mere parallels or borrowings, but of analyzing the dynamic space 'between' cultures—a space charged, as Damrosch puts it, by 'a fluid and multiple set of possibilities of juxtaposition and combination' (Damrosch 2003: 300). The elliptical figure accommodates asymmetry, difference, and negotiation, reflecting how both Turkish and Latin American texts are continually reshaped through translation, reception, and adaptation. This approach enables the thesis to map not just influences, but also the recontextualizations and innovations that arise from periphery-periphery connections. The elliptical model allows for a nuanced understanding of how national literatures are both refracted and reinvented as they enter new cultural or linguistic fields, and how the process of world literature is fundamentally dialogic and transformative. By invoking Damrosch's

elliptical perception, the thesis positions Turkish and Latin American comparative study as a space of active negotiation, invention, and world-making—a model for how world literature itself might be reimagined beyond traditional center-periphery hierarchies. Consequently, I seek to bring two cultures into dialogue and explore the translation, circulation, and reception of a selection of Latin American narratives ('source culture') within the Turkish literary scene ('the host culture') (Damrosch 2003: 283). Using this lens, I examine how literary aesthetics/narratology are constructed in Turkish and Latin American texts and disclose the objectives underpinning these negotiations.

I contend that Gabriel García Márquez, Latife Tekin, César Aira, Orhan Pamuk, Roberto Bolaño, Elif Shafak, and Mariana Enríquez synthesise the hybrid interplay between the real and the fantastic by crossing the boundaries between a multiplicity of genres and discourses, which generates literature that fosters transnational affiliations. This valorisation of the local and the transnational within world literary space correlates with Pascale Casanova's theory of the 'World Republic of Letters', in which Casanova states that:

> I want to propose a hypothesis that would move beyond this division between internal and external criticism. Let us say that a mediating space exists between literature and the world: a parallel territory, relatively autonomous from the political domain, and dedicated as a result to questions, debates, inventions of specifically literary nature. Here, struggles of all sorts – political, social, national, gender, ethnic -come to be refracted, diluted, deformed or transformed according to a literary logic, and in literary forms. (Casanova 2014: 193)

Furthermore, these 'mediating spaces' are inevitably informed by translation questions, whether direct or indirect. The translation debate has been problematised by Emily Apter's theorisation of the term the 'translation zone', which Apter defines as 'cast as an act of love, and as an act of disruption, translation becomes a means of repositioning the subject in the world and history; a

means of rendering self-knowledge foreign to itself; a way of denaturalising citizens, taking them out of the comfort zone of national space, daily ritual, and pre-given domestic arrangements' (Apter 2006: 6). Within the framework of Apter's theory of the translation zone, this thesis, therefore, enters a form of translation zone that pulls them out of the comfort zones of their source culture and rejuvenates them with the local colours of the host culture, which further generates another zone that Apter calls 'contact zones', echoing Mary Louise Pratt (Apter 2006: 163). Focusing on Turkish and Latin American texts, I am placing my dissertation in conversation with Apter's notion of a 'contact zone' that goes beyond local and national limitations, thereby enabling confrontation within the global circuit.

Each chapter in this thesis is therefore formulated as a transnational horizon that superimposes both the local and the global, recognising the political, historical, cultural, and economic specificities of each context, while also foregrounding literary dialogues and cultural exchanges, as well as social struggles, processes of circulation, and forms of affiliation between Turkish and Latin American writers. Mariano Siskind affirms that 'the idea of the genre of world literature does not present a problem of scale (the same traditional genres considered on a global scale) or quantity (the addition of all the particular, local genres of the world), but it introduces questions of novelty and specificity' (Siskind 2011: 347). In dialogue with Siskind's theory of world literature, in my literary case studies, I discuss the selected authors both as national and global writers, whose narratives can be considered within the ‘elliptical’ form of circulation postulated by Damrosch and the hybrid, original, complex, and idiosyncratic works that are at the crossroads of the local and the global.

Even though Turkish and Hispanic literary studies have been brought into fruitful dialogue in specific studies,[1] comparative and extensive direct encounters between them have, to my knowledge, not been carried out so far as a full-length study, and should bring to light not only the analogies and differences, but also the idiosyncrasies in the focused texts of the authors in the twentieth—and twenty-first-centuries in Turkey and Latin America. Asking questions such as, what kind of experience of world literature do these Turkish-Latin American cultural encounters create? (Orsini and Novillo-Corvalán 2023: 186). Therefore, this PhD project seeks to fill these gaps and contribute to comparative and world literature studies by identifying reciprocities between Turkish and Hispanic studies that overcome national boundaries despite the divergent milieus of the two geographies.

In sum, this thesis is grounded in the field of comparative literature and also benefits a great deal from a variety of theories and discourses, including postcolonial, political, historical, gender, and feminism. Within the bounds of the case studies, I scrutinise the designated texts through a comparative-critical approach, in that each of the chapters accommodates at least two narratives in contrast with one another to disclose common trends and conventions that overcome national boundaries in both Turkish and Latin American texts of that specific period, considering Lawrence Venuti's statement that 'clearly, the formal and semantic gain that enables translation to define world literature cannot be perceived without close reading, without a detailed analysis that examines shifts between the source and translated texts' (Venuti 2011: 185-186).

II. Overview of Chapters

[1] Ceyda Elgül's 'Jorge Luis Borges in Turkish: Magical Realism in a Politically-and-Poetically Motivated Literary Field' (2022), Macit Balık's 'Latife Tekin'in *Sevgili Arsiz Ölüm* ve Gabriel García Márquez'in *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* Romanlarında Büyülü Gerçekçili*k*' (2009; Magical Realism in Latife Tekin's *Dear Shameless Death* and Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*'), Simge Könu's 'A Comparative Analysis of *Dear Shameless Death* and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*' (2017), and K. C., Dilber's 'Jorge Luis Borges'ten Hasan Ali Toptaş'a Düşsel Yolculuğun Şifreleri' (2011; 'Code to Imaginative Journey from Jorge Luis Borges to Hasan Ali Toptaş'.

This thesis performs a comparative literary/cultural context-focused scrutiny of cross-cultural negotiations to corroborate the aesthetic and thematic affinities of four writers' works from Latin America: Gabriel García Márquez, César Aira, Roberto Bolaño, and Mariana Enríquez, and three writers from Turkey: Latife Tekin, Orhan Pamuk, and Elif Shafak, under diverse social, cultural, and linguistic systems. By exploring these interactions through networks of translation, circulation, and reception – taking as a point of departure Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in Turkey – this thesis provides close reading of a corpus of texts that constitute its case studies, in order to tease out commonalities between Turkish and Hispanic literature at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Thus, the bulk of the thesis comprises texts written between 1967 and 2017 in Turkey and Latin America, and the works' settings will vary from past, present, and future. Therefore, I regard the texts under scrutiny as modern and contemporary fiction. Rather than focalising primarily on each text, I place them in conversation in each chapter to define each one along the other, as Casanova formulates in her article, 'Literature as a World', that 'each figure can be grasped only in terms of the position it occupies within the whole, and its interconnections with all the others' (Casanova 2014: 194). I also situate the texts at the local and global crossroads, which Casanova calls 'world literary space', where the possibility of overlapping and crisscrossing transnational dialogues is generated. Moreover, I also examine the authors' fictional praxis and thematic dialogues in socio-political contexts by comparing modern and contemporary Turkish and Latin American narratives. My research is further enriched by theoretical insights drawn from multiple fields of inquiry, such as world literature studies, translation studies, aesthetics of magical realism/fantastic, socio-cultural historiography, modernist studies, and intersectional and feminist theoretical turns.

Regarding the thesis structure, following the introductory section, five chapters are developed. Each chapter puts two writers into complex and fascinating conversations.

The first chapter of the thesis, 'The Reception and Circulation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in Turkey: Cross-Cultural Encounters', examines the translation, reception, and circulation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in Turkey given that this thesis upholds Gabriel García Márquez as a pioneer in the productive circulation of magical realism in Turkey. The chapter comprises four sections, 'The Turkish 'Paratexts' of *Cien años de soledad*', 'Censorship in Turkey', 'Direct and Indirect Translation', and 'Indirect Translation of *Cien años de soledad* into Turkish', followed by a brief introduction and conclusion. Although Turkophone readers were familiar with Latin American literature to some extent, the peripatetic exchange burgeoned explicitly in the twentieth century with the import of Latin American 'Boom' novels written by authors such as Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, Julio Cortázar, and others, into Turkey. In 'Booms in Literatures of the Global South' (2019), Roannne L. Kantor explores 'Latin American Boom' as follows:

> "Boom" is a term used to describe the sudden growth in both popularity and perceived literary quality of writing from a particular region within a relatively compressed time frame, usually ranging between one and two decades. The post-World War II period has been characterized by successive booms in Latin American literature, South Asian literaurte, and more recently perhaps, Anglophone African literatures. (Kantor 2019: 1)

Moreover, in the article, 'Translation and Print Culture in Latin America', María Constanza Guzmán states:

> In the 1960s, like in previous decades and political landscapes, translation was deployed in alignment with the political sphere. However, there were a variety of shifts, particularly in regard to the themes and the movement of translations. This period was marked by a change in the directionality of translation; whereas, before the 1960s, translation was largely unidirectional with translated texts largely at the service of importing ideas into the Latin American cultural space – in the 1960s,

> Latin American narratives began to be translated into other languages and gain international visibility. (Constanza Guzmán 2012: 316)

The encounter with Boom novels has had such momentous effects that the further circulation of Latin American narratives is still in vogue in the Turkish literary circuit. García Márquez is a landmark figure in form and content in Latin America and the world. Even though his novel was translated into Turkish via an interim English language, he has made a great impression on contemporary Turkish fiction. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was translated into Turkish indirectly by Seckin Selvi from English two years after Gregory Rabassa's acclaimed 1972 English translation. Therefore, the English translation of Rabassa played an 'intermediary' role in the circulation of the text among Turkophone readers, which corroborates Venuti's utterance that 'translations patterns may not be as straightforward as terms like 'importing and 'transferring' might suggest. Intermediary forms and practices can decisively intervene between a source text and a translation' (Venuti 2011: 181). Firmly grounded in the first chapter of the thesis is a discussion on the effects of the circulation and adaptation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in Turkey, starting from the marketisation of the first and second editions of the Turkish translation of the book, the adaptation of the magical realism, and the scholarship of the narrative in Turkey. In addition to sociocultural elements, the chapter is enriched by theorists such as Gerard Genette, David Damrosch, Mariano Siskind, Lawrence Venuti, Maggie Ann Bowers, Lois Parkinson Zamora and, Wendy B. Faris, and others.

As a result, I disclose that the encounter with Latin American literature has not only mirrored shared socio-political struggles, but also served a specific cultural need to fill the gaps in the zones of Turkish literature by inspiring Turkish writers to depart from realistic narratives, turn inward and produce complex and original texts. In particular, this chapter offers a critical analysis and explanation of Gabriel García Márquez and magical realism's appeal in Turkey, thus offering

a case study of the reception of García Márquez and his novel in a non-European context, thereby marking him as a figure of world literature. At the same time, Damrosch states that 'works become world literature by being received into the space of a foreign culture, a space defined in many ways by the host culture's national tradition and the present need of its writers' (Damrosch 2003: 283), Siskind remarks that 'world literature has taken full advantage of its potential to open up traditional genres, re-shuffle texts, and produce new generic formations [..]' (Siskind 2014: 347). Overall, translated either straight from Turkish or via an interim language, I argue that the impact of García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* has been enormous and continues to be so today. The travel of the text among Turkophone readers stimulated a vigorous dialogue in Turkish literature, in which many Turkish authors have composed novels comparable to García Márquez's, such as Latife Tekin, Elif Shafak, and Nazlı Eray. The dialogues this chapter discloses showcase the worldwide use of literary works as an instrument of resistance and critique and how these narratives propagate on the broader world literary circuit despite linguistic and political censorship barriers.

The second chapter, 'Ghosts, Djinns, and Thresholds: Phantasmagoric Intersections in César Aira and Latife Tekin,' and the third, 'Margins, *Villas*, and *Gecekondu*: César Aira, Latife Tekin, and the Urban Peripheries of Istanbul and Buenos Aires,' chapters address the intricacies of urban cities as multi-faceted, fragmented, and palimpsestic entities. The second chapter, thus, centres on the dialogue between Aira's *Los fantasmas* (2009; *Ghosts*) and Tekin's *Sevgili Arsız Ölüm* (2001; *Dear Shameless Death*). The sociocultural elements are particularly important to this chapter because both texts hail from national spaces marked by persistent dictatorial regimes and state violence. This chapter not only centres on contemporary diasporic migrant routes, Kurds in the case of *Dear Shameless Death* and Chileans in the case of *Ghosts*, but also direct socio-

economic analogies, such as urbanisation, rapid modernisation, and class conflicts. Tekin and Aira produce original, complex, and hybrid narratives that nourish fantastic tropes to reposition their countries' backdrops in urbanisation in the modern landscape. Adapting Gabriel García Márquez's method of employing magical realism, Tekin creates her global village full of magical and supernatural events, enriched by Turkish folkloric and oral storytelling devices such as fairies, djinns, and dreams. According to Maggie Ann Bowers, 'the adaptation of oral storytelling techniques in a magical realist narrative are complementary and mutually supportive' (Bowers 2004: 85). Aira, on the other hand, flirts with fantastic elements such as surrealism, the fantastic, and the gothic. Not merely a shocking revelation at the heart of the plot, the supernatural is interwoven through the narratives, making the appearance of authenticity in the social fabric and surroundings strange.

Nevertheless, whilst in Tekin the magical starts at the very beginning and continues until the end, in Aira, the fantastic spring in the middle of the story, about which John Erickson states that 'the 'marvellous' narrative depicts a fictitious world removed from conventional reality, while the 'fantastic' narrative heralds the sudden apparition of the supernatural in the minds of the everyday world' (Erickson 1995: 428). Tekin and Aira epitomise the overshadowed realities present in their countries from sociocultural frames and diverse focalisations by camouflaging them within the strange, the uncanny, and the irrational. In this way, I offer a comparative analysis of Tekin's *Dear Shameless Death* and Aira's *Ghosts* for a more nuanced consideration of these two-way dynamics, where thematic and aesthetic overlaps intersect in complex ways, often with phantasmagoric results.

In concert with the second chapter, the third chapter of my thesis brings Tekin's novel *Berci Kristin Çöp Masalları* (1984; *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*) and Aira's novella *La*

villa (2001: *Shantytown*) into comparative dialogue. While in *Dear Shameless Death* and *Ghosts*, Tekin and Aira address minorities/immigrants in their societies, in *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* and *Shantytown*, they engage with the margins, peripheries, and dispossessed in the Turkish and Argentine contexts. The chapter tackles the failings of neoliberal capitalist societies in Istanbul and Buenos Aires, which generate conflict between the centre and the periphery. In a similar manner to the previous chapter, I argue that Tekin and Aira advance socio-political critiques absorbed within whimsical, bizarre, uncanny, and hyperbolic styles. Theoretical insights from scholars such as Héctor Hoyos, Maggie Ann Bowers, Talat Halman, Jack Zipes, James Scorer, Kemal Kirişçi, Todorov Tzvetan, and Mariano Siskind undergird the chapter.

In dialogue with the thesis's conceptual thread, the next chapter, Chapter 4, focuses on Argentina and Turkey's cultural and diasporic encounters in the writings of two contemporary women authors, Elif Shafak from Turkey and Mariana Enríquez from Argentina. In this chapter, I question the term *femicidio* in the narratives of Şafak and Enríquez, along with the social, political and cultural trajectories of the narratives under the title of 'From *Femicidios* to Honour-Killing: Gender Politics in Mariana Enríquez and Elif Şafak', which comprises five sections. The chapter explores the familiar and the bizarre, focussing on style, genre, and a translational study of these transnational writers. Correspondingly, I put Shafak's novel, *İskender* (2012; *Honour*), in dialogue with Enríquez's short story collection, *Los cosas que perdimos en el fuego* (2017; *Things We Lost in the Fire*) in particular two stories, 'El chico sucio' (‘Dirty Kid’) and 'Things We Lost in the Fire.' The chapter scrutinises *Honour* and *Things We Lost in the Fire* on three main levels; the first part of the chapter revolves around the comparison of Shafak's *Honour* with Enríquez's 'The Dirty Kid' on the historical, political, and psychological traumas of their countries respectively. In 'The Dirty Kid', the dehumanising and horrific acts committed during the era of Argentina's military

dictatorship (1976-1983) will be disclosed; in *Honour*, the very sensitive political taboos in Turkey, such as the issue of minorities, will be discussed. The second part, the chapter's kernel, will address the discourses surrounding identity and gender. *Honour* and the collection's titular story, 'Things We Lost in the Fire', will juxtapose femicide and gender-based violence in Turkish and Argentinian contexts. Ultimately, the last part of the chapter will show how the translation, reception, and circulation of Enríquez's outputs illuminate some of the conflicting issues and anxieties that have characterised Turkish culture and politics in the world literature stage. In this respect, Venuti affirms that:

> Translation increases the heterogeneity because the translator's verbal choices amount to interpretative moves that vary the source text. The variations may be determined not simply by the receiving language and culture by a reading of the source text that incorporates knowledge of the source culture as well. The localising drive of translation can therefore change the very nature of the categories 'foreign' and 'local' as they are understood by readerships in the receiving situation. (Venuti 2011: 182)

It is the import of Enríquez's story collection that Turkophone readers face a transgressive and bizarre re-positioning of the gender dynamic, which has still been a bleeding wound in Turkey. If, as Damrosch puts it, 'world literature is writing that gains in translation' (2003: 281), through the translation of Enríquez's short-story collection, new terms entered the Turkish literary scene, such as 'catastrophe literature' (Ertan 2017: 1), 'literature of destruction', 'demonic tales' (Hantik 2017: 1) and so forth. Last but not least, while bringing two texts into dialogue, I pinpointed some concepts and theories, such as 'honour-killing,' 'femicide,' 'gothic feminism,' and 'black magical realism', and I benefited from a variety of scholars, such as Pastilí Toledo Vásquez, Petya Tsoneva, Olivia Vázquez-Medina, Sandra M. Gilbert, María Negroni, and Gerard Genette.

The thesis's last chapter, the fifth, turns to one of the most translated authors in Turkey and Latin America: Orhan Pamuk and Roberto Bolaño. The fifth chapter, 'The City as Palimpsest:

Istanbul and Buenos Aires in Orhan Pamuk's *The Museum of Innocence* and Roberto Bolaño's 'The Insufferable Gaucho', accommodates three sections as 'Bolaño, Pamuk, and Transnationalism', 'Bolaño, Pamuk, and the Tension between Tradition and Modernity', and 'Palimpsestic Spaces'. This chapter discusses how narratives of world literature can also be well provided with national symbols and emblems while touching upon the intricacies of the nation's identity crisis. By examining characters, in particular, Kemal in *The Museum of Innocence* and Pereda in 'The Insufferable Gaucho', relationships with the alienating present and nostalgic past, this chapter delves into *Istanbulites*' and *porteños*' sense of belonging and identity crisis, offering a nuanced exploration of Turkish and Argentinian identity within these world literary circuits. While Pamuk advances the complex experience of modernity and national identity in Turkey by means of a story of a love affair, Bolaño presents bygone values of authenticity and freedom by virtue of rewriting Borges's short story 'El sur' (1953; 'The South'). Even though Pamuk and Bolaño compose contextually disparate narratives, as global authors, both write from the periphery in *The Museum of Innocence* and 'The Gaucho Insufferable', in which literary connections extend beyond common frameworks of comparison and draw deeper connections as stated by Casanova:

> Multiculturalist enthusiasms have led others to assert that the relation between centre and periphery has now been radically reversed, and that the world of the periphery will henceforth occupy the central position. In reality, the effects of this pacific and hybridized fable are to depoliticize literary relations, to perpetuate the legend of the great literary enhancement and to disarm writers from the periphery who are seeking recognition strategies that would be both subversive and effective. (Casanova 2014: 204)

Both texts intersect by depicting spatial and temporal layers as narrative strategies that capture multiple layers of history and mnemonic symbols vis-a-vis modernisation efforts, neoliberal policies, and the melancholic present. Apart from enriching the chapter through a close reading of both texts, I boosted the dialogue by benefitting from multifarious theorists and scholars such as

Ezequiel Adamovsky, Adalet Agaoglu, David Damrosch, Sharae Deckard, Gloria Fisk, Beatriz Sarlo, Brett Levinson and so on.

III. Defining Key Terms: The Fantastic and Magical Realism

This section aims to elucidate several literary genres/terms employed by the above-referred authors, who are known for their embrace of fluidity, complexity, hybridity, and originality. The focus is on diverse genres/concepts, such as magical realism, surrealism, supernatural, fantastic, and gothic. However, in this section, I specifically explore the central literary techniques utilised by these writers, aiming to highlight their unique idiosyncrasies.

As a point of departure for discussing the nature of several literary techniques, I will start with the fantastic. The fantastic is an effective tool for subversive discourse excavating the human experience's most distressing aspects. The fantastic emphasises the overlapping and often confusing boundaries between the real and the supernatural. One foundational study of the fantastic is Tzvetan Todorov's *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1975). Todorov examines the fantastic from a structuralist point of view and approaches it by comparing it with 'neighbouring' genres such as the magical realism and uncanny. According to Todorov, there are three requirements of the fantastic:

> The fantastic requires the fulfilment of three conditions. First, the text must oblige the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living persons and to hesitate between a natural and a supernatural explanation of the events described. Second, this hesitation may also be experienced by a character; thus, the reader's role is so to speak entrusted to a character, and at the same time the hesitation is represents, it becomes one of the themes of the work – in the case of naïve reading, the actual reader identifies himself with the character. Third, the reader must adopt a certain attitude with regard to the text: he will reject allegorical as well as 'poetic' interpretations. (Todorov 1975: 33)

Todorov's three fantastic conditions align with the fantastic mode's core characteristics. The ambivalence between the recognizable world of ordinary people and the mysterious and inexplicable elements is the first condition of the ‘pure fantastic’, which undermines the status quo and attracts attention to multiple layers of meaning. This 'hesitation' shifts and slides our notion of selfhood and the world around us, whether from the language or the character itself. The fantastic lies in the uncertainty between the uncanny, which refers to something strangely familiar, and the marvellous, which refers to something strangely unfamiliar. The tension between real and imaginary worlds is experienced by both the reader and the characters in the story. Although there is no hesitation in magical realism, the fantastic disturbs the epistemological and ontological way of perception, about which Patricia García asserts that 'the fantastic arises in a realistic world in which the supernatural itself is not integrated as a natural law but is instead a disruption of the realistic environment' (García 2015: 16). In a similar vein, P. Gabrielle Foreman affirms that 'unlike magical realism, the fantastic and the uncanny posit an individual who experiences a world beyond the community's parameters' (Gabrielle Foreman 1995: 286). In this framework, the fantastic is defined as the ‘hesitation’ experienced by a subject who acknowledges no laws beyond those of the natural world when confronted with an ostensibly supernatural event. It is precisely in this state of indecision and uncertainty that the fantastic effect emerges, with the reader playing a crucial role in its creation. As an illustration, in *Shantytown* and *Ghosts*, Aira employs fantastic elements beyond our comprehension, not dissimilarly from Tekin in *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* and *Dear Shameless Death*. The *villa* that Aira pictures is fantastic because of its rotating and changing location, as per the circumstances. Correspondingly, although the novella *Ghosts* proceeds an ordinary scenario, the appearance of the phantasms halfway through the story is the threshold for the departure from the known and access into the unknown. While Tekin's novels are

mostly overpopulated with magical realism, they also include fantastic aspects, such as haunted characters, evil natural forces, and repugnant images. In tune with the examples from Aira's and Tekin's narratives, Pablo Brescia states that 'a list of classic fantastic motifs follows ghosts, time travel, the three wishes, the descent to hell, dreams, metamorphoses, parallel plots, immortality, metaphysical fantasies, vampires, and castles' (Brescia 2008: 6). In addition to Aira and Tekin, in the short story collection *Things We Lost in the Fire*, Enríquez presents 'a series of "nasty events" that range from mysterious disappearances (a term loaded with political significance in the Argentine context) attributable to equivocal causes, to full-blown supernatural occurrences such as metamorphosing houses and demonic entities' (Vásquez-Medina 2021: 292). Mariana Enríquez furthers the fantastic with disgusting and uncanny images that inspire chills and fear. Enríquez's characters in the story are comparable to vampire-like figures that evoke disgust and fear. The dread in Enríquez's story does not come from supernatural creatures, though they are human beings who commit cruel and sadistic acts.

Although the uncanny has not been historically confined to a single genre, it has become almost interchangeable with the Todorovian fantastic. This interchangeability connects the uncanny to a broader literary context, making it a subject of interest for world literature. Whilst the uncanny can be employed as a cushion for fantastic literature, it is more complex to define. At the beginning of the essay, 'Das Unheimliche' (1919: 'The Uncanny'), Sigmund Freud refers to the etymological analysis of the term uncanny and its antinomy as follows:

> Two courses are open to us at the start. Either we can find out what meaning has come to be attached to the word “uncanny” in the course of its history; or we can collect all those properties of persons, things, sensations, experiences and situations which arouse in us the feeling of uncanniness, and then infer the unknown nature of the uncanny from what they all have in common. I will say at once that both courses lead to the same result: the “uncanny” is that class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar. (Freud 2003: 124)

By focusing on the semantics of *Heimlich* and *Unheimlich*, Freud draws attention to the dualistic nature of the words to clarify their ambiguity. Freud claims that something can be familiar and unfamiliar at the same time, as *unheimlich* emerges from what was once familiar, veiled, or repressed. The uncanny necessitates the juxtaposition of the familiar and the unfamiliar, which is more closely tied to an invasion of the self. In a similar vein, Nicholas Royle declares that ‘the uncanny is not simply an experience of strangeness or alienation. More specifically, it is peculiar commingling of the familiar and unfamiliar. It can take the form of something familiar unexpectedly arising in a strange and unfamiliar context, or of something strange and unfamiliar unexpectedly arising in a familiar context’ (Royle 2003: 1). The term 'uncanny' is a complex concept that elicits a diverse range of interpretations. To define it, Royle suggests that 'the uncanny entails another thinking of beginning: the beginning is already haunted. The uncanny is ghostly. It is concerned with the strange, weird and mysterious, with a flickering sense (but not conviction) of something supernatural. The uncanny involves feelings of uncertainty, in particularly regarding the reality of who one is and what is being experienced' (Royle 2003: 1). Mariana Enríquez's use of the uncanny in the story 'Things We Lost in the Fire' aligns with Royle's outline of uncanny literature. Throughout the story, Enríquez bombards the reader with mutilated, disfigured and burned female characters that evoke the feeling of uncanniness. The uncanny breaks out in the story from the very beginning, altering the narrative atmosphere and mystifying the praxis through ugliness. Correspondingly, Royle affirms that ‘a feeling of uncanniness may come from curious coincidences, a sudden sense that things seem to be fated or ‘meant to happen.’ It can come in the fear of losing one’s eyes or genitals, or in realizing that someone has a missing or prosthetic body-part, in the strange actuality of dismembered, supplementary or phantom limbs.’ (Royle 2003: 1)

Irlemar Chiampi, in her study of the fantastic and marvellous, further underlines the uncanny's psychological reach: 'The uncanny produces a destabilization of the subject, an unsettling of certainties that results in a crisis of identity and perception' (Chiampi 1980: 15). This crisis, Chiampi notes, is central to the genre's power to disturb and provoke. Similarly, Ángel Flores, in his influential essay on magical realism, argues that the uncanny is a key device for 'defamiliarizing' the everyday, thus reopening the 'doors of perception' for readers (Flores 1955: 189). In this way, the uncanny in both fantastic and magical realist texts serves to reconfigure the boundaries between the known and the unknown, the self and the other, the possible and the impossible.

Magical realism is another narrative mode that has undergone several significant phases since its origin. As in many literary techniques, the geographical location of magical realism is substantial for the concept's framework. Bowers identified three stages as follows:

> The history of magic(al) realism, that is, of the related terms of magic realism, magical realism and marvellous realism, is a complicated story spanning eight decades with three principal turning points and many characters. The first period is set in Germany in the 1920s, the second period in Central America in the 1940 and the third period, beginning in 1955 in Latin America, continues internationally to this day. (Bowers 2004: 7)

The distinction between magical realism and marvellous realism remains a focal point in literary criticism, revealing how nuanced perceptions of reality and the extraordinary are constructed within different cultural and historical contexts. While the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably in casual discourse, critics consistently emphasize their unique origins, narrative strategies, and philosophical underpinnings. The concept of magical realism originated in the visual arts, specifically in Franz Roh's 1925 essay 'Nach-Expressionismus: Magischer Realismus,' where he sought to describe a post-expressionist painting style that unveiled the 'magic' latent in

the ordinary world. For Roh, ‘the magic of the real is not found in the fantastic or the imaginary, but in the revelation of reality’s own strangeness, its inherent marvels’ (Roh 1995: 16). This approach posits that the world, when attentively observed, yields marvels without recourse to the supernatural, suggesting a poetics rooted in the material and perceptible. Alejo Carpentier, on the other hand, in his prologue to ‘The Kingdom of This World’ (1949), appropriates and transforms Roh’s concept, asserting that in Latin America, the marvellous is not an artistic effect but an ‘amplification of reality’ grounded in cultural history. Carpentier famously writes, ‘the marvellous real is neither beautiful nor ugly; it is not at all the same as the fantastic. The fantastic provokes astonishment and doubt; the marvellous real is simply an amplification of reality, a heightened mode of being for those who accept mystery as something ordinary and every day’ (Carpentier 1949: viii). Carpentier’s marvellous realism is thus inseparable from the Latin American experience, where myth, legend, and the inexplicable are woven into the everyday, and where the marvellous is ‘lived as reality’ rather than imagined or artificially imposed. Irlemar Chiampi further develops this distinction by emphasizing the philosophical breadth of marvellous realism. For Chiampi, ‘marvellous realism is not merely a literary technique but a worldview, a cultural attitude that accepts the extraordinary as intrinsic to reality, especially in the Latin American context’ (Chiampi 1980: 21). This acceptance is not a suspension of disbelief but a recognition of the marvellous as part of one’s lived experience—a perspective cultivated by the region’s history of syncretism, colonial encounter, and oral tradition. Chiampi’s insights foreground how marvellous realism is inseparable from questions of identity, memory, and historical consciousness.Furthermore, Amaryll Beatrice Chanady, whose work is foundational for the theorization of magical realism, pinpoints the narrative mechanics that distinguish it from the marvellous. Chanady states that ‘magical realism is characterized by the presence of two

conflicting systems: one rational and empirical, the other supernatural and inexplicable. The essential feature is the matter-of-fact narrative of extraordinary events, without explanation, resulting in the coexistence of rationality and the marvellous' (Chanady 1985: 23). Chanady stresses that in marvellous realism, 'the supernatural is normalized to such an extent that neither characters nor readers are surprised by its presence' (Chanady 1985: 22). These theoretical distinctions have significant implications. while magical realism and marvellous realism are closely related and share a commitment to revealing the extraordinary within the ordinary, critics widely agree that they are not interchangeable. Marvellous realism emerges as a culturally situated vision of reality, most powerfully articulated in Latin American literature, whereas magical realism, in its broader international usage, is defined by narrative ambiguity and the coexistence of conflicting worldviews. Both modes challenge Western realist conventions, but they do so from different vantage points—one through ambiguity and narrative tension, the other through affirmation and cultural embeddedness.

While many of its early authors include names such as Alejo Carpentier, Massimo Bontempelli, Miguel Ángel Asturias, and Juan Rulfo, recent names are Gabriel García Márquez, Salman Rushdie, Latife Tekin, Toni Morrison and so forth. From Germany to Cuba, Italy, and India, magical realism followed an explosion in popularity, explicitly in Latin American writing, in the 1960s. This was majorly due to the global success of García Márquez's One *Hundred Years of Solitude*. 'For someone who said he would rather be a magician than a writer, Gabriel García Márquez meets his desire halfway by being both in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*' (Simpkins 1995: 153). Tracing the historical evolution of the term, the principal issue that arises with the study of magical realism is its diverse meanings. Scholars and theorists have tackled the definition

of the term variously due to its hybrid and fluid nature. For example, David Mikics expounds on magical realism by comparing it with the uncanny, whilst Zamora and Faris examine the term via realism. Mikics attests 'I will argue that magical realism is a mode or subset of the uncanny in which the uncanny exposes itself as a historical and cultural phenomenon. Magical realism realises the conjunction of ordinary and fantastic by focusing on a particular historical moment afflicted or graced by this doubleness' (Mikics 1995: 373). Zamora and Faris, on the other hand, declare that:

> The label magical realist draws upon cultural systems that are no less ‘real’ than those upon which traditional literary realism draws – often non-Western cultural systems that privilege mystery over empiricism, empathy over technology, tradition over innovation. Their primary narrative investment may be in myths, legends, and rituals – that is, in collective (sometimes oral and performative, as well as written) practices that bind communities together. (Zamora and Faris 1995: 3)

Standing in the periphery, magical realism is grounded in the real world and accepts the uncanny without hesitation. Although magical realism is generated from the real, as Zamora and Faris stated, it disturbs the nature of reality by inserting the uncanny. Contrary to the fantastic, magical realism does not cross the threshold but stands on it. One of the distinctive features of the magical realism is the perception of the supernatural, not as irrational but as ordinary. The difference between the two, therefore, is that the characters in the fantastic are astonished and frightened by magical events, which are often unpredictable and follow specific rules. This unpredictability creates a sense of suspense. Conversely, in magical realism, the characters tend to react to the wizardry without fear or hesitation. In the fantastic, magic is neither organised nor predictable; however, it follows specific rules. In the article ‘Assumptions of Reality: Law Fantasy, Magical Realism, and the Fantastic’, Greer Watson remarks:

> In the fantastic – that is, in a story such as *The Turn of the Screw* - -the narrator shares the worldview of the reader, recognizing an antinomy between the rationalist view and the apparently supernatural events, and thus demonstrating hesitation

> about the appearance of ghost. In magical realism, on the other hand, the narrator's worldview encompasses the supernatural […] In consequence, the reader does not feel there to be any antinomy, and experiences no hesitation (Watson 2000: 165)

As mentioned above, in magical realism, the characters and events, as they occur in both natural and imaginary worlds, are not afraid of the excitement of transitioning from the natural to the unnatural world. In magical realism, it is impossible to draw a clear line between the real and imaginary worlds; however, the goal is to blend the natural and the unnatural in a way that the reader is completely absorbed and perceives it as reality. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is, for instance, full of historical facts and magical events, such as the blurring of past, present, and future, hyperbolic descriptions, such as in the figure of Remedios the Beauty, the insomnia plague that causes characters to forget even their names, and so on. As Bowers affirms, 'the extraordinary in magical realism is rarely presented in the form of a dream or a psychological experience because to do so takes the magic out of the recognisable material reality and places it into the little understood world of imagination', so in marvellous real opposed ontologies coexist with the arena of ambiguity' (Bowers 2004: 15).

As I have mentioned before, the circulation of the works of Latin American boom authors, particularly García Márquez, in Turkey has been a vital aspiration and a valuable source for the employment of magical realism in Turkish literature. Like Latin America, Turkish literary texts are dense and rich with supernatural motifs, cultural mythology, and traditional folktales. Yaşar Kemal (1923-2015) is one of the foremost authors who inserts magical realism into his narratology, as declared by Franziska Stürmer that 'because of this embedding of unreal elements, together with a propensity to make use of myth, legend, and folklore and certain affinities with oral traditions characteristics for magical realism, Kemal has repeatedly been considered one of the first Turkish

writers to make use of magical realist strategies in his texts as well, although he never openly acknowledged this categorisation' (Stürmer 2014: 115).

Inspired by García Márquez and Yaşar Kemal, Latife Tekin is the second well-known Turkish author employing magical realist devices. As I explore both in the thesis's second and third chapters, Tekin enriches the magical realism with Turkish folklore and mythology to express traumatic events in Turkey. Yaşar Kemal, Latife Tekin, Adalet Ağaoğlu, Nazlı Eray, Elif Şafak and Orhan Pamuk are some of the acclaimed Turkish author's magical and fantastic twists in their texts to disclose historical, political, and social critiques of their country because 'the characteristic of magical realism which makes it such a frequently adopted narrative mode is its inherent transgressive and subversive qualities' (Bowers 2004: 75). Therefore, the purpose of magical realism in each narrative in the thesis is to expose sites of tension between dichotomies, known and unknown, subordinate and dominant, authentic and inconceivable, angel and monster, to touch upon social, political, and cultural structures.

The final motif that I frequently allude to throughout the thesis is surrealism. As an experimental avenue of study, surrealism is not distinguishable because it is an eerie and impenetrable feeling that is abnormal to what once was normal. Regarding the origin of the term, Walter Benjamin declares:

> The necessary gradient, in the case of Surrealism, is produced by the difference in intellectual level between France and Germany. What sprang up in 1919 France in a small circle of literati—we shall give the most important names at once: André Breton, Louis Aragon, Philippe Soupault, Robert Desnos, Paul Eluard—may have been a meagre stream, fed on the samp boredom of postwar Europe and the last trickle of French decadence. (Benjamin 1978: 47)

Besides the names Benjamin refers to, surrealism is related to the artistic movement of the early twentieth century in the works of artists like Salvador Dalí. Nonetheless, in literature, the techniques adopted to engender its effects have evolved consistently, as in the case of magical

realism. Surrealism is complex not solely because of extraordinary ingredients but also because it is grounded in the motions and praxis of ordinary life. In surrealism, forms and imagery reflect the dream world, the subconscious, and the imagination. The placement of familiar objects in unfamiliar surroundings profoundly influenced it. Visualising every day from a surrealistic lens means estrangement from the familiar. 'Everything with which it came into contact was integrated. Life only seemed worth living where the threshold between the steps of multitudinous flooding back and forth' (Benjamin 1978: 48). As in the case of magical realism, in surrealism, the real and the magical realismcoexist together, but in surrealism, the attention is attributed to individual's psychology and reaction to the social circumstances, about which Bowers maintains that 'surrealism is most distinct from magical realism since the aspects that it explores are associated now with material reality with the imagination and the mind, in particular it attempts to express the "inner life" and psychology of humans through art' (Bowers 2004: 22). Benjamin and Bowers mention the feeling of loss and alienation, which is traceable, for example, in the character of Maxi in *La villa*, which I examine in the second chapter or Dirmit's epiphany in *Dear Shameless Death*. Everyday life is in a constant back-and-forth connectedness, meaning there is always a fleeting level of chance in every part of life, which echoes the Borges's maze-like universe. Nevertheless, as Chiampi notes that 'surrealism's difference from the marvellous and magical realism lies in its radical emphasis on the unconscious, on psychic automatism, and on the dissolution of narrative logic in favour of free association' (Chiampi 1980: 55). This positions surrealism not merely as a literary device, but as a mode of perception that seeks to liberate the mind from rational constraints. Wendy B. Faris further draws attention to the affinity and divergence between surrealism and magical realism: 'Whereas magical realism often roots its marvels in cultural traditions and

collective myths, surrealism privileges the private world of the unconscious and dreams, often setting the fantastic adrift from social or historical explanation' (Faris 2004: 62).

Another central motif that emerges throughout the thesis is the supernatural. The supernatural, as a literary mode, is inherently elusive, as it embodies the intrusion of forces or entities that defy the ordinary laws of nature. Much like surrealism, the supernatural generates a sense of disquiet and wonder, offering a rupture in the everyday that commands attention. Tracing the genealogy of the term, Alejo Carpentier distinguishes the supernatural from the marvellous by arguing that, 'in the marvellous real, the supernatural is accepted as an integral part of reality, not as an aberration or anomaly' (Carpentier 1949: viii). This contrasts with the Western tradition, in which the supernatural has often been treated with skepticism or framed as a source of fear and uncertainty. In literary studies, the supernatural has been closely associated with the gothic and fantastic, providing a space where ghosts, miracles, and inexplicable phenomena are not only possible but narratively consequential. The supernatural's power in literature lies not just in the extraordinary events it presents, but in its ability to challenge epistemological boundaries. As Irlemar Chiampi observes, 'the supernatural calls into question the very nature of reality, inviting readers to reconsider what is possible, believable, or real' (Chiampi 1980: 41). The supernatural thus functions both as a disruption and a revelation, insisting on realities that exceed rational explanation. This motif is evident in works where the supernatural is seamlessly integrated into the narrative, such as García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, where levitating priests and ghosts are treated as ordinary occurrences. Wendy B. Faris notes that 'the supernatural in magical realism is not presented as a break with reality, but as an extension of it, blending the known and the unknown into a continuous whole' (Faris 2004: 53). Ultimately, the supernatural in literature is not simply a matter of content, but a mode of perception—one that invites readers

to inhabit worlds where the impossible is woven into the very fabric of the everyday. In this way, the supernatural, like surrealism, functions as both a literary device and a philosophical posture, offering new ways to perceive, experience, and narrate reality.

Overall, the authors' implementation of magical realism, fantasy, and, to a lesser extent, surrealism in their texts functions as a channel to expose, deconstruct, and subvert dominant ideologies and controversies in their societies. Rooted in a constant plight of hybridity and intricacies, Latin American and Turkish marvellous, occult, phantasmagorical, and surreal tropes are nurtured by social and cultural conventions that shape the region's local colours.

IV. Conclusion

As this thesis unfolds, I trace the neglected links between contemporary Turkish and Hispanic literature, illustrating reciprocities within a transnational comparative framework. In recent years, travels and exchanges have grown more extensively, and this extensive research on periphery-to-periphery literature on world literature relations will contribute to redressing the limits of comparative literature that crosses linguistic and geographical borders. This study has scrutinised primarily nine modern and contemporary outputs, novels, novellas, and short stories by seven writers from Latin America and Turkey. As I have outlined above, the exchanges are transnational because I have compared the literary and stylistic devices implemented in the narratives and the socio-political backgrounds that the narratives composed. Starting from the import of García Márquez's well-received novel, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, I juxtapose two contemporary authors from two geographies, Latin America and Turkey, in each chapter. Throughout analysing each selected text, I investigate the aesthetics of constructing these narratives, the construction of formal characteristics like plot, characterisation, time and space, and political and cultural

structures. The oscillation between the natural and the supernatural is the transgressive and subversive qualities the authors utilise to foment contradictions and reveal traumatic realities and artificiality of monological political and cultural structures. Therefore, through engaging with selected texts and numerous interdisciplinary theories, I explore the narratives the featured authors establish in various forms to expose the socio-political realities of their countries. In the subsequent chapters of the thesis, I will explore these commonalities that allow the comparison of texts across geographical and linguistic borders and bridge these interconnections.

CHAPTER 1: THE RECEPTION AND CIRCULATION OF *ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE* IN TURKEY: CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an alternative to formally assessing the novel *Cien años de soledad* (1967; *One Hundred Years of Solitude*) in Turkish language and culture. One of the main reasons that led me to study the case of *Cien años de soledad* in Turkey was that, although the novel and the writer, Gabriel García Márquez, has been widely recognized. Numerous works record his accomplishments as a novelist, but the extent of his influence and reception in Turkey have not been thoroughly examined until today. The purpose of this chapter is precisely to fill this gap. With that centrality as its starting point, this chapter aims to expose *One Hundred Years of Solitude*'s translation, circulation, and reception in the Turkish literary and cultural scene. In this context, this chapter highlights several points. The first is to discuss translation theories and their applicability to the Turkish translation of *Cien años de soledad*, mainly since it constitutes a case of indirect translation. Concerning translation theories, my analysis draws on the work of several theorists, such as Gerard Genette, David Damrosch, Mariano Siskind, Lawrence Venuti, and Michael Wood, to name only the most important. Since it is also significant to include the translator's insights and views on translation, in this way, the perspective of the Turkish translator of *Cien años de soledad*, Seçkin (Cılızoğlu) Selvi will be provided, together with the views conveyed by the translator of the English version, Gregory Rabassa.

Furthermore, the text has been examined along the same conceptual framework regarding its reception, including both the translators', Rabassa and Selvi, reception of the source text and the target audience's response to the novel. Concerning the reception dimension, I referred to some particular theorists, such as Gerald Martin, Yaşar Kemal, Octavio Paz, Hans R. Jauss, Wolfgang Iser, and Hans J. Vermeer. Ultimately, some conclusions are drawn accordingly.

1.2 The Turkish 'Paratexts' of *Cien años de soledad*

In *Paratext: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1987), the French narrative theorist Gérard Genette advances a theoretical framework concerning the meaning of textual elements located in what he calls the 'vestibule' of a text, which may include the cover of a book, blurb, image, and front and back matter, which he theorises as 'paratexts':

> The paratext is what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public. More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a threshold, or – a word Borges used apropos of a preface – "vestibule" that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back. (Genette 1997: 1)

Therefore, the 'paratext' constitutes neither a book's exterior nor interior but, as Genette points out, 'a threshold' of interpretation, an in-between space. According to Genette, one of the critical elements of the 'paratext' is the cover of the book, which would not only include the front and back covers but also 'the dust jacket (or wrapper) or the bond' (Genette 1997: 27). In this way, these various material aspects of the book are the initial signs that the reader encounters the very moment they lay eyes on the book.

A relevant paratextual angle to explore Genette's theory is Gabriel García Márquez's epoch-making novel *Cien años de Soledad* (1967; *One Hundred Years of Solitude*) that has so far amassed over one hundred different book covers throughout its numerous Spanish-language editions and translations into dozens of languages. The book's first edition was published in Buenos Aires by *Editorial Sudamericana* on June 5, 1967. In an article published in the newspaper *El Heraldo*, it is declared that the original version of the cover was designed by Iris Pagano: 'En la editorial Sudamericana la diseñadora Iris Pagano improvisó la portada de un galeón perdido en medio de una selva azul, que reposa sobre tres plantas amarillas, edición que es muy perseguida por los coleccionistas en la actualidad' (Robles Lujan 2014: 2). ('In the Sudamericana press, the designer Iris Pagano improvised the cover of a galleon lost in the middle of a blue forest, which rests on

three yellow plants, an edition that is much sought after by collectors today') (2019, translated by me). As things stand, Iris Pagano stepped in at the last minute since the cover of the first edition of the novel was to be designed by Vicente Rojo, a Mexican artist. Nonetheless, the publisher had to ask another in-house designer, Iris Pagano, because of some setbacks.

According to Karen Pérez the sudden change was due to a fortuitous event: 'a pesar de tener lista la portada y enviarla a Buenos Aires a tiempo, esta se extravió' (Pérez 2016:114) ('Despite having the cover ready and sending it to Buenos Aires on time, it got lost'). In an interview published in the journal *El Heraldo*, Rojo affirms:

> Gabo me pidió esa portada dándome el manuscrito y fui uno de los primeros en leerlo", relató agregando que "me dí cuenta de lo excepcional de la obra y de lo difícil que era sintetizar esta novela en una portada", reconoció. Yo empecé a trabajar y pensé que la portada debía ser con elementos de uso común y popular y creí que iba bien para dar con el tono de la novela, que como sabemos es una obra riquísima. (Rojo 2014: 1)
>
> Gabo asked me for that cover by giving me the manuscript and I was one of the first to read it. I realized how exceptional the work was and how difficult it was to synthesize this novel in a cover. I started to work and I thought that the cover should have elements of common usage and popular culture and I thought it was doing well in capturing the tone of the novel, which as we know is a very rich work.

Scrutiny of the front cover art reveals an image of a blue and white Spanish galleon in the middle of the image with three geometric yellow flowers at the bottom (*Figure 1.1*). The background is of a jungle, possibly a photograph in high contrast, with the drawing of a linear ship on a white background above the background above and three yellow floral ornaments below it. The image would look enigmatic for readers who first encounter the book, as they would only partially be able to infer its overall meaning. For those who have read the novel, it becomes clear that it is an

illustration referring to the moment when the villagers discover a wreck of an old Spanish galleon resting on a bed of stones: 'Frente a ellos, rodeado de helechos y palmeras, blanco y polvoriento en la silenciosa luz de mañana, estaba un enorme galeón español' (García Márquez 2003: 12). ('Before them, surrounded by ferns and palm trees, white and powdery in the silent morning light, was an enormous Spanish galleon') (García Márquez 1972: 22). Michael Wood observes that 'the Spanish galleon occupies a space of solitude and oblivion, but it is also a material memory, a recall to history, a lingering of the past in the present. It waits in the jungle like a destiny' (Wood 1990: 37). What Wood is referring to here are the multiple layers of meaning the Spanish galleon acquires, becoming a symbol of imperialism, the riches of Latin America that the coloniser plundered, the Edenic promise of the continent, as well as the destined *soledad* of Macondo and the Buendías genealogy. Likewise, Elizabeth A. Spiller and James Higgings dwell on the colonial dimension of the metaphor. While Spiller claims that 'the land becomes a kind of repository of the colonial past: whenever characters dig up the land, they unearth the past as artefacts of that pursuit', Higgins affirms that 'it is a symbol of a heritage that is anachronistic, out of context and ill-equipped to tackle the awesome American environment' (Spiller 2009: 387; Higgings 2002: 41). To this effect, the silhouette of a galleon on the exterior of the book is intended as a direct reference to colonialism and the trauma of the Spanish Conquest of America, thus ascribing a specific meaning to the novel by way of a politically inflected paratextual device.

Figure 1.1

García Márquez, Gabriel. 1967. *Cien años de soledad*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana. Source: abebooks.com.

Additionally, the ship is stranded, rusty and deserted; however, it is also draped with orchids, barnacles and soft moss, which, one could argue, gives a sense of the 'marvellous', hence articulating García Márquez's idiosyncratic magical realist style. 'Ligeramente volteado a estribor, de su arboladura intacta colgaban las piltrafas escuálidas del velamen, entre jarcias adornadas de orquídeas' (García Márquez 2003: 22). ('Tilted slightly to the starboard, it had hanging from its intact masts the dirty rags of its sails in the midst of its rigging, which was adorned with orchids') (García Márquez 1972: 12). On that account, Wood notes the oxymoronic interrelation between the two symbols: 'The rags of the sail suggest a disaster, but the orchids look like a carnival' (Wood 1990: 33). The yellow orchids, additionally, may be interpreted as an anticipation of the torrent of flowers that will rain in Macondo in chapter 7: 'Tantas flores cayeron del cielo, que las calles amanecieron tapizadas de una colcha compacta, y tuvieron que despejarse con palas y rastrillos para que pudiera pasar el entierro' (García Márquez 2003: 173). ('So many flowers fell from the sky that in the morning the streets were carpeted with a compact cushion and they had to clear them away with shovels and rakes so that the funeral procession could pass by') (García Márquez 1972: 144). The sky's hyperbolic rain of yellow flowers directly addresses the magical aspect of the narrative, which is essentially associated with García Márquez's sensuous Caribbean landscape. The whole structure seemed to occupy its field, a space of loneliness and oblivion, forbidden to the vices of time and the customs of birds.

Designed by M. Celal Ülken in 1974 (*Figure 1.2*), the Turkish cover of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1974; *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*) shows a naked female figure holding an apple in her hand, an apparent reference to the Biblical story of the original sin of Adam and Eve and the fall of humankind. The forbidden apple represents both the Tree of Knowledge and sexual love (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 1996: 35-36; Ferber 1999: 13), which symbolises the ongoing pursuit

of knowledge in the novel and the biblical apple in the unveiling of the sexual love among the six Buendía genealogies that lead to the birth of a child with pig tale:

> Una tía de Úrsula, casada con un tío de José Arcadio Buendía, tuvo un hijo que pasó toda la vida con unos pantalones englobados y flojos, y que murió desangrado después de haber vivido cuarenta y dos años en el mas puro estado de virginidad, porque nació y creció con una cola cartilaginosa en forma de tirabuzón y con una escobilla de pelos en la punta. (García Márquez 2003: 31)

> An aunt of Úrsula's, married to an uncle of José Arcadio Buendía, had a son who went through life wearing loose, baggy trousers and who bled to death after having lived forty-two years in the purest state of virginity, for he had been born and had grown up with a cartilaginous tail in the shape of a corkscrew and with a small tuft of hair on the tip. (García Márquez 1972: 20)

Therefore, the apple image on the book's front cover externalises the exploration of the world through isolation and solitude and the fatalistic incestuous love that leads to the disappearance of Macondo from the face of the earth. Furthermore, the cover image displays a range of fantastical animals, such as a unicorn, a yellow cat, and exotic-looking birds, including what appears to be a phoenix over which a gigantic sun rises. Even though there are allusions to birds in the narrative, there is no specific mention of the phoenix. According to Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant, the phoenix embodies a perpetual cycle of regeneration and immortality: 'The phoenix would seem to have been a mythical bird of matchless splendour and extraordinary longevity which came from Ethiopia and, having been cremated upon a funeral pyre, had the power to be reborn from its own ashes' (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 1996: 752). Correspondingly, the events and family cycles that constitute the Buendía in Macondo is six generations are considerably iterative.

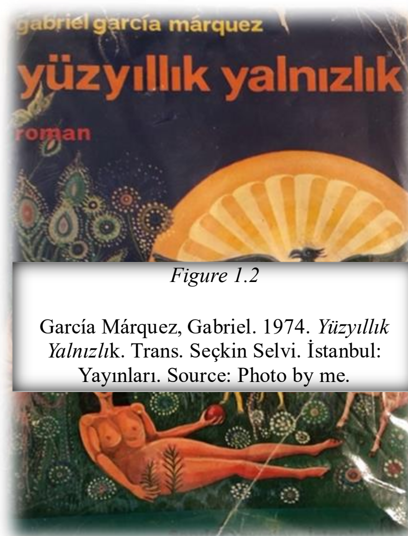

Figure 1.2

García Márquez, Gabriel. 1974. *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*. Trans. Seçkin Selvi. İstanbul: Yayınları. Source: Photo by me.

In some sections of the novel, even Úrsula, the wife of José Arcadio Buendía, refers to the similar patterns of behaviour among successive generations:

> No había ningún misterio en el corazón de un Buendía que fuera impenetrable para ella, porque un siglo de naipes y de experiencias le había enseñado que la historia de la familia era un engranaje de repeticiones irreparables, una rueda giratoria que hubiera seguido dando vueltas hasta la eternidad, de no haber sido por el desgaste progresivo e irremediable del eje. (García Márquez 2003: 471)

> There was no mystery in the heart of a Buendía that was impenetrable for her because the history of the family was a machine with unavoidable repetition, a turning wheel that would have gone on spilling into eternity were it not for the progressive and irremediable wearing of the axle. (García Márquez 1972: 402)

Just like the phoenix, the Buendía family regenerates itself. However, unlike the phoenix, the Buendía family does not resurrect itself out of its ashes and is wiped out from the face of the earth. Note that a family tree genealogy has been attached to the translated editions of the novel, although the original Spanish version does not include such a paratextual addition.

Moreover, the 'unicorn', a mythological creature prominently displayed on the cover, represents both divine revelation 'with its single horn in the middle of its forehead [it] symbolises a spiritual arrow, a sunray, the sword of God' (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 1972: 1054). Philip Swanson interprets divine revelation as 'The Buendía dynasty in Macondo is founded on an Original Sin (echoing another biblical myth) – that of incest' (Swanson 2010: 61), while Rubén Pelayo notes that: 'in general, most of the acts related to Melquíades are impregnated with the supernatural power that the Book of Genesis attributes only to God' (Pelayo 2001: 107). If, as Genette suggests, 'the role of a work's paratext is 'to make present, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its "reception" and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book' (Genette 1997: 1), then the Turkish cover of *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* demonstrates how the marketisation of the book was connected to a conceptual orientation that emphasised the magical aspects of the novel,

particularly incorporating mythological figures associated with cyclicality and renewal, on the one hand, but also Edenic imagery representative of sin, the search for forbidden knowledge, and the inevitable biblical fall, on the other.

1.3 Censorship in Turkey

It is interesting to note that the first cover of the Turkish edition of the novel was never reproduced, most likely owing to the provocativeness of the naked female figure (*Figure 1.3*). It is surprising, in this sense, that the cover was not censored, considering that in Turkey, the 1970s were a decade marked by military dictatorship and what Şehnaz Tahir Gülerçağlar describes as 'violence among politically opposed groups' (Gülerçağlar 2015: 132). Predictably, the military coups of 1960 and 1980 affected the Turkish cultural landscape, including the autonomy of the universities and the press and the freedom of writers and intellectuals. One of the most critical events in 1974 Turkey was the unpleasant repercussions of nudity in arts and culture. Social, economic, cultural, and political factors have influenced the production of Turkish literary works. Shortly after the publication of *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* (1974) in Turkey, nudity was started to be seen as contrary to sharia codes. However, the irony in this censorship is that even though the Ottoman Empire was considered more conservative than Turkey after the Republic, nudity was respected and celebrated in the Ottoman era. [2]

The fraught issue of censorship in 1980s Turkey can be observed in the views of several critics. For example, in the journal *Index on Censorship* (1995), Yaşar Kemal, who is the pioneer of magical realism in Turkey, notes how widespread cultural censorship became during the

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[2] However, the irony in this censorship is that even though the Ottoman Empire was considered more conservative than Turkey after the Republic, nudity was respected and celebrated in the Ottoman era.

dictatorship, declaring that 'the coup of September 19, 1980, not only forced intellectuals to keep their heads down but also threw thousands of people into prison and tortured them' (Kemal 1995: 146). The writer İrem Üstünsöz is a case in point. She highlights the censorship of one of the biggest publishing houses, *Can Yayınları*, in Turkey because it published a translation of Henry Miller's *Tropic of Capricorn* (1939) (1985; *Oğlak Dönencesi*): 'On February 19, 1986, legal proceedings were started against the publisher Erdal Öz, the major shareholder and the head of *Can Yayınları* and the translator Fatma Aylin Sağtür' (Üstünsöz 2015: 225). In a similar vein, the Turkish translator of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Seçkin Selvi, was sent to prison in 1972 for translating T*he Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti: A New England Legend* (1930) (1969; *Suçsuzlar: Sacco ile Vanzetti*), by Howard Fast, that the government found politically contentious. *Milliyet*, Turkey's leading newspaper announced on 7 January 1973, Selvi's sentence: 'Çevirmen Seçkin Selvi yayınlanan bir kitabı nedeniyle hakkında verilen ceza kesinleştiği için cezaevine girmiştir' [3](Milliyet 1973: 1). ('Due to the publication of a book, the translator Seçkin Selvi was given a prison sentence'). Thus, considering Selvi's arrest, it is even more surprising that the cover of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* escaped the attention of the censors.

[3] Unidentified Author

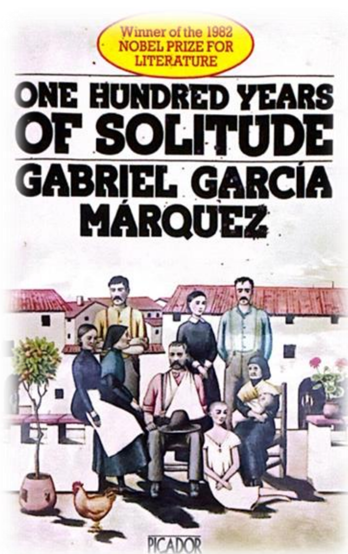


Figure 1.4
García Márquez, Gabriel. 1978. One Hundred Years of Solitude. Trans. Gregory Rabassa. London: Pan Books. Source: Photo by me.

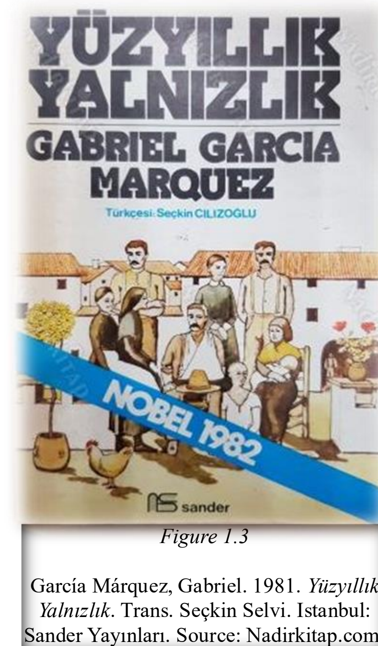


Figure 1.3
García Márquez, Gabriel. 1981. *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*. Trans. Seçkin Selvi. Istanbul: Sander Yayınları. Source: Nadirkitap.com.

Compared to the 1974 printing cover of the book, the second printing jacket of the novel in 1982 is remarkably different, containing no nudity and portraying a traditional family image, thus standing in contrast to the more 'audacious' first cover. Indeed, the provocative naked female silhouette has been removed and replaced by a photo of a family. Here, the female profiles are considerably modest. They are not only modest, but one is wearing a headscarf. The paratextual accessories of the novel, thus, address the issue of censorship in the target culture. This illustration is obviously localizing. Concerning this, Lawrence Venuti points out 'the aim of translation is to bring back a cultural other as the recognizable, the familiar, even the same; and this aim always risks a wholesale domestication of the foreign text, often in highly self-conscious projects where translation serves an appropriation of foreign cultures for agendas in the receiving situation, cultural, economic, political' (Venuti 2008: 27). Certainly, this is not related to the translation of the novel but to the reception. It is important to note that the sketch on the cover of the 1982 Turkish edition of the novel is copied from the cover of the 1978 English edition (*Figure 1.4*). However, this adjustment concerns censorship in Turkey because, since 1984, neither the first Turkish edition of the cover nor 1978 Picador edition have been used. From 1984, the Turkish covers of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* editions are as follows: *Figure 1.5*, *Figure 1.6*, and *Figure 1.7*.

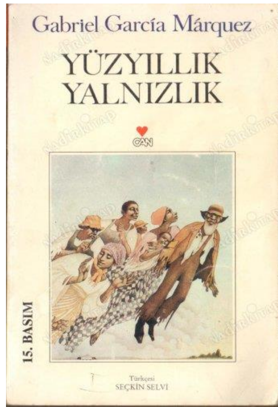


Figure 1.5

García Márquez, Gabriel.1984. *Yüzyillik Yalnızlık*. Trans. Seçkin Selvi. Istanbul: Can Yayınları. Source: Nadirkitap.com.

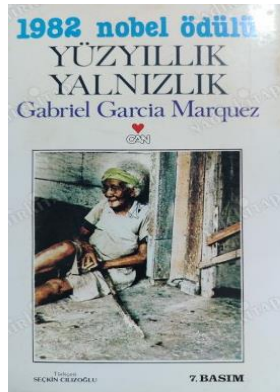


Figure 1.6

García Márquez, Gabriel. 1981. *Yüzyıllık Yalıizlık*. Trans. Seçkin Selvi. Istanbul: Can Yayınları. Source: Nadirkitap.com.

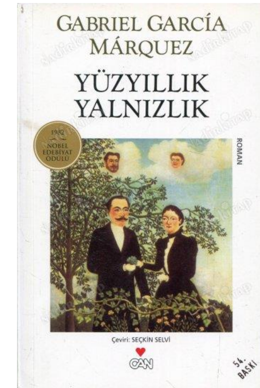


Figure 1.7

García Márquez, Gabriel. 2009. *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*. Trans. Seçkin Selvi. Istanbul: Can Yayınları. Source: Nadirkitap.com.

On account of localizing the novel's cover, the Turkish Publishing House (*Sander*) communicates a foreign text to the target audiences. Put another way, the jacket configuration is designed in a way that is familiar to the Turkish reader. In particular, in Turkish Anatolian culture, these is recognizable apparel since 'Türkler, Orta Asya Kültürü, İslam kültürü, Anadolu'ya yerleşerek Anadolu Kültürü, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu kültürü ve en son Batılılaşma ile çeşitli kültür değişim evrelerinden geçmişlerdir' (And 1974: 18). ('The Turks have gone through various stages of cultural change with the culture of Central Asia, Islamic culture, Anatolian culture by settling in Anatolia, Ottoman Empire culture and the latest Westernization). The cover has a clear commercial purpose, one of the paratextual elements: the 'peritext'. Gerard Genette considers paratextual elements: 'peritext' and 'epitext'. Genette points out that 'the peritext is everything within the covers of a bound volume' (Genette 1992: 8). Along the same line, Brian Nelson and Brigid Maher confirm that 'all areas of paratextual analysis, examining such aspects as cover images and marketing campaigns, as well as, textual features like notes and introductions, help shed light on how the agents involved in translation – translators themselves, but also editors and publishers – characterize their audience and assess their needs and expectations in order to ensure that the foreign is at once appealing and accessible' (Nelson and Maher 2013: 8). That is why in

his article 'A Conservative Revolution in Publishing', Pierre Bourdieu calls publishers as 'people of commerce much like art dealers' (Bourdieu 2008: 138).

Conceivably, the photograph represents some members of the Buendía family: the man sitting in the middle of the family members appears to be José Arcadio Buendía. José Arcadio Buendía, with whom the story starts, is depicted as the first patriarch of Macondo: 'Al principio, José Arcadio Buendía era una especie de patriarca juvenil, que daba instrucciones para la siembra y consejos para la crianza de niños y animales, y colaboraba con todos, aún en el trabajo físico, para la buena marcha de la comunidad' (García Márquez 2003: 18). ('At first José Arcadio Buendía had been a kind of youthful patriarch who would give instructions for planting and advice for the raising of children and animals, and who collaborated with everyone, even in the physical work, for the welfare of the community') (García Márquez 1972: 9). Even though we cannot be confident about the other figures on the cover, the one sitting in the middle with a hat on his lap is most likely José Arcadio Buendía. Whereas on the left of José Arcadio Buendía, Úrsula Iguarán, the first cousin and wife of José Arcadio Buendía, is sitting with a baby in her arms; on the right, two female figures, conceivably Amaranta and Rebeca, are sitting. Since the narrative includes various Buendía house members of similar names, such as José Arcadio Buendía, Colonel Aureliano Buendía, Jose Arcadio, Aureliano José, Amaranta, Amaranta Úrsula, Remedios the Beauty, Renata Remedios, the profiles on the cover are indefinite. Nevertheless, these two female pictures can be considered Amaranta and Rebeca because they face each other. Amaranta hates Rebeca because of their love for the same man, Pietro Crespi. If these women are Amaranta and Rebeca, the graphic representation of them is moderately expressive. Rebeca, supposedly, looks like she is sitting on Amaranta's lap. Despite their closeness while sitting, the faces of the two female figures are turned to each other, which appears to allude to their disunion in the narrative. As an illustration:

> Esa tarde, mientras Rebeca se ahogaba de calor dentro de la coraza de raso que Amparo Moscote iba Armando en su cuerpo con un millar de alfileres y una paciencia infinita, Amaranta equivocó varias veces los puntos del crochet y se pinchó el dedo con la aguja, pero dedicó con espantosa frialdad que la fecha sería el último viernes antes de la boda, y el modo sería un chorro de láudano en el café. (García Márquez 2003: 110)

> That afternoon, while Rebeca was suffocating with heat inside the armour of thread that Amparo Moscote was putting about her body with thousands of pins and infinite patience, Amaranta made several mistakes in. her crocheting and frightful coldness that the date would be the last Friday before the wedding and the method would be a dose of laudanum in her coffee. (García Márquez 1972: 89)

Because of their physical similarity, the two men at the back of the picture appear to be Aureliano Segundo and José Arcadio Segundo, twin brothers. Nevertheless, in the narrative, while José Arcadio Segundo is short and bony, Aureliano Segundo is tall and robust, which Rubén Pelayo deduces 'like a trick of magical realism, the games they play end up confusing them and they are changed for life. The names they use in the game begin to determine their physical characteristics, changing even their biological heritage' (Pelayo 2001: 101). However, on the cover, both are almost identical. Ultimately, the woman in the middle of Aureliano Segundo and José Arcadio Segundo can be Petra Cotes, with whom both have a relationship. At this point, it is worth noting that the subsequent cover of *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* is 'literal' in exemplifying García Márquez's saga of the Buendía family and of their village, in Karen Pérez words: 'La ilustración literal se identifica porque tiende a representar verdades pictóricas; estas pueden estar cargadas de fantasía, pero su aproximación técnica permite crear una escena creíble debido a su alto nivel de iconicidad' (Pérez 1016: 107). ('Literal illustration is identified because it tends to represent pictorial truths; these may be loaded with fantasy, but their technical approach allows a credible scene to be created due to their high level of iconicity'). The second illustration has more of a credible approach than an interpretative scene. On this occasion, the earliest illustration is more 'conceptual' which Pérez expounds as: 'La ilustración conceptual, por su parte, toma las ideas o conceptos y los representa

por medio de metáforas visuales; la abstracción y el surrealismo son movimientos que se basan en ella' (Pérez 2016: 107). ('The conceptual illustration takes ideas or concepts and represents them through visual metaphors; abstraction and surrealism are movements based on it'). Both illustrations generate coherence with the content of the narrative, but while the first design presents more fantasy combined with visual truths, the cover reinforces more pictorial representation.

At the same time, the jacket bears the following declaration written in capital letters in blue colour: 'NOBEL 1982' an imprimatur that Genette defines as 'the band':

> The band - to spin out these metaphors of clothing - is a sort of mini jacket that covers only the lower third of the book, and its means of expression are, in general, purely verbal - but the custom of placing an illustration or a likeness of the author on the band seems to be gaining ground. The band may repeat in larger letters the name of the author; it may display the name of a literary prize the work has already won. (Genette 1992:28)

The presence of paratextual slogans is not a mere coincidence, but a result of market-driven strategies. These strategies are meticulously designed to persuade the target audience of the literary quality and success of the book. Understanding this market-driven nature is crucial for a comprehensive analysis of the book's paratextual elements.

Another noteworthy aspect is the visibility of the Turkish translator Seçkin Selvi on the cover page under the name of the author. Neither the name of Gregory Rabassa nor the name of Seçkin Selvi appears on the earliest jacket of *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*. On the other hand, on the subsequent cover, Seçkin Selvi reads without any allusion to Gregory Rabbasa. In contrast to Venuti's conception of the 'translator's invisibility', which I will discuss later in the chapter, the second cover draws attention to the Turkish translator. Furthermore, the use of white colour with other abstract colours gives a naturalistic effect. Compared with the vibrant colouring of the first Turkish cover of the book, which consists mainly of blue, yellow and green, the second version is

less spectacular. When the two versions are compared to each other, it can be, all in all, said that the first cover (1974) arouses more curiosity and interpretation in the audience, with the abstract images used, whilst the following jacket (1982) represents more the market value of the text by leaving a concrete delineation in the background of the headings and inscriptions.

1.4 Direct and Indirect Translation

The first Turkish cover of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* may be used as a starting point to draw interconnections with the Spanish original – especially with David Damrosch's idea that 'world literature is an elliptical refraction of national literatures' [and] a mode of reading' (Damrosch 2003: 281) – as well as to examine the complex reception of the novel through the different critical responses it elicited and its subsequent impact on Turkish writers. The circumstances surrounding the publication of Seçkin Selvi's translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and the critical discussion of García Márquez's depictions of translation in the text require attention. Unlike the *Editorial Sudamericana* cover of the first edition of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which emphasises colonialism, the cover of the first Turkish translation of the novel (1974; *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*, translated by Seçkin Selvi) is more representative of its incestuous genealogy and the magical dimension of the book. Although by emphasising this magical aspect, the cover simultaneously suggests the colonial critique embedded in the story, particularly about Mariano Siskind's theorisation of magical realism as a 'third world genre', which provides an internationalist perspective of García Márquez's style:

> If, during the 1970s García Márquez was *a writer's writer*, after his 1982 Nobel Prize he became the greatest celebrity for general readers around the world, and magical realism came to be identified as a third world genre whose efficacy resided in its adaptability to be articulated in the most diverse cultural locations. (Siskind 2014: 353)

Apart from the front cover, one of the most striking paratextual differences between the Spanish original and the Turkish translation is the presence of the genealogical chart in the latter, which traces the Buendía family tree and is situated at the start of the novel (*Figure 1.8*). Similarly, the English translation of the book also includes the chart of the Buendía family tree that was requested by the publishers and created by Gregory Rabassa. However, Rabassa later claimed the chart to be nonessential to the elucidation of the novel: ‘If García Márquez had wanted such a table, he would have put one in the first Spanish edition. I came to think that perhaps confusion (and fusion) was meant to be a part of the novel’ (Rabassa 2005:100). Lois Parkinson Zamora explains why the chart was devised:

> That *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was originally published in Spanish without a genealogy suggests García Márquez’s archetypalizing intent: the Buendías are more significantly connected to prior human patterns than to prior individuals. Only when the novel was translated into English, in deference to the expectation of readers for individualized characters, was the genealogy added. (Zamora 1995: 502)

Making an argument on 'archetypelizing intent', Zamora suggests that García Márquez wanted readers to become more attentive to novelistic patterns rather than specific individuals. In a similar vein, Sergio Bolaños Cuéllar asserts that 'what is clear here is that the English editors of the novel had a patronizing attitude towards the TL readership. By including the tree, they would impose a certain reading of the novel which would “make it easier” to comprehend who the different characters were, thereby avoiding the possibility of getting confused’ (Bolaños Cuéllar 2010: 139). Although James Plath defends the inclusion of the chart, noting that 'there was an inordinate number of Buendías over 100 years with names so nearly indistinguishable from each other that a genealogy chart is necessary to keep them separate' (Plath et al. 2019: 41). It is, of course, one of the main challenges for first-time readers to keep track of the many homogenously named

Buendías. For that reason, Plath is in favour of the genealogy table. In response to Zamora's and Plath's claims, Allison E. Fagan states that: 'Even if Zamora is incorrect in her argument that the characters are meant to be confused, that differentiation between persons and personalities is not essential to an understanding of the novel as a whole, the addition of the genealogy still alters the possibilities for reception simply by providing what wasn't there in the first place' (Fagan 2008: 51). The family chart, therefore, constitutes another paratextual element added to the translation which, following Genette's theory, would be in conversation with the cover page, table of contents, indices, and blurb, being situated on the 'threshold' of the novel as an interpretative sign awaiting readers to decode. Thus, from a Genettian conceptual perspective, the chart would add a further interpretive layer to the translation that is absent from the original. In this way, the family tree's availability also alters the novel's reception in a Damroschian sense, allowing the original to 'gain in translation' (Damrosh 2003: 281). Curiously, Fagan observes that the translation influenced the original as: 'later editions of the novel contain similar or the same genealogy, including even the Spanish critical edition in the Cátedra series, demonstrating the ways the translation has had an impact on those Spanish, original-language editions that followed it' (Fagan 2008: 52). Whereas Gregory Rabassa's English translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* appeared in 1970, the Turkish version would have to wait a further four years to be released. Oddly enough, this has to do with the fact that the Turkish translator, Seçkin Selvi, drew on Rabassa's English translation, rather than the Spanish original, to

Figure 1.8
García Márquez, Gabriel. 1974. *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*. Trans. Seçkin Selvi. İstanbul: Sander Yayınları. Source: Photo by me.

produce the Turkish translation of the novel. This means that she translated a translation, a phenomenon variously known as 'indirect translation', 'second-hand translation', 'retranslation', 'relay translation', and 'mediated translation', which, according to Wenjie Li, 'has always been a common phenomenon in translation, especially in literary translation' (Li 2017: 181). The way of conceptualising ‘translation of translation' has been the subject of increased scholarly attention, as evidenced by the divergent connotations of the term. Cay Dollerup, for instance, argues that 'indirect translation', with its explicit focus on the end realisation, is misleading. This terminology does not really allow for the fact that the vast majority of translational realisations of an original into any language are primarily intended for an audience' (Dollerup 1998: 3). In lieu of 'indirect translation', Dollerup suggests the designation of 'relay translation', described as 'a mediation from the source to target language in which the translational product has been realised in another language than that of the original' (Dollerup 1998: 3-4). As might be inferred from this quotation, Dollerup proposes 'relay translation' over 'indirect translation' (IT) because of its grants for interpretation and continuance. In response to Dollerup's assertion, however, Anthony Pym argues that: 'In the absence of any really happy solution, stick with indirect translation and accept mediated translation' (Pym 2010: 7). In a parallel way, Jaroslav Spirk concurs with Pym: 'the designation "indirect translations" seems more appropriate than other, competing terms as an umbrella term, subsuming second-hand (secondary), third-hand, fourth-hand, etc. translations, i.e. translations not made directly with recourse to the original, but by means of a mediating text' (Spirk 2014: 132-133). Therefore, I will use 'indirect translation' because of the lack of a better term.

Compared to direct translation, indirect translation is more complex because it is the translation from a second language other than the target language, thus providing some layers of meaning, Clifford E. Landers explains how the process works, 'indirect translation is the translation

into Language C based on a translation into Language B of a source text in Language A', while Spirk further defines indirect translation as 'a target text for which the source text was not the 'original' written by the original (first) author, but some other version(s) of the text' (Landers 2001: 130; Spirk 2014: 137). Additionally, Pym describes the term by providing an example: 'Poe was translated into French by Baudelaire, then from French into Spanish by several poets. The Spanish versions would then be called 'indirect translations', and the first translation, into French, could then logically be called a 'direct translation' (Pym 2010: 7). In its variety of designations and definitions, 'indirect translation', as a whole, acts as a source to the first-generation translation. Since indirect translation is the reading of two or more lenses synchronically, Li describes this mediated translation as a 'hybrid' form (Li 2017: 183). As for its causes, 'mediated translation' occurs due to 'the lack of proper translator with mastery of the original language' and 'power relations between cultures/languages' (Li 2017: 184-185), 'a lack of translators or of linguistic competence in the ultimate SL or due to obtaining difficulty obtaining the original text or translating from a geographically and/or structurally distant language' (Rosa et al. 2017: 114). Regarding the history of translation in Turkey, the translators of the time needed adequate knowledge of the Spanish language due to the lack of formal education in the Spanish language and literature. In one of the noted literary journals of the time, *Sanat Olay*, Güney Dal declares some reasons behind it:

> Türkiye'nin gerek kendi ekonomik ve siyasal çıkmazlarıyla boğuşurken dış dünyaya umursamaz kalışı ve gerekse de edebiyatımızın üs ermeyen boyutlara ulaşmış kâğıt sorunlarıyla bitkin düşmesi; Latin Amerika edebiyatı 'patlama'sını ülkemize oldukça cılız bir yankı olarak getirdi. Bu edebiyattan yayımlanan çevirilerin sayısı on beş yıl içerisinde iki elin parmak sayısını bile geçemedi. Oysa, dünya sahnesine böyle birdenbire çıkıvermiş bir edebiyatın, aynı zamanda batı ekonomi ölçülerine göre – bizim gibi – 'az gelişmiş' bir ülkeler topluluğundan (kıtasından) gelmesi, herkesten çok bizleri ilgilendirmeliydi. Bu edebiyatta olan az ilginin bir başka nedeni de edebiyatımız da İspanyolca ve Portekizceden çeviri yapabilecek çevirmenlerin yeterli, hatta hiç olmayışına bağlanabilir. (Dal 1981: 46)

> Grappling with its own economic and political impasses, Turkey remained unconcerned with the outside world. Our literature has reached exhausted dimensions with paper problems. The Latin American Boom in literature has brought a very poor reaction to our country. The number of translations published from Latin American literature were very few within fifteen years. However, the fact that such suddenly emerged literature came from the 'continent' of a 'less developed' country (compared to the Western economy) like us should have been of concern to us more than anyone else. Another reason for little reaction to the Latin American literature is the lack of sufficient translators who can translate from Spanish and Portuguese.

As Dal explains, the scarcity of Spanish texts in Turkey depends on various factors. The need for more Spanish translators was one of the chief reasons. Nevertheless, as an underdeveloped country, Turkey was also struggling with economic and political problems. The intersections between Turkish literary translation, the 'boom' phenomenon, and the idea of world literature were particularly intense after the 1940s. Taking this affirmation from an early Turkish literary journal, *Milliyet Sanat* (1976), Oğuz Akkan points out:

> Konuyu daha derinlemesine ele almak için Türkçe çeviri edebiyatının, yani Türk düşünce ve sanatının dünya edebiyatlarıyla alış-verişinin yoğunlaştığı 1940'lara kısaca bakalım. Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın 500 kitaplık çeviri programı uygulanmakta ve çeşitli dillerden her yıl 100'e yakın eser Türk okuruna sunulmaktadır. Kitapevleri de daha çok çağdaş eserleri yayınlamaktadır. O yıllarda Türk edebiyatının ve düşüncesinin kıskanılacak bir cennete ayak basmış olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. (Akkan 1976: 15)
>
> Let us look briefly at the 1940s, when the exchange of Turkish translation literature, that is, Turkish thought and art, is intensified with world literature in more depth. 500 books translation program of the Ministry of National Education is implemented and nearly 100 works from various languages are presented to Turkish readers every year. Bookstores also publish more contemporary works. In those years, we can say that Turkish literature and thought set foot in an enviable paradise.

From the above passage, it will be discerned that until the 1940s, Turkey was less concerned with world literature. The cohesion of Turkish literature with world literature intensified thanks to the programs the Ministry of National Education started. As a result, bookstores began to publish more translations and *Can Yayınları* (*Can Publishing House*) was the first to publish Latin American

texts. Commenting on the reception of Latin American Literature in Turkey, the owner of the *Can Publishing House* Erdal Öz notes in an erstwhile Turkish newspaper, *Cumhuriyet*, on 20 May 1982: 'Carlos Fuentes'in ünlü romanı *Artemio Cruz'un Ölümü* bu dizide yayınladığımız ilk kitap oldu. Juan Rulfo, Vargas Llosa, Arguedas, Cortázar, García Márquez, Vasconcelos, Carpentier, Amanda, Asturias ve Latin Amerika'da pek çok yazarın kitapları şu anda dizgide, baskıda, çevrilmekte ya da çevrilmeyi bekliyor' (Öz 1982: 5). ('Carlos Fuentes' famous novel *Artemio Cruz's Death* was the first book in this series. Many Latin American authors such as Juan Rulfo, Vargas Llosa, Arguedas, Cortázar, García Márquez, Vasconcelos, Carpentier, Amanda, and Asturias are currently waiting for typesetting, printing or translation). Under the title 'Contemporary Classics Series', *Can Yayınları* started to publish examples from contemporary world writers who are already considered classics. In particular, they have focused on translating the most rewarding novels and narratives of writers from Latin America, which have been translated into dozens of Western languages over the last four decades.

Indirect translation may have resulted from distant cultures, minority works of literature, and a lack of translators with knowledge of the specific language. In her detailed study of Turkish translation politics, Şehnaz Tahir Gürçağlar refers to the main languages that were translated into Turkish between 1940-1966:

> Throughout the period under study, French remained the most popular source language and literature for the Translation Bureau. Between 1940-1966, the series of French classics included 308 translated French works. French was followed by German (113 translations), Greek (94 translations) Russian (88 translations) and English classics (80 translations). (Gürçağlar 2008: 167)

Notably, Spanish was not mentioned in this list. The translation 'boom' in Turkey happened in the 1980s, after the liberalization of the Turkish economy and international trade. However, indirect translation has continued to be very widespread.

Compared to direct translation, indirect translation is primarily a low-prestige, frowned-upon practice. Even though, in general, this is a valid argument, indirect translation, considering its complex underlying motives, involves some advantages. Specifying the role of indirect translation, Landers states that ‘certain classic works of world literature would not have found their way into languages of limited diffusion had it not been for indirect translation; at the very least their appearances would have been delayed’ (Landers 2001: 130-131). Conversely, indirect translation mediates the reception of a work of literature through the prism of a third culture, as in the example of classical works of literature. Speaking of the benefits of indirect translation, Landers goes on to explain:

> At the beginning of the Renaissance, the ‘lost’ works of Greek antiquity (lost to Europe but kept alive in Arab cultures, more advanced than their counterparts in Christendom) re-emerged through indirect translations into Western European tongues, thus reclaiming Plato and Aristotle for new generations. (Landers 2001: 131)

It is undeniable that in most historical periods, original translations of literary texts were not attainable because only a tiny minority of readers were multilingual. Indirect translation is a significant aspect of the historical process, which, as in the example of Landers, provided the circulation of ‘lost works of Greek antiquity’ in different languages and cultures. Even though Landers himself proffers first-generation translations, he does not diminish the fact that specific momentous translations have been indirect.

On the other hand, indirect translation inevitably has several drawbacks. As argued by Landers, the initial problem is that ‘any error or misinterpretation in the first-generation translation (T1) will inevitably be reproduced in T2 (the second generation) with no chance of correction through comparison with the SL’ (Landers 2001: 131). Since it acts as a source to the direct translation, indirectness is prone to introduce further errors. If the first translation alters meaning

sets or fails to employ cultural specificities of the source text, then indirect translation will inevitably misinterpret, which James Hadley entitles 'concatenation effect hypotheses.' Landers and Hadley, through their insightful work, have provided a new way of conceptualising loss in indirect translation. A new way of conceptualising loss in indirect translation is offered by Hadley:

> This tendency toward the omission of the cultural other and the disregarding of this other is termed here 'the concatenation effect', which describes translators' stands influencing one another directly, such that translated texts come to resemble those produced in stands not ascribed to by any of the translator. (Hadley 2001: 184)

The omissions and deficits of the indirect translation will inevitably bring about deformation in subsequent translations. Since indirect translation is the reception of the source text through the lens of the target text, it may misinterpret and contort what it shows. The resulting second-hand translation is predominantly undesirable and deceptive, yet unavoidable in some circumstances. On the other hand, in his remarks on translation, the Mexican poet and critic Octavio Paz posits the hypothesis that:

> Ningún texto es enteramente original, porque el lenguaje mismo, en su esencia, es ya una traducción: primero, del mundo no verbal y, después, porque cada signo y cada frase es la traducción de otro signo y de otra frase. Pero ese razonamiento puede invertirse sin perder validez: todos los textos son originales porque cada traducción es distinta. Cada traducción es, hasta cierto punto, una invención y así constituye un texto único. (Paz 1992: 2)
>
> No text can be completely original because language itself, in its very essence, is already a translation – first from the nonverbal world, and then because each phase is a translation of another sign, another phrase. However, the inverse of this reasoning is also entirely valid. All texts are originals because each translation has its own distinctive character. Up to a point, each translation is a creation and thus constitutes a unique text. (Paz 1971: 154)

A similar argumentation is advanced by Borges:

> Presuponer que toda recombinación de elementos es obligatoriamente inferior a su original, es presuponer que el borrador 9 es obligatoriamente inferior al borrador H – ya que no puede haber sino borradores. El concepto de *texto definitivo* no corresponde sino a la religión o al cansancio. (Borges 1932: 1)

> To assume that every recombination of elements is necessarily inferior to its original form is to assume that draft nine is necessarily inferior to draft H – for there can be only drafts. The concept of the *definitive text* corresponds only to religion or exhaustion. (Borges 1999: 69)

For example, John Felstiner, who translated parts of Pablo Neruda's *Canto General* (1950) (*The Way to Macchu Picchu*; 1980), conceives translation as a creative task, a process through which the original transforms: 'A strangeness converts strangeness into likeness, and yet in doing so may bring home to us the strangeness of the original. We need translation in order to know what in us a poem is like or not like. Doing without translations, then, might confine us to a kind of solipsistic cultural prison' (Felstiner 1980: 5). While bearing in mind the problematics inherent in indirect translation, this chapter follows the Paz's and Borges's theorisation of translation that debunks the original-translation binary opposition.

In the case of the Turkish edition of the book, it is clear that the translator, Seçkin Selvi, possessed no knowledge of the Spanish language. As she stated in a private interview:

> İspanyolca dışında başka bir dilden çeviri García Márquez'in istemediği bir çeviridir esasen. Lakin benim çevirim García Márquez'in ajansına gönderildi ve kabul edildi. Çünkü Türkçe çevirisini yazarın çok beğendiği İngilizce çevirisinden yaptım. Eserin tek çevirmeni benim çünkü yayın hakları sadece Can yayın evlerine ait. (Selvi İstanbul: 2019)
>
> Indirect translation is essentially a translation that García Márquez does not desire. Nevertheless, my translation was sent to García Márquez's publishing house before it was published. It was accepted because I did the Turkish translation from Gregory Rabassa's English translation, which has been praised by the author. I am the only interpreter of the book because the broadcasting rights belong to Can publishing houses.

Selvi justifies her translation by drawing its explicit interconnections with award-winning translator Gregory Rabassa, widely celebrated for his translation of Julio Cortázar's *Rayuela* (1963; *Hopscotch* 1966), whose English translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was widely praised by García Márquez: 'I don't recognize myself in any other language than Spanish. But I

have read some of the books that were translated into English by Gregory Rabassa, and I have to admit that I have found some passages that I like better than in the Spanish' (García Márquez 2019: 262). However, as pointed out earlier, García Márquez would have preferred a direct translation from Spanish to Turkish. Despite her ignorance of the Spanish language, Selvi herself is a prolific and distinguished literary translator who has, to date, translated numerous texts in literature, philosophy and theatre, including noted translations of the following Latin American authors: Gabriel García Márquez (*Şer Saati* 1983; *La mala hora* 1962), (*Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* 1974; *Cien años de soledad* 1967), Isabel Allende (*Eva Luna* 1991; *Eva Luna* 1987), and Carlos Fuentes (*Artemio Cruz'un Ölümü* 1981; *The Death of Artemio Cruz* 1962). Considering Selvi's impressive productivity in manifold languages, notably Spanish, it is clear that Selvi valorises the phenomenon of indirect translation. Additionally, Mario Vargas Llosa (*Şehir ve Köpekler* 1971*; La ciudad y los perros* 1963), (*Yeşil Ev* 1972; *La casa verde* 1966), Julio Cortázar (*Seksek* 1986; *Rayuela* 1963), and Carlos Fuentes (*Artemio Cruz'un Ölümü* 1976*; La muerte de Artemio Cruz* 1962), were translated indirectly.

1.5 Indirect Translation of *Cien años de soledad* into Turkish

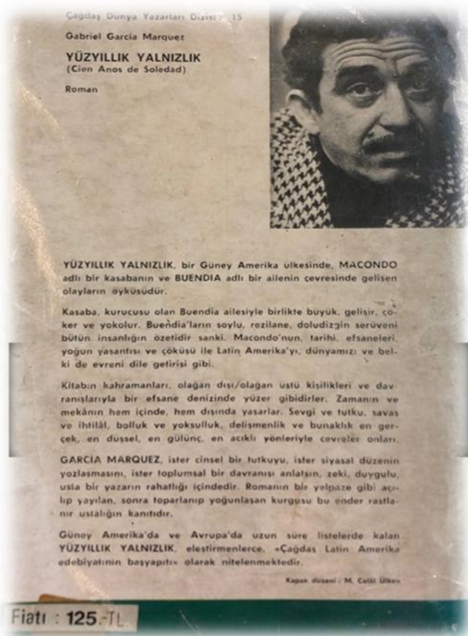
As I have mentioned earlier, the paratextual insertion of the genealogy chart was one of the obvious direct interventions of the translated text of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. The paratextual alteration of the English edition of the novel subsequently allowed for its insertion into the Turkish translation. Other paratextual elements in the translation worth paying attention to are the dust jacket and the book's opening pages. For instance, the first *Sander Publishing* edition of *One*

Hundred Years of Solitude, published in 1974, has a dust jacket that fails to mention the translator of the source text, Gregory Rabassa, upon whom Selvi based her Turkish translation. Still, the first page of the book includes the name of the Publishing House with a notice, 'Cağdaş Dünya Yazarlar Dizisi: 15' ('Series of Contemporary World Writers: 15'), which is another paratextual addition to the target text. While the English translation and the Spanish original comprise a brief biography of the author, Gabriel García Márquez, on their initial page, the Turkish version does not feature any such blurb of the writer. Nevertheless, at the top of the page of the Turkish translation of the text, both the original and the Turkish title of the book appear. One marked tendency can be detected here. The name of Seçkin Selvi does not appear on the dust jacket; it is just the Spanish and Turkish title of the book, and, of course, the author's name is included. Considering Venuti's study of the same title, the translator's invisibility on the book's cover is hard to ignore. In his book, titled *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (2008), Venuti illustrates the notion of translation and the role of the translator as:

> What is so remarkable here is that the effect of transparency conceals the numerous conditions under which the translation is made, starting with the translator's crucial intervention. The more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator, and, presumably, the more visible the writer or meaning of the foreign text. (Venuti 2008: 1)

Only the author's visibility on the cover of the source text's translational representation brings forth the translator's concealing, which is usually the case in most translations. Lawrence argues that the translation's' transparency' implies the translator's invisibility. The invisibility of Selvi to the reader as a translator, therefore, highlights the visibility of the author.

Moreover, the title page of the Turkish edition is analogous to the source text. Hence, as to the target text, the author's name appears at the top of the book, and below it is the book's title, the name of the translator, and the publishing company. Another minor alteration in the Turkish translation is the addition of the name of the genre *Roman* (*Novel*) both on the cover and in the middle of the title page, which is again a paratextual constituent as Genette describes 'A paratextual element can communicate a piece of sheer information - the name of the author, for example, or the date of publication. It can make known an intention or an interpretation by the author and/or the publisher: this is the chief function of most prefaces, and also of the genre indications on some covers or title pages' (Genette 1992: 11-10). This additional information, which is not in the original and English editions of the novel, is aimed at identifying the book's genre, which calls attention to the marketization of the novel. The second page of all three novel editions includes Publishing House details and copyright information; next to it, the dedication is included in the original. There is an extra page before the start of the novel that consists of the graph of the Buendía genealogy, which, as mentioned earlier, appears in the Rabassa translation and Selvi's translation but not in the original. The Spanish accent marks in Buendía, Márquez and Úrsula are missing in the entire of the earliest Turkish edition of the book. Whereas the tilde in José solely appears, Buendía, Márquez and Úrsula are miswritten as Buendia, Marquez and Ursula. Rather than a translation mistake, this might be a printing failure.


Çağdaş Dünya Yazarları Dizisi : 15

Gabriel Garcia Marquez

YÜZYILLIK YALNIZLIK
(Cien Anos de Soledad)

Roman

YÜZYILLIK YALNIZLIK, bir Güney Amerika ülkesinde, **MACONDO** adlı bir kasabanın ve **BUENDIA** adlı bir ailenin çevresinde gelişen olayların öyküsüdür.

Kasaba, kurucusu olan Buendia ailesiyle birlikte büyük, gelişir, çöker ve yokolur. Buendia'ların soylu, rezilane, doludizgin serüveni bütün insanlığın özetidir sanki. Macondo'nun, tarihi, efsaneleri, yoğun yaşantısı ve çöküşü ile Latin Amerika'yı, dünyamızı ve belki de evreni dile getirişi gibi.

Kitabın kahramanları, olağan dışı/olağan üstü kişilikleri ve davranışlarıyla bir efsane denizinde yüzer gibidirler. Zamanın ve mekânın hem içinde, hem dışında yaşarlar. Sevgi ve tutku, savaş ve ihtilâl, bolluk ve yoksulluk, delişmenlik ve bunaklık en gerçek, en düşsel, en gülünç, en acıklı yönleriyle çevreler onları.

GARCIA MARQUEZ, ister cinsel bir tutkuyu, ister siyasal düzenin yozlaşmasını, ister toplumsal bir davranışı anlatsın, zeki, duygulu, usta bir yazarın rahatlığı içindedir. Romanın bir yelpaze gibi açılıp yayılan, sonra toparlanıp yoğunlaşan kurgusu bu ender rastlanır ustalığın kanıtıdır.

Güney Amerika'da ve Avrupa'da uzun süre listelerde kalan **YÜZYILLIK YALNIZLIK**, eleştirmenlerce, «Çağdaş Latin Amerika edebiyatının başyapıtı» olarak nitelenmektedir.

Kapak düzeni : M. Celâl Ülken

Fiatı : 125.-TL

The back cover of the book's first Turkish translation is also worth noting (*Figure 1.9*). On the left top of the back cover, the exact details as on the front cover appear, but with a photograph of the author. A book summary is designated at the centre of the back cover. The last paragraph of the notes on the back cover seems to have a commercial purpose, which mentions a universal comment by critics: ‘Güney Amerika'da ve Avrupa'da uzun süre listelerde kalan *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*, eleştirmenlerce, ‘Çağdaş Latin Amerika edebiyatının başyapıtı’ olarak nitelenmektedir.’ (García Márquez 1974: back cover) (*'One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which has been on the shelves for a long time in South America and Europe, is described by critics as 'the masterpiece of contemporary Latin American Literature'). This point can be illustrated by Gerard Genette's notion of 'metatext'. Genette defines 'metatext' in his book, *The Architext:'Under transtexuality* ‘I also include – using the obligatory term metatextuality, modelled on language/metalanguage – the transtextual relationship that links a commentary to the text it comments on. All literary critics, for centuries, have been producing metatext without knowing it' (Genette 1992: 82). Therefore, this commentary aims to call for particular attention to the quality of the work. Ultimately, as different from the target and source text, the translational representation mentions the cover's designer. Additionally, the comment functions as a marketing strategy building on García Márquez's recent canonization as the celebrated writer of the so-called 'Boom' of Latin American literature. According to Stephen Hart, 'the Boom novel threw a new generation of Latin American writers into the international limelight in an unprecedented way' (Hart 1999: 126). Although Hart remarks that the Boom had its detractors, including the Guatemalan writer Miguel Ángel Asturias, who 'accused the Boom novels of being ‘meros productos de la publicidad (126). But Hart himself is less scathing, arguing that the Boom 'brought Latin American literature from the backwaters to the centre-stage of the literary world' (126). In the case of the Turkish translation, the Boom functions as a marketing

phenomenon, and the Turkish publishing house here uses it to consecrate García Márquez in the Turkish literary scene. The prominent photograph of the author inserted in the dust jacket further accentuates this aim.

Interestingly, in 1974, the year the translation was published, an article appeared in the cultural magazine *Milliyet Sanat* entitled, 'Latin Amerika İnsanına Kendi Yaratıcılığı Konusunda Güven Sağlayan *Modernismo* akımından Neruda'ya' (Tamer 1974: 15) ('From *Modernismo* movement to Neruda, which provides confidence to Latin American people for their own creativity') written by the critic Ülkü Tamer. (‘Tamer is particularly interested in Latin American poetry movements, spanning from the Gauchesco to Modernismo, Sencillimo, Mundonovismo, Creacionismo, Ultraísmo and Realismo Mágico, showing his keen interest in avant-gardism and the rise of the nueva novela’). A few years later, 1981, Güney Dal has written another article on the 'Boom' of Latin American Literature’. In this article, Dal delves into the roots of the Boom explosion in an attempt to find precursors, who spearheaded the linguistic renovation of the Latin American novel, identifying prominent writers such as Rubén Darío, José Martí, and Gabriel García Márquez: ‘Peki nasıl olmuştur da 10-12 yıl içeresinde bir Latin Amerika edebiyatı ‘patlama’sı onca büyük okuyucu kitlesi tarafından kabul görebilmişti? Öyle ki, 1960 ile 1970 arasındaki kısa dönemde bu edebiyatın batı dillerine birbiri ardınca çevrilivermişti’ (Dal 1981: 46). (‘Then, how has a Latin American literary boom been accepted by so many readers in a period of between 10-12 years? Latin American literature has been so much appreciated that in the short period between 1960 and 1970, this literature was in succession translated into Western languages’). This shows that the critic was aware that the Boom emerged as a marketing phenomenon and that before this, Turkish readers were unaware of Latin American literature. It also testifies to a growing interest in Latin American literature in the Turkish literary scene. Just

like in the target and source text, the Turkish translation of the novel starts without any chapter title. To compare and contrast three different versions of *Cien años de soledad*, Spanish, English and Turkish, would further highlight the specificities of the three texts.

The novel famously starts with Aureliano Buendía's flashback that suggests a circular notion of time, rather than linear time: 'Muchos años después, frente al pelotón de fusilamiento, el coronel Aureliano Buendía había de recordar aquella tarde remota en que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo' (García Márquez 1967: 9). Rabassa translates this opening sentence as follows: 'Many Years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice' (García Márquez 1972: 1). The opening line of the novel plays a crucial role in the development of the narrative, particularly Rabassa's decision to translate the verb *conocer* as *discover*. Rabassa claims, 'García Márquez has used the Spanish word here with all its connotations. But to know ice just won't do in English' (Rabassa 2005: 98). Rabassa reveals the variant possibilities that the word *conocer* includes. It means to know, *to be acquainted with*, and *to recognize*. Rabbasa chooses *to discover* because it conveys the idea of Aureliano Buendía's experience of ice. By the same token, Selvi prefers the word *keşfetmek* (*discover*) over *tanımak* (*to meet*) or *bilmek* (*to know*). In this context, Aureliano Buendía gets to know ice for the first time; therefore, to discover gives the sense of it. Rabassa repeatedly draws attention to his translation choices and how he translated keywords such as *habia de*, *recordar*, aquella, and *conocer*:

> *Había de* could have been *would* (How much wood can a woodchuck?), but I think *was to* has a better feeling to it. I choose *remember* over *recall* because I feel that it conveys a deeper memory. *Remote* might have aroused thoughts of such inappropriate things as remote control and robots. Also, I liked *distant* when used with me. (Rabassa 2005: 97)

In his memoir, Rabassa discusses the challenges he encountered when translating the novel's most striking opening sentence. As Michael Wood observes, the difficulty resides in the language, particularly how it condenses past, present, and future: 'The language, without breaking its stride or doing anything out of the ordinary, quietly confesses this odd transaction. For a moment we want to know who is speaking, who has this knowledge and would want to tip his hand in this way, but then we forget our question, because the effect is so slight, and the story calls' (Wood 1990: 18). For example, the past tense *había de* (*was to*) has a similar meaning as the Turkish verb *hatırlayacaktı*. The intricate application of *había* de is a memory in the past of what could become the future. In the opinion of İlhan Selçuk, the stunning opening sentence of the novel is the signature of García Márquez:

> García Márquez çağımızın en büyük romancılarından biridir. En ünlü iki romanında, *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* ve *Kırmızı Pazartesi*, eş yapıda iki tümceyle başlaması, kişiliğine ilişkin anahtarı belki bize verebilir. Geçmişi ve geleceği bir anda iç içe geçirip bütünleştirmek, edebiyattan başka hiçbir sanatın dilinde bu denli gerçekleşmez. (Selçuk 1987: 1)
>
> García Márquez is one of the greatest novelists of our time. The fact that two of his most famous novels, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Chronicle of Death Foretold*, begin with identical sentences may give us some hints about his personality. Integrating the past and the future in a moment in the present does not take place in the language of any art other than literature.

The language is highly potent, taut and dense because the narrator in the initial sentence of the novel is a child in the past and a future old man, which conveys the meaning ‘temporal variants on the key phrase reinforce the porous effect in the narrative – as if time had only shaky partitions as if moments could only trickle into other moments’ (Wood 1990: 42). The other puzzling phrase in the first sentence of the novel is *pelotón de fusilamiento*, which means *firing squad* or *firing party*. Rather than choosing the British translation *firing party*, Rabassa prefers the American translation *firing squad*, about which Allison E. Fagan claims that ‘by choosing the more familiar term,

Rabassa removes the possibility for confusion and readers never sense the options available. By placing the comfort of the audience ahead of his sense of the term's best correlative, Rabassa shifts from following the text to anticipating the readership' (Fagan 2008: 50). Although the word *fusilamiento* may lead to some confusion for an English audience because of its two different connotations, it simply means *idam mangasi*, as Selvi uses in her translation, in Turkish.

Even though Selvi's translation is based on Rabassa's translation, her Turkish translation of the novel differs from the English translation. In that sense, the opening sentence of the novel in the Turkish language requires more attention, which starts as: 'Albay Aureliano Buendía, yıllar yıllar sonra, idam mangasıyla yüz yüze geldiğinde, buz denen şeyi babasıyla keşfe çıktığı o ırak ikindi vaktini hatırlayacaktı birden' (García Márquez 1974: 1). ('Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice') (García Márquez 1972: 1). The expression *había de*, that Rabassa indicates above, is translated as *was to* in English. In Turkish, however, it is translated as *hatırlayacaktı birden*. The conjugation in Turkish is attached to the verb, so *hatırlayacaktı* means *to remember*. In this sense, Selvi appears to have used the right connotation as Rabassa. Yet, *birden*, which stands for suddenly in English, is neither used in the source or target texts. This tendency exhibits Selvi's idiosyncratic translation choices that differentiate her version from Rabassa's. In this sense, Venuti affirms that:

> Reading a translation as a translation means not just processing its meaning but reflecting on its conditions – formal features like the dialects and registers, styles and discourses in which it is written, but also seemingly external factors like the cultural situation in which it is read but which had a decisive (even if unwitting) influence on the translator's choices. (Venuti 2008: 276)

In addition, the expression *muchos años después* is, first of all, striking here. This utterance connects two points in time, interlinking past and future. In order to transform the expression many

years later, Selvi uses *yıllar yıllar sonra*, instead of *çok zaman sonra*. Both *yıllar yıllar sonra* and *çok zaman sonra* have a similar meaning, but their resonances differ. That is to say, *çok zaman sonra* is employed more in colloquial Turkish, whereas *yıllar yıllar sonra* evokes a fairy-tale narration. In this context, Selvi reproduces a storytelling device in her use of *yıllar yıllar sonra*.

In the course of comparing the English and Turkish editions, another baffling sentence is with an allusion to the word *reales*. The quotation in Spanish original reads: 'Mediante el pago de cinco reales, la gente se asomaba al catalejo y veía a la gitana al alcance de su mano' (García Márquez 2003: 11). The word *reales* refers to *penny* in English and Rabassa reproduces the original Spanish word, *reales*, without any explanation, which reads: 'For the price of five reales, people could look into the telescope and see the gypsy woman an arm's length away' (García Márquez 1972: 3). This may display that Rabassa and the editors of the English translation presupposed more familiarity with the Spanish language on the part of target language readers or it may suggest that Rabassa would like to produce a flavour of the source language in the translated version since he states that 'by not translating names we can at least maintain a certain aura of the original tongue and its culture' (Rabassa 2005: 14). Nevertheless, Selvi translates the word *reales* into *çeyrek* (*quarter*), which feels more accessible to the receiving culture. Thus, the Turkish edition reads: 'Çeyreği bastıran gözünü teleskopa uydurup, çingene karısını bir arşın ötede görüyordu' (García Márquez 1974: 10). In relation to this, there are several somewhat problematic aspects in the translation of the characters' names. The first one, at the end of chapter 6, refers to the last name of Captain Roque Carnicero. Both in English and Turkish editions of the novel, the captain's last name, *Carnicero*, was not translated. Since its meaning is not transparent both in English and Turkish, Rabassa solved the problem by adding an explanation following the name: 'The leader of the squad, a specialist in summary executions, had a name that had much more about it than chance: Captain

Roque Carnicero, which meant butcher' (García Márquez 1972: 123). Since the word *Carnicero* is phonetically and graphemically not close to the Turkish, and since Selvi has no knowledge of the source language, she follows Rabassa’s strategy in this example: ‘Apar topar infazlarda üstüne olmayan komutanın adı da kendine yaraşıyordu: Yüzbaşı Roque Carnicero idi adi, kasap demeye geliyordu’ (García Márquez 1974: 127).

Although Selvi is consistent with Rabassa's translation of names, she makes different verbal choices when translating the sentence above. The sentence in English translation leads to an interpretation that Captain Roque had a name that is more than a mere chance. However, in the Turkish translation, there is no mention of the chance, but there is a straightforward description that emphasizes that the name of Captain Roque fits himself. Selvi interprets the sentence more explicitly, which becomes more intelligible to the receptors. While Selvi attempts to follow the translation provided by Rabassa, she cannot help changing it. In some cases, Selvi employs her stylistic preferences to remove any possibility of confusion regarding the receiving culture. For example, I would like to examine a line through the end of the 11th chapter. The quotation in the English translation reads: 'Looking at the sketch that Aureliano Triste drew on the table and that was a direct descendent of the plans with which José Arcadio Buendía had illustrated his project for solar warfare, Úrsula confirmed her impression that time was going in a circle' (García Márquez 1972: 226). As in many parts of the novel, Úrsula refers to the continuous repetition of the events in the Buendía family in the above quotation. The same quotation in Turkish reads: ‘Ursula, Aureliano Triste’nin masanın üzerine çizdiği plana bakarken, bunun bir zamanlar José Arcadio Buendia’nin güneşin doğduğu yöne savaş açtığı sıradaki planlarının yavrusu olduğunu düşündü ve tarihin tekerrürden ibaret olduğu inancı bir kat daha pekişti’ (García Márquez 1974: 229). To translate the statement that 'time was going in a circle', Selvi benefits from a very well-known

expression of a Turkish poet, Mehmet Akif Ersoy (1873-1936), who says 'Tarih tekerrürden ibarettir' ('History repeats itself'). The expression used by Selvi conveys the same meaning, but Selvi seasoned it with elements of Turkish socio-cultural and historical contexts. In other words, Selvi uses different conventions of statements that differ from Rabassa's expression but create a similar effect for readers in the Turkish language. In this light, the great Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges affirms that 'in English, you say, "Good morning," while in Spanish, we say, in the plural, "Buenos días"— "Good days". To translate Spanish literally might produce a certain outlandish strangeness or beauty. But, of course, it all depends on what you are trying to do' (Borges 1974: 104-105). Even a simple greeting changes from language to language because every language has a different layout, punctuation and paragraphing convention. Therefore, the translator's task is to handle challenging linguistic differences that enrich the reader's horizons and satisfy their interest.

At this point, it is worth illustrating another stylistic pattern of Selvi in the translation process. Significantly, while Rabassa referred to the *people in Macondo* as the *inhabitants of Macondo*, Selvi addressed them as *Macondolular*. (García Márquez 1974: 327). In the original language of the novel, the expression is *los habitantes de Macondo* (*the inhabitants of Macondo*), and Rabassa translated it as it is, but Selvi preferred to say *Macondolular* rather than translating it directly to Macondo *halki* (*the inhabitants of Macondo*). Denominating the population according to their city is a well-known approach in Turkish culture, such as *Londoners* (*people who live in London*) in English or *porteños* (*people who live in a port city/residents of Buenos Aires*) in Spanish. By the same token, Selvi, particularly in this example, interprets the sending culture innovatively by intermingling the Spanish appellation Macondo with the Turkish appendix, *-lar, -ler*.

Selvi occasionally translates the novel within the Turkish literary traditions. As an illustration, from the very beginning of Chapter 6, Selvi makes use of a Turkish statement, *hidemat-i vataniye* (García Márquez 1974: 111). Chapter 6 opens with Coronel Aureliano Buendía's national civil war efforts and the awards that he has been offered for his contributions. One of the awards that Coronel Aureliano Buendía refused is the lifetime pension: 'He declined the lifetime pension offered him after the war and until old age he made his living from the little gold fishes that he manufactured in his workshop in Macondo' (García Márquez 1972: 106). Selvi translated lifetime pension as *hidemat-i vataniye* in quotation marks instead of *ömür boyu emeklilik* (*lifetime pension*): 'Savaştan sonra kendisine omur boyu bağlanılmak istenen 'hidemat-i vataniye' ödeneğini kabul etmedi ve yaşlılık günlerinde bile ekmeğini Macondo'daki işliğinde yaptığı gümüş balıklarla kazandı' (García Márquez 1974: 111). *Hidemat-i vataniye* is a social welfare practice from the last period of the Ottoman Empire to the early period of the Republic. It is an additional pension that the Turkish state has enacted under the headings of both military and homeland to show gratitude to those who have been benefitted from the national struggle (War of Independence). Even though the mention fits the context of the original word, this statement is more complex than it may seem because *hidemat-i vataniye* is a particular term in Turkish legislation, and many people today may not know its definition. Seçkin Selvi's translation strategies in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* played a pivotal role in shaping Turkish readers' understanding and reception of García Márquez, not merely by rendering the novel intelligible, but by actively recontextualizing its narrative for Turkish cultural and literary sensibilities. Rather than adhering rigidly to literal equivalence or to the precedents set by Rabassa's English translation, Selvi's approach is characterized by subtle but significant acts of interpretation, localization, and cultural bridging.These interventions, while sometimes risking a loss of the

qualities of the original, are not mere domestications in Venuti's sense of erasing difference; rather, they represent a creative negotiation between foreignness and familiarity. As Venuti observes, 'the aim of translation is to bring back a cultural other as the recognizable, the familiar, even the same; and this aim always risks a wholesale domestication of the foreign text' (Venuti 2008: 27). Selvi's translation, however, exemplifies what might be termed a 'reciprocal domestication'—adapting the text for Turkish readers while opening avenues for identification and cultural dialogue, rather than assimilation. Henceforth, Selvi's translation choices made García Márquez's novel accessible, resonant, and meaningful for Turkish readers by strategically weaving Turkish idioms, cultural references, and linguistic forms into the fabric of the text. This not only facilitated the novel's wide acceptance and enduring popularity in Turkey but also enabled Turkish readers to experience the magical world of Macondo as both a mirror and an extension of their own cultural realities**.** In doing so, Selvi's translation helped position *One Hundred Years of Solitude* not as a foreign import, but as a living, dialogic presence within Turkish literary culture.

In addition to the names used in the book, there are epithets, such as *Remedios* and *la bella*. In the Spanish original, it reads: 'En realidad, Remedios, la bella, no era un ser de este mundo' (García Márquez 2003: 239). Remedios is a proper name, but *la bella* (*beautiful*) is an epithet. In English, Gregory Rabassa translates as: 'Actually, Remedios the Beauty was not a creature of this world' (García Márquez 1972: 202). In his translation strategy of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Rabassa tends to leave the characters' original names while translating characters' nicknames or epithets. Regarding this, Rabassa comments: 'In my own translations, I prefer keeping names in the original while sometimes translating nicknames if they carry some descriptive value and can be translated without doing too much mischief to the tone of the story' (Rabassa 2005: 14-15). Rabassa translated it since the word *beautiful* carries a descriptive point that will not disturb the

narrative's tone. Similarly, Selvi kept the original name, Remedios, in Spanish and translated the descriptive expression *la bella* into *güzel* (*beautiful*) in Turkish: 'Aslında Güzel Remedios, hiç de bu dünyanın insanı değildi' (García Márquez 1974: 206).

Regarding the names, nicknames and epithets in the novel, there is one significant discrepancy between the English and Turkish editions of the book. As pointed out earlier, Selvi is consistent with Rabassa's interpretation of names. Nonetheless, throughout the Turkish translation of the novel, an utterance is translated in a problematic way. Rather than translating the titles prefixing a person's name in Turkish, Selvi left their English honorifics. Mr Brown, Mr Herbert and Mr Jack Brown could have been translated in Turkish as Brown *Bey*, Herbert *Bey*, and Jack Brown *Bey* because it is initially written in Spanish as *el señor*. It appears to be one of the outcomes of indirect translation.

Speaking about the translation strategies, Rabassa shares his view on some particular words that he 'used the euphemism': 'A word that Gabo enjoys throwing about in a lot of his writing as an expletive but more often than not as a descriptive term is mierda, excrement. I have used the euphemism to keep the impact for later. I naturally used the rightful one-syllable English word when the Spanish term put in an appearance under varying circumstances' (Rabassa 2005: 102). To illustrate: ‘Al voltearlo con la puntera de la bota para alumbrarle la cara, el capitán se quedó perplejo. «Mierda», exclamó. Otros oficiales se acercaron’ (García Márquez 2003: 147). ('When he turned him over with the tip of his boot and put the light on his face, the captain was perplexed. 'Jesus Christ,' he exclaimed. Other officers came over' (García Márquez 1974: 121). Instead of using the original word *mierda* (*shit or filthy*), Rabassa comes up with an equivalent connotation. On the report of Rabassa, the reason is that: 'This is how I did it, causing great distress at The New Yorker. I was given to understand that any number of high-level editorial meetings were held to

decide what to do about the word, which had never appeared in the magazine before' (García Márquez 1974: 206). Following Rabassa's translation Selvi transforms the phrase *Jesus Christ* into *Oh my God*: 'Yüzbaşı, çizmesinin burnuyla cesedi sırtüstü çevirip yüzüne ışık tutunca şaşkınlığı daha da arttı. «Aman yarabbi! » diye hakırdı. Öteki subaylar yanına koşuştular' (García Márquez 1974: 126). To the extent that such translation of the novel is, in turn, an effect of the novel's reception, it is an effect of indirect translation.

The export of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* can be seen as a form of peritext and epitext. While literary prizes are often a significant factor in the selection of the work in translation, the novel was translated into Turkish in 1974, before the Nobel prize in 1982. In most cases, the novel's reception was positive in Turkey. One of the earliest reviews of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in Turkey was written by Atilla Özkırımlı. Entitled 'Kitap… Kitap…' ('Books… Books…'), and published in the newspaper *Cumhuriyet*, the article announced the publication of the novel, as well as providing an introductory biographical sketch of García Márquez (Özkırımlı 1976: 6). Another relevant example of García Márquez's growing profile in Turkey is a July 1977 article published in the newspaper *Cumhuriyet* that disseminated García Márquez's political views on Angola, a country which he had just visited (1977: 10)[4]. On the one hand, the majority of critical pieces written on *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in Turkey examine the place of the novel in the subgenre of magical realism such as, 'Nobel Edebiyat Ödülü' (1982; 'Nobel Literary Prize') and 'Sivil Darbe' (1987; 'Civilian Coup') by İlhan Selçuk, 'Yeni Çıkan Kitaplar Üzerine' (1982; 'On New Books') by Seçkin Selvi, 'Bir Yanlışlık Olmasın' (1984; 'Not a Mistake') by Saliha Scheinhardt, and 'Latin Amerika Edebiyatının Taşradan Dünya Edebiyatına Atlayışı' (1981; 'The Rise of Latin American Literature from Country to the World Literature') by Güney Dal. In this light, Mariano Siskind

[4] Unidentified Author

affirms that 'García Márquez's saga of the Buendía family and their village, Macondo, has served a double function in world literary formations as the representative of magical realism and of Latin American literature at large' (Siskind 2014: 352). On the other hand, important critical articles on *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in Turkey deal with topics such as history, politics, myth, translation, and intertextuality. For example, while in his 1988 article, 'Gariban Gabito'dan García Márquez'e', Hüsen Portakal presents Colombian socio-political history by referring to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Murat Belge explores intertextuality in the novel in his article 'Márquez ve Romanda Yenilik' (1981; 'Márquez and Reform in Novel'). Additionally, some critics have been paying attention to the comparative analysis of García Márquez's works to some Turkish authors' novels, particularly Yaşar Kemal (1923-2015), Latife Tekin (1957-), and Hasan Ali Toptaş (1958 -). In their introduction to the book *Perspectives on Literature and Translation Creation, Circulation, Reception*, Brian Nelson and Brigid Maher address this subject as 'global literary flow' by stating:

> Critics, both in the academy and in the media (print and electronic), are often in the front line when a new text or writer enters a literary landscape through translation, and the study of the role they play in foreshadowing ways of reading and interpreting a text is important to our understanding of global literary flows. The expansion of knowledge brought about the translation is beneficial not only to the receiving culture but also to the culture that produced the original text. (Nelson and Maher 2013: 8)

Reception aesthetics is mainly rendered in the works of Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser. They consider the reader as an inseparable part of the literary composition. While H. R. Jauss states that 'in the triangle of the author, work, and public the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history. The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees' (Jauss 1982: 43). Iser Wolfgang affirms 'the repertoires of the text as a sender, and the reader as the recipient will also overlap. The

common elements are an essential precondition for the 'circulation' (Iser 1978: 56-57). Both Jauss and Iser place a high priority on the reader's contribution to a work of art. On the account of Jauss, target recipients play a pivotal role in the aesthetic value of the composition. Along the same line, Iser believes that the reader fills a range of gaps and blanks through the reading process. One of the key reasons the novel resonates in Turkey is the cultural and political affinity between Latin American countries and Turkey. In this sense, in a Turkish journal, *Sanat Olay*, Güney Dal declares that:

> Ekonomik yönden 'az gelişmişlik' sürecinde bulunan Latin Amerika ülkeleriyle ülkemiz arasındaki ekonomik 'benzeşim', yalnız alanımızdaki kalın çizgili benzeşimleri de birlikte getirmektedir. Örneğin Güney Amerikalı romancıların, romanlarındaki kişilerin iç dünyalarını yansıtmak amacıyla kullandıkları 'büyüler', 'ruhlar' gibi doğa ötesine uzanan perspektifin öğeleri 'cinler', 'yatırlar', 'adak törenleri' yoluyla bizim edebiyatımızda da görülür. Ancak onlar, herhalde roman teknik ve kuramlarıyla uğraşmaya bizlerden daha önce başlamış olduklarından, bu öğeleri yapıtlarında çok daha bilinçle ve özgün biçimde kullanmışlardır. (Dal 1981: 50)
>
> The economic affinity between the Latin American countries, which are in the process of underdevelopment in terms of economy, brings only the bold-like closeness in our field together. For example, the elements of the perspective that goes beyond the nature such as spells, spirits used by Latin American novelists to reflect the inner worlds of the people in their novels are seen in our literature through jinn, entombed saint, votive ceremonies. However, since they probably started to deal with novel techniques and theories before us, they used these elements in their much more consciously and in their original form.

There is a correlation not only in the economic context but also in the cultural ambience because in Turkish literary works such as Latife Tekin's *Sevgili Arsız Ölüm* (2001; *Dear Shameless Death*) and *Berci Kristin Çöp Masalları* (1984; *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*), there are healers, braggers, wizards and fortune-tellers. Since these straightforward descriptions of the extraordinary are pretty natural to the Turkish reader, *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*, in a magical realism sense, is familiar to the Turkish reader.

Magical realism was not as well-known in Turkey as in Latin America. When we consider the movement of magical realism in Turkish Literature, we can see writers who do not coincide with magical realism, but most of the features of this movement are in their works. Magical realism principles appeared earlier in Anatolian oral traditions of laments, ballads, epics and folk tales such as *Hikâyet-i Asuman ile Zeycan*, *Hikâyet-i Aşık Garip*, *Bezirgân Kızı* and *Dede Korkut Oğuznameleri*. Yaşar Kemal, who has listened to folk tales and read folk epics since childhood, is one of the earliest authors to use magical realistic motifs in his novels. 'Yaşar Kemal, anlatırken düşle gerçek arasında mekik dokur. Ne zaman şimdi ne zaman gelecek bir türlü anlaşılmaz ama bu anlaşılmazlık okuyanda rahatsızlık yaratmaz. Büyülü olan efsunlu olan onun kaleminin gücüdür' (Önder 2013: 20). ('While telling his stories, Yaşar Kemal shuttles between the real and the dream. When is now and when is the future will not be understood straightforwardly, but this incomprehensibility does not discomfort the reader. Enchantment is the power of his pen'). Translation provides new insights into the source text and enriches the target culture. The interaction between two cultures and languages contributes renewed significance to world literature. In 2015 *Moment* journal, Özlem Atar draws a comparison between García Márquez and Kemal, arguing 'Kemal ve García Márquez, dilleri bakımından edebiyat tahtasında dama tasları gibidirler. Kemal, olağanı olağanüstü destansı bir dille anlatırken, Márquez, gerçek olması olanaksız hadiseleri usta bir yalancının sakinliği ile yazıya döker' (Atar 2015: 379). ('Kemal and Márquez are like checkers on the literary board regarding their language. While Kemal describes the extraordinary in an epic language, Márquez transcribes the improbable events with the calmness of a master liar'). In the article, Atar discusses García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* and Kemal's *Ortadirek* (1960; *The Wind from the Plain*). Atar compares Kemal's unique poetic

style of criticizing capitalism in Turkey to García Márquez's fabulous and carnivalesque approach to Colombian conflicts such as the banana massacre.

Latife Tekin is, once again, another Turkish author who has been compared to García Márquez. A number of articles have been written on García Márquez and Latife Tekin; (Tanrıtanır and Çalışkan 2017: 302-312), (Balık 2009: 69-83), (Balık 2011: 26-33), etc. In some sources, not only the similarities of the two authors but also the so-called Tekin's 'imitation' of García Márquez was mentioned: 'Romanı okumadan önce söylentiler kulağıma geldi; Latife Tekin, García Márquez'in *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* romanına öykünmüş diye' (Nesin 2019:354). ('Before I read the novel, rumours came to my ear; Latife Tekin imitated García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*'). Regarding to these denunciations, in an interview, Latife Tekin declares that: 'evet, *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* heyecanla okuduğum bir kitap oldu. Ama ben daha ziyade bizim edebiyatımızdan, bir birikimden daha çok yararlandım. Benzerlikler vardı, ama bence ülkelerin benzerliği, anlatılan hikâyenin benzerliği gibi benzerlikler. Dil ve anlatım açısından fazla bir benzerlik yok. Fantezi var ikisinde de diye benzetildim' (Tekin 1984: 5). ('Yes, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was a book I read with enthusiasm. But I rather benefited from our literature and accumulation. There were similarities, but I think the similarities of the countries, similarities of the story told. There is not much similarity in terms of language and expression. Fantasy exists in both of them'). Tekin admits the affinities between her novels and García Márquez's compositions, but she refuses to admit mere imitation by arguing that these correspondences are mostly the result of the cultural closeness of Latin American countries and Turkey. Supporting Tekin's affirmation, Saliha Scheinhardt maintains 'dikkatli bir gözlem, Tekin'in, García Márquez'in birçok motifinden başarıyla esinlenmediğini de ortaya koyacaktır. Macondo ve Karacefenk birbirine ne kadar uzaksa, Huvat'la o dev kişilik José Arcadio Beundía ve Atiye'yle Ursula Iguaran da o kadar uzaktırlar'

(Scheinhardt 1984: 11). ('A careful observation will also reveal that Tekin was not successfully inspired by many of García Márquez's motifs. The further away Macondo and Karacefenk are, the more distant Huvat and José Arcadio Buendía and Atiye and Úrsula Iguarán are').

Even though Scheinhart refuses affinities between Tekin and García Márquez, I believe that there are, certainly, similarities because both works, *Dear Shameless Death* and *One Hundred Years of Solitude* present the plot with the help of folkloric motifs which are magical and extraordinary. Nevertheless, since both authors are from two different countries, the folkloric elements they use differed. In contrast to Tekin's declaration, Hasan Ali Toptaş, a celebrated Turkish author, admits the influence of García Márquez: 'That is, when I read García Márquez, I read him as if I were reading a story in our country, a story that took place here. It has had an influence on me' (Toptaş 2016: 57). Along the same lines, Mariano Siskind notes that magical realism 'produced the condition of possibility for the postcolonial translations and appropriations of magical realism as a global genre whose main feature is the inscriptions of modernizing aesthetic agency within cultural-political horizons' (Siskind 2014: 351). Magical realism represents cultural encounters at the centre of postcolonial literature through the freedom it gives in returning to folk tales, fairy tales, folk songs, legends, occult and other traditional beliefs.

Speaking about the promotion and the reception of the novel in Turkey, it is noteworthy to point out that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is one of the novels that attracted the Turkish President of the time, Mustafa Bülent Ecevit (in office 1974,

Figure 2.1
Cumhuriyet. 1982. İstanbul: Source: Cumhuriyet Arşivi.

1977, 1978-79, 1999-2002). Bülent Ecevit was among the first politicians with whom García Márquez had his first meal in Sweden after winning the Nobel Prize. This meeting has been mentioned in the Turkish press. For example, *Cumhuriyet* newspaper declares: 'Bülent Ecevit, Başbakan Olof Palme'nin davetlisi olarak gittiği İsveç'te, 1982 Nobel Edebiyat Ödülü'nü kazanan Kolombiyalı yazar García Márquez onuruna verilen yemeğe katıldı' (Cumhuriyet 1982: 1). ('Bülent Ecevit attended the dinner in honour of Colombian writer García Márquez, who won the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature, in Sweden, where he was invited by Prime Minister Olof Palme'). Following that, Abdullah Gürgün reports Ecevit's and García Márquez's private meeting: 'Önceki gün İsveç Kralı Karl Gustav'dan Nobel ödülünü alan Kolombiyalı yazar dün öğleden sonra Ecevit'i ziyaret etti. García Márquez ve Ecevit, otel odasında uzun süre sanat ve yazın üzerine sohbet ettiler' (Gürgün 1982: 1). ('The Colombian writer, who received the Nobel Prize from the Swedish King Karl Gustav, visited Ecevit yesterday afternoon. García Márquez and Ecevit chatted in the hotel for a long time about art and literature') (*Figure 2.1*). Bülent Ecevit was a prime minister in Turkey and a Turkish poet, journalist and writer. Ecevit also knew how to read and write in the Sanskrit language, which is the language of the prophecies of the character Melquíades in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. It is unknown whether Ecevit read the book in English or Turkish, but as I have mentioned above, Ecevit appreciated García Márquez and the novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter argues the prominence of Gabriel García Márquez and his celebrated novel, *Cien años de soledad* in the Turkish cultural context. Throughout the chapter, I have explored the novel's translation, circulation and reception in Turkish literature, history, and culture. In this sense, I have

shown that Gabriel García Márquez and *Cien años de soledad* were incorporated as a renewing and invigorating force in the Turkish literary scene. In the first place, I analysed the covers of the various editions of the novel. After comparing the original cover with the earliest Turkish cover of the book, I have drawn some conclusions by applying Gerard Genette's theory of 'paratexts' and Lawrence Venuti's theory of the 'translator's invisibility'. An interesting aspect has been shown in the contrast between the novel's first and second Turkish covers. I have explored that while the earliest Turkish cover is more aesthetic and coherent with the novel's content, the second cover is more market-driven and seeks to avoid trouble with the censors.

In the second place, I scrutinised the Spanish, English, and Turkish translation of *Cien años de soledad*. Even though the novel is translated into Turkish from Rabassa's English translation, the Turkish translation played a crucial role in exporting the book to a Turkish audience. Along the same lines, the target language norms are appropriate for the cultural success of the novel in Turkey. Gregory Rabassa's English translation of the book had a direct influence on the Turkish translation of the book, but, in several examples, I disclosed that Seçkin Selvi translated the novel by paying attention to the translational norms valid in the sociocultural surrounding of the target community so that there is coherence in itself and with their reception situation. Although the translation of Latin American literature in 1960s Turkey was not rapid, from the 1970s onwards, there was a greater presence of Latin American literature in Turkey through the accessibility of newly emerging Latin American works in translation. The role of the translators was key to the internalisation process, but the readers were the active, creative recipients. Since 1974, the novel has been present in the Turkish literary canon, which indicates the success of the text in Turkey.

All in all, analysing the novel from three broad perspectives—translation, reception, and circulation—I concluded that the translation of *Cien años de soledad* into Turkish has given target

recipients access to new literature and provided new insights into the source text. The fruitful interaction between these two different dynamics provides the circulation and exchange between cultures and languages, directly contributing to the world literature phenomenon as defined by Damrosch.

CHAPTER 2: GHOSTS, DJINNS, AND THRESHOLDS: PHANTASMAGORIC INTERSECTIONS IN CÉSAR AIRA AND LATİFE TEKİN

2.1 Introduction

This chapter builds on the other chapter, the third one, by offering an extended comparative exploration of two additional works by Aira and Tekin: *Los fantasmas* (2009; *Ghosts*) and *Sevgili Arsız Ölüm* (2001; *Dear Shameless Death*). The chapter aims to further develop the rich contextual and textual commonalities between the two authors. As I will argue in the following chapter, Aira

and Tekin favoured a new/hybrid way of writing that is deeply rooted in surreal aesthetics, fairy tales, oral culture, folklore, and subtle social critiques. In line with the next chapter, I will demonstrate how Tekin and Aira filter reality through the interplay between the semiotic and the symbolic, the seen and the unseen, the known and the unknown. Writing from an intermediary space, both authors delve into the political upheavals of their societies. Tekin engages in a debate on socio-economic dynamics, such as Turkish rapid modernisation, internal and external migration, capitalism, and urbanisation. Aira, on the other hand, focuses on the historical past's influence on the modern present and socio-economic concerns, such as political violence and trauma, illegal immigration, class consciousness, and economic instability.

2.2 Shameless Ghosts and Djinns

As a socialist ecofeminist, Tekin, unsurprisingly, turned her analytical gaze towards the concerted impact of patriarchy and capitalism, which play havoc with the lives of people. In *Dear Shameless Death*, Tekin once again maps out the wretched conditions of people specifically vulnerable to predatory modernity and capitalism through the dramatic story of a Kurdish family in a small village in Anatolia. *Dear Shameless Death* is like a fairy-tale novel in which folkloric and legendary surreal elements make the time and place ambiguous, the event moves far from the cause-and-effect line, and the characters in the novel have extraordinary features. The surreal and magical units are so intertwined with the novel's tone that it turns off reality in the familiar, classic sense. However, the literary operation of Aira in *Ghosts* is so transcendent that the phantasm and real intertwine, and the essence and metaphysical drifts splayed over many pages and are hard to pin down. Aira's work, with its modified version of the traditional ghost motif, challenges the reader's perception of reality from the beginning and highlights traumatic voids. As Héctor Hoyos

states, 'Aira thus sets the stage for readers to estrange themselves from the familiar position of regarding a 'souvenir' as an indifferent object; but instead of offering answers, he creates a space for interrogation' (Hoyos 2012: 224). In a similar vein, in the preface of the *Dear Shameless Death* English translation, Saliha Paker affirms:

> Using a fantastic mode, Latife Tekin has not only simply textured an unusual, 'authentic' folkloric interpretation of a community's culture, which is both homogeneous and capable of being easily captured in realistic terms for a realistic narrative. By the very use of the fantastic, she has subverted the homogeneity of such an interpretation, making 'otherness' visible both within that culture and in a broader modern cultural framework in which it is located. (Paker 2001: 16)

Although both narratives are thematically disparate, they centre upon the vacillations between the familiar and unfamiliar, as per Todorov's theory of the fantastic (Todorov 1975), so the authenticity is filtered through the interconnections between the natural and the supernatural. In *Ghosts*, the story starts in a recognisable world and turns a twist with a mundane event that triggers the eccentric. In *Dear Shameless Death*, however, the extraordinary occurs in the first part of the narrative and takes a lyrical turn. Throughout this chapter, I will scrutinise how Aira and Tekin favoured a new hybrid narrative oriented towards fantastic literature, deviating from prosaic scenarios to underline their countries' socioeconomic and political issues.

Tekin made her literary debut with this semi-autobiographical novel, considered one of the foremost bleak examples of magical realism in contemporary Turkish fiction. Telescoping the marvellous with Anatolian oral culture, folklore, and shamanism, the novel also utilised culturally specific surreal elements such as superstitions, dreams, djinns, and phantoms. Set in the political and social upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s Turkey, the novel consists of two parts, with the fragment centring around the village life of Alacüvek and the second part around the urban life in Istanbul. Whilst rural life was full of traditions, supernatural occurrences, and surreal beings like djinns and ghosts, city life presents the country's socioeconomic, political and cultural facts, such

as rapid modernisation, industrialisation, and capitalism. Therefore, the novel sheds light on Turkey's expeditious reformation from a pre-capitalist socioeconomic milieu to pervasive capitalism. Tekin makes an aerial viewpoint of Turkey through the form of the novel, which oscillates between reality and fantasy and picturises situations that are considered absurd, hilarious, and superstitious as if they are in reality. Underneath all these epic and phantasmic narration, the bulky picture of binary oppositions, such as rural and urban, West and East, indigenous and foreign, modern and conventional, religious and secular, and poor and wealthy, *Dear Shameless Death* epitomises the chain of events in the 1960s-1970s Turkey through the Aktaş family. From the beginning, the comparability between *Dear Shameless Death* and *Ghosts* strikes as both authors preferred to give voice to the minorities in their countries. In the case of *Dear Shameless Death*, the story revolves around a Kurdish-Turkish family; in *Ghosts*, it is a Chilean family. Aira sets the novella in a luxury high-rise block of flats in Buenos Aires, which is still under construction and unbuilt. All the maniac, schizophrenic, and absurd incidents happen in this unbuilt apartment around a Chilean family. In a similar fashion to *Dear Shameless Death*, *Ghost* exhibits socio-political facts of the 1980s-1990s Argentine, such as political violence of dictatorship, neoliberal formulas, modernisation, and pre-and-post-capitalist environment. Aira writes extravagant and unbelievable scenarios and plays with perceived realities and meanings, which lead to mystery and confusion, generating a grey zone between the seen and unseen, the known and the unknown. Tekin and Aira benefit from the oral culture mingling with modern literary forms. Whilst Tekin employs an epic narrative form and inserts Anatolian surreal motifs like djinns, Aira utilises a storytelling mode of writing and includes renovated traditional characters such as mad scientists and ghosts. For example, in this novella, naked ghosts talk about the world we live in.

Ghosts, translated by Chris Andrews in 2009, revolves around the life of a Chilean security guard and his family in a luxury high-rise building in the Flores neighbourhood, Buenos Aires. At 139 pages, it is a slim novel with a light plot that encircles the daily activities and preparations of the Chilean family's New Year's Party. As typical of the Airean pattern, although the novella transpires over a single ultra-hot day, it is stocked with myriad questions, contradictions, gaps, and essences that exceed its stature. As I have affirmed, it is not feasible to entitle Aira's outputs to one genre but instead to the blending of genres. As an illustration, Will H. Corral declares, '*Ghosts*, published in Spanish in 1990, many provide the best evidence to consider the enigmatic César Aira an accomplished and prolific wizard of odd' (Corral 2009: 61). In the issue of the magazine *Babel* in 1990, Alan Pauls scrutinises the novella further and makes a comprehensive evaluation:

> The synoptic contradiction, that operation that seems to define the style of Aira's narrators more than any other, no longer sediments particles of common sense here; It is, on the contrary, a small paradoxical formation, a nucleus of nonsense, the wind of humour that suddenly begins to blow on the very surface of language. (Pauls 1990: 5)

Similar to *La villa*, the construction site in the *Ghosts* serves as an open, traversable, and porous frame that can take multiple contours. The opening paragraph of the narrative, for example, introduces a series of unique elements in the incipit. These elements deliver the text's distinctive tone and maximise the crux of interest that will be scattered throughout the novella:

> El 31 de diciembre a la mañana el matrimonio Pagalday visitó el piso, ya de su propiedad, en la obra de la calle José Bonifacio 2161, en compañía de Bartolo Sacristán Olmedo, el paisajista que habían contratado para que dispusiera las plantas en los dos amplios balcones del apartamento, frente y contrafrente. Subieron por las escaleras cubiertas de escombros hasta el nivel de la mitad de la estructura: el piso que habían adquirido era el tercero. El edificio estaba fraccionado en pisos enteros. Además de los Pagalday, había sólo seis propietarios más, todos los cuales se apersonaron esa mañana, la última del año, para verificar los progresos de la construcción. (Aira 2013: 7)
>
> On the morning of the 31st of December, the Pagaldays visited the apartment they already owned in the building under construction at 2161 Calle José Bonifacio,

> along with Bartolo Sacristán Olmedo, the landscape gardener they had hired to arrange plants on the two broad balconies, front and rear. They climbed the stairs littered with rubble to the middle level of the edifice: like the other apartments, the one they had acquired occupied a whole floor, the fourth. Apart from the Pagaldays there were only six owners, all of whom made an appearance on that last morning of the year to see how the work coming along. (Aira 2008:1)

The story promptly initiates with a point to the day of the 31st of December and the construction site, about which Lewis states, 'it begins, in the usual Aira's fashion, with a completely straightforward, if not mundane opening' (Lewis 2011: 132). The indication of the 31st of December evokes the end of a year, which is not specified, and the beginning of a new year. Reporting the day specifically but not the date creates ambiguity from the beginning. Similarly, *Dear Shameless Death* follows a timeline without mentioning a specific time and place. The derealisation effect installs the plot in a zone of ambiguity between day and date. Thus, reporting the day specifically but not the date creates a temporal suspension from the very beginning. The derealisation effect installs the plot in a zone of ambiguity between day and date, allowing the novella to float free of time and place. The paradoxical formations, Aira's signature, start at the very beginning of the novel and escalate throughout the text until the mystification reaches the zenith, about which Nathan Hogan notes:

> At the same time, these details also reflect the novella's sustained pre-occupation with thresholds – with the point at which a year passes into the next, or the moment when a construction site can rightly be called a building. Thresholds are legion in the book, and they're so intricately connected that it feels at times as if Aira is using fiction to graph some kind of complex mathematical function. (Hogan 2010: 117)

As Hogan states, in the earliest pages of the novella, Aira introduces one of the central dichotomies, built versus unbuilt, that will shape the entire narrative. The story, therefore, starts on the morning of 31st December and continues until midnight at the construction site. It revolves around the Chilean night watchman, Raúl Viñas, and his family, who live temporarily on the top floor of the

'unbuilt' apartment until the Pagaldays and the other six flat owners arrive. This temporary nature of their residence adds a sense of impermanence to the narrative. It reads as:

> El primer nivel subterráneo era el de las cocheras, comunicado con la acera por una rampa todavía desprovista de su pavimento especial antideslizante. El segundo, las bauleras o depósitos. Encima del sexto piso, la pileta de natación climatizada y el salón de juegos, con un amplio panorama de techos y calles. Y el departamento del portero, que, aunque estaba tan incompleto como el resto de la obra ya albergaba, desde hacía meses, a una familia, la del sereno, Raúl Viñas, un albañil chileno de toda confianza, aunque se había revelado un tremendo borracho. (Aria 2013: 8)
>
> The first basement level was to be used for garages, with ramps up to the street, which had not yet been covered with their special anti-slip surface. The second level was for box rooms and storage space. On top of the seventh floor, a heated swimming pool and a games room, with a panoramic view over rooftops and streets. And the caretaker's apartment, which was no more finished than the rest of the building but had been inhabited for some months by Raúl Viñas, the night watchman, and his family. Viñas was a reliable Chilean builder, although he had turned out to be a prodigious drinker. (Aira 2008:2)

From the fairy tale tone, the narrative shows a predominance of action through depiction or observation, which supports the story's rational mechanisms. The realistic representation of the setting, everyday life, daily minutiae, and familial relationships normalises the juxtaposition. Aira foregrounds precisely this unbuilt condo complex and superimposes the cracks and distortion. In a construction site scene, Aira explores the social and economic crisis of the community. In this modern story, sameness and otherness flesh out structural dichotomies. The poor and immigrated characters and wealthy apartment owners coexist on the map of the building portrayed.

Published in 1983 and translated into English in 2001 by Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne as *Dear Shameless Death*, it provides a panorama of modern-day Turkey with its failures from various segments of Turkish society. Tekin's semi-autobiographical novel once again delineates the harsh life conditions of rural people who are specifically vulnerable to predatory urbanisation and modernity via the story of a Kurdish family in a small village in Anatolia. The novel has been recognised as a milestone in Turkish literature, in particular, because of its structure more than the

plotline. Tekin not only employs magical realism, which was a new genre in the Turkish literary scene but also moves the marvellous to a different level by clothing it with Ottoman and Turkish narrative fashions such as folktales, myths, laments, riddles, ditties, religious elements and rites of faith. Paker asserts:

> This voice is intimately rooted in the family's common language and culture, and duly exploits the supernatural and fantastic devices that belong in the tradition of Turkish fairy tales, folk tales, popular epics in a manner similar to that of Márquez, Asturias and Rushdie, among others, but it can also adopt a mischievous, mocking distance to family perceptions and behaviour. (Paker 2001: 13)

Tekin opens a space to interrogate dominant discourses, traumatic events, and designed binaries in Turkey by interlacing marvellousness and verisimilitude and knotting them on the folkloric ground, since 'the marvellous real as a cultural condition prescribes a literary form, magical realism, capable of accounting for subaltern and subalternized socio-cultural realities' (Siskind 2014: 351). Just as Aira employs a fairy tale tone in *Ghosts*, Tekin adapts the storytelling tradition of oral culture:

> Huvat Aktaş'ın bir gündüz bir gece süren yolculuğu, bir öğlen vakti Alacüvek Köyü ağılının başında son buldu. Bu kez masmavi bir otobüsle çıkagelmişti köye. Otobüs yol boyunca epeyce toz yutmuştu ama yine de güneşin kızgın ışıkları altında ayna gibi parlıyordu. Köylüler, hayatlarında ilk kez gördükleri bu garip şey karşısında ilkin dehşetle irkildiler. Bu şaşkınlık anında dua okuyup sağa sola üfürenlerin, korkudan donuna kaçıranların yanı sıra, otobüsün sağını solunu elleme cesareti gösterenler de çıktı. (Tekin 2013: 7)

> Huvat Aktas travelled for a whole day and a night, ending his journey at noon by the sheepfold in the village of Alacüvek. This time he brought a bright blue bus with him. The bus had collected quite bit of dust along the way, but it still stood gleaming like a mirror in the fiery rays of the sun. At first, the villagers were horrified by this outlandish contraption of pure amazement, while some blew prayers to the right and left or panicked and almost wet their pants, a few risked touching the bus gingerly. (Tekin 2001: 19)

The narrative's plot is relatively simple, contrary to the disjointed drifts. The story takes place in precisely two spheres. The initial one is the village of Alacüvek, in the Anatolian part of Turkey.

The second is the sphere of the urban, a big city, supposedly Istanbul. The narrative revolves around the Aktaş family: Huvat, the father; Atiye, the mother; and their children, Nuğber, Halit, Seyit, Dirmit, and Mahmut. As the quotation above shows, the record opens with Huvat's presenting 'inventions' to the villagers. These 'inventions' are modern technologies that the villagers have never seen before, such as a bus, a radio, a stove, a television, a water pump, and so forth. The village is so pre-modern that even a bus is a discovery for them, which causes distress, blackouts, and fear that some 'wet their pants'. The blow and uneasiness of villagers proceed as Huvat brings more novelties. From the novel's start, Tekin delivers the complex web of sociocultural dynamics in Turkey via hyperbole and humour, as in the case of Aira and García Márquez. While Aira slips into the supernatural halfway through the narrative, Tekin favours the bizarre at the novel's outset. As in the case of *Ghosts*, *Dear Shameless Death* reflects the impacts of industrialisation, modernisation and capitalism through idiosyncrasies. The narrative mainly exhibits Turkey's political and social turmoil in the 1970s and 1980s, about which Katerina Dalacoura remarks:

> In the 1980s and 1990s, with authors such as Latife Tekin and Orhan Pamuk, Turkish literature began to experience a post-modern turn, which entailed a return to Ottoman/Islamic history, individualism, existentialism, and the city, away from socialism, patriarchy, and Anatolianism. Turkish postmodernism expressed opposition to early twentieth-century modernism and emphasized a plurality of perspectives: it did not, as is sometimes expressed, indicate a dismissal or failure of modernism, but rather introduced multiplicity to a rigid, universal, Eurocentric hierarchy of progress and development. (Dalacoura 2017: 2071)

Writing immediately after the 1980 military coup, Tekin witnessed the pre- and after-effects of the atrocities of traumatic state violence and socio-economic transition in Turkey. It is essential to indicate that Aira and Tekin experienced the historical occurrences of their countries as insiders but composed as outsiders, making the texts correspond. Turkey has undergone numerous radical transformations since establishing the Turkish Republic in 1923. The introduction of reforms

modified not only the politics of society but also all aspects of it, from the country's alphabet to its dress codes. Even though the reforms towards modernisation were quite drastic, which created distress, the political process was promising for the country's welfare. The following decades, the 1960s and the 1970s saw industrialisation start, leading to a capitalist system. In particular, the late 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s were the most tumultuous periods in Turkey, with four coups in 1955, 1960, 1971, and the last in 1980, catastrophic military coups interrupting civil rule, about which Leyla Neyzi declares:

> The coup of 12 September 1980 was a major watershed in Turkish history. Despite (or because) of the political repression, and under the impact of global trends, there was a turn to cultural and subjective identities. The emergence of private media opened up new channels of communication in the public sphere. Beginning in the 1980s, and continuing into the present, Turkish society turned to its recent past, furiously debating national history. History has acquired tremendous significance for the present (and future), as contemporary issues are discussed in relation to the past and the past in relation to the present. The country is increasingly divided into conflicting groups whose differences vis-à-vis contemporary issues are linked to different interpretations of the past. (Neyzi 2010: 446)

As Neyzi states, the 1980s was a turning point in the Turkish community, not only because of military interventions but also because of the liberal market economy. This economic shift had a significant impact on the socio-economic changes in Turkey during the 1980s, leading to a perpetual and distressing process of modernisation/Westernization. Although most of Turkey's population was rural, from the 1950s on, economically driven internal migration had started because of the substantial discrepancy between the East and the West. As the extent of the demographic migration escalated, unemployment and social discontent were climbing. The result was a shrink in agriculture and production vis-a-vis an upsurge in privatisation and foreign-source dependency. Regarding Turkey's urbanisation rates starting from the 1950s, Jenny B. White declares that 'the urban population soared. Twenty-five per cent of Turkey's population was urbanised in the 1950s, 32 per cent by 1960. Between 500,000 and 60,000 poor immigrants lived

in Ankara's squatter areas between 1940 and 1950' (White 2010: 430). *Dear Shameless Death* shuttles between two opposite poles of the country: the periphery and the centre, the West and the East, urban and rural, and so forth. The discrepancy in development between the city and the countryside is manifested throughout the narrative in the farthermost extremities. One twist is that the peasants in the Alacüvek village are petrified by essential technological devices rather than supernatural occurrences. The impression of urban is so outlying that when Huvat marries an urbanite woman, Atiye, the villagers are alarmed and consider her ill-omened:

> Zavallı kadın, günlerce orasını burasını elleyen, yüzündeki kırmızılığın boya olup olmadığını anlamak için yaşmaklarının ucunu tükürükleyip yüzüne çalan, saçını eteğini çekiştiren bir dolu kadın ve çocuğun arasında iğne ipliğe döndü. Ve sonunda bir gün 'Küt!' diye düşüp bayıldı. Böylece üç koyunun art arda şişip şişip ölmelerinin nedeni açığa çıktı. Çifte sarılı yumurtlayan tavuğun yumurtayı kesmesi, Huvat'in anasının tahtadan düşmesi, hepsinin başı bu cinli ve uğursuz kadındı. Önce boğup bir yana bırakmayı düşündüler. Ama cininden çekindiler. Aynı gün, yatağını yorganını toplayıp dışarı attılar. Yine aynı gün ne konuştular ne düşündülerse kadını ahıra kapattılar. (Tekin 2013: 8-9)

> Four days on end the poor woman was surrounded by a crowd of women and children, who never stopped pawing her. They rubbed her face with the edge of their yashmaks moistened with spit to see if the redness was real and they tugged at her hair and skirt. She was soon worn down to skin and bones. Finally she collapsed and fainted. Then they knew why three sheep had bloated up and died one after the other, why the hen who laid double-yolked eggs had stopped laying and why Huvat's mother had fallen off the wooden veranda. All were caused by the ill-omened woman who was possessed by a djinn. Their first thought was to strangle her and dump her body somewhere, but they were afraid of her djinn, so they threw out her mattress and bedding and, after a lot of talk, shut her up in the stable. (Tekin 2001:20)

Tekin hyperbolises the uncanniness of urbanisation in the periphery to the extent that the fairies, djinns and other supernatural beings seem more mundane than an urbanite woman. Whilst modernity is an out-mapped notion in the village, the occult is ordinary, which metaphorically captures the trauma of Turkish people in the face of rapid modernisation.

In tune with Tekin, Aira delineates two extreme poles of classes in Argentina, which recalls the historical context that led to the escalating gap between the two classes. On the one hand, the luxury apartment is temporarily inhabited by poor immigrants who live shabbily and precariously. While the wealthy owners meditate on slight niceties for their opulence and luxury, as exhibited in the following quote:

> El universo real se mide en milímetros, y es gigantesco. Donde hay niños, hay siempre una mediación en las dimensiones. Los decoradores eran artesanos de miniaturas. Además, esta gente pudiente y este negocio suculento tenían ambos por objeto la comodidad de los niños, sin los cuales sus padres habrían preferido vivir en hoteles. Horribles y semidesnudos, los albañiles iban y venían entre ellos. (Aria 2013: 10)
>
> The real universe is measured in millimetres, and it is gigantic. Where children are present, dimensions and this profitable business were operating for the benefit of the children; if not for them, the parents would have chosen to live in hotels. Horrible and half-naked, the builders came and went among them. (Aira 2008: 4)

The uttering of 'horrible', 'half-naked', and 'beasts', informed by humour and hyperbole, intensifies the conflict and tension and pushes the limits of perceived reality and authenticity. While magnifying the feeling of absurdity and playing on stereotypes via employing grotesque similes, Aira draws attention to the dilemmas in Argentina posed by the neoliberal capitalist system; as Niall H. Geraghty observes, 'Aira conveys the sense that literature condenses the past into the present where it becomes a living presence and the progenitor of historical sense' (Geraghty 2022: 13). The landscape depicted here metaphors the newly shaken environment in Argentina following dictatorship, political violence, economic crisis, and neoliberal reforms, as stated by Carlos Riobó:

> By 2000 not only have had the country been experiencing a relatively prolonged democratic period, thus affording it the freedom to take a good, hard look at itself, but it was also poised to celebrate the bicentennial of its founding in 2010. As the new millennium began, however, Argentina was also reeling from economic convulsions that produced a deep recession, squatting on a massive scale, and forceful periodic waves of protest and civil unrest. (Riobó 2019: 93)

Argentina underwent some traumatic events, especially in the 1990s. The novel gestures toward fragmentation, fallibility, and hyperbole to symptomatic certain black holes of the haunting past. As in the example of the Pagaldays and Viñas families, the vast gap between social classes reflects Argentina's chain of drawbacks that led to social degradation. Following the military dictatorship, the return of democracy and neo-liberal reforms was a sign of economic, social, and political progress. Nevertheless, unemployment rates spiked by the end of 2001, shantytowns proliferated, and the Argentine economy collapsed. Aira does not deliver historical facts but provides specific signifiers and scents of references to the national context, about which Nicolas Licata remarks:

> César Aira's narratives written between 1987 and 1995, under the presidency of Raúl Alfonsín and Carlos Menem (Presidents of the Argentine Nation from 1983 to 1989 and from 1989 to 1999 respectively), contain tangential references to Argentinian society and politics, which show that the author does not completely ignore reality, but he does not treat it as a priority, or even a serious issue. (Licata 2021: 1521)

There is constant innuendo to previous stages of society, which have been radically compartmentalized by applying new economic policy, giving rise to the mounting extent of social impoverishment. The novella reflects the changing face of Buenos Aires, a promising economic reform created from desperation that results in disillusionment and leads to uncanny urban coexistence among *los porteños*. As an illustration, the narrator sarcastically and deliberately mentions children of Pagaldays and Viñas, manifesting how some marginalised groups live with the dim light of a lamp in an unconstructed building whilst privileged ones' meticulousness on extravagance and gratification:

> Estaba también la cuestión de caerse, de un piso cualquiera, hasta abajo, ya que el edificio seguía siendo un esqueleto de concreto, con algunos tabiques en pie, no todos ni mucho menos. Pero de eso la madre y la hija no hablaron, ni hicieron alusión siquiera en sus reflexiones personales. Una vez habían dicho que tanto podía caerse un adulto como un chico, no había ninguna diferencia por cuanto la atracción del planeta se ejerce lo mismo sobre esto o aquello; es como preguntarse qué pesa más, si un kilo de plomo o un kilo de plumas. En ese sentido, les producía

> una vaga y profunda repugnancia el cuidado que ponían los dueños de los pisos, cuando hacían visitas como la de esta mañana, en que sus hijos no se acercaran a los bordes. Si pensaban así, ¿Por qué no se iban a vivir a casas a ras del suelo? 'Nosotros somos diferentes,' pensaban ellos, 'somos chilenos.' (Aira 2013: 49-50)

> There was the possibility of a fall, from any of the floors, since the building was still a concrete frame, with just a few internal walks in place, not all of them by any means. But neither mother nor daughter mentioned that possibility; it didn't even enter into their private reflections. They had once said that an adult was just likely to fall as a child; there was no difference, because the planet's gravitational force worked in the same way on both. It was like asking which weighed more, a kilo of lead or a kilo of feathers. And that's why they were vaguely but deeply revolted by the owners of the apartments took such care not to let their children approach the edges when they visited, like that morning. If that was how they felt, why were they buying the apartments in the first place? Why didn't they go and live in houses at ground level? 'We're different,' they thought, 'we're Chilean.' (Aira 2008: 44)

The unbuilt apartment reflects the complex network of relationships between two sectors, which discloses a series of questions about the transformations of Buenos Aires at the end of the twentieth century. More than the plot, the descriptive details add thickness to the narrative. For example, the picturesque recount of Chilean and Argentine characters unveils the perceptible distinction among multiple sectors of Buenos Aires, such as indigenous and foreign and impoverished and affluent. Corral makes a pertinent statement in the following quote:

> In *Ghosts*, those forays are about pygmies, Australians, art (a leitmotif and ubiquitous template), and potlatch, reducing the plot to a transformative performance. Within the main narrative line, Aira also inserts historical notes about the growth of cities, suggestions for other books that readers may want to write and enough psychological references to write a humorous treatise about Chilean and Argentine idiosyncrasies. (Corral 2009: 62)

In this apartment, Aira herds people of various origins living in Argentina, such as four Chileans, one Uruguayan, and one Italian. They are not only poor but also illegal migrants, so double-displaced people. As in the following quote, Aira sprinkles some facts in a sarcastic tone:

> Félix Tello era un profesional surgido de la clase media. A partir de cierto punto en su carrera, había empezado a alternar casi exclusivamente con dos franjas sociales muy apartadas entre sí: los extraordinariamente ricos que compraban unidades en sus sofisticados edificios, y los pobrísimos albañiles que los construían. Había

> descubierto que ambas clases se parecían en muchas cosas, y muy especialmente en su completa ausencia de delicadeza cuando se trataba del dinero. En ese aspecto eran calcos exactos. Los muy pobres, y los muy ricos, encuentran natural tratar de sacar un máximo de provecho de quien tienen adelante. (Aira 2013: 15)
>
> Felix Tello was a professional from a middle-class background. From a certain point on his career, he had associated almost exclusively with two opposite fringes of society: the extraordinarily rich people who bought parts of his sophisticated buildings, and the extremely poor workers who built them. He had discovered that the two classes were alike in many ways, and especially in their complete lack of tact where money was concerned. In that respect the correspondence was exact. The very poor and the very rich regard it as a natural to extract the maximum benefit from the person they happen to be dealing with. (Aira 2008: 10)

The owners exploit migrant labourers by maximising their workload and paying low salaries as they are not only deprived workers but also illegal immigrants. The weight of their struggles is felt through the importance of their identities, which are not just labels but integral parts of their experiences. Filtering the historical facts through hyperbole, Aira and Tekin cross the borders of a uniform understanding of urbanisation and modernity; whilst in the case of Aira, it is the extremity of a modish and lavish setting, in Tekin, it is the extremity of the village's rusticity and primitiveness. The dispossessed characters in both texts are not only poor but also immigrants, which means double exclusion. Another thematic quirk shared by Aira and Tekin is the depiction of minorities, Chileans and Kurds. The main characters in *Ghosts* are Chilean caretakers, mainly their daughter Patri, while the protagonist in *Dear Shameless Death* is Dirmit, the daughter of the Kurdish Aktas family.

2.3 Migrant Stories

In a similar fashion to Nobel Laureate Orhan Pamuk, Tekin depicts minorities in Turkey, such as Armenians and Kurds, which are yet fragile matters in Turkey. This is another autobiographical aspect of the novel because, like Dirmit, Tekin was born into a Kurdish family in the Eastern region

of Turkey and migrated to Istanbul. Therefore, *Dear Shameless Death* is ground-breaking not only due to its distinctive patterns but also because it is a brave novel for its time, as the 1980s was a period of monolithic ideologies. Equal citizenship rights are a far-fetched issue in Turkey that is still under the spotlight. Since the Ottoman era, Turkey has been a heterogeneous country that embraces Greeks, Albanians, Kurds, Armenians, etc. Nevertheless, following the declaration of the Turkish Republic and 'The Settlement Law', the community were divided into groups as Kemal Kirişçi declares:

> The Settlement Law divided the people of the Republic into three groups and its territory into three zones. The three groups were those who spoke Turkish and were of Turkish ethnicity; those who did not speak Turkish but were considered to be of Turkish culture; and finally, those who did not speak Turkish nor belonged to the Turkish culture. The second group included post-immigrants from the Caucasus and the Balkans, whom the state considered Turkish even if they were of Albanian, Bosnian, Circassian, Pomak, Roma or Tatar background. Many of this category did not or could not speak Turkish for a variety of reasons. The third group considered primarily of Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Kurds, and Arabs. (Kirişçi 2008: 181)

As a result of these reforms, minority groups were dispersed in various regions of Turkey, and the Kurdish population predominantly resided in the Eastern and southeastern parts of the country. Even though the justification was conciliation in the country, the outcome failed. Just as Tekin delineates the situation of peasants in Alacüvek village, minorities, remote by every measure from the most urbanised swaths of Turkey, were not only economically disadvantaged but also isolated, which inflamed the hostility between Kurds and Turks. N.B Cengiz epitomises the plight in the following utterances:

> Many of the internally displaced Kurds did not have the necessary language skills to communicate in Turkish. To this was added the hostile feelings against Kurds which escalated in response to the guerrilla war and terror attacks of PKK, resulting prejudice against the economic migrants of earlier decades, harsher and much more hostile. (Cengiz 2017: 34)

In a similar pattern to Aira, Tekin does not directly allude to the binaries or socio-economic facts but recounts the chain of events lyrically in the village. For example, to manifest the gravity of the aloofness and deprivation, the narrator mentions the notion of school as follows:

> Köylülerin coşkusuna bir anlam veremeyen yabancı, şaşkın şaşkın epeyce dolaştı. Neden sonra, 'Burası okulmuş, ben öğretmenim,' diyerek Huvat'in erkek odasına çıktı. Huvat, bir solukta zavallı Bayraktar'ın başına gelenleri anlattı. Okul dağılıp gitmişti. Çocuklar okulu çoktan unutmuş, koyun gütmeye, kuş yuvası bozmaya, güvercin yumurtası çalmaya yeniden başlamışlardı. (Tekin 2013: 19-20)
>
> Unable to make out why the villagers were so jubilant, the stranger wandered about for a long time, confused. 'This must be the school,' he declared at last. 'I'am the teacher.' He went up to the men's lounge in Huvat's house, and Huvat explained to him, all in one breath, everything that had happened to poor Bayraktar. There no longer a school. The children had forgotten about it and gone back to tending the sheep, knocking down bords' nests and stealing pigeon eggs. (Tekin 2001: 30-31)

Alacüvek is so outlandish that it lacks one of the most crucial civil rights-education. Once the school has been built, there is no school building, not by the government but by the villagers. Tekin neither glorifies nor vilifies the rural setting and local traditions. Still, there is only ambivalence, mystification, and curlicue, which, in a way, demonstrates the suffering of the dispossessed and the anxiety of identification in a social context where there is an ongoing discrepancy between different sectors of society. Once the Aktaş family moved to the untitled big city, their wretchedness was hijacked because of economic and adaptation problems. As a household of eight people, they live in a one-bedroom house, echoing the shantytown periphery of Tekin's novel *Berci Kristin Çöp Masalları*, which I discuss in the next chapter. They are living in one of the *gecekondus* (*shantytowns*) of the *varos* (*area occupied by impoverished*) periphery of the city, which is explained further by Kirişçi as:

> The physical appearances of many urban centres have changed with the impact of migration. Starting from the early 1950s, illegal squatter housing (*gecekondu*) became a feature of major Turkish urban centres. *Gecekondu* affected the physical

> appearances of cities and the cultural, economic, social lives of urban centres. (Kirişçi 2008: 190-191)

The impact of modernisation and capitalism manifests itself mordantly in city life, where the Aktaş family face unemployment, poverty, and isolation, which is the naked truth of the time as Çağlar Keyder asserts that 'it became the principal transmission mechanism for the urbanisation and 'modernisation' of the peasantry. At any given time, no more than one-third of its employment was in the formal sector, but most households held one person who was formally employed and could therefore guarantee some stable income and access to social services' (Keyder 2008: 515). In *Dear Shameless Death,* this failure reads as:

> Köpek karı, Dirmit'e kara sivilceli oğlanı getirdi. Ama evlerinden dirliği, düzeni aldı götürdü. Huvat, köpek karı yağdığı gün, erkenden aşık bir yüzle eve geldi. Arkasından Halit'le Seyit içeri girdi. Topluca kara sövüp saydılar. O kış, ıssız kaldılar. Nuğber kolundaki bilezikleri sıyırıp, babasının eline verdi. (Tekin 2013: 80)
>
> The dog snow brought the dark boy with the spotty face to Dirmit and deprived the household of its prosperity and order. On the day of the dog snow, Huvat came home early, looking sulky. Halit and Seyit arrived shortly afterwards. Then all joined together in cursing the snow. That winter left them without employment. Nugber slipped off her bracelets and handed them over to her father. (Tekin 2001: 86)

The male members of the Aktaş family, Huvat and his sons, cannot keep steady jobs each time they fail to adapt because they cannot meet the demands of the urban culture. As observed in the example, the emphasis is on human action more than the characters' inner worlds. The economy-driven rural-to-urban migration in the process of industrialisation and modernisation reforms and the failures of these transformations infiltrated incessant events in the narrative rather than the emotions or psychology of the characters. The whimsical digression and flight into absurdism proceed even in such distressful contexts. None of the characters in Tekin and Aira reflect their

agitation or carry out any manoeuvre to improve the situation, on the contrary, they inflate the rationality of the irrationality; both texts harmonise with opaque melody.

Furthermore, the novel's rhythm is based on using short sentences always in the past tense, echoing oral cultural tradition. The narrative has a perpetual euphonic tone springs from the interplay between the magical realism and the real in an endless circle. As in the novella *Ghosts*, *Dear Shameless Death* is populated with mysterious spirits and bizarre and hilarious scenes that disconcert unified, solid and fixed interpretation. The most outstanding supernatural beings are the djinns and fairies, which have religious and cultural roots in Turkish society in the novel, and their capabilities are more complete than technological devices. According to Paker, 'djinns are believed to be capable of harm when disturbed by human beings, but also of assisting them under special circumstances, as is the case with Kepse in *Dear Shameless Death*. In the Koran it is said that some djinns chose the path of Allah while others remained evil, destined to burn in hell' (Paker 2001: 14). In a similar line with Paker, Gündoğan states, 'in Islamic as well as in pre-Islamic folkloric tradition, djinns are considered as "supernatural fiery creatures." They have their own will and are either said to be corrupted, devilish or well-behaved and good. They are mostly mentioned in the Qur'an. The corrupted' (Gündoğan 2010: 5). Djinns are part of Alacüvek life; they are the realities of the people living in the village, and fairies appear and cast spells on the villagers. Some of the djinns have even names as follows:

> Bu cin göze görünmeden önce, ilkin ateşle yoklardı. Arkasından bir titreme bir ter. Sonra da ‘Güp!’ diye gelir insanın göğsüne çökerdi. Mercimek gözlü, elsiz ayaksız, kapkara, yumak gibi bir şeydi. İşte o an kolunu kıpırdatabilir, Kepse’yi tutabilirsen tutarsın – kulun kölen olur, bir dediğini iki etmezdi-, tutamazsan kaçıp gider, bir daha da o fırsat ele geçmezdi. (Tekin 2013: 12)
>
> The djinn Kepse was invisible at first but later it appeared as a fever, followed by sweating and shivering. Finally, it pounced on your chest and sat there, a black ball with neither hands nor feet, and with eyes like lentils. If, just at that moment, you were quick enough to reach out and grab Kepse, it immediately became your

> faithful servant. But if you missed, and it escaped, you never got another chance. (Tekin 2001: 23)

Traditionally, djinns are divided into two groups; while some are perilous, some are virtuous, as in the case of Kepse. Along with the djinns and fairies, the text is populated with religious and traditional rituals such as magic spells and superstitious involvements. Nevertheless, there is a mighty allusion to the religious figure Azrael, the Angel of Death, in a tragi-comic rhythm. The way naked ghosts wander among the construction workers visibly in *Ghosts*, Azrael visits the mother Atiye heaps of time. The scene between Azrael and Atiye is one of the novel's conclusive illustrations of magical realism. The appearance of Azrael is so ordinary that Atiye bargains with Azrael so as to manipulate her husband or fights with Azrael over the death timing:

> Ama Atiye göğsünden sırtına vuran sancının acısından Azrail'i duymadı. Allah'a, 'Varsan, oğlumu göster,' diye içinden bağırdı. Azrail'in ağzının üstüne kapattığı elini öfkeyle tutup çekti. Azrail'in elinden sıyrılıp, yatağın içine dikildi. Ağzına geleni verdi veriştirdi. Atiye'nin Azrail'le kavgaya tutuşması, kendisine karşı inancını bozması Allah'ın gücüne gitti. Azrail'e Atiye'nin başından geri çekilmesini emretti. Atiye'ye, 'Sancılarıyla ve yaralarıyla yaşama' cezası verdi. Atiye, Azrail başından kalkıp gidince derin bir soluk aldı. Korkuyla başına toplanan çocuklarına Azrail'in gelip kendini yokladığını, ama arsızlıkla Azrail'in elini boş çıkardığını söyledi. (Tekin 2013: 212)

> Atiye's chest to her back was so sharp that she didn't hear a thing Azrael said. "if you're there, let me see my son!' she screamed a silent appeal to Allah. Then she shoved Azrael's hand from her mouth and began to throw herself about, trying to dislodge Azrael from her chest with what strength she had left. Finally, she broke loose from Azrael's clutches and sat upright in bed, cursing and swearing. Allah, offended with Atiye for quarrelling with Azrael and breaking her faith, ordered Azrael away and condemned her 'to live on with the sores and the pain". As soon as Azrael had departed, Atiye drew a deep breath and spoke to her children, who had gathered fearfully at her side. She announced that it was only because she had acted so shamelessly that Azrael, who had dropped in for a visit, had been driven away empty-handed. (Tekin 2001: 208-209)

Atiye is one of the most inapprehensible personas in the novel, with a cryptic disposition. While disturbed by Dirmit's odd deeds, Atiye enhances the absurdism with reasonable allegations. In this particular episode, all patterns of Tekin's paranormal, psychedelic, hilarious, and hyperbolic

language come together inasmuch as blurring the line between symbolic and semiotic, as in the case of Aira. In one of his articles, 'César Aira's Magical Surrealism', Lewis labels this ingenuity as *el beso de fantasía* (*the kiss of fantasy*) and divulges further that 'the kiss of fantasy heightens these scenes' authenticity, not in terms of historical accuracy, but in blurring the borders between a plausibly realistic account of the world and the perceptions of a mind deranged with pain' (Lewis 2011: 136).

In an analogous path to Tekin, Aira captures the current reality by avoiding the thematic treatment of historical uncanniness. Dierda Reber notes that 'the definitional boundaries between metaphoric and realist representation become permanently blurred in Aira's narrative, yet his narrators persist – even anchor their stories – in a recurrent quest to define, catalogue, and comprehend reality' (Reber 2007: 380). In a similar line, Pauls observes that:

> The lunatic enjoyment of paradox is the true festival of *The Ghosts*, the festival that drags in its orgy of perplexities all the worlds of the novel, that of architecture and that of social classes, that of money and time, of dream and conversation, as if each of them forgot for a moment the conventions that govern their representation, violated the limits that separate them into spheres and took flight together, indistinct, intoxicated by that apyretic vertigo that knots them in a common surface. (Pauls 1990: 5)

The perplexities and jolts become more visible through the twist of strangeness. The uncanny breaks out suddenly, modifying the atmosphere of the narrative and mystifying the praxis by virtue of *los fantasmas*. In the course of the hasty slipping of the phantasm, the supernatural light skews the storyline and the known and the thresholds overlap. Just as the subjects transgress the presumed spatial dispositions, the architecture is hooked in an infinitive sprawling cocoon. Along similar lines with Tekin's refashioning conventional Turkish literary devices, Aira transfigures the whims of traditional gothic motifs. The ghosts appear, in the usual Airean fashion, with an utterly forthright slip, about which Enríque Ajuria Ibarra remarks that 'the literary use of the ghost has

also tended to reconfigure its value under the guise of ambiguity, rather than eliciting anxiety that arises from a chilling encounter' (Ajuria Ibarra 2017: 237).

> En el pequeño corillo que lo escuchaba con gran atención, esos segundos matrimonios con un común proyecto de felicidad se habían colado dos individuos, dos hombres que estaban desnudos y con la piel cubierta de polvillo de cal. Ellos también escuchaban, pero sólo para soltar grandes y feroces carcajadas a cada momento. Más que risas eran tremendos aullidos, de exagerado sarcasmo […] Por lo sucios, parecían albañiles, y también por la conformación del cuerpo, más bien pequeños, sólidos, de pies pequeños y manos gastadas. Tenían los dedos de los pies muy separados, como los salvajes. Su comportamiento era el de niños malcriados. Pero eran adultos. (Aira 2013: 17)

> The little group hanging on his words, those remarried couples with their shared project of happiness, had been infiltrated by two individuals, two naked men covered in fine cement dust. They were listening too, but only as a pretext for bursting continually into fierce, raucous laughter. Or not so much laughter as vehement, theatrically sarcastic howling […] They were dirty like builders and had the same kind of bodies: rather stocky, solid, with small feet and rough hands. They were behaving like badly brought-up children. But they were adults. (Aira 2008: 11-12)

The construction site is haunted by a flock of naked, dusty, and pot-bellied male ghosts who casually interact with the workers hilariously. Ghosts do not embody fear and shock, as in traditional forms, but push the limits of normality in their maniac, absurd, bizarre, and jovial dispositions. While Licata asserts that 'it is not so much the image of the ghost that comes to mind here as much as that of the zombie, a creature capable of moving itself in the world but not able to engage in rational thought, a being eviscerated of its substance, wandering between life and the nothingness' (Licata 2021: 1529). Correspondingly, José Agustín Conde de Boeck deduces that 'ajeno a la representación siniestra de la novela gótica, Aira construye sus fantasmas en un punto a medio camino entre la puerilidad de Casper (o Gasparín) y la obscenidad de los monstruos de Osvaldo Lamborghini' ('oblivious to the sinister representation of the Gothic novel, Aira builds his ghosts at a point halfway between the childishness of Casper (or Gasparín) and the obscenity of Osvaldo Lamborghini's monsters' (Conde de Boeck 2017: 2). Along the same tone as the figure

of Azrael, who is conventionally a dreadful actor, in *Dear Shameless Death*, the phantasm in the *Ghosts* estranges the readers from a familiar position by means of hyperbole and ludicrousness. In the following example, the presence of the ghosts is so ordinary that the caretakers jovially grab the ghosts' elastic and absurd penises or shave bottles of wine down their throats to chill them:

> De modo que Raúl Viñas había puesto a enfriar catorce botellas de vino tinto, con un sistema de su invención, a mejor dicho: descubierto por él. Consistía en acercarse decididamente a un fantasma e introducirle una botella en el tórax; ahí quedaba, en un equilibrio sobrenatural. Cuando la iba a buscar, dos horas después, por ejemplo, estaba fría. Había dos cosas que no había notado. La primera era que el vino salía de las botellas y corría como una linfa por todo el cuerpo de los fantasmas durante el proceso. La segunda, que semejante destilación transmutaba el vulgar vino barato, de barricas de cemento, que ni los magnates podían permitirse todos los días. Pero qué lo iba a notar, un bebedor tan poco exigente que en verano tomaba el tinto frío, sólo porque hacía calor. Encima, acostumbrado como estaba a los vinos maravillosos de su país, éste le parecía lo más natural del mundo. (Aira 2013: 35-36)
>
> So Raúl Viñas was keeping fourteen bottles of red wine cool, with a system he had invented, or rather discovered, himself. It consisted of resolutely approaching a ghost and inserting a bottle into his thorax, where it remained, supernaturally balanced. When he went back for it, say two hours later, it was cold. There were two things he hadn't noticed, however. The first was that, during the cooling process, the wine came out of the bottles and flowed like lymph all through the bodies of the ghosts. The second was that this distillation transmuted ordinary cheap wine, fermented in cement vats, into an exquisite, matured cabernet sauvignon, which not even captains of industry could afford to drink every day. But an undiscriminating drinker like Viñas, who chilled his red wine in summer just because of the heat, wasn't going to notice the change. Besides, he was accustomed to the wonderful wines of his country, so it seemed perfectly natural to him. (Aira 2008:29-30)

As djinns, fairies, and people coexist casually in *Dear Shameless Death*, in *Ghosts*, the characters cross the limits of boundaries in a way that the image of the uncanny looks more familiar. In contrary fashion with the djinns and fairies in Tekin, Aira's ghosts are not terrifying. In *Dear Shameless Death*, the presence of supernatural beings is ordinary but can be vicious, which requires precaution. In *Ghosts*, however, the eidolon is more mundane and amicable than the landowners. Although the caretakers do not approach the apartment's owners because of social

strata, they communicate and make fun of ghosts. The privileged class does not recognise the impoverished and does not see the ghosts. The labourers and the supernatural forces are invisible to the wealthy owners while salient to each other. According to Valeria Sager, the outcome is that ‘El fantasma es la figura de la interrupción, del momento en el que el signo y la cosa se miden únicamente por su ajenidad y, en el reconocimiento del corte o del vacío, instituyen un nuevo reparto de sus bordes, sus amalgamientos, sus atribuciones y remisiones’ (‘The ghost is the figure of interruption, of the moment in which the sign and the thing are measured only by their alienness and, in the recognition of the cult or the void, they institute a new distribution of their edges, their amalgamations, their attributions and referrals’) (Sager 2021: 156).

In both narratives, the characters do not fear crossing the immovable borders; explicitly, in Aira, the unknown is more seductive. The ghosts communicate solely with the oldest daughter of the Viñas family, whose only role is to help her mother and take care of her siblings, but 'her emergence marks both the crossing of an elusive narrative threshold and the crystallisation of Aira's theme. The novella's second half describes Patri's tentative but unmistakable march toward self-awareness, and it features a more suspenseful, linear narrative, still pregnant with Aira's ontological and socioeconomic concern' (Hogan 2010: 118). Similar to the character of Dirmit, Patri is more oblivious and enigmatic than the household. She does not only accept the ghosts' New Year's Eve party at the expense of dying but also feels strange sexual connotations to them. As an illustration, after being invited to the party by the ghost, her perception is as follows:

> La Patri sintió que se le apretaba el corazón ante esos hombres…De hecho, fue como si viera hombres por primera vez. ¡Deténganse!, gritaba su alma, ¡no se vayan nunca! Quería verlos así por toda la eternidad, aunque la eternidad durase un instante, y sobre todo si duraba un instante. No concebía la eternidad de otra forma. ¡Ven, eternidad, ven y sé el instante de mi vida!, exclamaba para sí misma. (Aira 2013: 111)

> At the sight of those men, Patri could feel her heart contracting…as if she were truly seeing men for the first time. Stop! Cried her soul. Don't go, ever! She wanted to see them like that for all eternity, even if eternity lasted an instant, especially if it lasted an instant. That was the only eternity she could imagine. Come, come and be the instant of my life! She exclaimed to herself. (Aira 2008: 105)

In a similar fashion to Patri in *Ghost*, Dirmit is the daughter of an immigrant Kurdish family in *Dear Shameless Death*. Dirmit and Patri cross in their representation of the transition of subjectivation crystallised by their interested, curious, and unfit natures. Dirmit is dubbed a 'djinn-hysterical girl' by her family and environment. From the day she was born, she started talking, communicating with djinns, and befriending inanimate objects such as water pumps, snow, wind, and plants, about which Gündoğan remarks that 'the nature draws everything to its side: plant talking to animal, earth talking to sky or man talking to other beings. I can say that most of the similitudes in *Dear Shameless Death* stem from this folkloric narration, *Dede Korkut Stories*' (Gündoğan 2010: 6). On the other hand, Keith Hitchins makes the ensuing exposition on Dirmit's position:

> Dirmit, by contrast, represents change, the transition from the old to the new. Of all the members of her family, she adjusts best to the city. She speaks for the author: she is inquisitive, takes to formal schooling, constantly challenging the established order of things, and becomes a writer. Still, she remains attached to the village; she talks to the birdie-bird plant, seeking its advice, and she believes in djinns, those mysterious creatures of pre-Islamic folklore who could assume any form to influence human behaviour. (Hitchins 2001: 234)

One of the most distinctive immigrant personas in the modern Turkish novel, Dirmit is an indefatigable figure disconnected from this family and environment in rural and urban life. While communicating mostly with djinns and fairies in the town, Dirmit befriends inanimate objects instead of human beings. For instance, when in the city, Dirmit befriends a birdie-bird plant in a children's park, who acts like a supervisor or counsellor. Personified as a mentor, the birdie-bird plant talks and acts like a cultivated individual, and Dirmit considers the birdie-bird plant's advice:

> Kuşkuş otu Dirmit'e bir kış neler yaptığını sordu. Dirmit yaptıklarını kuşkuş otuna anlattı. Ona herşeyi merak ettiğini, ama çok az şey bildiğini söyleyip yakındı. Kuşkuş otu ona akıl verdi. Kitap okursa bir dolu şey öğrenebileceğini söyledi. Dirmit kuşkuş otuna okuldaki kitaplıktan söz etti. Ama utandiği içín gidip diğer çocuklar gibi, orada kitap okuyamadığından yakındı. Kuşkuş otu Dirmit'i karşısına aldı. Ona utanırsa hep çok az şey bileceğini anlattı. (Tekin 2013: 95)

> Joyfully she plumped herself down beside the birdie-bird plant, who asked her what she had been doing all winter. Dirmit replied, complaining that she was curious about everything but knew next to nothing. The birdie-bird plant offered her some advice, saying that if she read books she would learn many, many things. Dirmit mentioned her school library and said that she felt too shy to go and read there like the other children. The birdie-bird plant made her sit her down before it, and explained to her that if she kept on feeling shy she would always know very little. It went on to warn her not to feel abashed. (Tekin 2001: 101)

The birdie-bird plant assists Dirmit in urban life because, under its guidance, Dirmit starts reading more and befriending students at school. Dirmit metamorphoses at a point where her communications with animals, objects, natural forces, and plants end. The supernatural effects halt Dirmit's life with the appearance of literature; she occupies herself with books and writing poetry. All the characters in both novels are oblivious and delusional, except the wealthy owners of the building in *Ghosts*, yet Dirmit and Patri stand out as particularly eccentric and unconventional. Nevertheless, Patri is more unconventional than Dirmit because, at the end of *Dear Shameless Death,* Dirmit clutches on urban life through literature and her imagination. Patri, whose psychology is not reflected, drifts towards the unmediated reality and an alternative metamorphosis by accepting the ghosts' party invitation. In both texts, we do not perceive the characters' inner thoughts. As the uncanny and ambiguous light skews the events, the characters' actions are mysterious. Dirmit wrote a letter for six days and seven nights, but we do not know what she wrote. Patri sacrificed her life to attend the ghosts' New Year's Eve party without any reasonable motive behind it.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided a literary and historical analysis of two texts, *Los fantasmas* (2009; *Ghosts*) and *Sevgili Arsız Ölüm* (2001; *Dear Shameless Death*) of César Aira and Latife Tekin based on their idiosyncratic style that offers a kaleidoscopic look of the stark realities of their time, filtering them through narratives full of whimsical digressions, hyperbole, uncanniness, and stylistic flights into surrealism, and magical realism. On the one hand, the interplay between the semiotic and symbolic has been scrutinised—the fantastic and surreal twists of the *Ghosts* juxtaposed with the magical realistic angles of *Dear Shameless Death*. I discovered that Tekin and Aira conflate the supernatural and augmented reality, crossing and fusing the worlds of the living and the dead, the natural and the paranormal, and the known and the unknown. Whilst in *Dear Shameless Death*, djinns, mythological creatures, and the Angel of Death typically live and communicate with characters, in *Ghosts*, the naked ghosts wander freely around the household. Through *Dear Shameless Death*, Tekin creates an antecedent of magical realism in contemporary Turkish literature, drawing on local colours and conventions. On the other hand, *Dear Shameless Death* and *Ghost* masterfully depict the socio-economic, political, and historical realities of their communities.

All in all, *Dear Shameless Death* provides a window into 1960s-1970s Turkish society, a period marked by internal and external migration, rapid industrialisation and modernisation, urbanisation, and military interventions. *Ghosts*, in contrast, reveals 1980s-1990s Argentina, a period of pre- and post-capitalism, characterised by economic instability, political violence, and

trauma. This chapter examines how Tekin and Aira, with their literary finesse, create a liminal space where the boundaries between fact, fiction, novel, and history are blurred and transgressed. The two texts were chosen in this study to expand and complement the previous chapter and flesh out further comparative affinities between both authors. Aira and Tekin blend the boundaries between the real and the supernatural, creating narratives rich in fantastical elements, ambiguity, and an otherworldly atmosphere. The chapter, in sum, highlighted their unique literary styles that served as a distorting lens through which to examine the social critiques of Turkey and Argentina, respectively, underpinning their works.

CHAPTER 3: MARGINS, *VILLAS*, AND *GECEKONDU*: CÉSAR AIRA, LATİFE TEKİN, AND THE URBAN PERIPHERIES OF ISTANBUL AND BUENOS AIRES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter critically examines the representation of the urban phenomenon of the shanty town in the writings of Turkish author Latife Tekin and Argentine author César Aira. The main focus is on their novels *Berci Kristin Çöp Masalları* (1984; *Berci Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*) and *La villa* (2001; *Shantytown*). I explore their use of stylistic devices such as the fantastic and magical realism to advance socio-political critiques of the failings of neoliberal capitalist societies in Istanbul and Buenos Aires, respectively. The chapter also discusses the various techniques that both authors use to represent the margins of their cities and the tumultuous historical events in Turkey and Argentina that inform their fiction.

3.2 The Rise of the *gecekondu*

Latife Tekin's autobiographical account of her childhood migration from a rural area in Kayseri, Turkey, to the vast city of Istanbul symbolises the experience of many other children of her generation, whose parents tore off their roots for the sake of a better life in the capital. The quotation below is from Tekin's introduction to the first edition of her autobiographical novel *Sevgili Arsız Ölüm* (2001; *Dear Shameless Death*), in which she draws attention to the personal difficulties and cultural transformation her family underwent during this period:

> 1966 yılında İstanbul'a geldim. Çocukluğum keskin bir acıyla ikiye bölündü sanki. Gerçekleşmeyen düşler, aralarında doğup büyüdüğüm insanları paramparça etti. Babam hızla işçileşti ve giderek işsiz kaldı. İki ağabeyim ve kardeşim inşaatlarda işe girdi. Yedi kardeşin arasından titrek bir gölge gibi sıyrılıp liseyi bitirdim. Korku

> ve yalnızlığın içinden okula gitmenin bedelini ödedim. İnanılmaz savrulmalar, inkâr ve baskının bin çeşidi. Kente ayak uydurabilmek için boğuşup durdum. Her yanım yara bere içinde kaldı. Boğuşurken birlikte doğup büyüdüğüm insanlardan ayrı düştüm. Ama kendi öz değerlerimi, dilimi ve o insanların durulmaz bir coşkuyla bana taşıdıkları sevgiyi koruyabilmek için direndim. (Tekin 2013: 144)
>
> In 1966, I came to live in Istanbul. I felt like a sharp pain that split up my childhood. Unfulfilled dreams tore apart the people that I grew up with. My father quickly became working class, then gradually fell into unemployment. Three brothers worked on construction sites. I finished high school, slipping away like a trembling shadow from seven brothers and sisters. I paid the price of moving away from fear and loneliness to go to school: subjected to a thousand denials and pressures, I was incredibly shaken. I fought hard to keep up with the city and was badly bruised. During my struggles, I felt apart from those that I grew up with. But I resisted in order not to lose my own values, my language, and constant and passionate love that those people bare me. (Tekin 1996: 9-10)

In this excerpt, Tekin expresses the fragility of her family's change of social status, uncertain financial situation, and the ensuing sense of cultural displacement she experienced, particularly concerning her new life in a vast metropolis, thus drawing attention to the problems brought upon by modernity, urbanisation, and the erosion of the social values and practices of rural communities. Deirdre Levinson and Lisa DiCarlo affirm that 'in the late 1940s and early1950s, Turkey witnessed the first wave of migration of people travelling from small villages to big cities, particularly Istanbul' (Levinson 1993: 30-31), noting that 'in almost every decade, migration to Istanbul has surpassed migration to other large areas in Turkey, even cities that are in closer proximity to the sending villages' (DiCarlo 2008: 69). Turkish historian Kemal H. Karpat identifies several interrelated factors behind this wave of migration in Turkey, including 'the slow but steady mechanisation of agriculture particularly after the 1960s, improvements in transportation and education, the expansion of trade post-World War 2, and the rise of urban centres serving as exchange places and export outlets' (Karpat 1976: 17; 56). In *Dear Shameless Death*, Tekin shows that, by building their settlements in the peripheries of the city, migrants became marginalised

outcasts who, as a result, needed to find their way around their new urban surroundings and construct a new sense of identity. David Collier describes these squatter settlements as ‘residential communities formed by low-income families, in which the houses are constructed in large measure by the residents and which are generally, but not exclusively, formed illegally’ (Collier 1976: 18).

The Turkish term *gecekondu* is usually translated as a shanty town in English despite having a more complex meaning owing to the combination of two different utterances: *gece* (*overnight*), while *kondu* conveys the notion of *constructed*, which relates to the idea of something *landed* or *perched*. Therefore, *gecekondu* buildings are makeshift settlements commonly built in a single night in the most precarious of ways and are typically located outside of the city centre, in undesirable environments. The settlements are precariously made with various recycled materials, including plastics, paperboard, tin plates, and other things found in rubbish tips. These are turned into the private dwellings of the city’s dispossessed inhabitants. Despite their liminal location, scarcity of water, and lack of electricity supply, these *gecekondu* lands continue to develop, becoming the dwellings of Turkey’s dispossessed, as Latife Tekin shows in her novel *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*. The book consists of 21 episodes, and a distinctive image of the town and its inhabitants is presented in each section. According to Şerefnur Atik, ‘from the beginning until the end of the novel, the protagonist, the *gecekondu*, grows up like a baby’ (Atik 2012: 248).

In Tekin’s novel, the word *berci* denotes *shepherdess*, but it additionally refers to *innocence* and Kristin is the nickname of the first prostitute in the novel. In her conversation with Pelin Özer, Latife Tekin notes that:

> “Berci”, çoban kız demek ama “berci” sözcüğü, aynı zamanda da saflık simgesi. Kitapta da anlattığım gibi, kızların terbiyesi süt yolunda ölçülüyor. Süt sağmaya giderken oğlanlarla buluşuyorlar mı, gidip gelirken neler yapıyorlar, diye bakılıyor. Kristin de gecekondu mahallesinin içinden çıkan ilk fahişe. (Özer 2015: 72)

> "Berci" means shepherdess but it also the representation of purity. Just as I have narrated in the book, the decency of the girls has been measured in the milk route. The girls are being observed whether they join the boys or whatever they are doing on their paths of milking the cows. Kristin is also the first prostitute comes out in the land of *gecekondu*.

As is implied in Tekin's oxymoronic title, there is a transition from innocence to prostitution or corruption, which can be understood as an example of the contradictory nature of *gecekondu*. As the quantity of shanty town dwellers increased, a new culture of dispossession existed. In Turkish literature, the influence of this transition led to the birth in the 1950s of the 'village novel', which became the prevalent novel form (Esen 2010: 327). Talât S. Halman describes the 'village novel' as:

> Dealing with the merciless reality of poverty, village literature portrays the peasant threatened by the natural disaster and man's inhumanity. The drama is enacted in terms of economic and psychological deprivation […] stagnation and starvation, droughts [...] exploitation at the hands of landowners and politics. (Halman 2013: 81)

Rather than portraying heroic stories or the life of upper-class characters, there was a focus on the everyday life of lower-class characters like peasants and villagers. The depiction of binary oppositions between the poor and the rich, peasants and landowners, are the common themes in 'village novels.' Accordingly, the Turkish author Yaşar Kemal (1923-2015) is widely considered one of the pioneers of the 'village genre' (Esen 2010: 327). Kemal composed many fictions on the drama of the dispossessed in Turkey, such as *İnce Memed* (1955; *Memed*), *Teneke* (1955; *The Drumming-Out*) and *Yılanı Öldürseler* (1976; *To Crush the Serpent*). The common element of the 'village novel' is, of course, social realism. Some aspects of Tekin's fiction evoke the modes of representation of the village narrative, meaning that she has complexly conflated social (and magical) realism. In this way, while Tekin's fiction engages with the subject matter of social realism, her novels do not strictly conform to this genre due to their experimental nature and use

of magical realist devices that offer a more multifaceted aesthetic experience. Hande Tekdemir notes that: ‘Tekin’s novels, in their hybrid form and content, defy easy categorization and challenge the accepted reality of their respective majorities and officialdoms’ (Tekdemir 2011: 50). Additionally, Saliha Paker remarks that:

> In conjunction with fresh narrative form, Tekin developed a figurative style which is vigorous and innovative. She has often expressed the desire to forge a language of the deprived, one that gives expression not only to their way of life but also to their outlook on life, perception of reality, sense of humour and dreams. (Paker 1993: 12)

Tekin is considered a notable innovator of contemporary Turkish literature by producing experimental fiction. Regarding genre, some scholars label Tekin’s second novel, *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*, as a ‘tale’ because it conforms more to the conventions of the fairy tale than the novel. As an illustration, Füsun Akatlı defines the text concerning ‘stories, parables, as the title connotes: tales’ (‘Öykücükler, masallar, adında ifade edildiği üzere: Masallar’) (Akatlı 1984: 46) and Semih Acar delineate the novel for ‘an influential lengthy narrative’ (‘bir uzun anlatı’) (Acar 1985: 11). Tekin offers the following views on *Tales from the Garbage Hills*, where she implies that there is no fixed genre to fit this novel, thus, it is appropriate for Tekin to produce a story reflecting this hybridity properly in style and content:

> Kitabımın gecekondulaşma macerasını yalnızca diliyle değil, biçimiyle de yansıtmalıydı. Daha sonra *Berci Kistin Çöp Masalları’*nın roman olup olmadığı epeyce tartışıldı, roman olmaması bir zayıflığıymış gibi […] Gecekonduculara bakıp, gecekondular hakkında bir hikâye anlatacaksam, onu roman yapmaya çalışmak kadar tuhaf bir şey olamaz diye düşünüyorum. Bu kitap tam da o havanın kendisinde […] roman olma durumunu kaybetmiş, onu arayan bir kitap. (quoted in Atik 2002: 192-3)

> My book should reflect the experience of living in a shanty town not only through its language but also, through its style. After *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* has been criticised a lot for not being a traditional novel as if this was a weakness […]. If I am writing about shanty town dwellers by looking at them, there cannot be a weirder situation than forcing the story to fit the genre of the novel.

> This book is completely in this style […] having lost the features of a novel, it searches for a different form.

3.3 The Rise of the *villa miseria*

According to Argentine critic James Scorer, 'the first villa in Buenos Aires dates from 1932. As a result of both of widespread unemployment [due to the crisis detonated by the Wall Street crash] and continuing high levels of immigration from abroad and the interior' (Scorer 2016: 168). Jason Wilson adds that the term *villa miseria* was coined by the writer and journalist Bernardo Verbitsky in a novel entitled *Villa miseria también es América* (1957; *Shanty Town is also America*) that represents the experience of living in a shanty town in post-Peronist Argentina after the so-called *revolución libertadora* of 1955 (Wilson 1999: 234). Hernán A. Biscayart suggests that Verbitsky's novel emerged as a *novela de denuncia* concerning the way the Peronist administration sought to conceal the existence of deprived barrios in Buenos Aires that started to proliferate in disused lands as a consequence of industrialisation, which attracted migrants from both the interior and abroad (Biscayart 2012: 1). Therefore, the phrases *villas miseria*, *villas de emergencia*, *asentamientos de emergencia* or just 'villas' were used to refer to uncontrolled settlements in Argentina (Guillermina Seri 29; Benson 98), as well as 'the origins of all the city's problems' (Scorer 2016: 169). In Argentina, the phrase *villa miseria* joins two oxymoronic words: the noun *villa* is typically associated with a large, luxurious country house and the adjective *miseria* stems from the Latin *miser* and denotes wretchedness, hardship, and suffering. In Verbitsky's novel, the word *villa* acquires a more complex meaning within the specific socio-economic context in which it is set. By proposing an Argentina literary tradition of *novelas de denuncia*, Biscayart firmly positions *Villa miseria también es América* as the precursor text that is then followed by later texts such as

La villa by César Aira, which refers to the new socio-economic condition of Argentina in the wake of the aggressive neoliberal reforms of the 1990s (Biscayart 2012: 1). In Aira's novel, the *villa miserias* are depicted in the following manner:

> Las casillas de un tamaño ridículo de tan reducido, y literalmente apiladas unas contra otras; esto era comprensible, y al parecer sucedía lo mismo en todas las villas: se levantaban en sitios limitados, que no podían extenderse, y su población aumentaba sin cesar, por el crecimiento vegetativo descontrolado y por las migraciones del interior y países limítrofes. (Aira 2001: 33)
>
> The shacks were absurdly small and crammed together, for reasons that apparently applied to shantytowns everywhere: these settlements sprang up in strictly limited spaces, and the population was continually growing because of unplanned reproduction as well as migration from the inland provinces and neighbouring countries. (Aira 2013: 27)

From a comparative perspective, while in Turkish, the word *gecekondu* refers to the shantytown's functionality and physical condition, in Spanish, *villa miseria* recalls the spiritual state of the people in shantytowns. In other words, *gecekondu* reminds us of the precariousness and poor quality (material condition) of the settlements and *villa miseria* symbolises settlements constructed out of *miseria espiritual*.

Born in 1949 in Coronel Pringles, Argentina, César Aira has published 'more than fifty books through small and independent presses in Latin America' (Lewis 2011: 127). A prolific writer, Aira holds an influential artistic position in Latin American literature, and a selection of his works have been translated into English over the last decade by Chris Andrews, who previously translated a selection of Roberto Bolaño's works. One of the characteristics of Aira's writing style is its digressive nature and unpredictability, as he uses a writing technique that he defines as *fuga hacia adelante* (*flight forward*). In an interview with Scott Esposito, Aira admits that he neither edits his work nor plans its structure beforehand:

> La huída hacia delante debería ser la actitud mental de quien quiera cabalgar el continuo. Pero me temo que tiene menos de teoría que de excusa para evitarme lo penoso del trabajo de corrección, la autocrítica, etcétera. Escribir para mí siempre ha sido la busca de la felicidad, y siendo así hay que ir rápido, recorrer la mayor distancia posible, y no frenarse con escrúpulos profesionales. (Esposito 2017: 1)

> The flight forward must be the mental attitude of someone who would like to gallop non-stop. But I'm afraid it provides less a theory than an excuse to avoid myself the arduous task of self-correction, self-critique, etc. Writing has always been for me a search for happiness and, thus, one has to go fast, cross-over the greatest possible distance and not refrain oneself for professional motives.

Like Tekin, Aira prefers to use a hybrid form that combines social realism, fantastic devices, fairy tale elements, and surrealist twists rather than pigeonholing his writing into a specific genre. In other words, Aira invents new aesthetic procedures that suit his idiosyncratic writing style, allowing him a great degree of aesthetic experimentation. Furthermore, in an interview with María Moreno, Aira observes, 'I have always thought I did not have avant-garde chops because I like conventional literature too much. I deliberately want to create something new, but I instinctively go on loving the old' (Moreno 2009: 5). Since there is the combination of old and new, past, present and future, and the real and the fantastic, it is difficult to pigeonhole his texts into a specific genre, due to their fluidity and interlacing of different forms.

3.4 Tekin's and Aira's Marginal Crossroads

A comparative examination of the opening pages of *La villa* and *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* reveals a relevant parallel that stresses both authors' blending of literary genres. For example, César Aira opens the novel by intermingling fairy tale elements and social realism, reporting that:

> Una ocupación voluntaria de Maxi era ayudar a los cartoneros del barrio a transportar sus cargas. De un gesto casual había pasado a ser con el correr de los días un trabajo que se tomaba muy en serio. (Aira 2001: 9)

> One way Maxi chose to spend his time was helping the local cardboard collectors to transport their loads. An act performed once, on the spur of the moment, had developed over time into a job that he took very seriously. (Aira 2013: 3)

Therefore, Aira begins the novel by focusing on his central personage, a youth named Maxi whose new 'occupation' of helping the *cartoneros* (*cardboard collectors*) brings together two social strata: a middle-class man in his early twenties mingling with the dispossessed inhabitants of the city who reside in a nearby *villa miseria*, the dispossessed pockets of the city that are usually ignored by the better off. Therefore, Maxi acts as a symbolic 'guardian spirit' who breaks down class boundaries by helping and sympathising with those in need, usually invisible to his privileged class members. In this way, he becomes a modern 'gentle giant', an Argentine avatar of the archetypal fairy tale hero in chaotic Buenos Aires. Aira, who declared in one of his interviews with María Moreno, that he writes 'in the clearest, most neutral tone possible' and 'try to make [h]is prose almost transparent' deliberately uses this deceptive simplicity as a mask to embed a more profound meaning or mystery within the novel' (Moreno 2009: 4-5). Thus, from the very beginning, the story is depicted as the fairy tale of an almost superhero named Maxi, who spontaneously begins to assist the poor *cartoneros* in pushing their carts full of waste to make a living. In *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion* (2012), Jack Zipes observes that 'fairy tales are predicated on a human disposition to social action [and have been] generally been viewed as dangerous if not subversive by conservative religious and political groups' and as a challenge to the status quo' (Zipes 2012: 9, 11). The 'subversive' breakdown of class boundaries proposed by Maxi's relationship with the *cartoneros* adheres to Zipes' definition of the fairy tale's socially 'dangerous' aspect. Thus, Maxi aids the neglected members of the population, which at first sight betokens his good-natured, conscientious and mythical persona: 'Al poco tiempo ya no hacía distinciones, y le daba lo mismo que fueran chicos o grandes, hombres o mujeres: de cualquier modo, él era más grande, más fuerte, y además

lo hacía por gusto, sin que nadie se lo pidiera' (Aira 2001: 9). ('Before long he was indiscriminately helping children and adults, men and women: he was bigger and stronger than any of them, and anyway he did it because he wanted to, not because he was asked') (Aira 2013: 3). In this way, Maxi emerges as both considerably fantastic and magical and as an identifiable young, well-off *porteño* (he does not need to work for a living) obsessed with fitness and with a sudden turn for charitable work. Contingent upon spending much of his day at the gym, Maxi's physical attributes, particularly his height, are out of the ordinary, adding to his mythical fairy tale qualities. The narrator invariably refers to his body as 'de cualquier modo él era más grande, más fuerte', 'era muy alto y corpulento', 'un patovica' o 'una montaña de músculos sin cerebro', 'el gigante bueno' (Aira 2001: 9, 11, 19). ('He was bigger and stronger than any of them [the cartoneros], very tall and solidly built, meathead or brainless hulk, good giant') (Aira 2013: 3, 5, 13).

Consequently, the qualities of a traditional legendary hero, who is 'exceptional and extraordinary', are conferred onto Maxi (Jones 1995: 8). Similarly, Annelies Oeyen argues that 'Maxi is presented as an almost mythical character' (Oeyen 2012: 80), while Gwyn Bouwman points out that Maxi is not depicted as an 'idealist', which seems to be a factual point (Bouwman 2014: 35). It is repetitively recounted in the novel that 'nunca se le ocurrió verlo como una tarea de caridad, o solidaridad, o cristianismo, o piedad, o lo que fuera; lo hacía, y basta […] lo hacía porque podía, porque se le daba la gana, porque les daba un sentido a sus caminatas del atardecer' (Aira 2001: 9-10). ('It never occurred to him [Maxi] to see it as an act of charity or solidarity or Christian duty or pity or anything like that. It was something he did, that was all […] he did it because he could, because he felt like it because it gave his evening walk a purpose') (2013: 3-4). As the novel progresses, we are informed that the new occupation Maxi has recently adopted has arisen out of his meanderings at night, a kind of flaneur, and then curiosity.

What at the outset appears to be lacking in Maxi's character here is depth, especially in his initial depiction of him as an altruistic character. However, his characterisation radically changes as the novel progresses and the plotline becomes more convoluted. His 'improvised' work with the cardboard collectors undoubtedly requires elucidation. For example, Gisela Heffes writes, ' Maxi does not seek to infuse the cartoneros with a consciousness of their socially exploited status. His aid can be translated into a sort of charity that, instead of challenging the status quo, simply preserves it' (Heffes 2009: 10). While I agree with Heffes that Maxi's altruism does not alter social inequality, it is still essential to be aware of the way he disturbs class boundaries and the rigid divide between the 'rich' (note, again, that Maxi's affluent status means that he does not need to work for a living) and the 'poor' in a socially stratified Argentina. Therefore, he plays a crucial role as a *bisagra* (*hinge*) character, standing between two distinctive worlds, the urban space and the shanty town margin. Even though there were no motives behind his 'charity', the moment he starts helping the *cartoneros*, Maxi disrupts the strata as implicated by the narrator:

> También existía la posibilidad de que la ayuda que les prestaba Maxi estuviera dando frutos. Su intervención era individual, casual, artesanal; pero quizás producía un efecto general y aliviaba a todos los cartoneros […] No tenía ninguna duda de que llegaría el momento de encontrar su trabajo de verdad, su vocación. Y quizás esto no era sólo un ersatz momentáneo para ir ocupando el tiempo, sino un camino. (Aira 2001: 25-26)

> It was possible that Maxi's help was making difference. His action was individual, spontaneous and technically primitive, but perhaps it was having an overall effect and lightening the burden for all the collectors […] He had no doubt that in time he would find his real work, his vocation. And perhaps this was not just a stopgap measure, to fill in the time, but a path. (Aira 2013: 19; 21)

When he finally enters the mysterious shanty town, he is surprised by what he finds there. Hence, his unceasing curiosity, forming approximations, getting closer to the *villa miseria* and acceptance by the cardboard collectors point towards Maxi's unintentional trespassing of socially demarcated boundaries. By the same token, Gregory Joseph Pryzbybla observes that 'more than just a thread

that intertwines the various characters of the novel, Maxi is the only one who truly gets a sense of the villa by unknowingly challenging self-grounding presumptions established by the panoptical gaze of the dominant sectors of society' (Pryzbybla 2017: 177).

In a comparable manner, *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* begins in a fairy tale manner: 'Bir kış gecesinde, gündüzleri kocaman tenekelerin şehrin çöpünü getirip boşalttıkları bir tepenin üstüne, çöp yığınlarından az uzağa, fener ışığında, sekiz kondu kuruldu' (Tekin 2012: 7). ('One winter night, on a hill where the huge bins came daily and dumped the city's waste, eight shelters were set up by lantern-light near the garbage heaps') (Tekin 1993: 15). The narrator informs the reader of the migration of people from Turkey's rural villages to the urban peripheries and their unceasing creation of precarious dwellings. As in the fiction of Aira, in Tekin's novel, there is an allusion to the 'Once upon a time' fairy tale trope, which, as Max Lüthi observes, 'conquers the time by ignoring it' and also implies 'what once happened will happen again and again' (Lüthi 1976: 44-7). Similarly, the construction of *kondu* quarters never stops in Tekin's fiction. At the same time, in *Berji Kristin Garbage Tales*, the reader cannot detect a traditional narrative voice in the book's opening pages. The idiosyncratic narrative of Tekin revealed to be distinctive from the very start, as Saliha Paker notes, 'some affinity with Marquezian fiction, yes, but also something unique in the way of a Turkish writer was exploiting fantasy which was not a means of escapism but of reconstructing an individual experience that was authentic and indigenous' (Paker 1993: 9). In effect, the blend of 'authentic and indigenous' with other literary devices, such as fantasy and magical realism, add to the distinctiveness of *Berji Kristin Garbage Tales*. For instance, when referring to the destructive force of the wind at the beginning of the novel, the third person narrator informs the reader that: 'kadınlar bebeklerini daha da uzağa sürüklemesin diye rüzgârın yolunu bağladılar. Bir ağıtla mendillerinin, yazmalarının ucuna düğüm

attılar' (Tekin 2012: 9). ('Keeing and lamenting, the women tied magic knots in their handkerchiefs and headscarves to arrest the passage of the wind, praying it would carry the babies no further') (Tekin 1993: 17). The extract, for example, demonstrates how the women search for an almost supernatural solution against the wind through popular beliefs and superstitions. In this manner, the moment something unexpected happens, they invent a superstition consistent with the scenario. To cite another example, the factory labourers in the novel commence a strike, and, at the beginning, a sizeable tent is placed within the factory. One of the employees on strike 'grabbed a big tin can', stared at it, and then mockingly unfolded a poem inspired by it:

> Ting tinga tinga ting
> İlacın işçisi greve çıktı
> Hele hele tinga ting
> Fabrika önüne ak çadır açtı
> Hele hele tinga ting. (Tekin 2012: 37)
>
> Ding Ding, Dinga Ding,
> Out on strike the Chemists went,
> Keep it going, Dinga Ding,
> By the factory bloomed a snow-white tent
> Keep it going, Dinga Ding. (Tekin 1993: 48)

The poem is rich in the use of onomatopoeia, a device that seeks to capture the spirit of discontent and rebellion in the factory, as well as the literal noise made by the labourers with cans and other metallic instruments. The image of the 'snow-white tent' that suddenly 'blooms' in the factory is a magical realist device strategically added to the sordid conditions of the strike and the worker's morale. According to Lois Parkinson Zamora, these types of magical realist devices are utilised so that 'their primary narrative investments may be in myths, legends, rituals - that is, in collective (sometimes oral and performative, as well as written) practices that bind communities together' (Zamora 1995: 3).

Moreover, unlike other examples of Turkish depicting the more affluent areas of the city (Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil, Reşat Nuri Güntekin, and Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar), in Tekin's novel, we witness the essence of a squatter settlement, Garbage Hill, as the protagonist of the story. In the 'Preface' to the English translation of *Berji Kristin Garbage Tales* (1993), John Berger maintains that 'the originality of Tekin's mature book is the direct consequence of its story. Before her, no shanty town had entered literature as an entity. If shanty towns were there, they were there as décor or as social problems' (Berger 1993: 6). From the opening of the novel to its ending, the third-person narrator reports the challenging life of a community living in a rubbish hill, who relentlessly cope with the wind, garbage trucks, pollution, and wreckers (shanty dwellers denominate every demolisher crew as wrecker). To cite an instance from the novel:

> Sabah yıkımcılar yeniden geldiler. İnsanlar iki büklüm olup düştükleri konduların içinde dozer kasnaklarının sesiyle irkildiler [...] Dozerler döne dolana konduların üstünden geçti, kırık briketleri, tabakları un ufak etti, tahtaları parmak gibi ölçülü ölçülü kırdı, tenekeleri katlayıp kıvırıp attı. (Tekin 2012: 12)
>
> In the morning the wreckers came back. The hut people, bent double and collapsed with exhaustion, started up at the sound of approaching bulldozer [...] The bulldozers rolled methodically backwards and forwards over the huts, reducing the fragments of china and bricks to a fine dust, splintering the wood into neat fragments, and hurling aside the crumpled pieces of tin. (Tekin 1993: 21)

The novel can be interpreted as a comprehensive exploration of squatter inhabitants' efforts to adapt to life in an unfamiliar environment. *Berji Kristin Garbage Tales*, Tekin's first novel, is a mirror to *Dear Shameless Death*, particularly in its exploration of migration issues, a recurring and central theme in Tekin's work. While *Dear Shameless Death* focuses on a migrated family, *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* shifts the focus to the entire shanty town district, yet migration remains a recurrent subject in Tekin's writings, underscoring the depth of her exploration. The novel encompasses a multifarious range of characters whose lives are stitched together by their experiences in the *gecekondu* and who contribute to the continuous growth and

development of the central character in the novel, the sprawling shantytown settlement. Their attachment to the place is symbolised in the character of Sırma, who clings to the demolished debris of the settlement in a defiant attempt against the authorities who constantly seek to evict the community: 'Sırma, sağlam bir tuğlayı göğsüne bastırmış, yıkık konduların önünde titriyordu. Öteki çocuklar tepenin dört bir yanında teneke ve taş toplarken Sırma'nın titremeleri arttı' (Tekin 2012: 12). ('Sırma stood trembling before the ruins, embracing a complete, undamaged brick. As the other children gathered stones and bits of tin all over the hill, her trembling increased') (Tekin 1993: 20). The repetition of the verb 'trembling' foregrounds the suffering that the authorities inflict on their precarious lives and their utter sense of helplessness. Interestingly, the character of Sırma is captured at the instant in which she clings to the last remaining brick, as the story does not provide any other features regarding her personality, appearance or family history, the novel prioritises fragmentation and the attempt to capture the life of a character at a singular, traumatic moment. Even the only detail about Sırma's feelings has been recounted by a detached narrator. By way of illustration, Sırma reminisces about her migration to the city and how she felt alienated from her family and her surroundings:

> Sırma geniş yollar boyunca sıralanmış evleri, denizi hiç görmedi […] Bu yüzden en çok, şehirde, köylerindeki evlerinden daha küçük bir eve gelip girdiklerinde şaşırdı. Şaşkınlığından utandı. Babasının yanına o gün hiç sokulmadı. (Tekin 2012: 15)

> Wide awake, Sırma gazed into the dark and retraced a long train journey […] she saw neither the houses lining the wide streets nor the sea, and so she was utterly bewildered when they entered a house in the city for smaller than their home. She was embarrassed and all day avoided her father. (Tekin 1993: 23-4)

Similarly, Güllü Baba, the second character introduced following Sırma, is one of the novel's prominent figures who embodies the community's superstitious side. Güllü Baba acquires a noteworthy role as the one who gives advice, heals people with his so-called magical powers and

sustains the culture of the ‘Flower Hill’ (‘Garbage Hill’) by inventing new traditions. Even so, the reader is not furnished with a pre-history about this character, apart from the deeds he performs. By way of illustration, the first anecdote talked about Güllü Baba is that ‘Sırma’nın ellerini yine bağladılar. Sırma’yı okuyup iyileştirmesi için mahallenin en yaşlısı Güllü Baba’yı çağırdılar’ (Tekin 2012: 13). (‘They tied her [Sirma’s] hands again and summoned the oldest member of the community, Güllü Baba, to recite the prayers which would heal her’) (Tekin 1993: 21). On these grounds, it could be inferred that Güllü Baba is the wise man of his society who acts as the spiritual guide and healer of the community. While detached from the characters in the story, the reader is kept closer to the shanty townland. In this sense, the use of the first-person plural pronoun ‘we’, as the voice of the community, is more marked than the individual voice of the ‘I’, which, all in all, contributes to the existence of the shanty town as the leading character of the novel. Significantly, in her book, *Postmodern Süreç ve Latife Tekin* (2012; T*he Postmodern Process and Latife Tekin*) Şerefnur Atik quotes Tekin’s views on the depiction of her characters in *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*:

> Ben anlattığım insanların tabi ki bir maceraya, en azından bir göç macerasına atıldıklarını biliyorum ama teke tek, toplumla düşünsel ve ruhsal bir çatışma içine girip bunu bilinçli biçimde yaşadıklarını, kendileri için özel bir hayat hikayesi kurma arzusu içinde olduklarını sanmıyorum. Zaten böyle düşündüğüm için *Berji Kristin Çöp Masalları’*nda asil kahraman, gecekondu mahallesinin kendisi olarak beliriyor. (Atik 2012: 237)
>
> I know, of course, that the people I have narrated were getting an adventure, at least a migration adventure but I don’t think that they undertake it individually, which would be an intellectual and spiritual contradiction with the community, and I don’t think they have a desire to establish a private life story for themselves. Since I have already thought in that sense, the shanty town arises as the hero of *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* itself.

In this regard, César Aira and Latife Tekin share analogous ‘plural’ perspectives on the *cartoneros* in *la villa miseria* and the *gecekondu* dwellers. From the beginning, apart from the fantastic and

magical sides of both narratives, they depict the unseen and concealed margins of their capitals. While they are growing in number, the cartoneros in *La villa* remain contradictorily invisible. In both novels, the reader is presented – with the 'earliest scavengers', particularly how they deal with 'poverty, pollution and degradation', as Tekin puts it (Tekin 1993: 15).

In *La villa*, the world of the cartoneros is exemplified via entire families devoted to this penurious activity as a means to eke out a living: mother, father, and children all set about their usual scavenging near Rivadava Avenue, where 'si no encontraban ahí lo que buscaban, no lo encontraban más' (Aira 2001: 16). ('If the collectors could not find what they were after in that stretch, they would not find it anywhere) (Aira 2013: 10). Likewise, in *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*, all the family members work indiscriminately together to reconstruct their huts and fight against the wreckers. In particular, their adapting to any new environment is exceptional, as they struggle against the elements and pollution in both metropolises. For example, one day, on their way to 'Bajo Flores' ('Lower Flores'), the fatigued cardboard collectors suddenly stop in an open space and comfort themselves as if at home, which astonishes Maxi. The third-person narrator notes:

> Quizás no teníAn casa, o compartían alguna casilla muy precaria e incómoda, y estaban mejor en uno de estos sitios casuales. En fin: era una de las ventajas de salir todos juntos a hacer su trabajo, en familia; donde se detenían, ahí estaba su casa. (Aira 2001: 18)
>
> Perhaps they had nowhere to live, or just a portion of some flimsy little shack, and it was more comfortable for them to set up a provisional camp. One advantage of going out to work all together, as a family, was that wherever they happened to stop instantly became their home. (Aira 2013: 11)

In *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*, there is a constant interplay between the government's routine demolition of the *gecekondular* (*shantytowns*) by its officially assigned wreckers and its rebuilding by the stubborn community. On 'Flower Hill', indeed, 'Garbage Hill',

squatters passionately confront the numerous wreckers and their accompanying garbage trucks. Chiefly, wreckers ruthlessly arrive and demolish the scavengers' households. Nevertheless, from the moment a habitation has been destroyed, it has been almost magically re-established and propped up instantly: 'yıkım üst üste tam otuz yedi gün sürdü. Her yıkımdan sonra kurulan kondular biraz daha küçüldü. Gitgide eve benzemez oldu' (Tekin 2012: 13-4). ('The destruction went on for exactly thirty-seven endless days, and after each raid, the huts became a little smaller and gradually lost all resemblance to houses') (Tekin 1993: 22).

Geographically, in *La villa*, the squatter land is positioned at the margins of the city, and, unlike Tekin's more symbolic naming of the area, streets names are substantially standard, following the Argentine tradition of using historical figures or dates. Though street names have been identified in the area surrounding the *villa miseria*, its inner streets have yet to be named, as they were not considered an official part of the city. Even the street-naming of the surrounding area made dense in terms of space: 'la calle Bonorino, desde que nacía en Rivadavia, se llamaba en los carteles "Avenida" Esteban Bonorino, y nadie sabía por qué, porque era una calle angosta como todas las demás' (Aira 2001: 19). ('From the intersection with Rivadavia, where the street Bonorino began, all the signs said "Avenida Esteban Bonorino," but no one knew why, because it was a narrow street like any other') (Aira 2013: 13). According to James Scorer, despite being located in the peripheries of the urban city, the *villa miseria* is not a territory in the metropolis but rather a space interrelating itself to the city illegitimately (Scorer 2016: 172). Scorer adds that the 'inhabitants of the villa, many of whom are cartoneros, often recycle what is left over from the rest of the city, creating a material connection' (2016: 172). There is a concealed ecological bridge between these two distinctive territories: the *cartoneros* and the urban community depend on each other to maintain their lives. The cardboard collectors must enter the urban land because they need

to work, and city inhabitants require them for recycling and environmental concerns. Therefore, *cartoneros* cross boundaries for the sake of material demands. The liminal space of the shantytown where they reside is neither the metropolitan area nor the countryside. To be sure, Scorer is right to note that the squatter region stands as a 'limbo' within the city, a liminal space. Writing in the wake of Borges, whose concept of the *orillas* was conceived as an in-between space or, as Beatriz Sarlo puts it, 'a frontier between city and countryside' (Sarlo 1993: 21), the Buenos Aires of the 1990s depicted by Aira similarly attempts to represent an indeterminate space, though in this case an undefined area within the metropolis, the *villa miserias* that did not yet exist in the Borges's Buenos Aires of the 1920s. According to Sarlo, the term *orillas* 'described the poor suburban neighbourhoods that lay in close proximity to the pampas that surrounded the city' (21). Despite their historical differences, both the *orillas* and the *villa miseria* are conceived as spaces within the city's margins and edges. While Borges's *orillas* referred to the poor suburban neighborhoods bordering the pampas, Aira's 1990s Buenos Aires reframes this indeterminacy within the metropolis itself, through the villa miseria: a space both inside and outside, official yet invisible. Considering the dialogue between the centre and the periphery, more fitting would be the concept of 'cosmopolitanism of the poor' by Silviano Santiago. In the essay 'O cosmopolitismo do pobre' (2017; 'The Cosmopolitanism of the Poor'), Santiago theorizes and offers a new form of cosmopolitanism that emerges from the *favelas*, in the context of Afro-Brazilian culture. Santiago remarks that:

> Ao ser reconfigurado pragmaticamente pelos atuais economistas epolíticos, para que se adeque às determinações do fluxo do capital transnacional, que operacionaliza as diversas economías de mercado emconfronto no palco do mundo, a cultura nacional estaria (ou deve estar) ganhando uma nova reconfiguração que, por suavez, levaria (ouestá levando) os atores culturais pobres a se manifestarem por uma atitude cosmopolita, até então inédita em termos degrupos carentes e marginalizados em países periféricos (Santiago 2017: 9).

> Contemporary economists and politicians pragmatically reconfigure national culture in order to make it conform to the determinations of the flow of transnational capital that drives the diverse market economies into conflict on the world stage.With regard to marginalized groups in countries on the periphery of the global market, the national culture would be, or rather should be, newly configured in a way that would lead to the unprecedented manifestation of a cosmopolitan attitude among economically disadvantaged cultural actors (Santiago 2017: 35).

Santiago's cosmopolitanism provides a global mediation that values not only hegemonic centers but also the periphery. Santiago encourages embracing diversity and multiplicity, rather than undervaluing the experiences of poor, ethnic, and socially marginalized groups. This 'cosmopolitanism' is not about rootlessness or privilege, but about creative survival, adaptation, and the forging of new cultural forms at the city's edges. In this light, the *villa miseria* in Aira and the *gecekondu* in Tekin are not merely sites of deprivation, but of inventive world-making and negotiation with global forces.Therefore, by reading these works through Santiago's 'cosmopolitanism of the poor,' we recognize the agency, adaptability, and creativity of those who dwell in the world's interstices—not as passive victims of marginalization, but as active participants in shaping both local and global cultures. The margins, in this sense, become sites of cosmopolitan possibility, challenging any simple opposition between center and periphery, and revealing the complex cultural flows that animate the contemporary city.

The notion of the margins is also applicable to the *gecekondu* (conceived as a district that is neither an organ of the municipal nor a part of the rural dimension), also an in-between area in the interstices of the metropolis, and what could be called a 'third space' (Bouwman 2014: 12). At the same time, the 'third space' constitutes for Bouwman the combination of both 'the real and imagined representations' of the writer (Bouwman 2014: 13-14). For Maxi, therefore, *la villa* 'era parte del miedo. Ahí esteba la clave de los lugares, los lugares sociales y también de todos los

otros, incluidos los imaginarios' (Aira 2001: 31-32). ('Was a part of the fear. And fear is the key to all places: social, geographical, even imaginary') (Aira 2013: 25). As in *La villa*, the 'Garbage Hill' in *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* is in the urban area and out of it. It was supposedly born at the borders of Istanbul. The fictional characters provide titles and nicknames for the locations, streets, and places in the story endowed with meaning on a symbolic level. For example, while at the outset of the novel, the slum area is called 'Garbage Hill', later on, it has been transformed into 'Kovma Burnu', 'Savaştepe', and 'Çiçektepe' (Tekin 2012: 11;15). ('Wind-Curse Point', Battlefield'' and 'Flower Hill') (Tekin 1993: 20; 24). The setting of the narrative has been symbolically linked to these district names, whether they are suggestive of a deceptively prosperous area 'Flower Hill', or whether they have negative connotations related to the daily plight of its inhabitants, 'Wind-Curse Point' and 'Battlefield'. Later on, 'Flower Hill' morphs into the home of anarchists, gypsies, gamblers, prostitutes, drug dealers, and exploiters such as the Garbage Owner, Kurd Cemal and Hacı Hasan. If, at the beginning of the novel, the purity of the community is conveyed through the work done by 'Berji Girls' in the village, as it develops, the district is turned into a corrupt red-light district (see Tekin 2012:158; Tekin 1993: 158). This shows that the image of the shanty town is not static but in a constant state of flux. From its birth until its last plight, the *gecekondu* is constantly 'becoming'.

3.5 Turkey's 'troubles'

Saliha Paker notes that 'the key 'authentic' place is highlighted by the title 'Garbage Hill' because it alludes to a factual incident that occurred in the history of Istanbul. It was part of the history of squatter inhabitants who migrated to Istanbul in the 1960s, and the 'Rubbish Road' has remained the name of a bus stop on the main road from the Bosphorus to the city, the mosque was still standing in 1988' (Paker 1993: 13). As pointed out earlier, in Turkey, there were two marked

migratory waves, in the 1950s and the 1980s. Overall, 'migration was concentrated around the five largest cities: Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana and Bursa', but Istanbul was the most populous city' (Delibaş 2015: 118). Tekin's use of magical realist techniques adheres to Ann Bowers' claim that 'magical realism uses realism to provide an environment with which to stretch the reader's notions of what is acceptable as reality' (Bowers 2004: 22). In *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* there is a miniature parody of a Turkish community grappling with the tumultuous affairs of the 1980s military regime, which was characterised by labour strikes as a consequence of the income inequalities ushered in by rampant capitalism and industrialisation. After the War of Independence (1919-1923), Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (in office 1923-1938) was proclaimed Turkey's first president. The country constructed a national identity during his governance by establishing the Republic, democracy, modernisation and secularism. 'The Kemalist Revolution was the end of the Turkish quest for a new identity in the contemporary world. Ottomanism and Islamism were submissions to history […] First and foremost, the Turkish people were solidly cemented as a national entity around a firm linguistic, cultural, and territorial base' (Eren 1963:19). Erik Jan Zürcher points out that Turkish membership of NATO in 1952 was initially celebrated as 'a guarantee against Soviet aggression and as guaranteeing the flow of Western aid and loans which would make the modernisation of Turkey possible' (Zürcher 1993: 246). He adds that 'it was taken as a sign that Turkey had finally been accepted by the Western nations on equal terms' (Zürcher 1993: 246). However, C. H. Dodd notes that, by the 1970s, NATO became more problematic due to the 'total nationalisation of banks, and major industries, import controls, large cuts in defence spending, the removal of NATO bases' (Dodd 1990: 36). The NATO controversy is satirised in Tekin's novel. When unemployed 'Flower Hill' men were desperately looking for jobs, they came across a new 'Flower Hill' signboard with 'Nato Avenue' on it. The recent avenue, undoubtedly,

evokes curiosity and a variety of interpretations that critique neoliberalism and its global institutions:

> Güllü Baba'nin Nato'nun eğrilik demeye gelebileceğini söyledikten sonra Çiçektepe'nin yüregi "Güp!" diye yekindi. Ortalığa türlü türlü laf salındı […] Nato'nun eğrilik demeye gelmediğini söyleyenler, Nato'nun devletle ilgili bir "büyük kuruluş" olduğunu anlata anlata ortalıkta dönenler sus pus oldu. Çiçektepeliler bir gece kadın erkek levhayı söktükleri gibi kaldırıp Kovma Burnun'ndan aşağı attılar. (Tekin 2012: 27-28)

> Once Gullu Baba had suggested this, the hearts of the Flower Hill people trembled and all kinds of ideas were put forward […] Those who said 'Nato' had no connection with 'deformity' and who had come out and explained to everyone that it was a 'big institution' to do with the state, fell silent. And one night the men and women of Flower Hill took down the street sign and threw it over Wind-Curse Point. (Tekin 1993: 37-38)

Nevertheless, Tekin also critiques the rise of authoritarianism in Turkey, particularly the military coups of 1960 and 1980. Eric Jan Zürcher suggests that the coups were motivated by 'increasing law and order problems, Kurdish separatism, a political system which seemed completely deadlocked and an economy in tatters' (1993: 282). Similarly, Kayhan Delibaş points out that political problems such as 'widespread social unrest, increased violence and political killings in the streets, led to the military seizure of power on 12 September 1980' (Delibaş 2005: 121). The 1980 coup aimed 'to preserve the integrity of the country, to restore national union and togetherness, to avert a possible civil war, to re-establish the authority of the state and to eliminate all the factors that prevent the normal functioning of the democratic order' (Dagi 1998: 124). Even though the objective of the coup was to restructure Turkish political, social and economic policies in the interest of providing stability in the nation, the military violated civil rights. 'Respectable trade unionists, legal politicians, university professors, teachers, journalists and lawyers, in short, anyone who had expressed even vaguely leftist (or in some cases Islamist) views before September

1980 was liable to get into trouble' (Zürcher 1993: 294). In her interview with Pelin Özer, Tekin refers to this challenging period in Turkish history:

> Ama ben gerçekten de çaresizlikten yazar oldum. O dönemde, o kadar önemliydi ki benim bir şey yaparak kendimi kurtarabilmem…12 Eylül'ün şiddetini bertaraf edip parçalanmamak için benim de o şiddette bir şey yapmam gerekiyordu. O koşullarda, elimi uzatabileceğim tek şey kâğıt ve kalem. (Özer 2015: 33)
>
> I became a writer truthfully from desperation. It was so important in my life that I could save myself by doing something ... I had to do something in order not to wear myself out as a result of the severity of 12 September. In those circumstances, the only thing I could get away with was paper and pencil.

These historical events mirror the novel's deterioration of the 'Garbage Hill' community. Garbage Chief and Kurd Cemal are, for example, the two separate candidates for the Municipal Council who create political unrest, both of whom exploit the dwellers both physically and mentally. They brainwash the community by promising deeds such as constructing a school, building a factory and setting up businesses for them:

> Donlu Yol'da sanayi buzdolabı çıkaran fabrikanın gerçek olduğu günlerde, Çiçektepe'de Kürt Cemal'in partisine yazılı olanların bu fabrikada iş bulacağına dair bir haber yayıldı. Çiçektepe konducuları topluca gidip Kürt Cemal'in partisine yazıldı. (Tekin 2012: 88)
>
> When the refrigerator factory got going on Panty Way the rumour spread that anyone on Flower Hill who had registered in Kurd Cemal's party would find work in the plan. The Flower Hill people all registered with Kurd Cemal. (Tekin 1993: 101)

In this way, *konducular* invest their whole money to find employment and to have a field in the community. After that, many sham factories were built, most of which produced fake or inadequate products: 'Birkaç gün içinde kurulan fabrikalarda, sabahtan akşama, sahte deterjan, renk renk meyve tozları, meyve suları, ağız dağlayan çikolatalar, beyazlatmayan çamaşır suları, köpürmeyen sabunlar yapıldı' (Tekin 2012: 91). ('From morning to night, in these factories which had been set up in just a few days, they produced fake detergent, multi-coloured fruit powders and juices,

mouth-scorching chocolates, liquid whiteners that would not bleach and soaps that would not lather') (Tekin 1993: 105).

In *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*, the narrator makes various allusions to the deplorable conditions of labourers and as shown earlier, to the labour strikes. For example, the refrigerator factory owner in the novel, Mr. Izak, exploits the employees' rights day by day by forcing them to work under dehumanising conditions. First, he restrains the workers from looking out of the window: 'Camları yarısından yukarı, isçiler çalışırken başlarını kaldırıp çöp bayırlarının parıldayan yamaçlarına bakmasınlar diye griye boyattı' (Tekin 2012: 71). ('He had the top half of the windows painted grey so the workers could not look up from their work at the dazzling slopes of the rubbish mounds') (Tekin 1993: 84). Later, Mr. Izak informs the labourers about their inability to get premium pay any more: 'Sonra yılda bir kez aldıkları ikramiyelerini artık alamayacaklarını bildirdi. İkramiye yerine bir gün bisküvi, bir gün yoğurt vereceğini söyledi' (Tekin 2012: 75) ('He announced that from now on they could not have the bonus they had had once a year. Instead, he would give out biscuits and yoghurt on alternate days') (Tekin 1993:88). Mr. Izak, for example, embodies a rapacious form of capitalism in the narrative. In his refrigerator factory, Mr. Izak exploits labourers' collective structure by differentiating them as 'muntazam calişanlar' and 'muntazam calişmayanlar' (Tekin 2012: 76). ('Regulars' and 'Irregulars') (Tekin 1993: 88). He is distorting the unity among employees for the sake of his political deeds. While Mr. Izak benefits from the workforce in his factory, the work ethics have been substantially disregarded. In return for this injustice, some of the employees in the *gecekondu* rebelled and requested their pay, and some of them compose a song, which is a part of their oral culture, reflects their current condition:

Işçiler daha hızlı
Uçaktan daha hızlı
Çalışın daha hızlı

Elim ayağımdan önce
Uzanırsa prese?
Parmaklarınız kopar
Üstüpüye kan dollar. (Tekin 2012: 76)

Workers, faster, faster move
Than the aeroplane above.

What if my hand gets caught and trapped
Before my foot can stop the press?
Your fingers will get crushed and torn,
A bloody mess! (Tekin 1993: 88-89)

The song incorporates sarcasm, which creates a more striking language with irony and social criticism. In giving voice to shanty dwellers' cries, songs, elegies and prayers, Tekin, in the opinion of Yasemin Yılmaz, employs 'a language that symbolises the cultural presence of a disregarded group in a city function as a means of resistance to the hegemony of urban culture' (2013: 37). Nevertheless, there were *Dayakçı* (*Bully Boys*) who beat labourers that speak of 'unions, or insurance, or compensation' (Tekin 1993: 87). Comparatively, violent labour strikes continued to happen in the late 1970s. According to Delibaş, there were two main reasons behind the strikes. The first reason is that 'the neoliberal economic policies, by causing income disparities, destroyed rural life so that millions of peasants had to seek employment in the cities. The second point is that the low wages and salary policies deepened the poverty of the millions of urban dwellers in the cities.' (Delibaş 2005: 126)

Another critical example is one of the chemical factories built over 'Water Father', where many factory labourers and children died of poisoning. When the families of those who died confront the factory owner, he scares them away, while at the same time giving them free yoghurt

to placate their anger, an event that Tekin satirises with the use of magical realism: 'Herkes el açıp duaya başladı. Fabrika sahibi, konducuların duasını aldıktan sonra fabrikanın serum ve ilaç şişelerinin yıkandığı mavimsi sıcak suyu oluk oluk mahalleninin üstüne saldı' (Tekin 2012: 19). ('They gave up cursing the owner and everyone raised their hands in prayer to him. Once rewarded with their prayers, he flooded the neighbourhood with the hot bluish water in which the factory serum and medicine bottles were washed') (Tekin 1993: 28). The workers forget their pain and comically pray for the employer for a bowl of yoghurt. Finally, another essential aspect addressed in Tekin's novel is the issue of women's rights. The forging of female communities is an important aspect that underpins the novel. For example, Tirintaz Fidan's character embodies a sophisticated woman who brings education to deprived women's communities. Tirintaz Fidan is a self-taught marginal character who started to give *Gece dersi* (*Evening Class*) to women. In her classes, she teaches women gender equality, suggesting that '[…] yalnızca erkeklerin 'keyif' almadığını, kocasıyla yatan kadının da keyif alabileceğini fitneledi' (Tekin 2012: 50). ('[…] men were not the only ones to enjoy pleasure, a woman also could have pleasure from sleeping with her husband') (Tekin 1993: 63). Although the novel also shows that, despite Fidan's well-meant teachings, women are still subject to abuse '[…] kadınlar ondan öğrendikleri her yeni şey için kocalarından dayak yedi' (Tekin 2012: 50) ('[…] but for every new thing the women learned from her they took a beating from their husbands') (1993: 63).

3.6 Argentina's Neoliberal 'troubles'

Aira also touches on vital socio-political events in twentieth-century Argentina. It marked Argentina's so-called economic, agricultural 'boom' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The rapid industrial growth the Argentine Republic underwent in the final decades of

the nineteenth century – a complex neo-colonial period dominated by British economic intervention – inevitably led to a series of boom-and-bust cycles during a protracted period that culminated in the Wall Street Crash of 1929. Historian David Rock states that 'by 1914 Argentina had become a primary exporter par excellence serving the industrial economies. Ninety percent of its exports were farm goods from the pampas region' (1985: 168). Later on, under the government of Juan Domingo Perón (in office: 1946-1952; 1952-1955; 1973-1974), the country witnessed a number of economic, political, and social transformations. One of the distinguishing features of the Perón regime was the privileges brought on the working class. James Scobie observes that 'through policies and programs which he continued as president, Perón became the saviour of the descamisados or "shirtless ones" […] For the first time, the working man was made to feel important' (1978: 248). Nonetheless, after Perón was overthrown in 1955: 'Argentina began a long, unavailing struggle to surmount the economic impasse that had risen during the 1940s. Nevertheless, the country failed to regain prosperity and growth' (Rock 2006: 320).

In *La villa*, a post-dictatorship novel, as well as a novel that critiques the neoliberalism of the Carlos Ménem administration (in office 1989-1999), Aira highlights the widening gap between the rich and the poor, particularly how the latter group did not benefit from the changes brought upon by globalisation. According to James Scorer: 'One very visible face of that poverty in Buenos Aires in the lead-up to and the aftermath of the 2001 crisis, were informal rubbish collectors, known as cartoneros […] At the turn of new millennium there was a dramatic increase in the numbers of cartoneros as a result of growing unemployment and urban poverty in Buenos Aires' (Scorer 2016: 95,150). Similarly, Gregory Joseph Przybyla suggests that 'Buenos Aires in *La villa* is a broken place struggling to put itself together in the wake of the December 2001 economic crisis that left the country in shambles' (2017: 158-159). Another pertinent example of social

inequality and discrimination is depicted in the case of the character Aira Cynthia Cabezas who ‘había sido una chica pobre, una “negrita” (según su hermana; él no la había conocido), la clase de chica que normalmente trabaja de sirvienta y no va al colegio. Había ido becada, y había sido "la mosca en la leche", la excepción' (Aira 2001: 89). ('Was a poor girl, shanty trash as his sister put it (he had never met her), the kind of girl who would normally be working as a servant, not going to a high school […] She had a scholarship; she was the "fly in the pail of milk," the odd one out') (2013: 81). Another textual example is offered in a conversation between a poor Peruvian immigrant housemaid, Adelita, and Maxi:

> - ¿Qué pobres? Señor, ésa es una palabra antigua. Antes había pobres y ricos, porque había un mundo hecho de pobres y ricos. Ahora ese mundo desapareció, y los pobres se quedaron sin mundo. Por eso mis patronas dicen: “ya no hay pobres.” (Aira 2001: 75)
>
> “What poor people? Sir, that’s an old-fashioned word. In the old days, there were poor people and rich people because there was a world made up of the poor and the rich. Now that world has disappeared, and the poor have been left without a world. That’s why the ladies I work for say: ‘There are no poor people anymore’.” (Aira 2013: 67)

What Aira makes clear throughout the novel is that people with low incomes have not only become poorer – thus rendering the word *pobre* almost inadequate – but that they have become invisible and removed from reality. It is also noteworthy that in the 1940s, large waves of migrants from the provinces emigrated to Buenos Aires, meaning that ‘urban manufacturing could no longer absorb the swelling urban labour force, and most new migrants were condemned to the rapidly proliferating shantytowns’ (Rock 311-312). Expectedly, as migrants shifted towards the capital, ‘slums absorbed these new arrivals, introduced them to economic and social wants, but failed to provide them with the means to fulfil their ambitions’ (Scobie 1978: 7). As a result of rapid urbanisation and industrialisation, the balance between production and consumption fell through meaning that the gap between rich and poor widened. In particular, the surplus of *cartoneros* in

Buenos Aires indicates poverty and unemployment. As Maxi inhabits the ambiguous border that separates the city from the shanty town, he starts questioning the cardboard collectors about their means of survival. Maxi's perception of the *cartoneros* is considerably pragmatic despite being dreamy and romantic. To cite an instance, unlike the other inhabitants to whom *los pobres* have become invisible, Maxi has become acutely aware of their existence and, therefore, becomes inquisitive about their condition:

> ¿Cómo se las arreglaban los habitantes de la villa para sobrevivir? El sistema de los cartoneros podía entenderlo más o menos, o podía llegar a entenderlo […], pero los cartoneros eran una docena o dos, o tres, y en la villa vivían decenas de miles de familias. ¿De qué vivían? ¿Del aire? (Aira 2001: 69)
>
> How did the inhabitants of the shantytown manage to survive? He understood the collectors' system more or less, or could have […], but there weren't many of them - a dozen, three at the most – and there were tens of thousands of families living in the shantytowns. What did they live on? Air? (Aira 2013: 60-61)

Paradoxically, at the same time as the cardboard collectors are supporting the capital's ecosystem by contributing to the recycling and reusing of discarded material that would otherwise end up in landfills, they feed themselves from the leftovers left by the better-off in municipal bins and remain alive in scarcity. While the *cartoneros* have achieved social invisibility in Aira's novel, in Tekin's narrative, *çöp ayıklayıcılar* (*scavengers*) are constantly under threat by the powerful law enforcers who visit their settlements from time to time in an attempt to recuperate the land in order to allow the building of a new factory.

The *villa miseria* in Aira is constructed as an urban microcosm, which is referred to as *la calesita* (*the carousel*) by the police:

> Si la forma general de la villa era circular, entonces las calles deberían haber estado trazadas en perpendicular al borde, de modo de ser "radios"; y desembocar todas en el centro. Pero no: partían en ángulos de cuarenta y cinco grados, todas en la misma dirección (vistas desde afuera, hacia la derecha). Eso significaba que ninguna llegaba al centro, y que ninguna tenía salida. ¿Adónde terminaban? (Aira 2001: 35)

> If the overall shape of the shantytown was circular, then the streets should have run perpendicular to the edge, in a radial pattern, all converging at the centre. But no: they ran off an angle of forty-five degrees, all in the same direction (to the right, for someone facing inward). Which mean that none of them led to centre, or came out anywhere. Where did they end? (Aira 2013: 28-29)

The *calesita* structure advances a circular, labyrinthine (in the mode of Borges) place noteworthy for its luminosity. According to James Scorer, the fabulous aspect of *la villa* 'allows for a double move: the ability to feel wonder at the space of the *villa* - of imaging it – without denying the material reality of poverty' (Scorer 2016: 181). Maxi faces the continuous dilemma of whether to continue aiding the cartoners: '¿No lo tenía todo, acoso? Los que necesitaban suerte eran los otros, los cartoneros, por ejemplo, o la gente de la villa, o este mismo muchacho sin casa. ¿Pero él? (Aira 2001: 86). ('Wasn't he (Maxi) lucky already? The others needed luck: the collectors, for example, the people who lived in the shantytown or this homeless kid. But him?') (Aira 2013: 78). Though the glittery appearance of the shanty town is deceptive since the inside is ruled by a series of gangs involved in crime and drug trafficking. The drug dealers benefit from the eccentric shape of the *villa* in order to hide from and trick the police authorities. The fantastical aspect of *la villa* means that it constantly rotates and that the dealers change the lighting accordingly:

> Una consigna fácil de retener ("el cuadrado", "el triángulo", "las paralelas", "la cabellera"), que se cambiaba todas las noches, o varias veces por noche, y se transmitía por el celular cuando el auto ya estaba dando vueltas a la Villa, y no había modo de equivocarse. Era así como habían sacado la proxidina, bajo las narices mismas de la policía, y habían burlado todo intento de interceptar el tráfico. (Aira 2001: 150)

> The system was foolproof: they used names that were easy to remember (like "the square," "the triangle," "the parallel lines," or "the hair"), changed the location every night, or several times a night, and waited until the buyers were already circling the shantytown before calling them on their cell phones to tell them where to go. But it was like the Nazca lines: the inspector had been able to dicover the pattern only by seeing the whole thing from the air, as no one had ever seen it before. (Aira 2013: 142-143)

This means that *la villa miseria* destabilises fixed urban perceptions through its fantastical angle and ability to create mirage effects to protect its inhabitants. As the novel comes to an end, the mystery of the villa also unfolds. The squatter settlement of 'Bajo Flores', for the first time, reveals itself in its bare form: 'Nadie había visto antes la villa desde ese punto de vista, es decir, en su forma íntegra. Era un anillo de luz, con radios muy marcados en una inclinación de cuarenta y cinco grados respecto del perímetro, ninguno de los cuales apuntaba al centro, y el centro quedaba oscuro, como un vacío' (Aira 2001: 148). ('No one had ever seen the shantytown like that, in its entirety. It was a ring of light, with clearly marked lines going in at an angle of 45 degrees to the circumference, none of them leading to the centre, which was dark, like a void') (Aira 2013: 141). Therefore, Inspector Cabezas cannot trace Maxi because the structure contains and protects him. His protectors change the lights while he is sleeping, like in a fairy tale. Evidently, Cabezas is a corrupt police officer whose dishonest machinations are finally discovered and punished. His last words are focalised through the third-person narrator, as the character experiences a negative epiphany, where he realises that the glittery image of the villa is just an illusion and that what is left is a barren land. In this way, Aira also shows that the image of the villa is both subjective and deceptive, depending, as exemplified below, in the eye of the beholder:

> Cabezas se lanzó sobre la puerta, y la abrió de par en par por el impacto. No pudo dar crédito a sus ojos. Lo que había del otro…era simplemente nada. No había habitación. Era una fachada, detrás de la cual se abría un paisaje desolado lleno de lluvia, con otras casillas, cerca y lejos, iluminadas por los relámpagos. Era parecido y distinto a la vez: afuera, pero también adentro. (Aira 2001: 167)
>
> Cabezas hurled himself at the door, and the impact burst it wide open. He couldn't believe his eyes. Inside there was…simply nothing. There was no room. It was a door in a facade, behind which stretched a desolate scene full of rain, with other shacks, near and far, illuminated by the lightning. It was similar and different at the same time: outside, but also inside. (Aira 2013: 160)

3.7 Conclusion

Parallel to the second chapter, the third chapter compares Tekin's second novel, *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* to Aira's novella, *The Shantytown*. In *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*, Tekin heightens the narrative's complexity by interweaving magical realism and Anatolian folkloric traditions, including epics, songs, lyrics, and riddles. On the other hand, Aira utilises a Borges-like labyrinthine tone, where the intensification of knottiness and fantasy unfolds throughout the novella. The mystifying experiences resulting from these tensions create a sense of cognitive dissonance, often expressed through the language and tropes of the narratives. The characters encounter these dissonances and live with them rather than resolve them. This aligns

with the fantastic devices Tekin and Aira employ, which are continuously evolving and shifting. The characters' experiences, such as a rotating villa and communication with plants, ghosts, and djinns, are often seen as ludicrous, paradoxical, bizarre, and irrational. However, these experiences, while seemingly outlandish, are more familiar to the characters than the modern technological devices they fear. The characters' familiarity with the bizarre, despite its irrationality, may make the audience feel more connected to their experiences. In *Dear Shameless Death*, the villagers' fear of radio, stove, and television starkly contrasts with their ability to chaffer with djinns. Furthermore, *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* follows the years echoed in *Dear Shameless Death,* specifically the 1980s, when the failings of neoliberal capitalist society led to the emergence of *gecekondu*, providing a socio-political context that informs the narrative. Correspondingly, *The Shantytown* depicts Argentina from the 1990s to the 2000s, following the post-dictatorship era and the rise of la *villa miseria*, shedding light on the socio-political landscape of the time.

In sum, both Tekin and Aira present their shantytowns as in-between spaces in constant flux. In Aira, *la villa miseria* becomes the centre of the novel, which evokes a marvellous sense of curiosity and mystery in the manner of the fairy tale while at the same time addressing complex social issues such as social inequality, police corruption, local gangs, and drug trafficking. In Tekin, the ever-growing *gecekondu* district and its dispossessed inhabitants also become the centre of the novel, as it explores their daily plight of seeking employment, battling with adverse weather conditions, and the constant assault of the police authorities. Both narratives seek to portray and 'remap' the peripheral cityscapes of Buenos Aires and Istanbul from the alternative perspective of the margins and their marginalised inhabitants. They achieve this with magical realism, an innovative fictional device that enables them to juxtapose social realism with symbolic,

metaphoric, and mythical strategies that act as semi-concealed ideological critiques. Both writers' depiction of the city from the perspective of the margins offers 'new' versions of Istanbul and Buenos Aires, where it is possible to witness crucial issues such as migration, poverty, and the rise of a criminal class that reflect in distorted ways the tumultuous histories of Turkey and Argentina respectively.

CHAPTER 4: FROM *FEMICIDIOS* TO HONOUR-KILLING: GENDER POLITICS IN MARIANA ENRÍQUEZ AND ELİF ŞAFAK/SHAFAK

4.1 Introduction

The present chapter offers an exploration of the literary works of two women authors, Mariana Enríquez from Argentina and Elif Shafak from Turkey. In accordance with the thesis's conceptual thread, the current chapter's comparative focus dwells on the unique cultural and diasporic encounters of Argentina and Turkey as depicted in their works. Divergently, in this instance, the transgressive and revolutionary import of women's writings will be compared, discussed, and analysed. The rationale behind drawing comparative parallels between Enríquez and Shafak is the nature of their aesthetic interventions in the transnational literary field, which offer unique versions

of feminist resistance alongside the historical, political, and psychological traumas of their respective countries of origin.

The chapter analyses Enriquez's story collection *Las cosas que perdimos en el fuego* (2017; *Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories*) and the novel *İskender* (2012; *Honour*) by Shafak. Enríquez's collection was first published in its original language, Spanish, and then translated into English by Megan McDowell in 2017. In contrast, Shafak's novel was written in English and translated into Turkish by Omca A. Korugan 2012. However, the English version of the book is interspersed with Turkish words and expressions. *Things We Lost in the Fire* encapsulates twelve stories, which are not directly interrelated but create a thematic coherence. Some characters in the collection overlap, and themes of grief, death, abuse, and homelessness feature throughout the collection.

On the other hand, Shafak's *Honour* is a saga of three generations. The Toprak family faced a cultural split, firstly as a Turkish-Kurdish family in Turkey and then migrating to another cultural division in London. Shafak, in her novel, blurs the boundaries by transferring her main characters from one location to another, creating a transgenerational and transnational novel: first, a Kurdish village on the banks of the Euphrates; second, to Istanbul and then to London, and eventually Abu Dhabi. Through close, detailed reading, one can observe similarities and differences between these texts written by two contemporary women writers. Thematically, Enríquez and Shafak have picked up various distinct stories to weave their plots in different tones and narration applied to characters who faced similar concerns in the late twentieth century, mainly through the intersections of gender, identity, and historical trauma. More specifically, both works grapple with the problematic issue of domestic abuse and men's violence against women or *femicidio* (*femicide*). Pastilí Toledo Vásquez, expert on gender and criminal justice, defines the term *femicidio* as:

> Los conceptos de feminicidio y femicidio se desarrollan en la literatura feminista desde principios de la década de 1990 para evidenciar el sustrato sexista en

> numerosos asesinatos y muertes de mujeres, el androcentrismo de figuras aparentemente neutras como homicidio, así como la responsabilidad directa o indirecta del Estado en estos fenómenos, dadas las deficiencias en su juzgamiento por parte de teóricas enfatizan uno o varios de estos elementos, siendo propio de Latinoamérica tanto la inclusión de la responsabilidad del Estado en el análisis – relativo a fenómenos de corrupción o impunidad -, así como el debate entre las expresiones femicidio o feminicidio para denominar estos hechos. (Toledo Vázquez 2009: 13)
>
> The concepts of *feminicide* and *femicide* have been developed in feminist literature since the early 1990s to demonstrate the sexist substrate in numerous murders and deaths of women, the androcentrism of seemingly neutral figures such as homicide, as well as the direct or indirect responsibility of the State in these phenomena, given the deficiencies in their judgment by theorists, they emphasize one or several of these elements, being typical of Latin America both the inclusion of the responsibility of the State in the analysis – related to phenomena of corruption or impunity – as well as the debate between the expressions femicide or feminicide to denominate these facts.

In some sources, *femicidio* and *feminicidio* have been referred to as concomitant phrases importing to the gender-based killing of women due to either homicide or States' failures. While in her definition, Toledo Vásquez weaves a relationship and gives a broad definition of both terms, the Mexican author, anthropologist, politician, and feminist activist Marcela Lagarde focuses on the distinction of the two terms and gives a more conclusive definition:

> Transité de femicidio a feminicidio porque en castellano "femicidio" es una voz análoga a homicidio y solo significa asesinato de mujeres […] Por eso, para diferenciar los términos, preferí la voz feminicidio para denominar así el conjunto de delitos de lesa humanidad que contienen los crímenes, los secuestros y las desapariciones de niñas y mujeres en un cuadro de colapso institucional. Se trata de una fractura del Estado de derecho que favorece la impunidad. Por eso, el feminicidio es un crimen de Estado. (Lagarde 2005: 155)
>
> I went from *femicidio* to *feminicidio* because in Spanish *femicidio* is a word analogous to homicide and only means murder of women […] That is why, to differentiate the terms, I preferred the word *feminicidio* to name the set of crimes against humanity that they contain crimes, abductions and disappearances of girls and women in a context of institutional collapse. This is a fracture of the rule of law that favours impunity. Therefore, *feminicidio* is a state crime.

Hence, in the following discussion, I will employ the term *femicidio* to address the murder of women by men triggered by hatred, revenge, pleasure, domination, or under the name of 'honour' as in the exemplum of Shafak's narrative. In some instances, as noted in the above definition, we can also witness 'institutional collapse'.

At the same time, whereas *Things We Lost in the Fire* includes gruesome horror tales which touch on the socio-political horrors of Argentina's military dictatorship (1976-1983) and domestic violence with supernatural and surreal elements, *Honour* portrays a hybrid space where the Toprak family circle dashes from one territory to another, eventually resulting in separation, displacement, unhomeliness, and finally the catastrophe of honour killing. While unveiling some severe social and cultural discourses in Turkey, such as displacement, hybridity, Turkish-Kurdish conflict, isolation, social status, and the position of women, as well as existential conflicts, Shafak employs magical realism and supernatural twists through djinns, ghosts, prophecies, and superstitions. On the other hand, Enriquez pictures the precarious nature of the lives of women and other vulnerable individuals in post-dictatorship Argentina. What is outstanding here is that both texts primarily deal with gender dynamics. In the texts' core are the lives of various female characters. For example, the titular story, 'Things We Lost in the Fire', was placed last in the collection; it is a gruesome and brutal story that reflects female empowerment, which allows women to act of their own accord in burning themselves alive as a protest to male violence, and *femicidios*. In a similar vein, one of the protagonists of the novel, Pembe, is mercilessly killed by his beloved son out of rumours of an illicit love affair. Therefore, this chapter aims to compare the work of these two women writers through an examination of selected stories from Enriquez's collection, such as 'The Dirty Kid' and 'Things We Lost in the Fire' and Shafak's saga-driven narrative, by focusing on social, cultural, and political angles of the texts, both in Argentina and Turkey in the late twentieth

century with a focus on gender-based violence through the employment of magical realism, gothic, and other supernatural twists. All in all, the thematic appeal of Shafak's and Enríquez's works on the world literature stage and their dynamics will be the focus of the chapter.

4.2 Enríquez's and Shafak's Political Labyrinths

Born in 1973 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Mariana Enríquez is a journalist, short story writer, and novelist. Enríquez starts off her writing career publishing her first novel *Bajar es lo peor* (1995; *Coming down is the Worst*), following *Cómo desaparecer completamente* (2004; *How to Disappear Completely*), *Los peligros de fumar en la cama* (2009; *The Dangers of Smoking in Bed*), *Este es el mar* (2017; *This is the Sea*), amongst her most significant works to date. To be sure, Enríquez had experienced a meteoric rise expressly when she featured a collection of short stories in 2016, *Las cosas que perdimos en el fuego*, which was superbly translated into English by Megan McDowell the following year as *Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories*. What makes this collection stand out is the way Enríquez engages with considerably momentous issues, such as post-dictatorship Argentina, domestic violence, corruption, violence, oppression, and feminist resistance, whilst inserting her writing within an identifiable gothic tradition within Argentina, Latin America, and transnationally. To fully comprehend the reality of terrors portrayed in the works of Enríquez, one needs to appreciate the political and social atmosphere of Argentina between the years 1970s and 1980s, something that Enríquez herself likes to emphasise: 'crecí en la dictadura, en el horror y después en el alfonsinismo, con el horror destapado […] Creo que el género literario del terror es adecuado para contar esa época' ('I grew up during the military dictatorship, and then during the Alfonsín era, when horror was uncovered […] I believe that the horror literary genre is appropriate to recount those times') (Enríquez and Orosz 2009: 2).

Born just three years before the last of military dictatorships in Argentina (1976-1983), Enríquez paints a bleak picture of Argentina in her collection. The historical roots of the Dirty War and the dictatorship reach back to the Peronist era (1946-1955). Juan Perón and his first wife Eva Perón attracted enormous popularity during his early leadership and being associated with the concept of *descamisados* (*shirtless*, *working-class*) and his principles of *caudillismo* (*political power through charisma or military force*) and *justicialismo* (*social justice*). Nonetheless, his political doctrines had failed as the economic crisis soared by 1949. After the death of Eva Perón in 1952, the social and political unrest escalated as Juan Perón reached a breaking point with the Church and the opposing parties and authorities. There had been the *coup d'etat* (1955), the overthrow and exile of Perón, which followed industrial distress, riots, and tumult in Argentine society. The worsening labour conditions, political chaos and violence, the friction between the right- and left-wing Peronists, and finally, the guerrilla terrorism engendered the period of civil unrest and state terrorism. In her interview with Kona Bongai in 2018, Mariana Enríquez unreservedly shares her childhood memories in those lines:

> You have to keep in mind that the dictatorship in Argentina was incredibly violent but in a very secret way. Thousands were tortured and killed, yes, but this was very successfully hidden from the population. […] The military was not shooting in the streets. They were kidnapping people into clandestine detention centres. […] My parents knew what was going on but it was spoken in whispers and, whenever I understood something, I was told never to talk about it outside the house. And 'outside' meant school and birthday parties and the daily life that went on. […] When it ended, it was like an explosion. The morbid details were everywhere, TV, magazines, and of course the trials of the generals where the victims told their stories, the cruelty was explicit. I remember reading about it and being so terrified. I think those were the first horror stories I ever read. (Kona and Enríquez 2018: 2)

Having grown up in an atmosphere charged with anxiety, fear, and terror, Enríquez unveils how the traumas of the past were swept under the rug. As Enríquez commented, Argentina was put asunder by the bloody conflict in which the state terrorised in the name of anti-communism in the

Cold War era, which caused thousands of people to disappear and be killed. The historian Federico Finchelstein corroborates that:

> Tallying up the actions of the Triple A presents a unique perspective on the genealogy of the military dictatorship's Dirty War. Between July and September of 1974 there were 220 attacks by the Triple A against its preconceived enemies (almost three per day), including bombings, rapes, 60 assassinations (one every 19 hours), 44 heavily injured and/or raped victims, and 20 kidnappings (one every two days). All in all, from 1973 to 1976, the Triple A executed more than 900 people it deemed enemies, including parliamentarians, journalists' human rights advocates and lawyers, Latin American exiles in Argentina, intellectuals, union representatives, and leftist militants and guerrillas. (Finchelstein 2014: 120)

The 'Triple A' that Finchelstein refers to here is the quasi-governmental organisation of the Argentine Anti-communist Alliance that functioned between July 1973 and March 1976. The conflict between leftist guerrillas and state and military forces unleashed the ruthless determination of the violation of human rights in Argentina, which proceeded until the end of the decade. As a writer who grew up under the long shadow of the traumatic milestones in her country, Enríquez does not hesitate to touch upon real-life horrors blending with her artistic pen because, as she points out, 'in Argentina everything is political' (Enríquez 2017: 2).

When it comes to genre, in the 'Afterword' to *Things We Lost in the Fire*, Megan McDowell remarks on the difficulty of categorising Enríquez's fiction with a specific label:

> In Mariana Enríquez's stories, Argentina's particular history combines with an aesthetic many have tied to the gothic horror tradition of the English-speaking world. She's been compared with Shirley Jackson, and her depictions of a labyrinthine and sinister Buenos Aires echo Victorian gothic renderings of London. Latin America has a gothic tradition as well, according to the critic María Negroni, that overlaps with what we're used to thinking of as magical realism. Enríquez is the heir, perhaps, of Argentine gothic: Cortázar, Borges, Arlt, and Silvina Ocampo; or that the protagonist of this book's title story is named Silvina. (McDowell 2917: 199-200)

McDowell stresses that Enríquez's complex fiction defies fixed generic categorisations. It cannot be pigeonholed into a single literary genre. Consequently, critics have attached an assortment of

labels to her fiction, yet most fail to capture the richness and hybridity of her creative project: from 'black magical realism' (Bett 2017: 4), 'ghost stories' (Meade 2017: 1), 'gothic horror' (Santos 2019: 37), 'gothic feminism' (Gallego Cuiñas 2020: 4), 'weirdly horrible tales' (Vázquez-Medina 2021: 290), 'weird literature' (Lorena Amaro 2019: 800), 'fantastic horror' (Bustamante 2019: 42) to 'Argentine gothic' (Levitin 2022: 12), amongst them. Like McDowell, Rebecca DeWald cautions against simplistic critical tendencies inclined to lump all Latin American writers within the 'magical realist' blanket category or similar coinages that tend to remove such writings from the socio-political realities they complexly depict:

> On the surface, the reader encounters a reality that mixes realism with magical events, though concluding from this that Enríquez writes magical realism is a hasty and erroneous comparison. Just below the surface lurks the harsh reality of life in the deprived neighbourhoods of a major Latin American city, marked by inequalities – all of Enríquez's protagonists are woven and many are children or young adults -, poverty, drug abuse, and a clinging onto folk beliefs. The uncanny derives from this parallelism between a cosy world and surrealist events, whereby one can turn into the other without warning. (DeWald 2018: 1)

The negative angle of the social imposition, alongside the historical and psychological trauma, has been delicately crafted with a vibrant narrative style. As McDowell asserts, Enríquez is predominantly correlated to Silvina Ocampo (1903-1993), an Argentinian writer, about whom Enríquez has composed a biography *La hermana menor: Un retrato* (2018), not yet translated into English. 'One of Argentina's most exciting and disturbing writers', Evelyn Fishburn remarks, 'Ocampo has been overshadowed by her more famous sister, Victoria Ocampo, and her husband, Adolfo Bioy Casares. Thus, her work has not received the exposure and critical acclaim it deserves' (2004: 393). Enríquez's biography seeks to fill this critical lacuna, along with recent studies of Ocampo's work chiefly produced by feminist critics. Correspondingly, Angela Woodward similarly remarks that 'she [Enríquez] comes from a tradition of Argentinian fabulists, beginning

with the revered Jorge Luis Borges, Bioy Casares and Silvina Ocampo – were so fond of horror that they co-edited several editions of an anthology of macabre stories. The blend of horror, fantasy, crime, and cruelty has a particular Argentine pedigree' (Woodward 2017: 1).

The Argentine writer Silvina Ocampo is one of the most rarefied, ingenious, and well-kept secrets. The daughter of an aristocratic family and friend of a prominent literary group, which included her sister Victoria Ocampo – founder and editor of the literary review 'El Sur' ('The 'South', founded in 1931) – Jorge Luis Borges, her husband Adolfo Bioy Casares, and José Bianco, Ocampo published a vast number of short stories, poetry, and novellas. Ocampo is mostly known for her short stories, 'La furia' (1959; 'The Fury'), 'Las invitadas' (1961; 'The Guests'), and 'Los días de la noche' (1970; 'The Days of Night'), amongst them. The owner of an outrageous imagination, Ocampo 'has achieved her greatest expression in extraordinary stories born of the everyday. The writer represents the fantastic in relationship to the psychological: that is the irruption/eruption of strange forces in the psyche of human being' (Espinoza-Vera 2009: 220). In a similar vein, Enríquez is threading these wildly imaginative tales of the macabre and fantastic that she is essentially echoing path-breaking Argentinian writers, as well as Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño, concerning the question of the femicides, which he depicts in gruesome forensic detail in the apocalyptic *2666* (2004).

Elif Shafak is, on the other hand, a renowned Turkish author, short story writer, and academic. Born in Strasbourg, France, in 1971, Şafak is one of the most celebrated Turkish female writers internationally. She has written more than 15 books, 12 of which are novels, which have been translated into more than forty languages. *Mahrem* (2006; *The Gaze*), *Bit Palas* (2007; *The Flea Palace*), *Araf* (2004; *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*), *Baba ve Piç* (2007; *The Bastard of Istanbul*), *İskender* (2012; *Honour*), and *Ustam ve Ben* (2014; *The Architect's Apprentice*) are

amongst her eminent works. Writing in both Turkish and English, Shafak has been awarded and shortlisted for the prestigious prizes such as Rumi Prize (1988), Independent Best Foreign Fiction (2005), IMPAC Dublin Literary Award (2012), and so forth. Throughout her life, Shafak has lived in various parts of the world such as France, Germany, United States, United Kingdom, Jordan, and Turkey, and these diverse cultural experiences have significantly influenced her writing.

In her interview in the *Journal of Turkish Literature*, when she is asked whether her books belong to English or Turkish literary corpus, she says:

> I am a Turkish writer and I feel deeply connected with my culture. But at the same time, I am a world citizen. I commute between languages the way I commute between cultures. I am a commuter, a nomad. For me writing fiction is about 'journeys' anyhow. It is possible to be local and universal all at once. Like a compass. One leg of the compass is fixed and stable, it is local. The other leg draws a huge wide circle and travels the world. It is universal. This is how I see my fiction. (Shafak 2009: 13)

As an author with a multicultural background, Shafak has authority in both languages. Although Shafak feels heartily Turkish, she is exceptionally ebullient when delving into other cultures and languages. She sees herself as a 'nomad' who can travel and migrate from one language to another, from one culture to another, from Turkey to the world. Briefly, Shafak does not see this multi-language writing as a handicap. On the other hand, she considers this indispensable in our globalised era. In this regard, in 2014, she made a relevant exposition:

> I love language. I love alphabets. The fact that you can build infinite meanings with a limited number of letters is, to me, still like magic. As I commute between Turkish and English, I pay attention to words that cannot be translated directly. I think about not only words and meanings, but also absences and gaps. Strangely, over the years have come to understand that sometimes distance brings you closer, stepping out of something helps you to see that thing better. Writing in English does not pull me away from Turkey; just the opposite, it brings me closer. (Shafak 2014: 1)

As an outcome of her multicultural and cosmopolitan background, Shafak feels free to write in whatever language she prefers. Nevertheless, the tension here is that she has been broadly criticized

in Turkey because some of her works are not composed in her native language, as Arzu Akbatur remarks: 'Following her novels in Turkish, Shafak began to write in her second language (English), a decision much discussed and criticized in Turkey, but following this, this was to become a systematic choice' (Akbatur 2017: 121). On the other hand, Elena Furlanetto defends her decision to write in more than one language, 'the image of the threshold is crucial to Shafak's understanding and positioning of her writing as neither Turkish nor English… Eventually, she concludes that 'writing fiction necessitates thresholds' (Furlanetto 2017: 59). Rebecca L. Walkowitz states, 'some writers tried to mitigate the need for translation by choosing to write in a dominant language if they can. We could call this strategy preemptive translation' (Walkowitz 2015: 11). Regarding the motive behind Shafak's shuttling between Turkish and English, Wakowitz asserts that:

> For example, novelist Elif Shafak, who lives both in London and in Istanbul, writes some works in English and some in Turkish. Her novels establish 'home' in several different ways. To say that there is no correspondence between language and home, then, does not mean that books no longer have homes, only that homes are not reducible to languages.' (Walkowitz 2015: 177)

Walkowitz's assumption endorses Shafak's depiction of herself as a 'nomad.' Consequently, Shafak does not consider that a book's production and location must be domestic. Whilst alluding to Elif Shafak, it is comparatively significant to emphasise her controversial reception in Turkey. Similarly to Orhan Pamuk, one of the outstanding Turkish authors and Nobel laureates, Shafak's novel, *Baba ve Piç*, set off a firestorm in Turkey, and Shafak has been put on trial for insulting Turkishness. Like Pamuk, Shafak has been accused of courting Western audiences at the expense of her nation. As in the case of other minorities in Turkey, like Kurds, the historical dialogue between Armenians and Turks is a very sensitive political topic to ventilate even today in Turkey. Giving a voice to an Armenian character in her novel and using the word 'genocide', Shafak has shaken this taboo. In *The Bastard of Istanbul*, Shafak refers to the ethnic minorities within post-

Ottoman Turkey, true to form. In *Honour*, she gives voice to a Kurdish family living in 1970s Turkey. Regarding these accusations and the trial, Shafak expresses her thoughts on *The Guardian*, a British left-wing newspaper:

> In 2006, after I wrote *The Bastard of Istanbul* – a novel about a Turkish and Armenian-American family – I was put on trial for 'insulting Turkishness'. The words of several of my Armenian fictional characters were used as 'evidence' by the prosecutors. As a result, my Turkish lawyer had to defend not only me but also my characters. I wish I could say that Turkey has made progress in human rights and freedom of speech since then, but I am afraid it has been the opposite. (Shafak 2012: 3)

Shafak was put on trial for violating Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code and has been accused of dishonouring Turkishness. Alongside Shafak's utilization of the utterance 'genocide', the justification behind her vilification of Turkey is in part that she overexposes her nation to Western audiences with a judgmental gaze and even falsifies Turkey's image. Nonetheless, her fame ironically boomed as the international media, authorities, thinkers, and readers followed the trial. In the sequel, in 2006, the charges against Shafak were dropped. Regarding Shafak's indulgence in touching such taboos, Elena Furlanetto asserts:

> Shafak resorts to the instruments of transnationalism. She shifts the focus of Turkey's identarian narratives from monocultural discourse to a multicultural one, fully acknowledging past and present cultural interconnections and how they shape Turkey's self-perception. Shafak's work shows her willingness to integrate the colonial past in Turkey's present identarian narrations. (Furlanetto 2017: 34)

When Dani Hedlund asked Shafak about the political subtexts of her writings, Shafak remarked that politics is present every day and that her fiction neither wishes to 'preach' nor 'dictate' ideological views; readers have the freedom to interpret them as they want.

4.3 Bifurcated Spheres and Identities: *Honour* and 'Things We Lost in the Fire'

As the forces of violence and fear seep through Enríquez's stories, children and women, in particular, are at the centre of the narratives. According to Enríquez, the gothic and horror literary genres are congruent enough to expose the scars and the precarity of the life of the many who have experienced Argentina's recent traumatic past. Shafak, however, would rather have a separate route in which she focuses more on the plot and eventful social issues such as honour killing, discrimination, assimilation, and multiculturalism. While Enríquez's utilisation of various literary genres is heavily explicit, Shafak is rather tight on blurring the lines and forcing the reader's phantasy. That is to say, Enríquez overpopulates the narrative with a variety of literary devices and themes, which makes her work more challenging and baffling, whilst Shafak's novel is less hybrid when it comes to questions of genre. Another factor behind this discrepancy is that one is a novel of 445 pages, and the other is a short story collection of 197 pages. In Shafak's book, the audience can grasp the plot, the characters' mentality, and the conclusion, even though the time zone and plot line are entangled, switching back and forth between past and present, Turkey, London, and the world. Regarding stylistic devices, the novel is furnished with magical realism elements (á la García Márquez).

Regarding *Things We Lost in the Fire*, although the stories are not wholly interrelated, specific themes are correlative as are some characters. The collection comprises twelve short stories altogether: 'El chico sucio' ('The Dirty Kid'), 'La Hostería' ('The Inn'), 'Los casa de Adela' ('Adela's House'), 'Pablito clavó un clavito: una evocación del Petiso Orejudo' ('An Invocation of the Big-Eared Runt'), 'Tela de araña' ('Spiderweb'), 'Fin de curso' ('End of Term'), 'Nada de carne sobre nosotras' ('No Flesh over Our Bones'), 'El patio del vecino' ('The Neighbour's Courtyard'), 'Bajo el agua negra' ('Under the Black Water'), 'Verde rojo anaranjado' ('Green Red Orange'), and, finally, the titular 'Los cosas que perdimos en el fuego' ('Things We Lost in the

Fire'). The following analysis will focus on, initially, two short stories: the first, 'El chico sucio', and the tenth, 'Bajo el agua negra', of the collection since they have common thematical approaches such as violence against children, emotional wounds and guilt, and the slums of Argentina. The opening story, 'The Dirty Kid', challenges heavy matters in Argentina's slums or *villas miseria*. The narrator recounts all her observations and experiences in the city's neglected part, such as violence, drug trafficking, corruption, poverty, crimes, disappearances, muggers, and travesties. At the beginning of the story, the narrator calls herself a *desafiante* (*rebel*) who chooses to live in one of the most crime-ridden regions of the city and can survive:

> Tiene un poco de razón, aunque me molesta escucharla así, me molesta que ella, tan sinceramente, me ubique en mi lugar, la mujer de clase media que cree ser desafiante porque decidió vivir en el barrio más peligroso de Buenos Aires. (Enríquez 2016: 14)
>
> She's right, even though I don't like to hear it. No do I like that she can so candidly put me right in my place: the middle-class woman who thinks she's a rebel because she chose to live in the most dangerous neighbourhood in Buenos Aires. (Enríquez 2017: 16)

The narrator's name is not mentioned throughout the narrative; however, her hairdresser friend, Lala, frequently calls her *Princesa* (*Princess*), which also signals her affluent background. Even though the narrator has a romanticised perception of poverty, she faces harsh realities after encountering traumatic crimes and horrific murders of children. This narrative encapsulates various themes, but the relationship between this unnamed middle-class woman and the homeless *el chico sucio* (*the dirty kid*) evokes the terror of poverty and corruption in *villas miseria*. The historian James Scorer verbalises the definition of a villa through these words: 'Establishing a clear definition of a *villa* is complex. The notion that they are temporary residences, as implied by their original name, *villas de emergencia*, is incompatible with their current permanence. Neither are villas necessarily precarious dwellings built with discarded material in undeveloped areas of the

city, as the two-story concrete houses now being built in some shantytowns indicate (Scorer 2016: 196).' As Scorer emphasises, *villas miseria* are relatively neglected, no-go-areas of the city, which encapsulate more patches of crime and corruption.

Regarding the formation of *villas*, Gabriela Nouzilles and Graciela Montaldo note that 'slums were portrayed as the ultimate example of the failure Peronist populism during the 1950s, as project sites for modernising dreams of the 1960s, as hotbeds of revolution during the "glorious 1970s" as obstacles to progress during the dictatorship of the 1980s, and as places of immortality, crime, and lawlessness in contemporary Argentina' (Nouzeilles and Montaldo 2002: 513). According to Scorer, 'the first *villa* in Buenos Aires dates from 1932, a result both of the widespread unemployment brought by the effects of the Wall Street Crash in 1929 and continuing high levels of immigration from abroad and the interior' (Scorer 2016: 167). In each case, the outcome is that *villas* expanded under the Perón government through industry growth; however, they ended up in disillusionment. The narrator in the story 'The Dirty Kid' shows how the old stately homes dating back to the nineteenth century stand as remnants of the past, crumbling and deteriorating structures, a far cry from Argentina's so-called 'golden years', now squeezed by sprawling urban conglomerates and swelling *villas miserias*:

> Constitución es el barrio de la estación de trenes que vienen del sur a la ciudad. Fue, en el siglo XIX, una zona donde vivía la aristocracia porteña, por eso existen estas casas, como la de mi familia – y hay muchas más mansiones convertidas en hoteles o asilos de ancianos o en derrumbe del otro lado de la estación, en Barcas. En 1887 las familias aristocráticas huyeron hacia el norte de la ciudad escapando de la fiebre amarilla. Pocas volvieron, casi ninguna. Con los años, familias de comerciantes ricos, como la de mi abuelo, pudieron comprar las casas de piedra con gárgolas y llamadores de bronce. Pero el barrio quedó, marcado por la huida, el abandono, la condición de indeseado. (Enríquez 2016: 10)
>
> The Constitución station is where trains coming from the south of the country enter the city. In the nineteenth century, the port's aristocracy had lived in Constitución: that's why houses like my family's exist, and there are plenty of others that have been converted into hotels or old folks' homes or are crumbling to the ground on

> the other side of the station, in Barracas. In 1887, the aristocratic families fled to the northern part of the city to escape the yellow fever. Few of them came back, almost none. Over the years, families of rich businessmen like my grandfather were able to buy those stone houses with their gargoyles and bronze door knockers. But the neighbourhood was marked by that flight, the abandonment, the condition of being unwanted. (Enríquez 2017: 12)

Further, the story comments on the city's transformation in the wake of the devastating yellow fever epidemic that struck Buenos Aires in 1879, which led to the significant exodus of the upper and middle classes of *porteño* society from the South to the North of the city (Scobie 1974). Therefore, the first-person middle-class narrator feels adrift in modern-day *Constitución*; she has never experienced poverty, nostalgically basking on the old glory of her ancestors; their house has become a shadow of its former splendour. Yet 'the fall of the house of *Constitución*' (there are echoes of Edgar Allan Poe in the story's use of Gothic tropes) mirrors the breakdown of its deluded narrator-protagonist. Further intertextual links may be drawn with the Río de la Plata gothic tradition, from Julio Cortázar's 'Casa tomada' (1946; 'The House Taken Over') – where a mysterious entity infiltrates the affluent sibling's ancient house or, if read as a political allegory, by Perón's adoring crowds – to Silvina Ocampo's 'La casa de azúcar' (1959; 'The House Made of Sugar'), in which the life of the middle-class newlyweds is enigmatically turned upside down by the house's eerie gravitation, as well as by the dangerous area in which it is set: the Constitución barrio and its train station of the same name (opened in 1885).

Indeed, in 'The Dirty Kid', we hear the voice of this middle-class woman and witness her transformation from self-confidence, apathy and rebellion to bewilderedness, awareness, and, finally, remorse. For example, on the second page of the story, she boosts her knowledge and self-confidence about the hazardous neighbourhood that she has moved into:

> Yo sé que los viernes por la noche, si me acerco a la plaza Garay, puedo quedar atrapada en alguna pelea entre varios contrincantes posibles: los mininarcos de la calle Ceballos que defienden su territorio de otros ocupantes y persiguen a sus

> perpetuos deudores; los adictos que, descerebrados, se ofenden por cualquier cosa y reaccionan atacando con botellas; las travestis borrachas y cansadas que también defienden su baldosa. Sé que, si vuelvo a mi casa caminando por la avenida, estoy más expuesta a un robo que si regreso por la calle Solís, y eso a pesar de que la avenida está muy iluminada y Solís es oscura porque tiene pocas lámparas y muchas están rotas: hay que conocer el barrio para aprender estas estrategias. (Enríquez 2016: 10)

> I know that on Friday nights, if I go down to Plaza Garay I might end up caught in a fight between several possible adversaries: the mini-narcos from Calle Ceballos who defend their territory from invaders and chase down the countless people who owe them money; the brain-dead addicts who get offended at anything and react by lashing out with broken bottles; the drunk and tired travesties who have their own patches of pavement to defend. I also know that if I walk home along the avenue, I'm more exposed to muggers than if I take Solís, even though the avenue is well lit and Solís is dark; most of the few streetlights it has are broken. You have to know the neighbourhood to learn these strategies. (Enríquez 2017: 12)

The narrator's tone is relatively self-assured at the beginning, but it switches to an emotionally nervous commentary, verging on self-confession, as she witnesses more severe and harsh incidents. It is essential to note that Enríquez is not demonising people living in precarious conditions; on the other hand, she casts light upon the invisible walls between the poor and the privileged to convey a more profound message. The striking transformation of the nameless narrator is even more transparent from her tone. In the quotation above, while describing the precarity and defects, she utters those words as 'the brain-dead addicts' or 'drunk and tired travesties'. The narrator has an aesthetic distance through which she views poverty, crime, and negligence. As Megan McDowell states in the collection's 'Translator's Note', 'the horror comes not only from turning our gaze on desperate populations; it comes from realising the extent of our blindness' (McDowell 2017: 201). As the story proceeds, the more disturbing, gory, and throwaway comment the narrator makes when she sees the dirty boy and her mother are foregrounded:

> Tiene un método muy inquietante: después de ofrecerles la estampita a los pasajeros, los obliga a darle la mano, un apretón breve y mugriento. Los pasajeros contienen la pena y el asco: el chico está sucio y apesta. (Enríquez 2016: 12)

> He has a disturbing method: after offering the prayer cards to the passengers, he obliges them to shake hands, a brief and very grimy squeeze. The passengers have to contain their pity and disgust: the kid is very dirty, and he stinks. (Enríquez 2017: 14)

Vázquez Medina states, 'when the boy forces the passengers to shake his hand, he also breaks the invisibility often imposed upon those at the bottom of the social scale' (Vázquez-Medina 2021: 312). The narrator describes the dirty boy as stinky, filthy, and disgusting. On the one hand, she would like to bathe and sanitize him; on the other, she is nauseated by him. The feeling of ugliness and disgust dispirit as the dirty kid's vulnerability and disappearance haunt the narrator. The dirty kid's mother disappears, and the narrator takes care of him, which creates a bond between them. At this point, the story takes a propulsive and mesmerizing twist, which Vázquez Medina designates as 'miasmic gloom' (Vázquez-Medina 2021: 315). This stage is where Enríquez's savoir-faire fashion appears more vividly, in which the story flirts with the natural and the supernatural (in a Todorovian fashion) so crafty that the line between the ordinary and fantastic is disrupted, which DeWald, building on Todorov, defines as a 'parallelism between a cosy world and surrealist events, whereby one can turn into the other without warning' (DeWald 2018: 1). For example, when the dirty kid disappears, the news reports another missing boy, Ignacio Nachito, who appears to be the victim of a ritualistic murder:

> En el estacionamiento en desuso de la calle Solís había aparecido un chico muerto. Degollado. Habían colocado la cabeza a un costado del cuerpo. A las diez, se sabía que la cabeza estaba pelada hasta el hueso y que no se había encontrado pelo en la zona. También, que los párpados estaban cosidos y la lengua mordida, no se sabía si por el propio chico muerto o-y esto la arranó un grito a Lala-por los dientes de otra persona […] También se sabía que había sido torturado: el torso estaba cubierto de quemaduras de cigarrillos. Sospechaban un ataque sexual, que se filtró un primer informe de los peritos forenses. (Enríquez 2016: 22)

> In a deserted parking lot on Calle Solís, a dead child has turned up. Decapitated. They'd found the head to one side of the body. By ten o'clock, we knew that the head was skinned to the bone and that the scalp hadn't been found on the scene.

> Also, the eyelids, had been sewn shut and the tongue bitten, though they didn't know whether by the dead boy himself or-and this brought a shriek from Lala-by someone else's teeth […] It was also known by then that the boy had been tortured: the torso was covered in cigarette burns. They suspected a sexual assault, which was confirmed around two in the morning, when the first forensics report was leaked. (Enríquez 2017: 24-25)

The narrative fastidiously unveils the details of the murder in forensic detail. First, Enríquez chooses a child as a victim and then employs the cruellest scenarios, making the story more shocking and disturbing. As I have indicated previously, Enríquez establishes a dialogue with Silvina Ocampo at different moments in her narratives. The visceral description of violence and cruelty is one of them. In her article 'Reading Cruelty in Silvina Ocampo's Short Fiction,' Ashley Hope Pérez asserts that:

> Silvina Ocampo's stories often evoke a distressing fictional world: children frequently witness, commit, or suffer acts of violence; death and murder occur with startling regularity; self-mutilation and rivalry abound; vengeance outstrips offense; and a sinister atmosphere hover over even those stories that avoid direct engagement with cruelty. (Pérez 2016: 75)

The bleak report, body dismemberment, mutilation, and sexual abuse of violence toward a child unsettle the reader. Enríquez utilizes a renewed version of the gothic 'based on the idea that the ominous is integrated—if hidden—in our ideology and everyday existence' (Gallego Cuiñas 2020: 2).

The publication of *Honour* was Shafak's first exposure to the Anglophone world and led to the recognition of the novel as a microcosm of a larger, exotic Turkish community. The novel appeared with the title İskender in Turkey, translated by Omca A. Korugan in 2011. Although the book was initially written in English, the Turkish translation was published a year earlier. Apart from that, there is a big difference between the Turkish and English versions of the novel in terms of plotline and subtitling. The sequence of the chapters in the Turkish version differs from the English one, amounting to almost two other books. Not only the alignment but also the titles of

the episodes do not tally, which means that readers like me can access both versions (*Figure 1.1*) and then have two different reading experiences. According to Nuzhat Khan, the composition is as follows:

> In the Turkish version of the novel, Esma's voice is heard only in the first and last part of the novel as the first-person narrator. In the English version, Esma narrates all the chapters related to herself in the first person and others in the third person. Iskender appears as a narratorial voice through prison dairies in both the English and the Turkish versions. (Khan 2017: 477-478)

Perhaps the most striking change is structural, as the captions' incongruities. Rather than blurring the distinctions between the original version and the translated one, there is ocular disparateness between English and Turkish editions of the novel. The first episode of the English record and the initial title are designated as 'Esma' with a note indicating the year and the place where the events occur. *Figure 1.1* above is, however, the caption reads 'When Starting' for Turkophone readers. The end of the first section also specifies the date '3 October 1992' and the location 'London'.

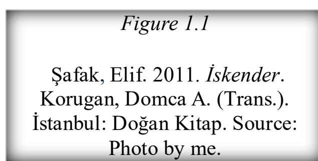
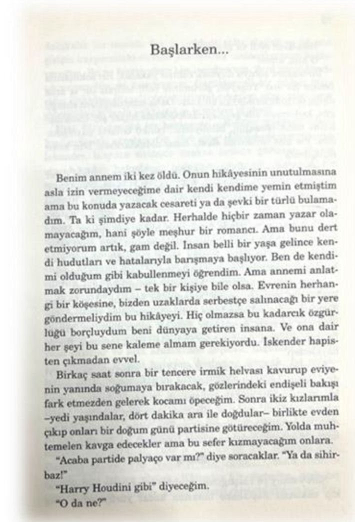


Figure 1.1

Şafak, Elif. 2011. *İskender*. Korugan, Domca A. (Trans.). İstanbul: Doğan Kitap. Source: Photo by me.

Symptomatically, the ambiguity of Turkish translation vis-à-vis the original version of the narrative is visible in terms of the intricate relationship between the two texts. This paradox between the books continues until the end, thus creating a constant tension around legibility for the polyglottic readers. Notice, for example, how whereas the original version of the text starts with Pembe, the Turkish edition starts with Cemile, her twin sister:



Başlarken...

Benim annem iki kez öldü. Onun hikâyesinin unutulmasına asla izin vermeyeceğime dair kendi kendime yemin etmiştim ama bu konuda yazacak cesareti ya da şevki bir türlü bulamadım. Ta ki şimdiye kadar. Herhalde hiçbir zaman yazar olamayacağım, hani şöyle meşhur bir romancı. Ama bunu dert etmiyorum artık, gam değil. İnsan belli bir yaşa gelince kendi hudutları ve hatalarıyla barışmaya başlıyor. Ben de kendimi olduğum gibi kabullenmeyi öğrendim. Ama annemi anlatmak zorundaydım – tek bir kişiye bile olsa. Evrenin herhangi bir köşesine, bizden uzaklarda serbestçe salınacağı bir yere göndermeliydim bu hikâyeyi. Hiç olmazsa bu kadarcık özgürlüğü borçluydum beni dünyaya getiren insana. Ve ona dair her şeyi bu sene kaleme almam gerekiyordu. İskender hapisten çıkmadan evvel.

Birkaç saat sonra bir tencere irmik helvası kavurup eviyenin yanında soğumaya bırakacak, gözlerindeki endişeli bakışı fark etmezden gelerek kocamı öpeceğim. Sonra ikiz kızlarımla –yedi yaşındalar, dört dakika ara ile doğdular– birlikte evden çıkıp onları bir doğum günü partisine götüreceğim. Yolda muhtemelen kavga edecekler ama bu sefer kızmayacağım onlara.

"Acaba partide palyaço var mı?" diye soracaklar. "Ya da sihirbaz!"

"Harry Houdini gibi" diyeceğim.

"O da ne?"

> Seneler var ki hasret çekiyordu Cemile. Eş ikizi, aynadaki yansıması, kalbimin yarısı, hayatta en çok sevdiği insan gitmişti. Pembe artık başka bir göğün altında

> uyuyor, ara sıra mektuplar ve üzerinde kırmızı, iki katlı otobüslerin ya da saat kulelerin olduğu kartpostallar yolluyordu. Ziyarete geldiğinde – olur da gelirse – giysileri değişik kokuyor -yumuşacık oluyordu. Cemile'yi her seferinde şaşırtırdı kız kardeşinin bavulunu açısıyla birlikte o yabancı topraklara ait koku etrafa yayılışı. (Şafak 2011: 37)

> Pembe was gone now, her mirror image, her reflection in still waters. She slept under a different sky and every so often sent Jamila letters and postcards with pictures of red, two-tiered buses and immense clock towers. When she came home for a visit, her clothes smelled differently, and felt soft to the touch. That was the part that struck Jamila the most: watching her sister open suitcase, bringing in aromas, assumption that everything would be as it was upon her return. (Shafak 2012: 32) (*Figure 1.1*)

Figure 1.2

Şafak, Elif. 2011. *İskender*. Korugan, Domca A. (Trans.). İstanbul: Doğan Kitap. Source: Photo by me.

The front cover, back cover, and the opening flaps on the jackets of both narrative versions can be considered paratexts that crystallise the enigmatic angle of the novel's reception in the Anglophone versus Turkophone world. The title Honour in the original variant of the story, *Figure 1.3*, unswervingly overlaps with the scope of the narrative, which is fundamentally relevant to the panoramic socio-political plot of honour killing. On the other hand, in the Turkish translation, the title appeared as İskender, as shown in *Figure 1.2*, which is the name of the novel's main character.

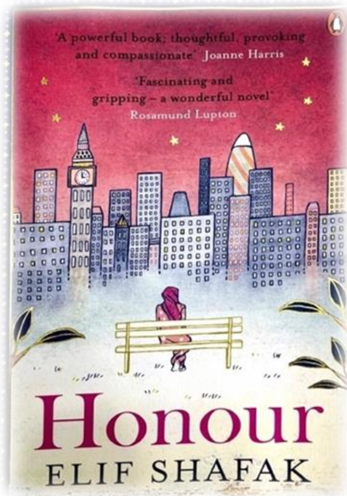
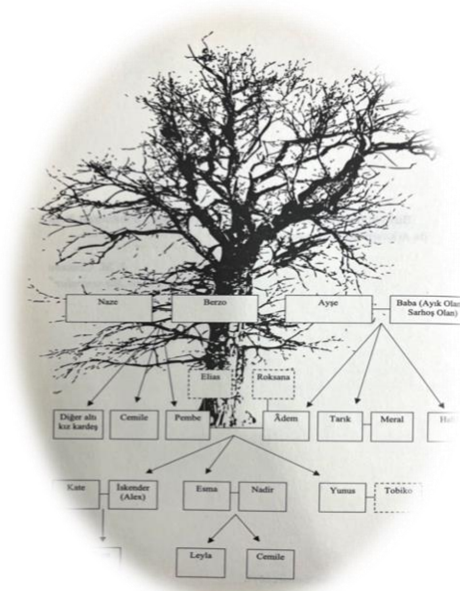


Figure 1.3

Shafak, Elif. 2012. *Honour*. London: Penguin. Source: Photo by me.

The title is delinked with the question of 'honour', which requires further scrutiny. The specific use of the word 'honour' might lead to some contraventions within the Turkic-speaking world, as it is another societal taboo dynamic in the Turkish ethos. Although the book title, Iskender, is innocuous, the picture of Shafak on the book's jacket is relatively cynical. The book's front cover poses Shafak's image utterly masculinely. The black shirt, jacket, trousers, shoes, and silhouette are so manly that Shafak is hardly recognisable. The uncanny picaresque of Shafak on the book's jacket of the Turkish version is reasonably mordant because *Figure 1.2* visualises and deconstructs the traditional gender

roles that are the tenor of the narrative. Nuzhat Khan, however, asserts that the reason behind this facade is Shafak's giving voice to both victim and victimiser 'because what makes Iskender Iskender is actually Pembe' (Khan 2017: 477). The original version of the book’s jacket is, however, in a genuine dialogue with the novel’s content. As in the case of the Turkish translation of Gabriel García Márquez’s *Cien años de soledad* (1974; *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık*), in İskender’s jacket flap, there is a genealogical chart of the Toprak family, *Figure 1.4*, which highlight the redundancy of characters and complexity of the theme. Undeniably, traces of Gabriel García Márquez’s literary aesthetics are instantly recognisable, as Shafak admits in these lines: ‘I feel closely related to many writers and philosophers. Sometimes in style, sometimes in spirit, and sometimes for no reason. Some of these writers are contemporary, and some are from the past. I can tell you right away how much I love Gabriel García Márquez, Lev Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoyevsky […]’ (Shafak 2009: 19). The immense influence of García Márquez is evident, further confirming Mariano Siskind’s argument regarding the circulation of magical realism as the emblematic ‘genre of world literature’ within the global South (Siskind 2011: 349). However, it cannot be denied, as Gesine Müller has posited that, at the same time, the name of García Márquez has been used ad nauseam within a market-driven global publishing industry. Thus, magical realism is equally understood here as a ‘reception amplifier’ (Müller 2019: 20). Müller adds further critical nuance by stating that: ‘For a book to succeed in finding Western reception in the 1970s and 1980s, it was imperative it could be woven into a tapestry of both Orientalism and universalist world literature from the Western canon’ (Müller 2019: 22). This latter



point, of course, takes us straight back to Siskind's core argument regarding the worldwide appeal of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* based on García Márquez's tapping into local experiences of oppression and histories of decolonisation in the global South.

Honour is a roman-fleuve or a family saga of Kurdish Toprak kindred that traces back to a 1945 Kurdish village on the banks of Euphrates, followed by an expansive spatial storyline taking place in Istanbul, London, and Abu Dhabi. The narrative revolves around Iskender's erroneous killing of his aunt Jamila, the twin sister of Iskender's mother, Pembe, under honour killing. While centring on the mother-son relationship within the background of honour killing, the saga sketches the diasporic and uprooted representation of a Kurdish family. Shafak's devices multiple time frames using analepses and prolepses in a fluid spatial and temporal continuum. Mehmet Taş Recep outlines the circuitous composition as follows:

> The events have not been sequenced in a linear timeline. They are intertwined. The events in the story does not follow rising action, contrary to the usual order of the elements that construct a plot (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution), the novel starts with the resolution. The novel starts with Iskender's being released from the prison, the last section of the novel. Overall, the novel is narrated through such techniques as flashbacks, flashforward, skips, and summations. (Taş 2017: 498)

As described by Taş, the text is a somewhat hybrid and genre-bending work where the boundaries of fiction become blurred. As a result, not only the story itself but the novel's fabric of the book is also knotty. Furthermore, the critic Nuzhat Khan attests that '('I') referring to Esma, hence we can construe that Esma is a fictional narrator, though a large part of the novel is narrated by a third person omniscient narrator' (Khan 2017: 477). The employment of Esma's voice in first-person narration is crucial, as Petya Tsoneva Ivanova pinpoints:

> Esma, the narrator of *Honour,* sees some therapeutic potential in writing the story of his family. Though her narrative voice borders on the invisible, we are led to assume that it is Esma who

Figure 1.4

Şafak, Elif. 2011. *İskender*. Korugan, Domca A. (Trans.). İstanbul: Doğan Kitap. Source: Photo by me.

> narrates her personal reminiscence, possibly completed by other fragments – pieces of stories told by relatives and, mostly, letters, that occupy quite some space in the novel. Esma's presence as a narrator is most ostensible in the first and final chapters of the text, which lends a particular circular aspect to the narration. (Ivanova Tsoneva 2018: 190)

What is important here is the departure from the fragmented narration tone of the modern period, a return to a consciously fable-like narrative style against the nouveau roman. Although the construction of the novel is heterotaxic, the flavour is storytelling. While Khan states, 'Shafak weaves the narrative web with the ease of a master storyteller (Khan 2012: 2)', Jafarova declares, 'Her writing draws on diverse cultures and literary traditions, reflecting interests in history, philosophy, Sufism, oral culture, and cultural politics' (Jafarova 2017: 253). In one of her interviews, Shafak asserts: 'I think we have to defend storytelling. The art of storytelling. The format might change sometimes. We shouldn't be that worried about electronic books, in my opinion. But what is essential, what is universal and what is so ancient is our need for stories and storytelling' (Shafak 2019: 5). Relevantly, in the Turkish edition of the novel, the hints of the oral style are visible, oriented with superstitions, magic, and paranormal incidents. Instead of a book about Turkey and its people, *Honour* is a novel narrated through the worldview of those minorities inhabiting there. Although their mother, Pembe, is a submissive female model, Esma is a betweener who questions specific social codes and has dreams of being an author, as his brother Iskender attests in his diary:

> Kız kardeşim hariç. Esma bayılırdı dille uğraşmaya. Biri kalkıp da aşina olmadığı bir ifade kullanacak olsa, nadir nadir para bulmuş koleksiyoncu gibi onu edinmek için her şeyi yapardı. Kelimelere tutkundu. Okumaktan gözlerini bozacak ve koca bulma şansı azalacak diye endişelenirdi annem. (Şafak 2011: 179)

> My sister was different. Esma loved language. Duck to water. If someone used an expression, she wasn't familiar with, she'd do anything to make it hers, like a collector who's found a rare coin. She adored words – their sounds, their meanings. Mum was worried that her eyesight – and her options for marriage – would be ruined because of too much reading. (Shafak 2012: 135)

At regular intervals, Iskender, who commits honour killing, appears as a narratorial voice while writing his diaries, manifesting his feelings, regrets, and pleas. Nonetheless, the reader is cognizant that the narrative voice is not bound to a particular person but a woman, which could be Esma, Pembe, or the muted female's collective voice. As Shafak identifies herself in one of her interviews as a 'nomad', Esma is, one might as well say, a globetrotter, oscillating between worlds: the world of 'Mala Çar Bayan', populated with djinns, dreams, and ambiguity, the world of Istanbul, bloated with diversities and world of London, furnished with multi-ethnicity and displacement. It seems like the conflict arises from Shafak's desire for heterogeneity as she builds literary worlds that attest to a chaotic multiplicity, refusing any pure lineages. The narrator's lost and suppressed identity mirrors the novel's construction. Yet, like Esma's hybrid self, the novel's structure is in disarray. The book is constructed in a way that is instead an impetus to follow, zigzagging backwards and forwards in time and between 'Mala Çar Bayan', Istanbul, and London. On the one hand, the novel displays the atmosphere in a village on the banks of the Euphrates, from the point of a town relating to a Kurdish family, but on the other hand, it is separated from the real world in a double sense: 'Hristiyanlar, Müslümanlar, Zerdüştîler ve Yezidiler yüzyıllar boyunca buralarda yan yana yaşamış, sevmiş, didinmiş ve gene yan yana vefat etmişlerdi' (Şafak 2011: 40) ('For centuries Christian and Muslims and Zoroastrians and Yazidis had lived here side by side, loved and died side by side') (Shafak 2012: 35). Although the subsistence of the village is confirmed by the reminiscent of the various descendants from Christians to Yazidis, the narrator further states that 'yolsuz, elektriksiz, hekimsiz, mektepsiz, küçük ve ücra bir Kürt köyüymüş onlarınki. Dış dünyanın haberleri, büründükleri yalnızlık zırhını aşıp da kolay kolay ulaşmazmış' (Şafak 2011: 18) ('it was rugged, remote Kurdish village with no roads, no electricity, no doctor, no school. Barely any news from the outside world permeated its sheath of seclusion') (Shafak 2012: 6). The

name of the village is metaphorically reinforced by its appellation, *Mala Çar Bayan*, translated from Kurdish to Turkish as *Dört Rüzgarın Evi* (*House of Four Winds*). Petya Tsoneva says the following about the spot of the settlement: 'Significantly, the place is located in the margins of Turkey, at a literal and metaphorical crossroads between the 'universe beyond the shores of the Euphrates,' identified as a space of 'strange things' like '(t)he aftermath of the Second World War, the atomic bomb…' and the 'world' beyond Turkey's eastern border with Syria' (Tsoneva 2018: 99). The birthplace of the Toprak generation is crucial because this is the offset where the tension of rootlessness originates. As Tsoneva assumes, the lace of 'Mala Çar Bayan' might be in Turkey's eastern region, strengthened by the context that most of the Kurdish population resides in Turkey's East zone. I shall not further develop this issue, and I now seek to draw parallels between *Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories* and *Honour*.

Shafak is interested in postcolonial, poststructuralist, and post-feminist studies and is considerably inclined to give voice to the 'subaltern' without reckoning the criticism she is facing from the Turkish audience. Regarding the Turkic-speaking mindsets about minorities, Shafak speaks further:

> Turkish people have still not managed to critically reread their own past, face the mistakes they made, encourage self-criticism. Turkey underwent an incredible transformation on the way from a multi-ethnic empire to a nation-state. Turkish society and women achieved significant progressive steps. Nonetheless, there are still taboos we refrain from talking about. The Armenian Question is a taboo; the Kurdish Question is a taboo. (Shafak 2003:69)

Although Turkey used to be a multi-layered society, populated with Armenians, Kurds, Greeks, et al., the advent of the Turkish Republic (1923-1945) led to revolutions throughout Turkey. According to Shahrzad Mojab and Amir Hassanpour, 'the Ottoman State conducted genocide of Armenian people in 1915 and, together with its successor, the Republic of Turkey, subjected the Assyrian and Kurdish peoples to numerous campaigns of genocide and ethnic cleansing' (Mojab

and Hassanpour 2002: 62). Kim Fortuny also juxtaposes several political and cultural shifts in Turkey after the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic as follows:

> The writing system was radically changed from the Ottoman to the Latin script; women were no longer permitted to cover their heads; men were to give up the traditional fez for the Western fedora. These and many more acute cultural changes were thus imposed from the top down on the Turkish public at large. Turkish scholars are still hard at work examining and deliberating the cultural fallout of the early republican political legislation that continues to define contemporary Turkish life. (Fortuny 2011: 108)

Similarly, Elif Şimşek remarks that 'radical policies took place in later years with the Settlement Law of 1934 that 'relocated some Kurdish speakers from the eastern parts of Turkey to the West to make them learn Turkish and assimilate into Turkish culture […] The campaign 'Citizen, speak Turkish!" was one of the first signs of the 'othering' of individuals, communities, and perceptions in Turkey (Şimşek 2016: 94-95).' Therefore, it is not all surprising that in *Honour*, the boundaries between foreign and native, inside and outside, and heredity and rootlessness turn out to be very slippery indeed. Born in a Kurdish-speaking family, as a child, Pembe thought that Kurdish was the only language until she started school. The primary school is where Pembe learns about life outside of 'Mala Çar Bayan'. Then, for the first time, she discovers that speaking Kurdish is forbidden:

> Okula başlamadan önce dünyadaki herkesin Kürtçe konuştuğunu sanırmış Pembe. Ama durumun böyle olmadığını biliyormuş artık. Bazı insanlar hiç Kürtçe bilmiyormuş. Mesela öğretmenleri […] Bir süre önce birtakım kurallar koymuş. Sınıfta her kim tek kelime Kürtçe konuşacak olsa tahtanın yanında, sırtı arkadaşlarına dönük şekilde tek ayak üstünde duracakmış. (Şafak 2011: 60)

> Before starting school Pembe had taken it for granted that everyone in the world spoke Kurdish. Now she understood that wasn't the case/ Some people didn't know Kurdish at all. Their teacher, for instance […] He recently introduced a set of rules: whoever uttered a word in Kurdish would have to stand on one foot by the blackboard with their back turned to their classmates. (Shafak 2012: 10)

Here, the narrator highlights the Turkification process that Turkey was going through and the outcomes of it on minorities speaking the Turkish language in all parts of Turkey is one of the regulations of the Turkification with policies implemented during the early years of the Republic; hence the Kurdish communities were scattered in different parts of Turkey to prevent them from unionising and rising against the Turkish government. Just as the Armenian genocide remained an unresolved issue, the Kurdish struggle for independence still haunts Turkey. Crucially, 'Mala Çar Bayan' is a territory that the Kurdish people occupy. What is striking here is the deprivation displayed. The town's inhabitants are void of economic means and educational benefits. That is why it is a closed community that is teeming with superstitions, omens, and apocalypses, illustrated in Pembe's daily routine:

> Kapısında sıralanmış tam yirmi üç hasta varmış. Pembe sayıyı biliyormuş, çünkü köydeki diğer sekiz yaşındaki kızların aksine o ve Cemile okula – kırk dakikalık yürüme mesafesinde bir başka koyun tek katlı okuluna – gidiyorlarmış. (Şafak 2011: 60)
>
> Travelling to the city was fun and exciting; waiting at the hospital was neither. Lined up in front of the doctor's door were twenty-three patients. Pembe knew the exact number because, unlike the other eight-year-old girls in her village, she and Jamila went to school – a decrepit, one-storey building in another village forty minutes' walk away – and could count. (Shafak 2012: 10)

The gap between the village and the city can be discerned in the obstacles Pembe and Cemile face in communicating with others and shuttling between two spaces. To go to a hospital, they must go to the city and wait for hours in the queue, which the narrator calls *kahır*, meaning *distress*. Likewise, the narrator highlights that Pembe and Cemile have a privilege over the rest of their peers in the village to go to school even if the school is 45 minutes away pedestrianly. Although the plotline is complex with multifarious occurrences, the illustration of the precariousness of villagers is interspersed throughout the novel. The author does not approach the historical events and their outcomes in a forthright tenor but instead diffuses them through the lenses of Esma

disjointedly, ultimately combining them into a mosaic. While women's honour is a precarious asset like in conventional misogynistic melodramas, a critical novelistic manner to social context takes presence in these fragments. For instance, Adem, the father of the Toprak family, describes the intricate configurations of ‘Mala Çar Bayan’ in detail: ‘Mala Çar Bayan köyünde dolaşıp tarihi harabelere, çatlak duvarlara, oyuncaksız büyüyen çocuklara baktıkça burada zamanın hiç ilerlemediği hissine kapılmış. Manzara çorak, kasvetli ama tuhaf bir şekilde büyüleyiciymiş' (Şafak 2011: 19) ('He strolled through the village, observing the ricket houses, the cracks in the walls, the children with dirt under their fingernails, the ruts left by carts and caravans that had crossed this land, never to return. It was bare and bleak but oddly beguiling') (Shafak 2012: 82). The village's dwellers are deprived of the era's potentiality and marginalised from the rest of the community. In his article 'The Honour of Being Colonised: A Bhabhaian Reading of Elif Shafak's *Honour*,' for instance, Behzad Pourgharip addresses multiple belongings and hyphenated identities in the narrative:

> Depiction of dislocated people in culturally different locations in *Honour* opens the horizon of new experience and feelings to its characters which include seclusion, nostalgia, disintegration of family relations, homesickness, insecurity, inner conflict, breaking up conventions, exile, sense of uncanny, and the emergence of identity crisis, split self, and a sense of being out of place. (Pourgharib 2018: 59)

Pourgharib does not refer to one type of displacement, but to various disjunctions, the characters are going through. Being neither wholly of the West nor the East, the experience of being a Turkish-Kurdish individual was that of being homeless at home. The loss of backward – and forward–bound, though cryptic, and destituteness leads to various crimes in *Honour*, as Tsoneva observes:

> The dynamically changing routes of the characters’ displacements and their willingness or unwillingness to go beyond bordered forms of self, are part of Shafak’s larger project of raising ethical questions by means of an aesthetic technique of narration producing a text that will, possibly, instruct contemporary readership on the pernicious effects of violently bordered identities. (Tsoneva 2018: 101)

Thereafter, the Toprak family moved to Istanbul, where they first experienced a multicultural environment and then to London. Even though much has not been endorsed from the life of Istanbul other than the poverty they are in, Iskender commentates on his mother's hybrid status: 'Gramer falan değildi annemin zorlandığı. İngilizceye güvenmiyordu. Türkçede daha rahat olduğunu sanmam ya. Hatta anadili Kürtçe de bile (Şafak 2011: 178-179) ('It wasn't the grammar that she didn't get. It's just that with Turkish. Or even her native Kurdish') (Shafak 2012 134). Neither English nor Turkish Pembe feels displaced. At the same time, even in her native language, Kurdish, she feels anxious, which manifests in her inferiority complex. The feeling of inferiority as of Kurdish descent inhabiting Turkey, Pembe now transgressing to another country. This results in an endless cycle of discrimination and marginalization. Unsurprisingly, this chord is more perceptible in Pembe's position. In Iskender's situation, however, this dysphoria is more distinguishable as he rehearses it time after time in his diaries. For instance, while mentioning one of his anecdotes in prison, he announces:

> Kapıya giderken arkamdan homurdandığını duyuyorum: 'Ne diye Avrupa'ya gelip dertlerinizi de getirirsiniz ki?'
> İngiltere'deki yabancı düşmanlığı her seferinde hazırlıksız yakalar beni. İnsanın yüzüne pis Latin ya da yağlı Arap filan demezler kolay kolay. Irkçılık burada başka ülkelerde olduğunu duyduğum gibi günlük hayatın bir parçası değil. İnceden inceye yapılır; her zaman kibarca. (Shafak 2011: 183-184)
>
> As I head to the door, I hear him mutter, as if to himself, 'Why did you people come to England and bring us all your crap?'
> In Britain the dislike of foreigners always catches me off guard. They don't always call you spic or greasy wop to your face, although there is that from time to time. Racism is not part of daily life, as it is some other countries I hear about. It is subtle and always polished. (Shafak 2012: 138-139)

This baffling scene happens after İskender visits the office of prison officer Andrew. The manager shadows out his hatred towards immigrants by grunting and pointing them as the source of trouble in the community. From Andrew's point of view, immigrants, the same as Iskender, are archaic and

barbaric. Their stereotyped image is increasingly seen as the crux of backwardness in the country. Rather than embracing diversity and the beauty of assortment, there is pure hatred. Needless to say, the quotation above crystallises cross-border movements, isolation, and displacement. It is essential to denote that Iskender saliently speaks of British people as racist with a gentle demeanour. This is a complex manoeuvre where Shafak presents a figure of a foreigner against the background of foreignness. Shafak uses a narrative device to satisfy the narcissistic desire of Western observers to see their self-reflection, providing a tell-tale juncture specified primarily in Western praise for Shafak's oeuvre. There are manifold reflections here; on the one extreme, Shafak allows for the facade of the window into Turkish subjectivity.

On the other hand, she casts light on Western cultures in a way only an outcast can see. Although the Turkophone reader ignores this virtue and criticises Shafak for 'insulting Turkishness', as I have indicated previously, there is an empathy-building effect in the Anglophone reader towards Shafak. The narrative springs from the interplay between the fictional and the authentic and, equally, the exotic and the indigenous, as Toprak's offspring travel vast cultural territories. For the sake of brevity, the novel encapsulates multi-temporal poly-faceted identities furnished with augurs and miraculous ornaments. While in *Things We Lost in the Fire*, there is surreal, gothic, and supernatural horror, in *Honour*, superstition, apocalyptic, demonic, and folkloric trimmings. The techniques utilised also correspond to the metaphorical narrative, the existence of both authenticity and the surreal ingredients in the story, and a certain kind of uneasiness concerning the issue of minorities. In particular, implementing folklore that comprises djinns and dreams allows Shafak to outstrip the temporal/spatial impasse between ‘Mala Çar Bayan’ and the rest of the whereabouts in the narrative. ‘Mala Çar Bayan’ is top-down magical with its djinns, myths, and delusions. In a similar fashion, Maureen Freely enumerates that 'even

in that village near the Euphrates, where mothers grieve at the birth of each new daughter, women wield considerable social powers, although they are inclined to express them through dreams, premonitions, and potions' (Freely 2012: 2). The romance sets about with Naze, Pembe's mother, longing for a son. She gives birth to two twin girls, Kader (Destiny) and Yeter (Enough). She thinks calling her children such symbolic-laden appellations will change her fate, and she will have a boy. Later, the twins are given another name and start to be called Pembe Kader (Pink Destiny) and Cemile Yeter (Jamila Enough). Contrary to her mother, Pembe gets pregnant with a boy, which drives her to a delusional point where she is almost worshipping İskender. The night İskender is born, Pembe has a nightmare: 'İskender'in doğduğu gece bir kabus gördü Pembe – tıp kı hamileliği boyunca birçok kez olduğu gibi. Ama bu seferki o kadar gerçekti ki bir yanı bu kabustan asla çıkamayacak, düşler dünyasına hapsolacaktı' (Şafak 2011: 104) ('The night Iskender was born, Pembe had a nightmare – as she had had many other times during her pregnancy. But this one felt so real that a part of her would never recover from it, never return from the liquid land of dreams') (Shafak 2012: 20). Now and then, there are flashforwards in the story where the reader gets glimpses of approaching incidents. It is a nightmare that will haunt Pembe for the rest of her life. When Pembe recounts her dream to Cemile, she imputes the blame on the djinns:

> 'Seni cin çarpmış olmalı' dedi.
> 'Cin m?' diye sordu Pembe.
> 'Tabii ya. Koltukta, kanepede kestirmeyi pek sever cin taifesi. Birini, üstüne oturup ezmiş olmalısın. O da seni çarpmış.' (Şafak 2011: 104)
>
> 'You must have been jinxed. Probably by a djinni.'
> 'A djinni,' Pembe echoed.
> 'Yes, sweetheart. The djinn love to take a nap on chairs and sofas, don't you know? Adult djinn can make a dash for it when they see a human coming, but infants are not so fast. And pregnant women are heavy, clumsy. You must have sat on a baby djinn and crushed it.' (Shafak 2012: 20)

Cemile claims that the grounds of all the nightmares Pembe suffers whilst pregnant are djinns. What is baffling is the mode Cemile declares. She speaks of djinns as if something utterly peculiar, which are, in point of fact, invisible, volatile, and shifty. Shafak blurs the boundaries between the natural and ethereal world in the everyday life of Toprak's offspring. The presence of djinns is so regular that the validity of rationality is at stake in typical magical realist fashion. We might suggest this is one of the points of comparison between Enríquez and Shafak. While Enríquez shakes the grounds of some monolithic truths with idiosyncratic technique, which comprises gothic, supernatural and horror, Shafak questions some untouchable taboos within its tradition, which is folklore. This surrealistic and miraculous mode of narration, scrutinizing socio-historical layers of the narrative without directly alluding to concrete historical facts, coincides with the unconscious and uncanny and formulates new conceptions of reality.

Furthermore, Shafak engages with Turkish/Kurdish folkways to challenge the dominant discourses and create an alternative dimension. In other words, as a segment of the shared folklore of Turkish and Kurdish communities, the djinns and dreams also critique Turkish and Kurdish fetishization of ethnic memory. Hence, shared folklore unearths the dilemmas between them and generates an alternative space of hybridity by combining memory and history, sign and sensation, folklore, and fabricated truths. In one of her interviews, Shafak declares how her interest in folklore arises, in the figure of her grandmother, echoing García Márquez's similar assertions of his beloved grandma as a treasure trove of popular tales:

> Teníamos una especie de código secreto mediante el cual nos comunicábamos ambos con un universo invisible. De día, su mundo mágico me resultaba fascinante, pero en la noche me causaba un terror puro y simple: el miedo a la oscuridad, anterior a nuestro ser, que me ha perseguido durante toda la vida en caminos solitarios y aun en antros de baile del mundo entero. En la casa de los abuelos cada santo tenía su cuarto y cada cuarto tenía su muerto. (García Márquez 2002: 75)

> We had a kind of secret code by means of which we both communicated with an invisible universe. By day her magical world was fascinating, but at night it caused me terror, pure and simple: the fear of the dark, older than we are, that has pursued me my whole life on lonely roads and even in cheap dance halls all over the world. In my grandparents' house each saint had a room and each room had a dead person. (García Márquez 2003: 37)

> In my early years, I used to call my grandmother 'mother' and my mother 'big sister'. My grandmother's house was filled with superstitions, magic, and chaos. The stories she would tell a part of an oral culture that had been handed from one generation on the next. Those stories were so alive and left an impact on me. (Shafak 2019: 6)

The extraordinary acts of Pembe and Cemile do not end here; on the contrary, they continue as Iskender grows up. Another naming dilemma arises with Iskender, which signals manifold scenes in future. The naming of Iskender is one of the memorable scenes in the novel, as various critics have indicated it in multiple ways, to which I will refer. Until Iskender was five years old, he was nameless because of Pembe's suspicions: 'Oğlu güzelleştikçe Pembe'nin evhamları artıyordu – depremler, toprak kaymaları, seller, orman yangınları, bulaşıcı hastalıklar, Naze'nin hayaletinin gazabı ya da cinlerin intikamı' (Şafak 2011: 105) ('The more handsome her son grew, the more Pembe became terrified of things over which she had no control – earthquakes, landslides, floods, wildfires, contagious diseases, the wrath of Naze's ghost, the vengeance of a mother djinn') (Shafak 2012: 21). Living in a highly patriarchal society, Pembe is at a delusional point where she is even afraid of naming his son. Ultimately, she decides to ask one of the oldest and supposedly the wisest woman to name her son. Before choosing a name for Pembe's son, the old woman makes a prophecy, which again flashforwards: 'Bazı çocuklar Fırat gibidir, hızlı, taşkın. Ana babaları baş edemez. Korkarım oğlun yüreğini dağlayacak' (Şafak 2011: 108-109) ('Some children are like the Euphrates, so fast, so rowdy. Their parents cannot catch up with them. I'm afraid your son will break your heart to pieces') (Shafak 2012: 24). From this scene again, the reader gets the sight that Pembe's most pampered child will generate trouble. The old lady decides on the name as Askander:

'İşte böylece Pembe'nin ilk çocuğu, gözbebeği oğlu Kürtçede Askander, Türkçede İskender, Londra'ya göçtüklerinde ise okul arkadaşlarının dilinde Alex oldu' (Şafak 2012: 109-110) ('So it was that her first child, the apple of her eye, would become Askander in Kurdish and Iskender in Turkish. When the family immigrated to London, to the children and teachers in his school, he was Alex') (Shafak 2012: 25). Janatha Kumari and S. R. Aswathy remark that:

> Iskender, the eldest child of the Toprak's family was named after a great leader, Alexander. He represents the mindset of every common man who strives hard in their lives to preserve their honour at any cost in their lives to. Imbued by these perspectives in life, Iskender differs himself from other children of the Toprak's family. He inwardly blames his mother for her reactions, and he even punishes her with death at the end. (Kumari and Aswathy 2020: 1933)

According to Kumari and Aswathy, the journey of İskender towards superiority results from the family and their ethos imposed on him, which corresponds with Fiaza Ikram and Sadia Waheed's assertion that:

> Iskender's position in the family as the first-born makes Pembe and Adam over-indulgent in spite of themselves. This excessive pampering in the first six-seven years created problems in his adult life. The result of this indulgence is that he is shocked when his parents are strict and hit him. This results in psychosis, as he retreats from harsh treatment and is ultimately unable to come to terms with criticism and berating. (Ikram and Waheed 2018: 5)

Growing up with her mother, Naze's reproaches on not having a son and living in a horrifically patriarchal community, Pembe and Adem pampered their *sultan*, which has adverse effects on the child's personality as Kumari and Aswathy call 'psychosis'. Petya Tsoneva Ivanova, however, expounds the picture in a more allegorical approach:

> Frequently, as in the already discussed case of the Green Knight, he turns out to be both a divine and a diabolical creature, and the hero has to decipher his identity and advice. Thus, Perceval reaches the Grail castle following the Fisher King's instructions, but he fails to figure out the significance of the Grail ceremony and the King's guidance. In a similar way, Askander in the Sīrat follows Al-Khadir reluctantly and finally fails to drink from the source of life and grasp the meaning

> of the divine stone. The way Iskender receives his name in Shafak's novel presents a similar occasion. (Ivanova 2018: 197-8)

In contrast to Kumari and Aswathy and Ikram and Waheed, Ivanova attests that the whole story of *İskender* is like a rewrite of the romance *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (1839), where the concept of 'honour' and 'identity' is codified. His family's over-indulgence and vulnerability as a child bulged with anxiety and displacement in England, resulting in his fall. With this, another parallel between Enríquez' *Things We Lost in the Fire* and *Honour* comes across. The whole story collection features children and women characters. For example, in 'Dirty Kid', the relationship between a middle-class woman and a homeless child is the kernel of the narrative. At the same time, the titular 'Things We Lost in the Fire' unfolds the tense intergenerational relationship between Silvina's 'superhero' mother and her own reluctant and deeply ambivalent sentiment towards her incendiary form of liberation. In *Honour*, from childhood to adolescence, Iskender has metamorphosis. Iskender, his mother Pembe, and his sister Esma are again children and women.

Further than the pathetic lives of the characters in *Honour* and *Things We Lost in the Fire*, female identity and experience are to the fore. While Enríquez employs a playful and grotesque traditional gender role and deconstructs binarism, Shafak unveils a brutal attitude of patriarchy towards female personas, namely Pembe, who is depicted as uncommitted to the fabricated gender roles. In short, Shafak and Enríquez exhibit the voices of the maltreated, tormented, and abused people who were silenced in historical accounts due to their gender. In what follows, I would like to explore the parallelism further between two narratives in respect of the voices of the subalterns. I shall now expand this matter of contention and draw further analogies between *Honour* and *Things We Lost in the Fire*.

4.4 Female Resistance: *Honour* and 'Things We Lost in the Fire'

In Shafak and Enríquez, literature functions as a channel shimmering between melancholy, madness, and subversion, a scene far removed from the doctrine of logical decoding of a chaotic universe and the narrative as a medium of deconstructing binarism and creating a newly visible world of female culture, at the price, indisputably, of being subjected to the risk of going insane, delusional, and horripilation. Herein, this subsection tackles the binary generic catalogues encapsulating common and idiosyncratic matters in the short story 'Things We Lost in the Fire' and the novel *Honour*. From the 'Things We Lost in the Fire' perspective, I will deal with physical and emotional domestic abuse, self-mutilation, feminist resistance, a fatal break with the fabricated dichotomies, and subversive and empowered women, which address the monster and angel binarism. Regarding Honour, I will shed light on the physical and emotional domestic abuse, fabricated and internalised constructs of femininity, muted female experience, marginal and unfit women, and honour killing. An interesting note is that the portrayal of women in 'Things We Lost in the Fire' is markedly stimulating due to the bizarre, gothic, and surreal ornaments, as stated earlier. On the other extreme, Honour is more panoramic in its sprawling novelistic indulgence, but again apocalyptic, demonic, and mystic. In her article, 'Feminismo y literatura (Argentina) mundial. Selva Almada, María Enríquez y Samanta Schweblin' Ana Gallego Cuiñas discuss the feminist upheaval in recent Argentine literature:

> El objetivo no es sólo tener acceso a la palabra sino descorrer el velo ideológico que el discurso hegemónico patriarcal ha extendido sobre el cuerpo de la mujer y sus funciones: como madre, como amante, como víctima de la violencia. Así, esta novísima narrativa feminista muestra, en un acto político, los límites, los agujeros, las sombras (Ludmer, Clases 98) de la feminidad, aunque sin adoptar una postura decolonial para la subjetividad – subalterna– argentina. (Gallego Cuiñas 2020: 82)
>
> The objective is not only to have access to the word but to lift the ideological veil that the patriarchal hegemonic discourse has spread over the woman's body and its functions: as a mother, as a lover, as a victim of violence. Thus, this very new

> feminist narrative shows, (Ludmer, Clases 98) in a political act, the limits, the holes, the shadows of femininity, although without adapting a decolonial position for the subjectivity – subaltern – Argentina.

Exploring many themes, from poverty to the shattered notion of the safe place, Enríquez effervescently deconstructs myths and taboos on gender roles, in particular, via the titular story in the collection, 'Things We Lost in the Fire'. The titular story is the collection's final narrative, which is incredibly morbid, baffling, thought-provoking, and grotesque. Due to its idiosyncratic narrative techniques, 'Things We Lost in the Fire' is arduous to précis. Nevertheless, my point of departure is women's physical and psychological trauma leading to feminine resistance. In the entire collection, apart from societal and economic troubles, there are glimpses of gender roles, but 'Things We Lost in the Fire' converge substantially on the mistreatment and objectification of women. In a nutshell, the narrative starts with a subway woman set on fire by her husband and gaining ground as women take a supreme manoeuvre, formulating a ritual of putting themselves to the torch.

None of the stories in the collection is easy to digest based on the historical and psychological traumas they ferret out. Nonetheless, 'Things We Lost in the Fire' is the titular story for a reason. Enríquez bombards the reader with horripilation angles of traumatic lives, monstrous self-destruction, and fatal break with normality, as Ana Gallego Cuiñas notes:

> The plot that offers the most radical feminist reading is, without a doubt, ‘Things We Lost in the Fire’. The motivation behind the story is a series of femicides whose victims are burned with alcohol, which leads a group of “burning women” to set their own bodies alight, subverting beauty standards and fighting back against the discipline imposed upon their bodies by patriarchal society: they are no longer burnt up by men, but rather by themselves. (Gallego Cuiñas 2020: 5)

The story sketches the female experience in the dichotomy of monster/angel or femme fatale/virginal figures that culturally validate the unfavourable image of women. The narrative

begins with a nameless subway woman whose husband, Juan Martín Pozzi, set her on fire while sleeping because he believed she was cheating on him. To prevent her from leaving him and dominating her, Juan Martín mutilated her: 'El creía que ella lo engañaba y tenía razón: estaba por abandonarlo. Para evitar eso, él la arruinó, que no fuera de nadie más, entonces' (Enríquez 2016: 186) ('He thought she was cheating on him, and he was right – she'd been about to leave him. To keep that from happening, he ruined her. Decided she would belong to no one else') (Enríquez 2017: 187). Though he was guilty over the trial, everybody, even the subway woman's father, believed Juan Martín's claim that she had burned herself. What is mesmerizing here is the reflection of a disfigured woman, therefore, the smashing of patriarchal norms. Furthermore, the subway woman does not hide from the people. On the contrary, she visits the most crowded places in the city, the subways. Every day, she shares her story with each passenger she meets with her almost destroyed face:

> Pero resultaba inolvidable. Tenía la cara y los brazos completamente desfigurados por una quemadura extensa, completa y profunda; ella explicaba cuánto tiempo le había costado recuperarse, los meses de infecciones, hospital y dolor, con su boca sin labios y una nariz pésimamente reconstruida; le quedaba un solo ojo, el otro era un hueco de piel, y la cara toda, la cabeza, el cuello, una máscara marrón recorrida por telarañas. (Enríquez 2016: 185)
>
> But she was unforgettable. Her face and arms had been completely disfigured by deep, intensive burns. She talked to the passengers about how long it had taken her to recover, about the months of infections, hospitals, and pain. Her mouth was lipless ans her nose had been sloppily reconstructed. She had only one eye left – the other was a hollow of skin – and her whole face, head, and neck were a maroon mask crisscrossed by spiderweb. (Enríquez 2017: 186)

The image of the unnamed subway woman is terrifying as it oscillates between the disgusting and miserable, the grotesque and the realistic, and repulsive and eye-catching, which magnify the connection between femininity and freakiness. The women in the narrative radically undergo a process of self-definition, challenging the dominant dichotomy of female stereotypes like 'angels'

and ‘monsters.’ This freakiness is the new beauty so as freedom. Within this context, Llarena Ascanio affirms that:

> The body becomes an important metaphor and site for intervention in the discourse on nationalisms, and it is on the body that these women writers inscribe their politics of difference, kinship, and affection. The monster, the freak, the alien, the mutant, and the grotesque have all been read as metaphors that problematize the diverse politics of exclusion/inclusion. (Llarena Acanio 2020: 129-130)

The dilemma between the 'angel' and the 'monster' is not dusty in the narrative. On the contrary, the story magnifies the brutal break with the internalized constructs of femininity and deconstructs generic binary catalogues. There is a bleak and deliberative metamorphosis as Gallego Cuiñas remarks:

> The motivation behind the story is a series of femicides whose victims are burned with alcohol, which leads a group of “burning women” to set their own bodies alight, subverting beauty standards and fighting back against the discipline imposed upon their bodies by patriarchal society: they are no longer burnt up by men, but rather by themselves. (Gallego Cuiñas 2020: 5)

The point of departure regarding the 'angel' and 'monster' dichotomy will be the declaration of Virginia Woolf's (1882-1941) 'Kill the Angel in the House' in her speech 'Professions for Women' (1931), which was published posthumously in *The Death of the Month and Other Essays* (1931). Living in the Victorian era, Woolf experienced an oppressive patriarchal structure. In response, Woolf visualized a 'phantom'/'monster', which embodies woman as passive, salient, and sleek. In Woolf's expressions, the 'phantom' is 'pure. Her purity was supposed to be chief beauty - her blushes, her great grace' (Woolf 2007: 246). Therefore, before women can write, they must first 'Kill the Angel in the House' to vivify female creativity. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar orchestrate with Woolf and articulate that 'women must kill the aesthetic ideal through which they have been 'killed' into art. And similarly, all women writers must kill the angel's necessary opposite and double, the 'monster' in the house, whose Medusa-face also kills female creativity' (Gilbert

and Gubar 2009: 17). Last but not least, Mary Eagleton affirms that 'we have been presented with 'false' realities, 'false' images' 'unrepresentative' models, and these, like dead skins, should be shed to find the 'true' reality and the 'authentic' selves at the core of our beings' (Eagleton 2011: 192-193). In 'Things We Lost in The Fire', Enríquez destroys the phantom's angelic quality and transforms her into a physically frightening, gruesome, ludicrous, and repellent creature. As an illustration, the burning women movement was fuelled by myriad occurrences of male violence and proceeded when a boy insulted the subway woman as 'qué manipuladora, qué asquerosa, qué necesidad; también hacía chistes' (Enríquez 2016: 187) ('how manipulative, how gross, how desperate') (Enríquez 2017: 188). In response to this scene, the protagonist's mother, who will be later chillingly committed to the militant 'Burning Women Movement', punches the boy: 'y le había dado un puñetazo en la nariz, un golpe decidido y profesional, que lo hizo sangrar y gritar y vieja hija de puta qué te pasa' (Enríquez 2016: 187) ('she's drawn back her arm and punched the boy in the nose, a decisive and professional blow that made him bleed and cry out, 'You old bitch, what's wrong with you?') (Enríquez 2017: 188). From this point on, women started to burn themselves with the tagline' Una belleza nueva' (Enríquez 2016: 190) ('A new kind of beauty') (Enríquez 2017: 191). The bonfires spread like a contagion; each day/night, groups of women burn themselves alive to protest patriarchal mistreatment and objectification of women. 'Burned female challenge the societally-dubbed beautiful, abled corporal farms, which give the women their identity and validity in a heteronormative society, as well as the idea of women deliberately 'trashing' their beauty and becoming undefinable – i.e., abject – seems unfathomable' (Ramos Orta 2019: 134). It is the most anarchic way of challenging the romantic masculine ideal of feminine identity and body. The women who immolate themselves publicly display themselves and declare: 'Las quemas las hacen los hombres, Chiquita. Siempre nos quemaron. Ahora nos quemamos nosotras. Pero no nos vamos

a morir: vamos a mostrar nuestras cicatrices' (Enríquez 2016: 192) ('Burnings are the work of men. They have always burned us. Now we are burning ourselves. But we're not going to die; we're going to flaunt our scars') (Enríquez 2017: 193).

The idea of mutilation, oddness, freakiness, monstrosity, and metamorphosis is, particularly, where Enríquez establishes a dialogue with Silvina Ocampo. Just like Enríquez, Ocampo idiosyncratically questions the well-established gender roles imposed by the patriarchal order. Contrary to the traditional image of a fragile and sleek woman, Ocampo magnifies 'rebelliousness in "the freakiness" of the bodies of the female protagonists. There is not a place of maternal warmth, but bodies that transform, that are assimilated into animalism, into savagery, that avoid being controlled by men' (Espinoza-Vera 2009: 221). Patricia Klingenber's reading of Ocampo's narratives of feminine metamorphosis, however, follows a specific trajectory:

> The trajectory of Ocampo's treatment of the female double has shown a roughly chronological process by which this remarkably creative woman has fought to see beyond the images of monster and angel. At first, she deals with these images in the traditional male polarization of good woman versus evil woman. As her stories empower the creative monster, however, she discovers the hidden dangers of the passive-aggressive angel as well. Finally, in her conception of both parts of the woman myth as victims of their seething hatred, occasioned by a patriarchal system which pits women as competitors for male favour, Ocampo has at last exorcized these images for herself. (Klingenberg 1988: 38)

In light of the above definition, there is the militant use of the gothic, permeated by feminism, which accommodates the narrative about women's experiences. María Negroni explicates this fusion as follows: 'Between ideology and crime, the Gothic opts for an epic intensity, one that rehabilitates madness as via negativa even as it posits improbability as an antidote to transcendence.' (Negroni 2015: 7)

In *Honour*, however, there are no hints of a monster-like image of women or the empowered women's movement. Nevertheless, there is the monstrosity of patriarchy vis-à-vis

culturally fabricated norms of femininity as 'bad' and 'good'. In other words, there is an exposition of the dichotomy between victimizer and victim. Shafak succeeds in highlighting the oppressive patriarchal laws that condemn female individuals who struggle to go against their imposed, subordinated, and inferior societal position. As in the exemplification of Virginia Woolf's 'angel/monster' paradigm, in *Honour*, there is the process of self-discovery which results in 'honour-killing' in the case of Pembe (which we later find out that her twin sister, Cemile, will become the victim of 'honour-killing' mistakenly). From the village's name, ‘Mala Çar Bayan’, Shafak shadows forth the gender dimension of the story, which is also a hybrid, combining Kurdish and Turkish words. As I have exposed earlier in the chapter, *Mala Çar Bayan* means *House of the Winds*, but while *bayan* means *wind* in Kurdish, it also implies *woman* in Turkish, so 'the pun makes it possible to translate the name of the village as 'House of Women' and consider the 'house', in its more symbolic and imaginative significance, as a womb-like figure'. (Tsoneva 2018: 101)

Before delving into the mythos of the novel, it is paramount to reflect upon 'honour-killing' as a form of gender-based violence. Honour killing is 'a form of gender-based violence perpetrated by a male family member, usually a brother or a father, against a female family by engaging in immoral and unacceptable forms of sexual behaviour' (Awwad 2001: 39). Ivanova, on the other extreme, makes a more particular clarification by manifesting that 'defined as "control crimes", "community" or "cultural" offences, these acts of murder constitute part of the self-imposed severe enclosure of eastern, mostly south Asian, immigrant and diasporic communities' (Ivanova 2018: 169). In response to Ivanova, Shahrazad Mojab argues that 'given the universality and ubiquity of male violence – ranging from killing, to battering to rape, it would be more appropriate to look at honour killing and other forms of violence as a means for the exercise of gender power, in this case, male power,' Lama Abu-Odeh prefers to use 'crime of passion' rather than honour killing in

order to locate it in the "orientalist tradition but also shared by Euro-American popular culture that while the West has "passion" the East has "honour"' (Abu-Odeh 2010: 289). Although honour killing has been studied by various researchers and expounded in myriad forms, in Shafak's novel, it is explicitly a practice of domestic and familial violence, which encapsulates the ideology that men's honour links to women's virtue. Throughout the book, there is tremendous prominence on women's dignity, purity, and virginity. For example, one of the sections from Naze's, Pembe's mother, instructions to her daughters are as follows:

> 'Namus kadının zırhıdır' demiş. 'Zırhınızı kaybederseniz bakir akçe kadar kıymetiniz kalmaz, unutmayın' […] alnına leke sürülen kadınlar hemen fark edilir, tıpkı kabuğun danelerden sıyrıldığı gibi ayrılırmış diğerlerinden. Yani bir bakire kendini bir erkeğe verdiğinde – sevdiği de olsa – her şeyini kaybedermiş ama erkeğe hiçbir şeycik olmazmış. (Şafak 2011: 66)

> 'Modesty is a woman's only shield,' she said. 'Bear this in mind: if you lose that, you will be worth no more than a chipped *kurus* (small unit of Turkish currency)' […] women who were sullied would be instantly noticed and separated from the rest, like husks removed from grains. Hence when a virgin gave herself to a man – even if he were the man whom she loved – she had everything to lose, while he had absolutely nothing to lose. (Shafak 2012: 15-16)

Naze lectures her daughters that women should preserve their virtue and not even dare to be close to men, as this can be misinterpreted and lead to gossip. In addition, she warns them to keep their virginity and sexual purity until they marry. When it comes to men, however, they have a role of continuing family lines, so they are the *sultans*. Naze's condescending approach towards her daughters accentuates how mothers perpetuate patriarchy by tyrannising their daughters with fabricated ideologies vis-á-vis aggrandising manhood by bringing them up like sultans. The story of the Toprak family springs from this 'virginity' dilemma. Although Adem falls in love with Cemile, he marries her twin Pembe because Cemile has been kidnapped and tainted:

> Hmm, kimse tam bilemiyor. Dokunmadık diyorlar ama pek güven olmaz, kız da bir şey demiyor. Babası kaç kere dövdüyse de tek kelime alamadı ağzından. Ebeye

> muayene ettirdiler. Cemile’nin kızlık zarı yokmuş dediğine göre ama bazı kızların doğuştan öyle olurmuş. (Şafak 2011: 208)
>
> Hmm, nobody knows for sure. They say they didnt lay a hand on her, but they’re shifty and the girl never explained. Her father beat her several times but still no word. A midwife examined her. She says Jamila has no hymen, but some girls are born like this. (Shafak 2012: 97)

A midwife checked her, and she had been beaten multiple times by her father to speak about her virginity, but Cemile was silent. When Adem asks her directly, her response reflects Cemile's unyielding personality: 'Sen nasıl görürsen odur hakikat' (Şafak 2011: 209). ('The truth is what you make of it') (Shafak 2012: 99). The broad acceptance of both golden and silver rules of prudence shows that Cemile is alone in her fight against the patriarchy, even if there has been an assault. Knowing that uttering the words will not create a difference, Cemile favours taciturnity as a means of resistance. Whilst in 'Things We Lost in the Fire', there is the solidarity of women against gender-based violence, in *Honour*, instead of unity, even mothers and daughters, who are victims of male violence and perpetuate patriarchal codes, are pitted against one another. One of the most disgraceful manoeuvres against Cemile is the checking of her hymen to verify her virginity because:

> Loss of virginity outside of marriage is considered a catastrophe for the girl, her family, clan, or tribe. Grooms may require proof of virginity as a condition of marriage and girls can be subjected to forced virginity tests. The required proof may be a report from a physician (usually a male) about confirming that the hymen is intact. Proof may also involve inspection of bloodied sheets after the first night of marriage. In Turkey, the first night is so important that it has its own name (*gerdek*). In patriarchal regions, older women keep vigil throughout *gerdek* for proof of virginity (blood). (Sev’er 2005: 132)

Due to his scepticism about Cemile's virginity, Adem marries Pembe and has three children: İskender, Esma, and Yunus. As I have denoted previously, İskender is the first son of the family, who also conducts honour killing. However, what is staggering here is that both the victim and

victimiser are injured parties. Moreover, the crime's victim and perpetrator are given a voice, as various researchers have observed. For example, Fiaza Ikram and Sadia Waheed scrutinise the novel on the 'inferiority complex' and assert that 'by the time Iskender was five, he had developed the attributes of a pampered child. His superiority and solitary, friendless status is proof of that.

Additionally, his sobriquet 'sultan' helped to solidify his sense of superiority' (Ikram and Waheed 2018: 4-5). Nour Seblini, however, tackles two grounds that generated the catastrophe; one is 'his unlimited freedom and his Turkish 'manliness'. An inheritance passed on to the older, yet still young, son in the form of a heavy burden placed upon the shoulders regarding the honour of family's female members.' And the other one is 'the bond between mother and son is rendered secondary in face of the agency of a new bond which links control over women's body to the very notion of manliness as dictated by the traditional value system' (Seblini 2018: 4).

When we compare the mothers in both 'Things We Lost in the Fire' and *Honour*, it is reasonably incompatible. Although Pembe in *Honour* is the victim of domestic violence, she is a patriarchalized feminine archetype; Silvina's mother in 'Things We Lost in the Fire', on the other hand, is chillingly committed to the bonfire's ceremony. Pembe's husband, Adem, has a gambling addiction and a relationship with a Bulgarian prostitute, Roxana, for whom he leaves his family. The honour code does not perform on Adem, but when Pembe dates Elias, she becomes the target of honour killing. Rather than fighting against rumours and attacks, she chooses to leave Elias. Tarık, the uncle of İskender, is the manipulator, hypocritic, and brain behind honour killing:

> ‘Ne yaptın oğlum?’ dedi amcam. Sesi boğulur gibi çıktı. ‘Felaket bu.’ Şaşırdım. Kekelemeye başladım. ‘Aa…ma…b…biiz…ko…ko…konuş…muş..tuk.’
> ‘Yanlışın var’ dedi amcam. ‘Benimle böyle bir şey konuşmadın.’
> Annemin bir adamla buluştuğunu bana anlatan, acilen bir şeyler yapmam gerektiğini söyleyen, beni dolduruşa getiren, aile namusu üzerine nutuklar atan adam o değildi sanki. Donup kalmıştım.’ (Şafak 2011: 363)
>
> ‘What have you done son?’ His voice sounded strangled. ‘This is terrible.’

> I was taken aback. 'Bb… but…we…ttt…alk…ed ab…ab…ou…ttt…this.'
> 'Surely we did not,' my uncle said.
> The man who had told me everything and then impressed upon me, over and over again, that I had to do something and do it soon, had vanished into thin air. I was stunned.' (Shafak 2012: 247-248)

Once Pembe transgresses the norms of prudence and purity, she regrets it. Rather than fighting on her own with the furious infidel, like Silvina's mother, Pembe internalises and accepts the values of the patriarchal order. Silvina's mother, on the other hand, is so committed to the movement that she would offer Silvina up in sacrifice:

> Silvina sentía que la furia le llenaba los ojos de lágrimas. María Helena abrió la boca y dijo algo más, pero Silvina no la escuchó y su madre siguió y las dos mujeres conversaron en la luz enferma de la sala de visitas de la cárcel, y Silvina solamente escuchó que ellas estaban demasiado viejas, que no sobrevivirían a una quema, la infección se las llevaba en un segundo, pero Silvinita, ah, cuándo se decidirá Silvinita, sería una quemada hermosa, una verdadera flor de fuego. (Enríquez 2016: 196-197)
>
> Silvina felt the fury her eyes with tears. María Helena opened her mouth and said something else, but Silvina didn't hear it, and her mother went on and the two women conversed in the sickly light of the prison visitors' room and Silvina heard only how the two of them were too old, they wouldn't survive a Burn the infection would carry them off in a second. But Silvinita, oh, when Silvina burned it would be beautiful, she'd be a true flower of fire. (Enríquez 2017: 198)

On the other hand, Silvina is a complex character, as attested by several critics. Megan McDowell, for instance, states that 'Silvina, in the title story, sympathizes with the burning Women's movement but does not commit entirely, even toying with the option of destroying it from within. We understand that her choices are to betray her mother and her activists, or to burn herself – she cannot remain in between' (McDowell 2017: 201). Along the same line, Angela Woodward states that Silvina, the protagonist of 'Things We Lost in the Fire', is not yet all the way committed to the protest movement' (Woodward 2017: 2). The daughter of Pembe, Esma, however, struggles with patriarchal codes and resists dehumanizing conditions. Even when she was around fifteen years old, she outbreaks about the worshipping to the sons of the family, and she utters:

> Nefret ediyordu kız doğmuş olmaktan. Ne olurdu Esma değil de İskender olarak gelseydi şu dünyaya.
> Gene aklına düştü, 'Acaba erkek olsaydım neye benzerdim?' sorusu. Kahverengi göz kalemiyle kaşlarını kalınlaştırıp, ortada birleştirdi. Sonra dudaklarının üstüne bir bıyık çizdi. Ağabeyi onu görecek olsa kafasını sallar, 'Çatlaksın sen, kızım!' derdi. (Şafak 2011: 252-253)
>
> As I looked from the window back to the mirror, I wondered, for the umpteen time, what I look like has I been born a boy instead. Grabbing a nut-brown eye pencil, I first thickened, then joined, my eyebrows. Next, I began to draw a moustache above my lips. Not a thin, wispy bristle, but a big, bushy thing, curling over upwards. If Iskender saw me now, he would have shaken his head and said, 'Sis, you're off your trolley! (Shafak 2012: 180-181)

Although in the Turkish version of it, Esma unsubtly admits her wish to be İskender rather than Esma and imagines herself as a boy, in the English account, she does not spell the name of Iskender but again dreams of being a boy by painting a moustache and eyebrows in her face. Esma's confessions and rebelliousness nestle emancipatory ideals. In particular, the fact that she is writing letters to İskender whilst he is in jail but does not confess to him the truth that Pembe is alive, but Cemile died is her revenge. Since she hid the fact from Iskender, he suffers from being his mother's killer. That is to say, Esma is a static character who establishes an alternative, feminine space in her household through education, writing and reading. Petya Tsoneva Ivanova certifies that:

> Esma's story also represents the precarious boundary between personal confession and social responsibility in the wider social discourse of silenced femininity. In this manner, she breaks the spell of silence that consumes honour killings within the tightly bordered confinement of cultural vigilance and tells the secret loudly. (Ivanova 2018: 192)

Instead of being a submissive woman like her mother, Esma is a feminist who explores how to educate herself and rescue herself from the patriarchal structure of her family. In a nutshell, it is evident that while Pembe is a complex, silenced feminine figure, Silvina's mother is a hefty activist. At the same time, Silvina is a complicated and unpredictable character whilst Esma is a maximalist and feminist figure. Evidently, the feminine quest for self-definition in *Honour* is not

as clamorous as in 'Things We Lost in the Fire’, which challenges the female stereotypes as angel/monster prototypes of dominant male discourse. Enríquez’s monster-like feminine characterization in 'Things We Lost in the Fire' is distressing, as declared by Olivia Vázquez-Medina:

> Her [Enríquez’s] stories interweave a constellation of ‘ugly feelings’ that range from fear – that most prominent ‘vehement passion’ – and its accompanying affects (shock, dread) to distinctively noncathartic emotions such as uneasiness, shame and disgust, whilst also exploring the paradoxical ugliness of moral emotions such as compassion. (Vázquez-Medina 2021: 290)

4.5 The Translation, Circulation, and Reception of Mariana Enríquez’s ‘Things We Lost in the Fire’ in Turkey

The relationship between Latin American literature and Turkish literature constitutes a fertile field of research, particularly the importation, translation, circulation, and reception of Latin American literary corpus in Turkey, which opened the expanded zone of linguistic, cultural, and political encounters. The transcultural networks between Latin America and Turkey entered a phase of upsurge aftereffects of Jorge Luis Borges's translation and the initial Latin American ‘boom’ (1960-1970). The high-quality texts of Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, Julio Cortázar, and Carlos Fuentes have achieved tremendous recognition in the Turkish literary scene and worldwide and were soon followed by Roberto Bolaño, Isabel Allende, and Mariana Enríquez. Semih Gümüş addresses García Márquez and Borges and their outputs as world literary impact:

> Yeni bir anlayış olarak büyülü gerçekçiliğin yaygınlaşması, 1960'li yıllarda Márquez'in *Yüzyıllık Yalnızlık* romanının gördüğü muazzam ilgiyle tamamlandı. Borges'in gerçek sanılan düş gücünü birleştiren, her konuyu, olayı ya da bilgiyi içine alabilen öyküleri de bu arada büyülü gerçekçiliğin dışında, ikinci bir yol açtı. Sonunda, her ikisi de kendine özgü kaldı. Büyülü gerçekçilik ya da Borges düzyazısı, dünyanın her ikisine de öykünmenin neredeyse olanaksızlığı görüldü. (Gümüş 2011: 28)

> The spread of magical realism as a new understanding was mounted in the 1960s with the tremendous interest that Márquez's novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* received. By the way, Borges's stories, which combine the imagination that is thought to be authentic and can include every subject, event, or information, opened a second path outside magical realism. In the end, both remained distinctive. Magical realism or Borgesian prose, the world proved almost impossible to emulate either.

The rise of significant Latin American women writers has also influenced publication in Turkey and drew some publishers' attention. Ana Gallego Cuiñas declares that 'the Argentine narrative written by women in the 21st century has become one of the world centres of feminist literary production (from the hegemonic side), whose nature we will unravel below on the basis of its main problems' (Gallego Cuiñas 2020: 82). As Bolaño's idiosyncratic style opened new channels, the *nuevo boom femenino*, spearheaded by Samanta Schweblin and Mariana Enríquez, captured the attention of worldwide audiences. Concerning the topics contemporary Latin American women writers than to focus on, Llse Logie distinguishes between the 'new' writers and the older generation of writers like Chilean Isabel Allende and Mexican Laura Esquivel:

> They no longer write allegorical family sagas nor nationalist-flavoured romances in telenovela style with intimacy, privacy, and 'authenticity' as central values, but rather predominantly harsh, brutal, confrontational stories and novels. At the same time, they are very active in genres such as the chronicle and the essay. Furthermore, there is an aesthetic paradigm shift, which expresses itself in a revival of Gothic motifs. (Logie 2023: 283)

In this chapter section, I will, in particular, explore how Turkish translator Seda Ersavcı tackles Enriquez' sophisticated weirdness, ambiguous, and crude language in the Turkish edition of Enríquez's *Las cosas que perdimos en el fuego*. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the translation,

circulation, and adaptation of Enríquez's story collection, *Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories*, in Turkey. I will scrutinise the mode of translation praxis, agents and publishers, paratextual and in-text materials such as typography and illustration, and reception of the text in the Turkish literary market.

Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories is the first of the author's works to appear in English, translated by Megan McDowell. The collection was first published in 2016, translated into English in 2017, and the same year in Turkish by Seda Ersavcı. Ersavcı graduated with Spanish Language and Literature at Ankara University and a master's and PhD at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Translating both from English and Spanish, Ersavci translated over forty books by celebrated authors, such as Roberto Baloño, Mariana Enríquez, Evelio Rosero, Javier Marías, Elizabeth Farrelly, Carlos María Domínguez, Patti Smith and so forth. Ersavci translated the collection directly from Spanish and titled it the same as the original, *Yangında Kaybettiklerimiz*, as she declares: 'I translate directly from Spanish to Turkish. In my opinion, other languages and translations can be used, but the translation should be done in the text's original language, if possible. When it is impossible, other languages can be consulted, or to make a comparison, get ideas, and see how another translator translated it into another language' (Ersavcı 2023:1). This is a far cry from the previous indirect translation trend that characterised the reception of the 'Boom' writers, as we saw earlier in the thesis with the notable example of García Márquez, where the Turkish translation of *Cien años de soledad* was complexly mediated by Gregory Rabassa's English version.

Yangında Kaybettiklerimiz was first and solely published by *Domingo Publishing House* in Turkey. *Domingo Press* was established in 2007 to publish a wide range of translated works, which granted the Turkish-speaking public a substantial portion of world literature. Surprisingly,

Figure 1.5

Enríquez, Mariana. 2017. *Yangında Kaybettiklerimiz*. Seda Ersavcı (Trans.). İstanbul: Domingo. Source: Photo by me.

the collection has been published by a small independent press in Turkey rather than leading publishing houses. However, the text received almost immediate attention and has been featured in some outstanding magazines and newspapers such as *Gazete Duvar*, *Notos*, *Hürriyet*, and *Haber Sol*. The agents devoted full-page articles on the collection, and some titles are as follows: 'Kendini Yakan Kadınların Hikayesi' ('The Story of Women Who Burn Themselves'), 'Geçmişin Hayaletleri Arjantin'in Yakasını Bırakmıyor' ('Ghost of the Past Haunts Argentina'), 'Canavarların Bizler Olduğu Bir Öykü Kitabı' ('A Story Collection Where We are the Monsters'). This immediate and positive reception in the Turkish literary market is a testament to the quality and impact of the translation.

Paratextual materials, book jackets, titles, section breaks, epigraphs, and illustrations are crucial to the book's marketing. As Gerard Genette states, as we saw in the previous chapter on García Márquez, the paratext is the initial presentation of the work vis-a-vis the first impression the reader will take from the book. These paratexts, as specified by Genette, are not just supplementary elements but integral parts of the reading experience, shaping the reader's perception and understanding of the text. The paratextual cloth is the initial measure of communicating with the reader. The cloth, titles, illustrations, and epigraphs are vital in the book's marketing. It is a portmanteau material that encapsulates peritext and epitext. These are intrinsic and extrinsic properties of the work. Designed by Betül Güzhan, the jacket colour of the Turkish translation of the collection consists of cream, black, and white, principally, contrasting colours were chosen (*Figure 1.5*). The gothic and feminist features are sprinkled over the cover of the translation. The sketch of a burned woman is captured on the cover. The burned woman's figure is muddled with the burned leaves.

The illustration of a woman's face in flames synchronises with the last titular story of the collection, 'Things We Lost in the Fire'. Women reputably burning themselves in fires as in the following example:

> La mujer entró en el fuego como en una pileta de natación, se zambulló, dispuesta a sumergirse: no había duda de que lo hacía por su propia voluntad; una voluntad supersticiosa o incitada, pero propia. Ardió apenas veinte segundos. (Enríquez 2016: 193-194)
>
> The woman entered the fire as if it were a swimming pool; she dove in, ready to sink. There was no doubt she did it of her own will. A superstitious or provoked will, but her own. She burned for barely twenty seconds. Then two women in asbestos suits dragged her out of the flames and carried her at a run to the hospital. (Enríquez 2017: 194)

The collection's last story is one of the most debated in the Turkish literary scene. Pinar Kumandaş makes a mighty statement about it, uttering: 'Enríquez'in distopyasi, kadına yönelik şiddete bir başkaldırış gibi' ('Enríquez's dystopia is like a revolution against violence toward women') (Kumandaş 2020: 1). On the cover, the woman's figure is visible, though the face is void. The burning woman figure's face is coloured white, and the title is cemented on the front of the sketch. The title is in lowercase, but the most dramatic here is that while the word *yangında* (*in the fire*) is written in black, *kaybettiklerimiz* (*things we lost*) is furnished with red. There is a conspicuous tone in the expression' things we lost' and lends the cover a serious appearance. The bottom line is that the front cloth connects with the book's interior. Furthermore, the typography and illustration of the front cover of the collection are not very varnished for marketing purposes. On the subject of the jacket of a work, Genette alludes that:

Figure 1.6

Enríquez, Mariana. 2017. *Yangında Kaybettiklerimiz*. Seda Ersavcı (Trans.). İstanbul: Domingo. Source: Photo by me

> The most obvious function of the jacket is to attract attention, using means even more dramatic than those a cover can or should be permitted: a garnish illustration, a reminder of a film or television adaptation, or simply a graphic presentation more flattering or more personalized than a cover standard of a series allow. (Genette 1997: 28)

The paratextual accessories of the translation are relatively sober and short of embellishment, mystique, and eccentricity, which are significant book ingredients. The front jacket is just enriched with an epigraph. Just on the cover of the English translation of the book, in the Turkish version, a quotation from Dave Eggers is inserted, 'Mutlaka okunması gereken bir yazar. Büyülüyor…' (Enríquez 2017: front cover) ('Mesmerizing… hits with the force of a freight train') (Enríquez 2017: front cover). The existence of the slogan here is the only market-driven manoeuvring designed to convince the target audience of the literary quality and triumph of the book. The back cover is, by contrast, populated with paratextual slogans.

The rear cover (*Figure 1.6*) is more garnished than the front cover, encompassing illustrations, reviews, and the please-insert. On the report of Genette, the please-insert 'is a short text (generally between a half page and a full page) describing, by means of a summary or in some other way, and most often in a value-enhancing manner, the work to which it refers' (Genette1997: 104-105). First, a burning house covered in smoke in the middle of the back cover attracts attention. While the fire is one motif Enríquez employs, a haunted house is another she utilizes throughout the text. Since fire and haunted houses are two significant tropes in the stories, the rear/front cover sketches feature gothic patterns. In the matter of the uncanny houses, Rosa María Díez Cobo asserts:

> Pero cuando nos enfrentamos al concepto de casa encantada son muchos los territorios simbólicos y críticos que analizar: la consideración de la casa como un residuo maldito del pasado; el espacio doméstico como alter ego de personajes perturbados, espejo de rebelión o, la que nos interesa aquí, específicamente la dimensión arquitectónica del hogar, la casa como agente del mal en cuanto que

> entidad física con unas determinadas características fisionómicas. (Díez Cobo 2020: 140)
>
> But when we face the concept of the haunted house, there are many symbolic and critical territories to analyse: the consideration of the house as a cursed residue of the past; domestic space as alter ego of disturbed characters, mirror of psychic alterations; the home as a catalyst for forms of rebellion or, the one that interests us here, the house as an agent of evil as a physical entity with certain physiognomic characteristics.

The haunted house is the epitome of horror that evokes terror, mystery, and fear. Nevertheless, in Enríquez's craft, 'such incidents are the bubbling up of the unconscious, a psychic fire in which characters sometimes gain more than they lose' (Russell 2017: 1). In 'La casa de Adela', for instance, the haunted house is at the kernel of the story:

> La casa no tenía nada especial a primera vista, pero, si se le prestaba atención, había detalles inquietantes. Las ventanas estaban tapiadas, cerradas completamente, con ladrillos. ¿Para evitar que alguien entrara o que algo saliera? La pueta, de hierro, estaba pintada de marrón oscuro; parece sangre seca, dijo Adela. (Enríquez 2016: 71)
>
> At first glance there was nothing special about the house, but if you paid a little attention, there were some unsettling details. The windows were completely bricked up. 'To keep someone from getting in, or something from getting out?' The iron front door painted dark brown. 'It looks like dried blood,' said Adela. (Enríquez 2017: 72)

In a similar fashion, in the story 'Tela de Araña', it reads as:

> Volamos sobre un campo, en el norte, y de repente vi un incendio muy grande, se quemaba una casa, fuego bien anaranjado, una humareda negra, y se veía la casa como derrumbándose adentro. Miré y miré el incendio hasta que él giró la avioneta y lo perdí de vista. Pero a los diez minutos volvimos a pasar por ahí y el incendio había desaparecido. (Enríquez 2016: 97)
>
> We were flying over fields to the north, and suddenly I saw a very big fire. A house was burning, bright orange flames and a black cloud of smoke, and you could see the house collapsing in on itself. I stared and stared at the fire until he turned the plane, and I lost sight of it. But ten minutes later we passed over the spot again and the fire had disappeared. (Enríquez 2017: 98)

Therefore, paratextual accessories overlap with the collection's theme in a simple but delicate way. Just like the title is inserted in the front cover's centre of the burning face, a comprehensive afterword or *please-insert* is cemented on the blazing house picture. The depiction reads as:

> Mariana Enríquez'in ürkütücü evreninde canavarlar yatakların altında saklanmıyor, ormanların içinde dolaşmıyor. Bu öykülerde canavar, biziz. 12 öykü, ölümün dokunduğu 12 karakter. Perili olduğuna inanılan metruk bir evde tutsak kalan tek kollu Adela, dişleriyle tırnaklarını söken Marcela, Kepçekulak Ufaklık lakaplı çocuk seri katilin hayaletini gören Pablo ve kadına karşı şiddeti protesto etmek için kendilerini ateşe atan kadınlar… Toplumsal yozlaşmayı doğaüstü güçlerle karikatürize ederek anlatan Enríquez, berrak dili ve sanki her şey normalmiş gibi bir tavırla kaleme aldığı öyküleriyle Julio Cortazar, Shirley Jackson ve Roberto Bolaño gibi isimlerle birlikte anılmaya aday. (*Figure 1.6*)
>
> In Mariana Enríquez's spooky universe, monsters do not hide under beds or wander through forests. In these stories, we are the monster. 12 stories, 12 characters touched by death. One-armed Adela, who is trapped in an abandoned house believed to be haunted, Marcela, who pulls out her nails with her teeth, Pablo, who sees the ghost of the child serial killer nicknamed Little Ears, and women who set themselves on fire to protest violence against women... Enríquez, who describes social corruption by caricaturing it with supernatural powers, is a candidate to be remembered alongside names such as Julio Cortázar, Shirley Jackson, and Roberto Bolaño, with her explicit language and the stories she writes as if everything is normal.

The afterword on the back cover (*Figure 1.6*) offers some context about the book. It is a descriptive paragraph that glimpses into the stories' characters, themes, and techniques. As in the front cover, some epigraphs from outstanding magazines and newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Vanity Fair* are attached for polishing and marketing purposes. Overall, the translation's front and back covers are simple, elegant, and in harmony with the collection's tone. A brief information about the author, Enríquez, appears at the end of the book before the flyleaf.

These dazzling, incandescent stories by Enríquez are her first to be translated into Turkish, and each one crackles with sophisticated style into Turkish. However, Enríquez's savoir-faire is toilsome to import into another culture. As I have mentioned previously, Enríquez is genuinely original and subversive in her employment of the gothic. Due to the proliferation of vernacular

words, crude, ambiguous and macabre tones require specific technical translation skills. Lawrence Venuti, correspondingly, articulates that 'translators must also possess a commanding knowledge of the translating language and culture, past as well as present. And they must be able to deploy this knowledge in writing' (Venuti 2008: 267). Having a PhD in Spanish Language and Literature, Ersavcı captures the intensity and rhythm of the collection and manages to create an absorbing experience for the Turkophone reader. In the Turkish translation of the collection, Ersavci applies eight footnotes without disturbing the flow of the stories, offering a stream of cultural materials to bridge the distances between Latin America and Turkey. For instance, in the collection's English translation sequence, ‘Puente Moreno’ is translated as ‘Moreno Bridge’ (Enríquez 2017: 164). In Turkish translation, however, ‘Puente Moreno’ is imported as it is ‘Puente Moreno’ (Enríquez 2017: 160). Rather than translating the word *puente* in Turkish as Moreno *köprü*, Ersavci prefers to write a footnote that defines the term in Turkish. In another example, Ersavci heightens the foreignizing effect by inserting specific terms as follows:

> Igual, está tan acostumbrada que a veces habla por teléfono en portugués o, cuando se enoja, levanta los brazos hacia el techo y le reclama venganza o piedad a la Pomba Gira, su exú personal, para quien tiene un pequeño altar en el rincón de la sala donde corta el pelo, justo al lado de la computadora, que está encendida en chat perpetuo. (Enríquez 2016: 13)
>
> Still, she’s so used to it that sometimes she talks on the phone in Portuguese, or she gets mad and raises her arms to the sky and begs for vengeance or mercy from Pomba Gira, her personal spirit, to whom she has a small altar set up in the corner of the room where she cuts hair. It’s right next to her computer, which is always lit up in a perpetual chat. (Enríquez 2017: 15-16)
>
> Gelgelelim sırf alışkanlıktan, bazen telefonda Portekizce konuşuyor ya da sinirlendiğinde kollarını tavana doğru kaldırıp, saç kestiği salonun bir köşesinde, her daim sohbet sayfasının açık olduğu bilgisayarın tam yanında kendisine küçük bir sunak hazırlamış olduğu kişisel Eshu’su Pomba Gira’ya Portekizce dua ediyor; merhamet yahut intikam dileniyor. (Enríquez 2017: 15-16)

In the English translation, McDowell translates *su exú personal* as *her personal spirit*. At the same time, Ersavcı employs the title *Eshu* and expounds it in the footnote as follows: 'Yoruba dininde Tanrı'nın alametlerinden birini yansıtan bir ruha verilen ad' (Enríquez 2017: 6) ('In Yoruba religion, it is the name given to a spirit that reflects one of God's omens'). In discordance with McDowell, Ersavcı delineates further *Pomba Gira* in another footnote: 'Brezilya'da, özellikle Umbanda ve Kimbanda dini inanışlarında görülen Afro-Brezilya kökenli bir ruhtur. Eshu erkek cinselliğini, doğurganlığı ve gücü temsil ederken Pomba Gira dişil güzelliği, cinselliği ve arzuyu temsil eder' (Enríquez 2017: 6) ('In Brazil, especially in Umbanda and Kimbanda religious beliefs, it is a spirit of Afro-Brazilian origin. While *Eshu* represents male sexuality, fertility and power, the *poma* represents feminine beauty, sexuality, and desire'). Tracing the Turkish translation of Ersavcı emphasizes the significance of cultural expectations, local conditions, and the needs of the present. Ersavcı, therefore, uses what Kwame Anthony Appiah defines as 'thick translation' by interspersing Latin American-specific terms and expounding them in footnotes, yet without overpopulating the translation with annotations. Nonetheless, the Turkish version comprises fewer foreign words than the English translation. McDowell intersperses more local terms and does not explain them in annotations, which again signifies the differences in receiving culture as David Damrosch pronounces, 'every translation is a negotiation between 'source' and 'target' cultures, and as a result, all are evidence for shifting literary values' (Damrosch 2003: 167). In the same vein, Venuti declares:

> The viability of a translation is established by its relationship to the cultural and social conditions under which it is produced and read. This relationship points to the violence that resides in the very purpose and activity of translation: the reconstitution of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs, and representations that pre-exist it in the translating language and culture, always configured in hierarchies of dominance and marginality, always determining the production, circulation, and reception of texts. (Venuti 2008: 14)

As Damrosch and Venuti announce, the translation of vernacular idioms is determined by complex and dynamic networks of specific factors and actors, such as the properties of the receiving culture. Ersavci utilises fewer foreign words; if she does, she designates them in footnotes to show enough common ground between the source and target culture. McDowell, on the other hand, applies more vernacular words such as *mami*, *mamita*, *chicharras*, *agua*, *aguaciles*, *alguacil* and so on, about which Rebecca DeWald remarks:

> McDowell situates other stories more clearly in Latin America by leaving some terms in their original Spanish, though these are also testament to the fact that readers can generally access the internet to look up very specific terms whose explanation would otherwise fill entire footnotes […] The word *aguaciles*, as McDowell explains, drives from *agua*, meaning 'water' – without explanation in the text, where 'rain' suffices as reference. The similarity with the Spanish word for sheriff (*alguacil*), which enables the metonymy by which dragonflies are called 'police of the air' is a pun certainly difficult to render without reference to Spanish. Similiarly, *guayabera* (a lightweight shirt) and *nandutí* (fine Paraguayan lace, or 'spiderweb cloth') are partly explained, but mainly serve to situate the story on Paraguay (Enríquez 103). (DeWald 2018: 2)

These are some intricate vocabularies in Spanish that can only be partially suggested in English, and rather than explaining them in English, McDowell prefers clawing at the imagination and expectations of the reader. Furthermore, McDowell, from time to time, imports the whole sentence directly as below:

> Pablo volvió a su casa pensando en el clavo y en un trabalenguas que su madre le había enseñado cuando era chico: 'Pablito clavó un clavito. / ¿Qué clavito clavó Pablito? /Un clavito chiquitito.' (Enríquez 2016: 91)
>
> Pablo went back to his house thinking about the nail, and then about a math teacher he'd had in school. When he got a problem right, she'd say, 'Pablito! You hit the nail on the head.' Then he thought about a tongue twister his mother had taught him when he was little: 'Pablito clavó un clavito. / ¿Qué clavito clavó Pablito? /Un clavito chiquitito.' (Enríquez 2017: 92)
>
> Pablo eve döndüğünde bu çivi meselesini ve küçük bir çocukken annesinden öğrendiği bir tekerlemeyi düşünüyordu: 'Küçük Pablo bir çivi çaktı / Küçük Pablo nasıl bir çivi çaktı / Küçücük bir çivi.' (Enríquez 2017: 85)

McDowell syncretises the source and the target language without muddling the flow. Although Turkophone audiences have become more familiar with Latin American literature recently, Ersavcı tries to preserve Enríquez's tone wholly in the Turkish language and sprinkles a few Spanish words with footnotes to be comprehensible and appealing to the target audiences, about which Damrosch remarks:

> Travelling abroad, though, a text does indeed change, both in its frame of references and usually in language as well. In an excellent translation, the result is not the loss of an unmediated original vision but instead a *heightening* of the naturally creative interaction of reader and text. In this respect a poem or novel can be seen to achieve its lasting effect precisely by virtue of its adaptability to our private experience. (Damrosch 2003: 292)

The translation of Enríquez's fiction in Turkey offers a model of contact between Turkey and Latin America, especially regarding Enríquez's idiosyncratic manner. Following the popularisation of magical realism in the 1970s, Turkophone readers are familiar with stories laced with vivid, the grotesque, the fantastic, the supernatural, and the magical. Regarding Enríquez's pattern, while Esra Ertan observes that 've tam bu noktada genel olarak devinim halinde olan bir felaket edebiyatının varlığından söz edebiliyoruz. Bu edebiyat sadece hesaplaşmak istediği dönemin değil; zamana yayılan ve yayıldıkça kuvvetini artıran duygusal, cinsel, kamusal şiddetin – travmanın da temsil biçimi oluyor' ('and at this point, we can generally mention the existence of a catastrophe literature in motion. This literature is not only about the period it wants to reckon with; It is also a form of representation of emotional, sexual, and public violence – trauma that spreads over time and increases its strength as it spreads') (Ertan 2017: 1), Zeynep Hantik states that 'Toplumsal yozlaşmayi doğaüstü güçlerle karikatürize ederek anlatan Enríquez, berrak dili ve sanki her şey normalmiş gibi bir tavırla kaleme aldığı öyküleriyle Julio Cortázar, Shirler Jackson ve Roberto Bolaño gibi isimlerle birlikte anılmaya aday ('Enríquez, who depicts social corruption by caricaturing it with supernatural powers, is a candidate to be referred to along with names such as

Julio Cortázar, Shirley Jackson, and Roberto Bolaño, with her lucid language and the stories she writes as if everything is normal') (Hantik 2017: 1). Ertan refers to the collection as the 'literature of catastrophe/destruction', which is the reflection of some traumas existing in the world, while Hantik traces a transnational gothic literary tradition that stretches from Julio Cortázar to Shirley Jackson, and Roberto Bolaño.

Regarding the reception of the *Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories* in Turkey, critics have adopted a variety of standpoints. That is to say, some critics review the collection from a socio-political angle, and some observe it from a feminist perspective. As an illustration, Erhan Tekten alludes to Argentina between the period 1976-1983 and states that 'Enríquez'in ürkütücü, dehşet içeren, yaratıcı, şeytani masalları, çağdaş Arjantin'i şaşırtıcı derecede eşitsizlik, şiddet ve yolsuzluğun olduğu bir yer olarak gözler önüne seriyor. Cuntanın gelişinin hemen öncesinde hayata gözlerini açan yazar kitaptaki 12 hikâyede, unutulmaz bir şekilde korkuya vücut veriyor' ('Enríquez's macabre, terrifying, inventive, demonic tales reveal contemporary Argentina as a place of staggering inequality, violence, and corruption. The author, who came to life just before the arrival of the junta, unforgettably embodies fear in the 12 stories in the book') (Ertan 2018: 1). Pinar Kumandaş, on the other side, divulge the feminine resistance in the collection:

> Kadına yönelik şiddeti bambaşka bir bakış açısıyla işlemiş Enríquez. Trajik bir şiddet hikayesi bu defa gittikçe büyüyen kurgu bir kadın hareketiyle sona eriyor… Şenlik ateşleri, orta çağda yakılan, cadı yaftasıyla dışlanan masum kadınlara da gönderilen bir anma gibi aslında. Sahi, şeytanla iş birliği yaptığı düşünülen onca masum kadının katledilmesinden yüzlerce yıl sonra neden hala benzer şeyler yaşanıyor? Enríquez'in distopyası, kadına yönelik şiddete bir başkaldırış gibi. (Kumandaş 2020: 1)
>
> Enríquez explores violence against women from an entirely different perspective. A tragic story of violence ends this time with a growing fictional women's movement... The bonfires are actually like a commemoration sent to innocent women who were burned in the Middle Ages and excluded by the label of witches. Really, why are similar things still happening hundreds of years after the murder of

> so many innocent women who were thought to be in league with the devil? Enríquez's dystopia is like a rebellion against violence against women.

What is new is the collective representation of monsters, dysmorphic and disabled bodies, the bizarre, and above all, the gothic lens through which every fear is aroused from life itself, not from the fantastic. The boundaries and taboos that are disgusted in society all of a sudden penetrate life as normal, and this is what makes Enríquez genuine as Aysu Önen observes 'uygarlık evreniyle, barbarlık evreni arasındaki metaforik duvar yıkılmış, bir cehennem ağzı açılmış ve uygarlığın bütün kötücülleri barbarlığın çaresiz evrenine akmış. Normal artık yok, doğal olanı bozan her şey normalleştirilmiş' ('the metaphorical wall between the universe of civilization and the universe of barbarism collapsed, a Hellmouth opened, and all the evils of society flowed into the helpless universe of barbarism. 'Normal no longer exists; everything that disrupts the natural has been normalized') (Önen 2021: 1). Rejecting all romanticised and ahistorical accounts of the Latin American experience, Enríquez creates an altered degree of horror with disturbing lenses of grotesque to carve out the language of trauma, and this is what mostly outlined and celebrated among Turkophone audiences.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter provided a literary and historical analysis of two texts, *Las cosas que perdimos en el fuego* (2017; *Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories*) by Maríana Enríquez and the novel, *İskender* (2012; *Honour*) by Elif Shafak. Despite disparate tones, narrations, and plots, Enríquez and Shafak intersect, particularly in highlighting the experiences and voices of people who were maltreated and silenced in historical accounts because of their gender and ideologies. While Enríquez deconstructs the dynamics of the binaries, reason/madness, rationality/irrationality, fact/fiction, female/male, angel/monster- grotesquely and brutally, Shafak renegotiates these dichotomies benefitting from the folkloric trimmings of the society she depicts. Since both texts encapsulate a wide array of socio-political and literary themes, I divided my arguments into three sections such as 'Bifurcated Spheres and Identities: *Honour* and *Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories*', 'Female Resistance: *Honour* and '*Things We Lost in the Fire*'*: Stories*, and 'The Translation, Circulation, and Reception of Mariana Enríquez's *Things We Lost in the Fire in Turkey: Stories'*.

In the first part of the chapter, I converge on the cultural and diasporic encounters and trajectories of Argentina and Turkey. Both texts revisit certain political and historical discourses that accompany the end of historical constellations. In the case of *Things We Lost in the Fire: Stories*, the focus is on the dehumanising and horrific acts committed during the era of military dictatorship (1976-1983) that still haunt Argentina's present. Regarding this, I pinpoint some

moments and concepts of the time, such as *descamisados*, *caudillismo*, and *justicialismo*, benefitting from the historians such as James Scorer, Gabriela Nouzelles, Graciela Montaldo and so forth. In *Honour*, on the other hand, I draw attention to absolute taboos in Turkey, such as the minorities. In her saga-driven novel, Shafak portrays a transnational and transgenerational narrative swinging to and from a Kurdish village, Istanbul, London and Abu Dhabi to challenge singular national discourses and reflect syncretism and impurity. Therefore, in the initial section of the chapter, I compared the story 'El chico sucio' and *Honour* in respect of the historical, political, and psychological traumas of the country of their origin. I explore that while 'El chico sucio' casts light upon the invisible walls between the poor and the privileged, *Honour* gives voice to Turkey's indigenous and dislocated people.

The second part of the chapter, which is the kernel, revolves around the concept of *femicidio* (*femicide*) and gender-based violence. I compared the titular story 'Things We Lost in the Fire' and the novel *Honour*, constituting an embryonic search for redefining and manipulating the constructed nature of gender roles and representing the possibility of a non-masculine discourse. Enríquez transforms dominant codes of patriarchy by depicting a ghostly realm and allows the bizarre and inappropriate to exist in the real world and the beyond. In dialogue with Silvina Ocampo and Virginia Woolf, Enríquez questions angel/monster dichotomy and distinctive versions of female resistance via 'ugly feelings’ as Vázquez-Medina notes. In a different fashion, Shafak also redefines local dynamics of sex and gender. As the title suggests, *Honour* touches on honour killing and sheds light on the tyranny and liberty of traditionally 'inappropriate' females. The authors' unique approaches to these issues not only provoke thought but also invite us to reconsider our own perspectives, engaging the audience in the discourse. Nevertheless, while 'Things We Lost in the fire' shimmers between the ordinary and madness and real and surreal,

Honour is trafficking between the exclusive hierarchy and the mythic. In a nutshell, I unearth a diverse constellation of similarities and differences between the two narratives in the matters of the shaky grounds the writers explore, such as socio-political and psychological traumas, feminist resistance, and fantastic and magical realist twists.

The third and final section of the chapter bears upon the adaptation, circulation, and reception of the collection in the Turkish literary scene. The reception of Enríquez's *Las cosas que perdimos en el fuego* in Turkey is of particular interest, as it not only reflects the cultural context but also influences the interpretation of the text. To start examining this reception, I sift through the market forces that play a significant role in the importation of her work, such as the translator, gatekeepers, publishing industry, and paratextual apparatuses that initiates the channels of circulation. In respect of that, I benefitted from Genette's paratextual theory and Venuti's, Appiah's, and Damrosch's translation theories and discourses. In order to scrutinise the translation strategies of the Turkish version of the collection, I delve into the in-text probe in comparison with the Spanish and English editions of the text. Since Ersavci directly translated the text from the original language, I discovered somewhat discordance between the Turkish and English editions, particularly in terms of foreignizing effects. Last but not least, I traced the production and adjustment of textual meanings within the shifting context of reception. The migration and cultural flow of the collection in Turkey suggested several possible readings without settling into any firm conclusion from a political angle or a feminist perspective. Nevertheless, Enríquez's literary manner is the most debated and acclaimed among Turkophone readers.

CHAPTER 5: THE CITY AS PALIMPSEST: ISTANBUL AND BUENOS AIRES IN ORHAN PAMUK'S *THE MUSEUM OF INNOCENCE* AND ROBERTO BOLAÑO'S 'THE INSUFFERABLE GAUCHO'

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the literary relationship between Orhan Pamuk and Roberto Bolaño through the lens of historicist and world literature discourses. After situating both authors within a world literature framework, I focus on a comparative exploration of two of their works, Pamuk's novel *Masumiyet Müzesi* (2008; *The Museum of Innocence*) and Bolaño's short story 'El gaucho insufrible' (2003; 'The Insufferable Gaucho'). In these two works, I argue that Pamuk and Bolaño are interested in the representation of two cities: Istanbul and Buenos Aires, the capitals of Turkey (until 1923) and Argentina, respectively, as well as, in the case of Argentina, the pampas landscape in Greater Buenos Aires, spaces that are depicted as palimpsests through a complex superimposition that shifts between a nostalgic past and an alienating present. Therefore, the chapter aims to explore these multiple spatial and temporal layers to foreground the narrative strategies that both writers utilise to engage with the complex experience of modernity, industrialisation, and national identity. It also emphasizes the active role of the reader in interpreting these strategies, and how these conflicting spaces simultaneously present a vision of an idealised past, a traumatic present, and an uncertain future.

5.2 Bolaño, Pamuk, and Transnationalism

Born in Chile in 1953, Roberto Bolaño occupies an ambassadorial position as one of the prominent Latin American writers to have appeared on the world literature scene since the peak of the (so-called) 'Boom' of Latin American literature in the 1960s. In their re-articulation of Roberto Bolaño's oeuvre as a 'world literature' phenomenon, Nicholas Birns and Juan E. De Castro note: 'Bolaño's world literary status in many ways has to do with how he is part of many cultural formations and does not seem to be bound by one identity: both Mexican and Chilean, American and European, poet and novelist' (Birns and de Castro 2017: 11). Living in Chile until he was fifteen, Bolaño spent his adolescent years in Mexico, where he began his literary career, and then moved to Spain. Even though his roots lie squarely in Chile, Bolaño himself claimed that he was a Latin American writer and not specifically Chilean, Mexican or Spanish:

> Pues a mí lo mismo me da que digan que soy chileno, aunque algunos colegas chilenos prefieran verme como mexicano, o que digan que soy mexicano, aunque algunos colegas mexicanos prefieren considerarme español, o, ya de plano, desaparecido en combate, e incluso lo mismo me da que me consideran español, aunque algunos colegas españoles pongan el grito en el cielo y a partir de ahora digan que soy venezolano, naciado en Caracas o Bogotá, cosa que tampoco me disgusta, más bien todo lo contrario. (Bolaño 2006: 35-36)
>
> It doesn't matter to me whether people say I'm Chilean, although some of my Chilean fellow writers would rather see me as Mexican, or whether they say I'm Mexican, although some of my Mexican fellow writers would rather see me as Spanish, or simply as lost in combat, and I don't even care whether people think of me as Spanish, although some of my Spanish fellow writers might protest and decide from now to call me Venezuelan, born in Caracas or Bogotá, which wouldn't bother me either, in fact on the contrary. (Bolaño 2011: 33)

By the same token, Patricia Novillo-Corvalán asserts that:

> Unlike other Latin American writers firmly grounded in the mythology of their native countries, Bolaño's lifelong condition as a migrant (he lived in a number of Latin American countries and later in Europe) turned him into a global writer disdainful of national boundaries and able to boast that his only country was his cosmopolitan library. (Novillo-Corvalán 2018: 107-108)

At the same time, Bolaño's writings boast a variety of characters from different nationalities gravitating around an assortment of geographical locations and who perform a wide range of occupations, such as editors, readers, translators, professors, writers, gangsters, police officers, lower- and middle-class wage workers, and beyond. The awarding of the sixteenth prestigious prizes, Premio Herralde de Novela and the Premio Rómulo Gallegos in 1998, previously awarded to colossal figures such as Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Carlos Fuentes, to Roberto Bolaño for *Los detectives salvajes* (1998; *The Savage Detectives*), established him as a preeminent writer internationally and sealed his stature in the Hispanic world as a towering figure. In this regard, Ilan Stavans observes that 'not since Gabriel García Márquez, whose masterpiece, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, turns 40 this year, has a Latin American redrawn the map of world literature so emphatically as Roberto Bolaño does with *The Savage Detectives*' (Stavans 2007: 2). Chris Andrews adds that 'indeed, it is extremely rare for literary works translated into English from any language to achieve such a degree of serious critical attention and commercial success without the backing of the Nobel Prize committee' (Andrews 2014: 2-3). Even though literary prizes are not the ultimate criteria for determining the value of a literary work, from a Bourdesian point of view, prizes act as cultural (and commercial) capital, as well as literary consecrators in the world literary system (Bourdieu 1993: 137). Therefore, the international literary prizes that Bolaño has won have increased his visibility in the highly competitive 'world republic of letters', in Pascale Casanova's phrase. In this sense, Casanova writes that 'literary prizes, the least literary form of literary consecration, are responsible mainly for making the verdicts of the sanctioning organs of the republic of letters known beyond its borders. As the most apparent of the mechanisms of consecration, they represent a sort of confirmation for the benefit of the general public' (Casanova 2007: 146-147). Although it must be emphasised that neither Bolaño nor Orhan Pamuk,

the latter achieving the ultimate form of literary consecration, the Nobel Prize, defined by Casanova as 'the greatest proof of literary consecration, bordering on the definition of literary art itself, is the Nobel Prize – a European award established at the beginning of the twentieth century that gradually came to enjoy worldwide authority' (Casanova 2004: 147), conform to her model of writers from 'peripheries' migrating to metropolitan Paris to achieve worldwide recognition.

Born in 1952 into an upper-class family in Istanbul, Orhan Pamuk devoted his adolescent years to painting and reading; indeed, he was a voracious reader who greatly benefited from his intellectual father's library. Even though he studied architecture at Istanbul Technical University in the 1970s, Pamuk did not complete a degree and studied journalism instead. In fact, from the age of twenty-two, Pamuk dedicated himself to full-time writing. Unlike Bolaño's working-class origins, his father was a boxer and a truck driver; Pamuk enjoyed devoting himself to writing as a son of a prosperous family. Correspondingly, Pamuk attests, 'No Turkish universities had offered me a position, and I didn't need the money anyway, so until the age of fifty-four, all I did for a living was write novels' (Pamuk 2017: xii). Before winning the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2006, Pamuk wrote six significant novels – *Cevdet Bey ve Oğulları* (1982; *Mr Cevdet and His Sons*), *Sessiz Ev* (1983; *Silent House*), *Beyaz Kale* (1985; *The White Castle*), *Kara Kitap* (1990; *The Black Book*), *Yeni Hayat* (1994; *New Life*), and *Benim Adım Kırmızı* (1998; *My Name is Red*) – which were awarded several prestigious national prizes such as the Milliyet Press Novel Contest Award (1979) and Orhan Kemal Novel Prize (1983). Pamuk's seventh novel, *Kar* (2002; *Snow*), was greeted with enthusiasm, particularly abroad, and cemented his reputation worldwide. For example, the Canadian writer Margaret Atwood praised the novel in the *New York Times* by reporting:

> *Snow* is the latest entry in Pamuk's longtime project: narrating his country into being. It's also the closest to realism. Kars is finely drawn, in all its touching

> squalor, but its inhabitants resist 'Orhan's' novelizing of them. One of them asks him to tell the reader not to believe anything he says about them, because 'no one could understand us from so far away.' This is a challenge to Pamuk and his considerable art, but it is also a challenge to us. (Atwood 2004: 2)

Atwood describes the novel as realistic because it echoes the Turkish 'soul' in its historical particularity and postmodernism in its awareness of its relative value as fiction. However, the critic Sevinç Türkkan cautiously warns that 'Pamuk has been made to stand as the representative of all Turkish literature or else has often been idealised as exceptional for his ability to transcend Turkishness.' (Tükkan 2017: 3)

Interestingly, Pamuk sells more translated books abroad than in his native country. This has much to do with his political views, which many readers find controversial nationally. For example, in a February 2005 interview published in a Swiss newspaper, *Tages-Anzeigner*, Pamuk spoke openly of the Armenian massacre during the First World War: 'Thirty thousand Kurds and a million Armenians were killed in Turkey. Almost no one dares speak, but I and the nationalists hate me for that' (Pamuk 2008: 389). This single remark led to numerous campaigns against Pamuk, with national newspapers accusing him of treason, which resulted in the widespread belief that his writing denigrated Turkishness and distorted Turkish history. As Gloria Fisk observes: 'national media portrayed him as a traitor to the Turkish Republic and its people, motivated by some combination of opportunism and bad politics to ally himself with the West' (Fisk 2017: 18). Consequently, Pamuk's political views have been scrutinised more carefully than his art, and he has thus been labelled as a 'traitor'. The Armenian and Kurdish question, which is a very fragile matter to Turks even today, has driven Pamuk away from his country. After this interview, the Turkish people are more worried about the international representation of Turkey and Pamuk's views on Turkishness than about his pen. So much so that even the Nobel Prize was interpreted as Western obsequiousness. Regarding all these polemics, Pamuk made several remarks:

> After the mid-nineties, when my books began to sell in amounts that no one in Turkey had ever dreamed of, my honeymoon years with the Turkish press and intellectuals were over. From then on, critical reception was mostly a reaction to the publicity and sales, rather than the content of my books. Now, unfortunately, I am notorious for my political comments— most of which are picked up from international interviews and shamelessly manipulated by some Turkish nationalist journalists to make me look more radical and politically foolish than I really am. (Pamuk 2008: 391)

While some applauded Pamuk's success, some argued that Pamuk was given the prize because of his unfavourable 'marketing' of Turkey. As an illustration, in one his articles, Erol İrdelmen examines the novel and complains that: 'Orhan Pamuk'un Kars'ı bir Ermeni-Rus kentiymiş gibi tanıtması ve 'pazarlaması' gereksiz bir işgüzarlık ve kendi doğup büyüdüğü ülkesine karşı sevimsiz bir edimdir' ('Orhan Pamuk's promoting, and "marketing" Kars as an Armenian-Russian city is an unnecessary pragmatism and unsympathetic act against his own country of birth') (İrdelem 2012: 3). Meanwhile, the Turkish poet and writer Özdemir İnce, was even more scathing in remarking that:

> Orhan Pamuk sıradan bir yazardır. Türk edebiyatı roman ödülünü kazanmadı. Orhan Pamuk'a Nobel ödülü verildi. Nobel kazanmış olan Pamuk, Ermeni soykırımını kabul ediyor. Bu son derece önemli bir şeydir. Aşılması gereken ve aşılamayacak bir azman olacaktır. Türkiye satışa çıkarılmıştır, Türk tarihi açık arttırmayla satılmıştır. Açık arttırmanın en sıfır noktasında satılmıştır. Bundan dolayı utanç duyuyorum. Bunu söylemem lazım.
>
> Orhan Pamuk is an ordinary writer. Turkish literature did not win the novel award. Orhan Pamuk was awarded the Nobel Prize. Pamuk, who won the Nobel, accepts the Armenian genocide. This is extremely important. It will be a crossbreed who can and must not be exceeded. Turkey has put up for sale, Turkish history was sold by auction. It was sold at the zero points of the auction. I am ashamed of this. I have to say this. (İnce 2006: 1)

In the view of Ince, Pamuk did not glorify his native country with the prize; on the contrary, he sold his country because the reason behind Pamuk's award is his mystifying of Turkish history. The contemporary Turkish novelist Adalet Ağaoğlu, however, offers a more conciliatory view by

asserting that 'Fransız Meclisi'nden Türkiye aleyhine bir karar çıkmasının üzüntüsünü yaşarken böyle bir ödül beni sevindirdi. Şimdi herkes Orhan Pamuk'un ardında ne var diye Türk edebiyatını da merak edecek. Pamuk'un kitapları daha çok dile çevrilip okunacak' ('Although I am sad about the decision of the French parliament against Turkey, this award delights me. Now everyone will be curious about Pamuk's background, Turkish literature[5]. Pamuk's books will be translated and read more') (Ağaoğlu 2006: 1). Whereas Turkish nationalist critics such as Erol İrdelmen, Özdemir İnce, Demirtaş and Ceyhun portray Pamuk as the paradigmatic Westernised country that 'sold out' his country through a process of both exoticisation and historical revisionism, American critics such as David Damrosch argue that Pamuk achieved world literary status not solely by becoming the recipient of the Nobel award, but chiefly through his engagement with the local and the universal, in a manner that enabled his work to establish a transnational dialogue with other world works of literature, while at the same time remaining intensely attached to Turkey's local traditions:

> No Turkish writer has been more centrally concerned with the ambiguities of this engagement than Orhan Pamuk, a novelist who is thoroughly international in outlook and literary reference and yet resolutely local in his choice of material. Pamuk found in his native Istanbul – physically divided between a European half on one side of the Bosporus and an Asian half on the other – the perfect emblem for Turkey's double identity. (Damrosch 2009: 113)

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[5] In 2001, after France passed a bill officially recognizing the Armenian genocide on 12 October 2006, The French National Assembly approved the draft law that stipulates imprisonment of up to five years and a fine of 45,000 euros for those who deny the Armenian genocide. *Le Monde* newspaper describes the bill as 'Cette proposition de loi, qui comporte un seul article, vise à compléter la loi du 29 janvier 2001 qui dispose que *"la France reconnat publiquement le génocide arménien de 1915"*. Elle propose de pénaliser la négation du génocide arménien par une peine d'un an d'emprisonnement et une amende de 45 000 euros'. ('This proposed law, which comprises only one article, aims to complete the law of January 29, 2001 which states that *"France publicly recognizes the Armenian genocide of 1915"*. It proposes to penalize the denial of the Armenian genocide with a sentence of one year of imprisonment and a fine of 45,000 euros') ('L'Assemblée Nationale'). https://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2006/10/12/l-assemblee-adopte-le-texte-sanctionnant-la-negation-du-genocide-armenien_822623_3224.html (Accessed 25 August 2020).

Damrosch, however, does not reflect on how Pamuk is perceived in his native Turkey and that the 'local' partakes of an altogether different meaning for Turkish nationalist critics cited above, for whom the 'local' has been falsified and distorted. Still, it cannot be denied that Pamuk's fictional works seek to capture the interplay between the Ottoman past and the postmodern present within Istanbul and beyond it. Therefore, as Damrosch emphasises, Pamuk locates the particular and universal in his novels. To underscore the tensions that Pamuk establishes between the local and the universal, I turn to a short piece entitled 'In My Father's Suitcase' that appeared in *Öteki Renkler* (1999; *Other Colours*), which presents Pamuk's self-representation as an author writing both within and outside the Western tradition:

> Dünyanın merkezinde bizimkinden daha zengin ve daha heyecanlı bir hayat vardı ve tüm İstanbul, tüm Türkiye ile birlikte ben onun dışındaydım. Bugün sanırım bu hissi dünyadaki çoğu insanla paylaşıyorum. Aynı şekilde, dünya edebiyatı vardı ve onun merkezi de benden çok uzaktaydı. Aslında, aklımda olan şey dünya edebiyatı değil, Batı edebiyatıydı ve biz Türkler onun dışındaydık. (Pamuk 1999: 451)
>
> In the centre of the world there was a life richer and more exciting than our own, and with all of Istanbul, all of Turkey, I was outside it. Today I think that I share this feeling with most people in the world. In the same way, there was world literature, and its centre, too, was very far away from me. Actually, what I had in mind was Western, not world, literature, and we Turks were outside it. (Pamuk 2008: 449)

Along the same line, in his lecture 'El escritor argentino y la tradición' ('The Argentine Writer and Tradition'; 1951), Borges evaluates and syllogizes the tradition of world literature and the regional, saying that 'no podemos concretarnos a lo argentino para ser argentinos: porque o ser argentino es una fatalidad y en ese caso lo seremos de cualquier modo, o ser argentino es una mera afectación, una máscara' (Borges 1989, I: 273-4) ('we cannot confine ourselves to what is Argentine in order to be Argentine because either it is our inevitable destiny to be Argentine, in which the case we will be Argentine whatever we do, or being Argentine is a mere affectation, a mask') (Borges 2014: 397). The assertions of these two authors from distinctive geographies, Pamuk and Borges, about

the world and national literature are substantially parallel. It reveals how Pamuk and Bolaño view themselves as outsiders within the Western tradition and yet can use that tradition in an idiosyncratic way, affirming that writers writing from the periphery can innovate and renew that tradition: ‘Creo que nuestra tradición es toda la cultura occidental, y creo también que tenemos derecho a esta tradición, mayor que el que pueden tener los habitantes de una u otra nación occidental’ (Borges 1989 I: 272) (‘I believe that our tradition is the whole of Western culture, and also I believe that we have a right to this tradition, a greater right than that which the inhabitants of one Western nation or another may have’) (Borges 2014: 396).

Set in 1970s Istanbul, Pamuk’s *Masumiyet Müzesi* (2008; *The Museum of Innocence*) depicts the fictional love story of Füsun and Kemal. Comprising eighty-three chapters, the novel presents the romantic love story in the first-person point of view. In the book, Kemal Basmaci, the protagonist, creates a space where fiction and reality interact. The novel prompts discussion about post-Ottoman cultural insecurity and modernity, which I will discuss further in this chapter. While the novel depicts the conflicts between Turkish tradition, modernity, and Westernisation, it takes the form of a museum catalogue created by the hero, Kemal. The protagonist makes a museum for his lost love, Füsun, and just like a collector, he collects everyday objects that belong to Füsun, such as an ashtray, a cup of Turkish tea, a hair clip, Füsun’s cigarette butts, and so on. Pamuk not only presents historical facts but also literarily plays with the facticity per se because he established a museum, *The Museum of Innocence* (2012), in Turkey that serves as the physical manifestation of his narrative. (*Figure 1.1*). The novel also includes a Nişantaşı map and a free printed ticket for the actual Museum of Innocence in the Çukurcuma neighbourhood (*Figure 1.1*). Pamuk has renovated an old building in Istanbul and used it to exhibit the belongings of his fictional character, Füsun. The distinction between fiction and reality is blurred to turn fiction into a physical reality.

According to Nhora Lucía Serrano: '*The Museum of Innocence* is a manifestation of a scopic regime in its own right as well as a literal manifestation of textual visuality where intertextuality, ekphrasis, and rhetorical devices intersect with taxonomy, the flaneur, collecting, and the museum' (Serrano 2017: 210). Pamuk creates a space where he moves among dichotomies of East-West, Islamist-secularist, modernist-traditional, individual-collective, etc.

On a literal level, the novel is a very typical Turkish *Yeşilçam* film style, in which unrequited, impossible and tragic love stories play a vital role. Kevin R. McClure acknowledges that 'the text has a cinematic quality, closely resembling popular Turkish films of the 1970s and 1980s' (McClure 2010: 299). Emin Özdemir asserts that 'Masumiyet Müzesi'nin kurgusal yapısına bütünselliği içinde bakınca çok tanıdık öğeler gördüğümü de söylemeliyim, ilk ağızda Yeşilçam dünyasının 'varsıl oğlan - yoksul kız' klişesi beliriyor' ('When I look into the fictional structure of the Museum of Innocence in its totality, I must say that I have perceived very familiar details. At first, the "rich boy – poor girl cliché" of the Yesilcam World appears') (Özdemir 2008: 2). The story chronicles a forbidden love between the star-crossed lovers, Füsun and Kemal. Engaged to a daughter of a wealthy family, secular-elite *İstanbullu* (*Istanbulite*), Kemal falls in love with a lower-middle-class distant relative, Füsun, whom he has not met for years. While Kemal is a character from the Westernized Nişantaşı neighbourhood, Füsun lives in the less affluent and historic neighbourhood of Çukurcuma. Kemal meets Füsun in a shop where she works as a salesgirl. Although it may seem like a temporary enthusiasm initially, Kemal goes against

Figure 1.1

The Museum oF Innocence. Source: Pamuk, Orhan. 2012. Şeylerin Masumiyeti. İstanbul: İletişim.

class codes and abandons his fiancée and his sphere to be with Füsun. The name Füsun, of Persian origin, means 'magic' or 'spell' in Turkish. The deuteragonist's name is the epitome of a charactonym because it suggests a distinctive trait of Füsun. Just like her name connotes, Kemal is haunted and obsessed by the magic of Füsun, which, in the view of Özdemir, is a theatrical and 'hormonal love' (Özdemir 2008: 7).

Despite all these, the lovers are separated, and Kemal obsessively collects the physical objects that evoke for him the memory of his love affair. He whiles away his afternoon in the 'Merhamet apartment', where their love affair blossomed, reimagining his memories with Füsun. Kemal admits that: 'Merhamet Apartman'na gidip yatağa yatmak, bir eşya ile oyalanmak bana iyi gelmişti' (Pamuk 2008: 168) ('Unmentioned was that my therapy had consisted of going to the Merhamet Apartment and lying down on that bed and fondling something she had touched') (Pamuk 2009: 244). These objects do more than recall the protagonist of his necromantic love: they also evoke a lamentation for the prelapsarian past and the fallen present. Pamuk establishes a hybrid understanding of Istanbul, full of dichotomies and dualities of upper versus lower class, urban versus rural, periphery versus centre, East versus West, and modernity versus tradition. The collision between the half-forgotten era of the nation's cultural history and the influx of Western commodities is manifested throughout the narrative. For instance, Kemal says:

> Coca-Cola bayilere kredili satışı yapıyor, bedava pleksiglas pani veriyor, takvimle, hediyeler dağıtıyor, baş edemiyoruz,' dedi Zaim. 'Gençler de zaten maymun gibi, Maradona'nin (dönemin futbol yıldızı) elinde Coca-Cola görünce, Meltem daha ucuz, daha sağlıklı, yerli malı filan dinlemiyorlar, illa ki onu içecekler. (Pamuk 2008: 386)

> Coca-Cola is extending credit to distributors, and giving them huge Plexiglas shop signs for free, as well as calendars, and promotional gifts, and we just can't compete,' said Zaim. 'The young are like butterflies: Once they've seen Maradona (the greatest footballer of his day) holding a Coca-Cola, they couldn't care less about a Turkish-made drink, even though it's cheaper and healthier. (Pamuk 2009: 563)

Figure 1.2

Meltem Soda. Source: Pamuk, Orhan. 2012. *Şeylerin Masumiyeti*. İstanbul: İletişim.

Meltem soda was one of the earliest sparkling water brands produced in Turkey. It splashed Turkish culture but could not compete with Western commodities because young consumers mostly desired a modern and Western lifestyle – evoked here by the commodification of Diego Maradona as an international celebrity. The entrance of Western commodities into Turkish markets was a paramount hallmark of the transformation in Turkey in the 1980s. As an example of nostalgia, a *Meltem soda* bottle has been exhibited in the Museum and the catalogue (*Figure 1.2*.). Pamuk wrote a museum catalogue entitled *Şeylerin Masumiyeti* (2012; *The Innocence of Objects*), published three years after the novel. The catalogue is an archive of the eighty-three exhibits corresponding to eighty-three chapters of the narrative, which is why the distinction between novel and the museum blurs, about which Gloria Fisk utters:

> The novel and the museum work together to thematise the braided relation between translation and mimesis and mark the limited good of world literature, which specializes in the imperfect portage of meaning from one linguistic system to another, so it can play shell games between the imaginary and the real only as it also acknowledges the necessary difference between the two. (Fisk 2017: 75)

Pamuk establishes relatively intricate relations between his fiction and references by constructing a museum and then composing a novel to depict the fictional lives it displays. On the one hand, it brings new historical knowledge to global literature. On the other hand, it develops a false memory of new experiences. All these elements hasten the reader's willing suspension of disbelief. In this case, Turkish readers and visitors encounter signs of the past they recall in the narrative and the

museum, whilst Anglophone readers and visitors are confronted with nostalgia braided by a nation's fictional and historical past. The composition of the novel and the explorations of the objects go hand in hand, as Pamuk affirms: 'Müzede sergilediğim eşyalar, romanda anlatılan eşyalara denk düşer' (Pamuk 2012: 18) ('The objects exhibited in the museum are described in the novel') (Pamuk 2012: 18). He would hunt objects to elucidate a chapter or comes across an object from an antique shop that would catalyse a scene. The objects mentioned in the novel and exhibited in the museum mirror Turkey between 1970 and 1983.

When comparing Pamuk's and Bolaño's writings, it's important to note that, on the surface, they may appear vastly different. Pamuk's works are deeply rooted in Turkey, while Bolaño's narratives traverse a multitude of global locations, including Chile, Barcelona, Mexico, Paris, Buenos Aires, and beyond. This global perspective, as revealed in Bolaño's conversation with Carmen Boullosa, showcases his engagement and aesthetic dialogue with other traditions, enlightening the reader about the breadth of his literary exploration:

> He nombrado autores en español, únicamente para acortar el canon. Por supuesto, no soy de esos monstruos nacionalistas que sólo leen lo que produce el terruño. Me interesa la literatura francesa, la lucha de Pascal, que siempre intuyó su muerte, contra la melancolía, me parece, ahora más que nunca, admirable. O la ingenuidad adánica de Fourier. O toda esa prosa, generalmente anónima, de autores galantes, mitad constumbristas y mitad anatomistas y que, de algún modo, desemboca en la caverna interminable que es el marqués de Sade. También me interesa la literatura norteamericana del ochocientos, sobre todo Twain y Melville, y la poesía de Emily Dickinson y Whitma. (Bolaño 2010: 48)
>
> I named authors who wrote in Spanish in order to limit the canon. Needless to say, I'm not one of those nationalist monsters who only reads what his native country produces. I'm interested in French literature, in Pascal, who could foresee his death, and in his struggle against melancholy, which to me seems more admirable now than ever before. Or the utopian naiveté of Fourier. And all the prose, typically anonymous, of courtly writers (some Mannerists and some anatomists) that somehow leads to the endless caverns of the Marquis de Sade. I'm also interested in American literature of the 1880s, especially Twain and Melville, and the poetry of Emily Dickinson and Whitman. (Bolaño 2011: 40-41)

In Pamuk's case, however, the location is principally Istanbul and some other cities in Turkey. Although Bolaño and Pamuk write in different cultural contexts, Turkish and Chilean literary traditions, the two have a lot in common. Both have recently shaken the foundations of their nation's literature by producing a type of narrative that rearticulates the frustrated dreams of modernity, historical and political amnesias, and post-catastrophic traumas with the aesthetic semblances of intertextuality, the oneiric, and the haziness of fiction and autobiography. For example, one of Bolaño's short stories, 'El gaucho insufrible' (2003; 'The Insufferable Gaucho'), I claim, is thematically comparable to Pamuk's *The Museum of Innocence*, despite their apparent disparities in length, as Bolaño's short story or, more precisely, novella, contrasts with the colossal enormity of Pamuk's novel. And yet, as I argued earlier, both texts intersect by depicting multiple spatial and temporal layers as narrative strategies that capture the complex experience of modernity and national identity in Turkey and Argentina, respectively.

5.3 Bolaño, Pamuk, and the Tension between Tradition and Modernity

'The Insufferable Gaucho' is one of the five stories in Bolaño's final collection, *El gaucho insufrible* (2003; *The Insufferable Gaucho*). The collection, published posthumously by the Spanish critic Ignacio Echevarría, comprises five stories and two discursive essays. 'The Insufferable Gaucho', the titular story, illustrates the biography of the *porteño* (citizen of Buenos Aires) Héctor Pereda, who, we are told, has two remarkable virtues: 'fue un ciudadosa y tierno padre de familia y un abogado intachable, de probada honradez, en un país y en una época en que la honradez no estaba, precisamente, de moda' (Bolaño 2017: 17) ('he was a caring and affectionate father, and an irreproachable lawyer with a record of honesty, in a time and place that were hardly conductive to such rectitude') (Bolaño 2015: 9). Pereda is a widowed and retired judge with two

grown children, Bebe and Cuca Pereda. Spending his time mostly reading and travelling, Pereda decides to leave Buenos Aires due to the economic and institutional crisis that struck Argentina in 2001, a crisis triggered, according to James Scorer, by a government 'that was forced to rely on loans from international monetary bodies to sustain a currency that had been fixed to the U.S. dollar at the rate of one-to-one by the 1991 Ley de Convertibilidad, and that was dogged by allegations of corruption' (Scorer 2016: 10). In this way, the story chronicles the 2001 Argentine economic crisis, the freezing of bank accounts, general strikes and the policy called *el corralito*, which was 'a government decree that froze savers' deposits in order to prevent capital flight and a run on the banks' (Ozarow, Levey and Wylde 2014: 5). In the narrative, the protagonist, Pereda announces:

> Pocos días después, sin embargo, la economía argentina cayó al abismo. Se congelaron las cuentas corrientes en dólares, los que no habían sacado su capital (o sus ahorros) al extranjero de pronto se hallaron con que no tenían nada, unos bonos, unos pagarés que de sólo mirarlos se ponía la piel de gallina, vagas promesas inspiradas a medias en un olvidado tango y en la letra del himno nacional. (Bolaño 2017: 20)
>
> A few days later, however, the Argentine economy collapsed. Accounts in American dollars were frozen, and those who hadn't moved their capital (or their savings) offshore suddenly discovered that they had nothing left, except perhaps a few bonds and bank bills – just looking at them was enough to give you goosebumbs – vague promises inspired in equal parts by some forgotten tango and the words of the national anthem. (Bolaño 2015: 13)

On his way to his estancia *Álamo Negro* (*a ranch or estate*) located in Capitán Jourdan in the pampas region, Pereda, whose favourite writers are Jorge Luis Borges and his son Bebe, recalls Borges's story of 'El Sur' (1953; 'The South'): 'Recordó, como era inevitable, el cuento 'El Sur', de Borges, y tras imaginarse la pulpería de los párrafos finales los ojos se le humedecieron' (Bolaño 2017: 24) ('Inevitably, he remembered Borges's story 'The South,' and when he thought of the store mentioned in the final paragraphs, tears brimmed in his eyes') (Bolaño 2015: 17). 'The

South', the final story in the second edition of *Ficciones* (1962; Fictions), was originally published in *La Nación* in 1953 and thereafter added to Fictions in 1956. Juan Dahlmann, who is the third generation of the *crillo*-immigrant family (his grandfather, Johannes Dahlmann, was of German origin and his mother's father, Francisco Flores, was a criollo of Spanish origin), works as a librarian in Buenos Aires: 'El hombre que desembarcó en Buenos Aires en 1871 se llamaba Johannes Dahlmann y era pastor de la inglesia evangélica; en 1939, uno de sus nietos, Dahlmann, era secretario de una biblioteca municipal en la calle Córdoba y se sentía hondamente argentino' (Borges 2019: 214). ('The man that stepped off the boat in Buenos Aires in 1871 was a minister of the Evangelical Church; his name was Johannes Dahlmann. By 1939, one of his grandsons, Juan Dahlmann, was secretary of a municipal library on Calle Córdoba and considered himself profoundly Argentine') (Borges 2000: 146). Set in 1939, Borges's story recounts Dahlmann's journey from Buenos Aires to the South after recovering from a freak accident: he had hit his forehead on a freshly painted window, partly caused by his eagerness to peruse a newly bought copy of Gustave Weil's German translation of the first volume of the *Arabian Nights*. Like Juan Dahlmann, in 'The South', Pereda travels from Buenos Aires to the South. In his book Understanding Roberto Bolaño (2006), Ricardo Gutiérrez-Mouat pertinently draws attention to the intertextuality of the story and how it integrates an intricate patchwork of Argentine fiction:

> The story is a critical pastiche of two of Borges's best-known stories ('The South' and 'The Gospel According to Mark') but also of a number of other texts by authors as diverse as José Hernández (author of *Martín Fierro*), Leopoldo Lugones (the influential early twentieth-century writer who elevated he protagonist of Hernández's narrative poem to the level of national myth), Juan Rodolfo Wilcock, Antonio di Benedetto, José Bianco (frequent collaborator of *Sur*, the premier journal of the Buenos Aires intelligentsia for many decades beginning in the early 1930s), and Julio Cortázar. (Gutiérrez-Mouat 2016: 149)

Yet, as Gutiérrez-Mouat foregrounds, Bolaño's motives are partly parodic, mainly through interrogating the quintessential Argentine symbol, the gaucho. While the immobile gaucho whom

Dahlmann encounters in ‘The South’ anachronistically matches the one ‘Platonic’ gaucho that he had imagined through literature, Dahlmann’s doppelgänger Pereda is, however, bewildered to find gauchos playing monopoly at the corner store, driving jeeps rather than horses, and hunting rabbits, things that ‘real’ gauchos are not supposed to do:

> En el jeep de todas formas, nunca vio ningún conejo, sólo las pieles, pues el gaucho se encargaba de desollarlos en el mismo lugar donde dejaba las trampas. Cuando se despedían, Pereda siempre pensaba que el oficio de don Dulce no engrandecía a la patria sino que la achicaba. ¿A qué gaucho de verdad se le puede ocurrir vivir de cazar conejos? (Bolaño 2017: 30)
>
> In any case, Pereda never saw a single rabbit in the jeep, only the skins, because the gaucho skinned them on the spot, beside the traps. After those chats, Pereda always felt that Don Dulce was somehow debasing the nation. Rabbit hunting! What sort of job is that for a gaucho? (Bolaño 2015: 24)

Even though modern-day life in the pampean landscape baffles Pereda, he perseveres with his feverish obsession to find the gauchesque past of the nation, an essence that no longer exists, being in itself a nationalistic discourse constructed by Argentine intellectuals such as Leopoldo Lugones and Ricardo Rojas in the early twentieth century. In this sense, Brett Levinson asserts that 'Pereda himself tips towards madness. He sets out to restore symmetry, seeking to occupy the place of the Other, the (now lost) gaucho whose existence, set off from the metropolitan as barbarism is to civilisation, balances the Argentine nation.' (Levinson 2015: 162)

Beginning in the 1880s, the gaucho started to stand out as the national emblem of Argentinian identity, an emblem forged by the Argentine intelligentsia. In his book on the Argentinean archetype of ‘gaucho’ and ‘criollismo’, *El gaucho indómito* (2019), Ezequiel Adamovsky articulates that ‘tenían vocación de escritores y urgencia por participar en un proseco de más largo plazo: el de la construcción de una nación. De hecho, ambas actividades estaban para ellos entrelazadas: crear una literatura nacional, encontrar el tono y los contenidos que la hiciesen

única y distintiva, era crucial para la forja de sentido de la nacionalidad (Adamovsky 2019: 56). ('They had a vocation of writers and urgency to participate in a longer-term process: that of nation-building. Both activities were intertwined for them: creating national literature, finding the tone and content that would make it unique and distinctive, was crucial for forging a sense of nationality'). In the early twentieth century, public intellectuals such as Leopoldo Lugones and Ricardo Rojas believed that to have autochthonous literature, they necessitated indigenous figures. The Spanish conquest, violence against indigenous people, the wars of independence, the construction of a centralised state, urbanisation, migration, and the world capitalist market dragged Argentina through the whirlwind of demographic, economic, social and political transformations. As a social type of the past almost vanished in the present, the gaucho figure generated an attraction to construct a unified and homogenous identity in Argentina. Then, it emerged as a national Argentinian emblem, a nostalgic project that represented the bygone values of freedom, heroism, dignity, authenticity, autochthon and a lost idyll. The gaucho is also an organ of *criollismo*. Thus, in Argentina, the term *criollo* has an ambiguous meaning: it means both *creole* (*mixed race*) and, more specifically, an Argentine of Spanish descent. According to Adamovsky, *criollismo* is 'un modo particular de hablar de lo popular – de la vida del bajo pueblo de su pasado, de sus aspiraciones, de sus valores – a través de la figura del gaucho' (Adamovsky 2019: 6) ('a particular way of speaking about the popular – about the life of the lower town, its past, its aspirations, its values – through the figure of the gaucho'). It is an inclusive term that encapsulates labels such as ruralism, gaucho poetry, folklore, traditionalism, and authenticity. Borges was also very much attracted to *criollista* literature, especially as a young man, which can be gleaned in early poetry books such as *Fervor de Buenos Aires* (1923) and essayistic collections such as *Inquisiciones* (1925) and *El idioma de los argentinos* (1928). In effect, the echoes of rural *criollo* culture never

disappeared from Borges's writings. Juan Dahlmann, the protagonist of the 'The South' is a descendent from *criollo* line, as well. Borges has a brilliant comprehension of both local and world literature, and it is possible to see the mixture of traditional and contemporary motifs in most of his works. He reinvents a cultural past and reconstitutes an Argentine literary tradition whilst reading Western literature. Regarding Borges's tendency on *criollismo* literature while Philip Swanson affirms that 'what Borges seemed to see in him was the chance to renovate *criollismo* by creating a new poetics of the city, rather than one of rural tradition, a modern myth for the new Argentina based not just on the land and its lost gaucho inhabitants, but in the concept of the orillas' (Swanson 2013: 83), Edwin Williamson utters that 'Borges urged the criollos to forget their pride in their honourable lineage and become 'the confederates' (conjurados) with the immigrants to create what he termed a 'new man,' a new kind of Argentine, in a tolerant, hospitable country where people' from various nations of the world' might find a home' (Williamson 2013: 206). This is a riposte to extreme versions of nationalistic xenophobia.

While Pereda's conception of the gaucho parallels Dahlmann's, which is preconceived by the protagonists' readings, Dahlmann's gaucho experience utterly matches the one he had read in the literature. In his visit to an *almacén* (*a hybrid general store, bar, and café typical of nineteenth-century Argentina*), Dahlmann pays attention to an elderly, immobile man dressed like a traditional gaucho (Roger 2020: 80): 'Dahlmann registró con satisfacción la vincha, el poncho de bayeta, el largo chiripá y la bota de potro y se dijo, rememorando inútiles discusiones con gente de los partidos del Norte o con entrerrianos, que gauchos de esos ya no quedan más que en el Sur' (Borges 2019: 219) ('Dahlmann was warmed by the rightness of the man's hairband, the baise poncho he wore, his gaucho trousers, and the boots made out of the skin of a horse's leg, and he said to himself, recalling futile arguments with people from districts in the North, or from Entre Ríos, that

only in the South did gauchos like that exist anymore') (Borges 2000: 151). The presence of the true gaucho in 'The South', a story in 1939, is entirely anachronistic, considering that the gaucho had become extinct by the early twentieth century. By conceiving the text as an intertextual dialogue, Bolaño enters Borges's game and rewrites 'El Sur', but most importantly, Bolaño touches upon political, social, and economic events in contemporary Argentina. In other words, Bolaño hyperbolically transforms Borges's story, emphasising Pereda's quixotic idealisation of the gaucho and how his head has been turned, as it were, by reading too much Borges, while at the same time inscribing Argentina's recent economic, social, and political upheavals.

Whereas the geographical space of the 'South', in Borges, is a form of liberation and arrival at a glorious past, albeit one that results in the death of the protagonist, in Bolaño, it is a world that has lost its magic, a grotesque parody of Borges. On his way to his estancia in the South, Dahlmann ‘pudo sospechar que viajaba al pasado y no sólo al Sur’ (Borges 2019: 218) (‘Dahlmann almost suspected that he was travelling not only into the South but into the past’) (Borges 2000: 150). As an outcome of the modernisation and the integration of immigrants to Argentina, the nation transformed, and the figure of the gaucho, as stated earlier, became anachronistic. Nevertheless, Borges is inclined to reinvent the past in his fiction. Within this context, Beatriz Sarlo affirms that 'one of the purposes of Borges's literature is to gather up the scattered fragments of that tradition and to rearticulate within his writing the writing of other Argentines who had now disappeared. The first thing Borges does is to reconstitute a cultural tradition for that eccentric place that is his country' (Sarlo 2006: 4), while Sarah Roger states: 'Borges's version of the gauchesque is caught between the nation's past and its present, and between Borges's desire to write works that are distinctly Argentine but that also draw on an international literary heritage' (Roger 2020: 82).

In addition to Borges's multidimensional narrative of the gaucho, Bolaño adds the distorted national, institutional, and economic crisis of the early 2000s, and Pereda, as a deluded quixotic figure, tips into madness in his search for Argentina's lost, glorious, past. Pereda hopelessly seeks to find national archetypes in the modernised pampas, that is, gauchos, horses to tame, traditional *almacén* stores, and heroic knife fights such as the one that features in Borges's 'The South' and in the Argentine epic *Martín Fierro*, but the pampas and the gauchos of bygone years have been transformed and disappeared.

5.4 Palimpsestic Spaces

From a comparative vantage point, Pereda bursts into a world that is no longer as he imagined, just like the protagonist, Kemal, in *The Museum of Innocence*. Both characters seek to revive a culture lost on the shelves of gaucho literature, in the case of Pereda, and a culture lost in the objects due to frustrated dreams of modernity in Kemal's situation. Kemal has visited the Çukurcuma neighbourhood for nearly eight years. He strolls in the Istanbul streets like a flaneur in order to recall the city's pre-modern essence. Similarly, Pereda strolls through a decayed Buenos Aires that is a shadow of the grand city, known as the 'Paris of Buenos Aires', built in the early twentieth century. Therefore, he prefers to move to the pampas in search of a lost past. Instead of emigrating to some other countries, Europe being the ideal destination for many Argentines, Pereda resolves to return to the countryside, searching for the past that he learned from literature. Nevertheless, far from Dahlmann in Borges, who confronts horses, gauchos, and traditional stores, 'vio casas de ladrillo sin recovar, esquinadas y largas, infinitamente mirando pasar los trenes; vio jinetes en los terrosos caminos' (Borges 2019: 217) ('he saw unplastered brick houses, long and angular, infinitely watching the trains go by; he saw horsemen on the clod-strewn roads') ('Borges 2000:

149), Pereda experiences a pampa that is plagued by rabbits of fearful sizes, no cows and very few horses: 'vio que los conejos perseguidores ya habían dado alcance al conejo solitario y que se le arrojaban encima con saña, clavándole las garras y los dientes, esos largos dientes de roedores, pensó espantado Pereda' (Bolaño 2017: 23) ('he saw that the rabbits in pursuit had caught up with the lone racing rabbit, and were attacking it ferociously, tearing at its body with their claws and teeth, those long rodents' teeth, thought Pereda') (Bolaño 2015: 16-17). Many stories Bolaño tells are of Latin American lives uprooted and muddled by economic and political upheaval.

Pamuk recounts Turkish lives disoriented by modernity, Westernisation and political turmoil. In *The Museum of Innocence*, nostalgia is one of the defining characteristics of collecting. The objects are bathed with a warm nostalgia because 'Kemal's way of dealing with the past and the memory regime employed in *The Museum of Innocence* as a whole is the epitome of this modern conception of the time because it is the expression of a yearning for a past that is completed and left behind' (Özgül 2017: 206). Nevertheless, more than nostalgia, there is a mourning for the past in Bolaño's 'The Insufferable Gaucho'. As Sharae Deckard perceptively notes, 'Wrestling with post-ideological disillusion, and refusing simple nostalgia for earlier political moments of collective resistance, yet also seeking to preserve the memory of those moments, his works have a double gaze that casts backwards in order to examine the roots of a haunting prolepsis of foreclosed futures' (Deckard 2017: 217). In Bolaño's narrative, there is a mourning for the past marked by the tragedies of dictatorships, political violence, and economic tumult. Concordantly, Bolaño states that:

> Can one feel nostalgia for the land where one nearly died? Can one feel nostalgia for poverty, intolerance, arrogance, injustice? The refrain, intoned by the Latin Americans and also by writers from other impoverished or traumatized regions, insists on nostalgia, on the return to the true writer, books that may sit on shelves or in my memory. The politician can and should feel nostalgia. It's hard for a

> politician to thrive abroad. The working man neither can nor should: his hands are his homeland. (Bolaño 2011: 40-42)

Indeed, Bolaño did not hesitate to get to grips with the last century's violent global history. From the very beginning of 'The Insufferable Gaucho', the scenarios of violence and political conflicts in late and early twentieth century Argentina are disclosed:

> Para Pereda, el gran problema de Argentina, de la Argentina de aquellos años, era precisamente el problema de la madrastra. Los argentinos, decía, no tuvimos madre o nuestra madre fue invisible o nuestra madre nos abandonó en las puertas de la intrusa. Madrastras, en cambio, hemos tenido demasiadas y de todos los colores, empezando por la gran madrastra peronista. Y concluía: Sabemos más de madrastras que cualquier otra nación latinoamericana. (Bolaño 2017: 18)
>
> In Pereda's opinion, most of Argentina's recent problems could be traced back to the figure of the stepmother. As a nation, we have never had a mother, he would say, or she was never there, or she left us on the doorstep of the orphanage. But we've plenty of stepmothers, of all sorts, starting with the great Peronist stepmother. And he would conclude: in Latin America, when it comes to stepmothers, we're the experts. (Bolaño 2015: 10)

Referring here to the divisive legacy of Eva Duarte de Perón in Argentina, Bolaño is thoroughly familiar with both traumatic political moments and issues of the last decades in Latin America, post-dictatorial and post-revolutionary events and the forces of capitalism and the neoliberal consequences: the overthrown of the elected government of Chile president Salvador Allende (in office: 1970-1973), the military coup of Augusto Pinochet (in office: 1974-1990) in 1973, Argentina's Dity War (1976-1983), and so forth. In his brief return to Chile, he was arrested and spent eight days in prison after the failing government of Salvador Allende and the Pinochet *coup d'etat*. Bolaño manifests his experience of the imprisonment in these words: 'De todas maneras, y pese a las desgracias colectivas y a las pequeñas desgracias personales, recuerdo los días posteriores al golpe como días plenos, llenos de energía, llenos de erotismo, días y noches en los cuales todo podía suceder' (Bolaño 2006: 53) ('In any case, and despite the collective disasters and my small personal misfortunes, I remember the days after the coup as full days, crammed with

energy, crammed with eroticism, days and nights in which anything could happen') (Bolaño 2011: 53). A few days after his return to Chile, Bolaño was imprisoned as a terrorist and finally freed with the assistance of two guards who has been his old friends. Expectedly, in 'The Insufferable Gaucho', Bolaño is dealing with some disappointments, complexities and the aftermath of violence, political conflict, and economic problems in Argentina. Again, Pereda is using the metaphor of *la madrasta* (*the stepmother*) to draw attention to the underlying issues of the country, about which Julio Sebastián Figueroa notes that: 'La nación argentina, se lee, ha sufrido el control de madrastras forzadas y relacionadas con formas del autoritarismo, como es el caso, muy significativo en la administración política del país argentino, del peronismo' (Figueroa 2008: 154) ('It is read that the Argentine nation has suffered the control of forced stepmothers and is related to the forms of authoritarianism, as is the case, very significant in the political administration of the Argentine country, of Peronism'). Peronism has been one of the most influential social and ideological events in the contemporary political history of Argentina. Since the government of Juan Domingo Perón (in office: 1946-1952; 1952-1955; 1973-1974), Argentina has undergone a far-reaching transformation. Perón, with the help of his wife Evita, commenced and enhanced a state system of pensions and health services that would mainly benefit the working classes of Argentina. In addition to that, the emblem of *criollismo* and the gaucho circulated massively during the Peronist administration, as reported by Ezequiel Adamovsky:

> Cuando irrumpió el peronismo, el criollismo era un fenómeno absolutamente central en la cultura argentina. Quienes eran adultos en 1945 habían crecido en el período de auge de los cuadernillos con relatos de matreros, los Moreiras de carnaval y las representaciones de dramas gauchescos en el circo, el teatro, la radio y el cine. (Adamovsky 2019: 194)
>
> When Peronism broke in, criollismo was an absolutely central phenomenon in Argentine culture. Those who were adults in 1945 had grown up in the heyday of the booklets with tales of bullfighters, the Moreiras de carnaval and the representations of gaucho dramas in the circus, theatre, radio and cinema.

Perón created a powerful political posture and culture that continued to function even during his enforced exile from 1955 to 1973 because 'the core of Perón's agenda was to mediate between different classes and seek a 'third position' between opposing ideological projects – American capitalism and Soviet communism: free market and protectionism; etc. in this respect, Peronism is not an isolated, anomalous phenomenon, but rather the latest and the most enduring manifestation of Argentine populism' (Nouzeilles and Montaldo 2002: 8-9). He built a new political tie that comprised people from the most marginal sectors of Argentine society, such as urban workers, middle class, unionised workers and migrant workers, that would bring him to be the redeemer of the *descamisados* (literally, *the shirtless ones*). His social and labour policies created sympathy for him, and words and symbols were essential to his administration. Perón expanded the scope of populist strategies initiated by Radical president Hipólito Yrigoyen (in office: 1916-1922; 1928-1930). Perón did not only lead populism and revolutionary agendas, but he also nationalised the economy and foreign investments. Nonetheless, 'the promise of democracy has been tarnished more than once by pervasive official corruption and a perennial lack of equal opportunity and social security. Neither traditional populism nor revolutionary agendas have appeared to be a viable option' (Nouzeilles and Montaldo 2002: 5-6). Furthermore, neither Peron's administration nor Carlos Saúl Menem's (in office: 1989-1999) leadership forestalled the fall of Argentina's economy. Economic liberalisation, massive privatisation, Menem's dollar convertibility, and the effects of a reckless neoliberal program stir up the outcome as Pereda expresses: 'Buenos Aires se hunde' (Bolaño 2017: 20) ('Buenos Aires is sinking') (Bolaño 2015: 13). Regarding the failure of Perón's presidency policy, Javier Auyero notes that 'slums were portrayed as the ultimate example of the failure of Peronist populism during the 1950s, as project sites for the modernising dreams of the 1960s, as hotbeds of revolution during the "glorious 1970s," as obstacles to progress during

the dictatorship of the 1980s, and as places of immorality, crime, and lawlessness in contemporary Argentina' (Auyero 2002: 513). These are the *villas miseria* we see ambivalently depicted in César Aira's *La villa*, which critiques the failures of Peronismo and Menem's neoliberal period. And, it is during these tumultuous times that Pereda decides to return to the pampas, to retreat to an idealised world that no longer exists, which involves the creation of palimpsestous spaces superimposed by a diversity of layers: the glorious Buenos Aires of the turn of the twentieth century contrasts with the hellish city of the early-twenty-first century, and the impoverished pampas landscape devoid of gauchos, *almacén*, and heroic horses is pitted against the bucolic idyll depicted in Borges's 'The South' and gauchesque literature.

In a similar vein, *The Museum of Innocence* portrays a nostalgic view of Turkey in light of the socio-political factors that have shaped Turkish politics. To fully understand a modern individual's (Kemal's) quest for a home and identity in a modernising non-western society, it is necessary to know the contemporary history of Turkey – particularly the way Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (in office: 1923-1938) transformed the country in the 1920s. In point of fact, modernisation and Westernisation was inaugurated by the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century as the Turkish sociologist Şerif Mardin articulates: 'Tanzimat'ın Mustafa Reşit Paşa (ve onu izleyen Ali Paşa ve Fuat Paşa) gibi kurucuları, Batı'nın askeri ve idari yapısını Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na aktarırken Batı'nın günlük kültürü de ikinci defa etkin bir biçimde imparatorluğa girmişti' (Mardin 1991: 15) ('While the founders of Tanzimat such as Mustafa Reşit Pasa (and his followers, Ali Pasa and Fuat Pasa) transferred the military and administrative structure of the West to the Ottoman Empire, the daily culture of the West also entered the empire for the second time'). *Tanzimat Reforms* (1839-1876) paved the way for the input of Western-style institutions and commodities in Turkey. Following the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

restructured and fashioned Turkish identity in the 1920s by shifting the Turkish writing system from Arabic script to a remodelled Roman alphabet, secularising the state and adopting Western-style education and dressing codes. In the narrative, there are a variety of references to Atatürk's reforms, for instance:

> Cumhuriyetin kurulmasının ve Atatürk devrimlerinin üzerinden kırk elli yıl geçmesine rağmen, mayo-bikini giyip plajlarda birbirlerinin karşısına utanmadan çıkmayı hala tam anlamıyla öğrenememişti. Türk insanının mahcubiyeti ile Füsun'un kırılganlığı arasında, içime işleyen bir benzerlik olduğunu hissederdim o zaman. (Pamuk 2008: 160)
>
> Forty-five years after Atatürk's revolution and the founding of the Republic, the Turkish people had still not worked out how to go to the beach in bathing suits without embarrassment, and at times like this, it would occur to me how much Füsun's fragility reflected the bashfulness of the Turkish people. (Pamuk 2009: 230)

In many parts of the narrative, Kemal brings forth the identity crisis that Turkish people experience between provincialism and modernisation. In the process of enormous changes in Turkey's legal and social structures, self-contradiction is one of the country's pillars. As mentioned by Kemal, even after forty-five years of Atatürk's revolutions, Turkish citizens could not completely break with the cultural norms of the past and their national identities. Istanbul, by all means, was the most affected city from the reforms that had taken place in Turkey. In the second part of the twentieth century, Istanbul witnessed two convulsive episodes. First of all, Istanbul lost its status as the Ottoman imperial capital. Instead, Ankara was chosen as the capital city of Turkey in 1923. Additionally, Istanbul was populated with migrants from Anatolian provinces of Turkey. Within the context of the city's transformation, Esra Akcan specifies that 'Istanbul is no longer a black and white city, as it appeared to Pamuk as a child, but a multi-coloured booming metropolis, developing and expanding, generic and flashy, hybrid and nerve-racking, speedy and enthusiastic, spontaneous and dynamic'. (Akcan 2006: 24). Hereby, structuring palimpsestically the territorial and the

Western aspects of the city, Pamuk furnishes the hybrid character of Istanbul, superimposing layer upon layer. Kemal, the narrative's subject and object, observes Istanbul from the inside and outside. After he loses Füsun, Kemal wanders through the streets of Istanbul, discovering the poor, neglected back streets of Istanbul, which stand in vivid contrast to the modern, affluent, and Westernised neighbourhood of Nişantaşı where Kemal used to live. Even though the rich neighbourhoods of Istanbul render Western modernity as an ideal, the destitute periphery retains the city's pre-modern essence blanketed by the silhouette of the past. While strolling back streets of the old city, Kemal explains the feeling of being in-between: 'Babamın büyüyen işleri, fabrikaları, zenginleşme ve bu zenginliğe uygun itibarlı bir 'Avrupai' hayat yaşama zorunluluğu, sanki beni hayatın basit ve temel yanlarından uzaklaştırmıştı da, şimdi bu arka sokaklarda hayatımın kayıp merkezini arıyordum' (Pamuk 2008: 200) ('My father's expanding business, his factories, his growing fortune, and the attendant obligation to live the 'elegant European' life that benefit this wealth – it all now seemed to have deprived me of simple essences. As I walked these streets, it was as if I was seeking out my centre') (Pamuk 2009: 293).

Just like the city of Istanbul, Kemal cannot decide whether he is a part of the Westernised circle that his family and friends belong to or the other face of the urban that still echoes the vestiges of the Ottoman Empire. With his insistence that 'I was seeking out my centre', Kemal spotlights his identity crisis. Kemal, who is neither entirely Westernised nor perfectly traditional, seeks his essence in the streets of Istanbul. Similarly, in Bolaño's narrative, Manuel Pereda starts to feel like a stranger in the fluctuating, fragmented Buenos Aires he lives in. Therefore, he begins to reflect this estrangement in his daily routine. In the story, the narrator says 'sus hábitos higiénicos también cambiaron. Ya no se acicalaba como antes para salir a la calle. No tardó en dejar de ducharse diariamente. Un día se fue leer el periódico a un parque sin ponerse corbata'

(Bolaño 2017: 20) (‘his personal hygiene also underwent a change. He no longer spruced himself up when he was going out. He soon stopped taking a daily shower. One day, he went to read the paper in a park without putting on a tie') (Bolaño 2015: 12-13). His lack of hygiene and professional etiquette mirrors the city's social, political, and economic collapse. Contrary to what he did before as a city-dweller lawyer, Pereda stops paying attention to his urban outlook just as Buenos Aires sinks (*hunde*) into the economic abyss. Amid the 2001 Argentine economic and political crisis, Pereda can no longer be part of the old Buenos Aires and enters a state of delirium along with peripeteia. Pereda does not notice that the periphery (the pampas) is as distorted as the centre (Buenos Aires). Brett Levinson states that 'the case, for Pereda, is not that he, the city-dweller, is out-of-step with the gauchos. The situation is that the gauchos are out-of-step with themselves' (Levinson 2015: 161).

The difference between the pampas and the metropolis has already vanished. These two icons, rural Argentina and the other of the Argentine capital are interconnected, and the pampas are turned into a mythical space inhabited by mythical characters. While Kemal can still find the memory of the lost civilisation imprinted on the city's ruins and salvaged objects, Pereda encounters the unfamiliarity of the buildings and gauchos that he knows through literature. It is worth noting that in contradistinction to Kemal, Pereda does not return to his past but travels to a literary space that he found in the annals of Argentine literature, especially Borges's 'The South'. Although Kemal is a member of the elite Turkish Islamic society, he is acquainted with Istanbul's heterotopic moonscape. Still, he adopts mobility, representing a constant border crossing experience between the periphery and the centre. To negotiate his identity at the border between the centre and periphery, Kemal positions himself as an outsider to the city he once knew. Kemal experiences an anagnorisis; he is aware of his alterity and no longer desires to conform to the codes

of his class. Pereda, however, ends in puzzlement, although he leaves Buenos Aires and returns to the pampas without the reader ascertaining whether delusionally or now realistically. In both texts, the breakdowns and the fragments of the society produce precisely that anxious, depressed, and paranoic individual like Kemal and Pereda. Kemal finds consolation in the essence of objects by internal bonding of the mimesis and remembrance. In the case of Pereda, however, the situation is ironic, invigorating, and melodramatic. Bolaño's insufferable gaucho is, paradoxically, suffering all the time from the contradictions arising from the social, political, institutional, and economic crisis that infinitely consume Argentina. Both Kemal and Pereda are misfits to the time they live in, and they find themselves in the tones of grey that emerge in between. In the case of Kemal, there is the opposition between East and West, modern and traditional, in the situation of Pereda; similarly, there is the modern and rural Argentina and the old 'Paris of South America' model of Buenos Aires and, its reverse, what James Scorer calls its 'growing "Latinamericanization"' (Scorer 2016: 188).

During his walks between the poor and rich neighbourhoods of the city, Kemal transgresses the boundaries of the old gloomy atmosphere of the old town and the newly Westernised modern city:

> Yıllar sonra dut ve çınar ağaçları kesilerek üzerlerine apartmanlar dikilen, araba park yerine ya da yeşil plastik halılarla kaplı mini futbol sahalarına dönüştürülen bu büyük sinema bahçelerinin, kireçle badanalanmış duvarlar, imalathaneler, çökmekte olan ahşap konaklar ve iki üç katlı apartmanlarla ve sayısız balkon ve pencereyle çevrilmiş bu hüzünlü mekânların kalabalığı, her seferinde beni şaşırttı. (Pamuk 2008: 245)
>
> In later years these cinema gardens would disappear – the mulberry and plane trees would be chopped down, replaced with apartment buildings or turned into parking lots, mini football fields covered with Astro Turf; but in those days, each time I set eyes on these mournful places – surrounded by whitewashed walls, little factories, teetering old woden houses, and two-or-three-story apartments with too many balconies and windows to count – I was shocked by how crowded they were. (Pamuk 2009: 359-360)

The home that Kemal quests seem to have vanished into thin air, and instead, a new aporetic space of the city has been created. This history is not only limited to the past of a city, but it is also the history of Turkey's search for identity from Ottoman Empire to the Republic, as affirmed by the Turkish historian Şerif Mardin: 'Fakat, ister dindar ister laik olsun, Türk aydınlarının dünyasını 1950'lerde yeniden bu kültürel kök arayışı kapladı. Sonunda, kültürde yerlilik taraftarlığı Türk sağında olduğu kadar Türk solunda da egemen olan en güçlü kültürel akim olarak ortaya çıktı' ('However, this search for cultural roots once again captured the world of Turkish intellectuals, whether religious or secular. Eventually, the advocacy of indigenousness in culture emerged as the most vital cultural trend that dominated the Turkish left and right') (Mardin 1991: 277). Along similar lines, Gönül Eda Özgül remarks that:

> The loss of home in Turkey is closely related to the identity crisis that emerged during modernization since one of the main principles of Turkish modernization has been a self-imposed resignation from being 'oneself'. This is a common theme in the novel and related to the concept of innocence; it is also a common theme in the world of thought of the late Ottomans, which expresses an understanding of modernization as complete Westernization. (Özgül 2017: 205)

Turkish society has been in a tumultuous Westernisation process. Still, partly conservative, partly reactionary people revolt against those who want to accept everything from Europe without a second thought, and Istanbul, in the narrative of Pamuk, is too broad, versatile, multi-faced and complex to be defined or surpassed. The city's local and Western angles are structured palimsestically rather than sequentially, which is a dominant motif in several other writings of Pamuk. In his book *İstanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir* (2003; *Istanbul: Memories and the City*), Pamuk narrates the hybrid understanding of Istanbul's glorious past and post-imperial *hüzün* (*melancholy*). In a similar vein, in his book, *Öteki Renkler: Seçme Yazılar ve Bir Hikaye* (1999; *Other Colours: Essays and A Story*), Pamuk evocatively says:

> Önce bir hafızayı kaybederiz, ama onu kaybettiğimizi biliriz ve onu geri isteriz. Sonra onu unuttuğumuzu unuturuz ve şehir artık kendi geçmişini hatırlayamaz. Bize bu kadar acı veren ve unutkanlığa giden yolu açan harabeler, sonunda başkalarının yeni hayaller bulabileceği arsalar haline gelir. (Pamuk 1999: 92)

> First, we lose a memory, but we know we've lost it, and we want it back. Then we forget we have forgotten it, and the city can no longer remember its own past. The ruins that cause us such pain and open the road to forgetfulness become, in the end, the lots on which others can find new dreams. (Pamuk 2008: 87)

From a historical perspective, the melancholy of the loss of innocence is intrinsically related to the decline of the Ottoman Empire. Still, it is essential to note that the essence of grief is not the decline of the Ottoman Empire but rather the historical and cultural deprivation that resulted from the fraught processes of modernisation and Westernisation. Pamuk adopted the concept of *hüzün* from the notion of *buhran* (*depression*) and *terkip* (*harmony*) presented by the prominent Turkish writer Ahmet Hamdi Tanpinar (1901-1962). Witnessing the transition to modernity in Turkey, Tanpinar felt a profound uneasiness about the dichotomies between East and West, as well as past and present. This tension in Turkish society during the transition to modernity is a key aspect of Tanpinar's work. As a solution, Tanpinar employed the terkip approach, where the dualities harmoniously coexist, about which Pamuk states:

> Tanpinar yaratıcı dünyasının ağırlık noktasını bu iki dünyanın ortasında yerleştirmekle her iki dünyanın zengin unsurlarını uzanıp uzanıp devşirebileceği ve onları kitaplarına yerleştirebileceği bir noktayı keşfetmiştir. Bugün safçı bir tekçiliğin, her şeyi tek kaynağa, tek nedene indirgeme ve açıklama isteğinin bir hayal olduğunu artık belki anlamışızdır. Kimlik ve kültür tariflerinin boşluğunu da. İki dünya arasında yaşadığı çevre ve bu çevrenin imkânları konusunda çağdaşlarının çoğundan daha akıllı ve kararlı davranmıştır. İki dünyanın arasına kendini yerleştirerek, her iki dünyadan seçmeli bir şekilde yararlanabilmiştir. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'ı anlamamıza yol açacak anahtar, bu seçtiklerini yan yana getirmesindeki özel üsluptur. (Pamuk 1995: 45)

> By placing the center of gravity of his creative world between these two worlds, Tanpınar discovered a point from which he could reach out and collect the rich elements of both and integrate them into his books. Today, we perhaps understand that a purist monism, the desire to reduce and explain everything to a single source, a single cause, is a delusion. And so is the emptiness of definitions of identity and

> culture. He acted more intelligently and decisively than many of his contemporaries regarding the environment in which he lived between these two worlds and the possibilities within that environment. By placing himself between these two worlds, he was able to selectively draw from both. The key to understanding Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar is the unique style with which he juxtaposed these choices.

Tanpinar's solution to the Turkish modernisation crisis involves the creation of a purgatory. Tanpınar's literary purgatory—a liminal, in-between space—offers an alternative to the binaries of tradition and modernity, East and West. This 'threshold' or 'liminality' does not entail abandoning tradition, but rather inhabiting the space where multiple heritages coexist and interact. It is precisely this creative negotiation—a refusal to resolve the tension between past and present, periphery and center—that aligns Tanpınar, and by extension Pamuk, with the world literary sensibility exemplified by Borges and Bolaño. What unites Tanpınar, Pamuk, Borges, and Bolaño is not a shared language or geography, but their common negotiation with the Western canon from the periphery. Each navigates a world in which the search for authenticity and belonging is haunted by the specter of loss and the impossibility of return. Tanpınar's *terkip*, Pamuk's *hüzün*, Borges's 'orillas,' and Bolaño's liminal wanderers all articulate a world literary poetics of in-betweenness—a refusal to be defined by the binaries of center and margin, tradition and modernity. In this comparative frame, Tanpınar emerges as a vital Turkish counterpart to Borges and Bolaño: a writer whose creative vision is shaped by the threshold, whose work dramatizes the complexities of negotiating local and global identities, and whose influence reverberates through Pamuk's literary Istanbul. Together, they exemplify how literary modernity at the periphery is not derivative, but dialogic and inventive, forging new paths for world literature by embracing the productive tensions of hybridity and liminality.

As suggested by the novel's title, *The Museum of Innocence*, and the quotation above, there is a nostalgia for innocence. In his quest for home and identity, Kemal is hunting for the essence

and the innocence of a nation that might be encapsulated in the objects of everyday life. The connection between Kemal and Pereda here is crossing the borders to find a ground for the prelapsarian, but it remains an illusion. When the concept of 'innocence' was asked, Orhan Pamuk, in one of his interviews in 2013, declared that:

> There was indeed a kind of naivete to the pre-modernity of those days, an innocence now lost in the transition to modernity and post-modernity. Finally, there is also a certain innocence in the relationship between art and the world. One of the Webster dictionary's definitions of innocence is "artlessness." But these are all my peculiarities of perception. Let the reader decide. (Pamuk 2013: 25)

What is disclosed in the narrative is not the magnificence of the past but the chase of self and the vanishing past, not imitation. On that account, various classes sketched in the novel exemplify different responses to modernity and Westernisation in Turkey. In the course of the narrative, the Turkish elites are embracing and enjoying Western-style education and the dissemination of Western products and lifestyle, turning out to be cheap copies of the West. Lower-class and working-class people, however, remain in the space of tradition, distant from modernisation. Füsun's family house in Çukurcuma, for instance, represents innocence and timelessness for Kemal because the house is ornamented with objects evoking the past: 'Burada 'zaman' kelimesini, 'modern dünya', 'yaşadığımız çağ' anlamında kullanılırdı. Bu 'zaman' sürekli değişen bir şeydi ve biz duvar saatinin sürekli tıkırtısıyla bu değişiklikten uzak kalmaya çalışıyorduk' (Pamuk 2008: 267) ('Here he was using 'time' to mean 'the modern world' or 'the age in which we live'. This 'time' was an ever-changing thing, and with the help of the clock's perpetual ticking, we tried to keep it at bay') (Pamuk 2009:393). After finding out about Füsun's new house, Kemal spends evenings in her family house, where he relishes its sense of timelessness and innocence. Just like the plastic dogs and other trinkets that adorn the family television, the ticking clock in Füsun's family house was irreplaceable ornamentation that could previously be found in the houses of

many Turkish families. The ticking clock, therefore, serves to give them a feeling of timelessness and nostalgia.

In short, parallel to the identity of Istanbul, which is neither Western nor European but comprises both spheres, Kemal negotiates his identity at the border between the centre and the periphery, blurring the distinction between them whilst wandering in the streets of Istanbul. The weary Pereda, for his part, is suspended in time, clinging to the idealised dream of a pastoral Argentina fantasised by the cultural nationalists, while simultaneously *sinking* (*hundiéndose*) in a fragmented and hellish Buenos Aires, a former shadow of its grand, old days. His quixotic quest for origins and 'authenticity' can only lead to a perplexing anticlimax that culminates in the story's brutal denouement of the knife fight, no longer a grand scene of heroic *cuchilleros*, as in Borges's *Ficciones*, but a crude and unheroic brawl in a fretful and furious city, as noted by Brett Levinson: 'Unlike Dahlman's gestures (for whom the knife fight has a definite rationale), Pereda's antics are thereby purposeless. Bolaño's protagonist emerges as neither laudable nor futile but, precisely, as insufferable' (Levinson 2015: 163). Without any epiphanic moment, Pereda knifes a young writer and walks away with solicitude:

> ¿Qué hago, pensó el abogado mientras deambulaba por la ciudad de sus amores, desconociéndola, reconociéndola, maravillándose de ella y compadeciéndola, me quedo en Buenos Aires y me convierto en un campeón de la justicia, o me vuelvo a la pampa, de la que nada sé, y procuro hacer algo de provecho, no sé, tal vez con los consejos, tal vez con la gente, esos pobres gauchos que me aceptan y me sufren sin protestar? (Bolaño 2017: 44-45)

> What should I do, the lawyer wondered as he roamed through his beloved city, finding it strange and familiar, marvelous and pathetic. Do I stay in Buenos Aires and become a champion of justice, or go back to the pampas, where I don't belong, and try to do something useful…I don't know, something with rabbits, maybe, or the locals, those poor gauchos who accept me and put up with me and never complain? (Bolaño 2015: 40-41)

Bolaño underscores these tensions and concludes with the image of a peripatetic Pereda wandering through the streets of an eerie, deserted Buenos Aires as the city palimpsestically blends in his mind with the much-yearned spaces of the pampas, both of which remain, ultimately, unattainable.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter frames Roberto Bolaño's short fiction 'The Insufferable Gaucho' and Orhan Pamuk's novel *The Museum of Innocence* comparatively, binding Turkish and Latin American national literary traditions with world literature. Both writers are connected thematically and historically through their representation of kaleidoscopic spaces, which they adopt as their primary subject matter. In the case of the Bolaño, it is the paradigmatic discourse of the gaucho and the pampas, whilst in Pamuk, it is the museological objects that shelter a nation's culture. In so doing, both writers knit the universal with the particular. Situating both authors within a world literature framework, I examine how, metaphorically and literally, the conception of gaucho and museum interact with histories rooted in the pursuit of disclosing the filtered realities of national identities. In the first part of the chapter, I explored Bolaño and Pamuk as literary 'celebrities' and how their texts work transnationally, where I indicate how the prestigious literary prizes they were awarded operate in the national and world literary canons.

On the one hand, Bolaño touches upon political, social, and economic events in contemporary Argentina, which are, in turn, intermingled with one of the Argentinian national emblems, the gaucho, and he rewrites Borges's short story 'The South'. On the other hand, Pamuk creates a space where the textual and physical museums work together to create a mimetic representation of Turkish history. While Kemal, the main character of *The Museum of Innocence*, seeks refuge in the possession of everyday objects, Pereda, in 'The Insufferable Gaucho', clings to

the notion of the gaucho. Both authors are contextually linked through their representation of kaleidoscopic spaces. Pamuk's palimpsest is the pre-1923 capital of Turkey, Istanbul, while Bolaño's is the pampas landscape in Greater Buenos Aires. Their works engage with the complex experience of modernity, industrialisation, and national identity, challenging our understanding of the alienating present and stimulating our intellectual capacity. Through the lens of gaucho and museum conceptions, they present society's history, culture, and national and collective identity, pushing the boundaries of our intellectual capacity. Thus, both authors superimpose a complex mythology upon multiple palimpsest spaces to evoke an evanescent past while simultaneously crystallising Argentina's and Turkey's complex and traumatic historical processes.

The comparative hinge between Roberto Bolaño, Orhan Pamuk, and Jorge Luis Borges lies in their shared yet distinct engagements with the Western literary tradition from positions of perceived marginality. Each author navigates a complex relationship to the canon, oscillating between admiration, estrangement, and creative appropriation. Jorge Luis Borges, often cited as a precursor to both Pamuk and Bolaño, situates himself at 'the orillas'—the margins—of Western culture. In his essay 'The Argentine Writer and Tradition,' Borges famously claims: 'I believe that our tradition is all of Western culture, and I also believe that we have a right to this tradition, greater perhaps than that which the inhabitants of one or another Western nation might have' (Borges 1964: 178). Yet, Borges's cosmopolitanism is marked by irony and a keen awareness of his own estrangement: 'being Argentine […] is a matter of being, in some way, outside of all tradition, or inside all traditions at once' (Borges 1964: 182). These authors thus share an outsider's vantage point, but their responses are shaped by different histories and strategies. Pamuk's melancholy negotiation with Europe, Bolaño's irreverent subversion, and Borges's cosmopolitan marginality each enact a distinct mode of world literature. By foregrounding the interplay between

margins and centers, these writers offer powerful models for understanding literature as a space of plural, dynamic encounters.

In this way, this chapter seeks to situate Bolaño and Pamuk within a critical practice akin to what Héctor Hoyos describes as a form of reading that 'belongs within a regional and a world paradigm' and which constitutes 'a key source for a critique of the prevailing ideologies of globalisation' (Hoyos: 2015: 11). These are precisely the tensions, conflicts, and contradictions this chapter has explored, which are, above all, particularly evident in the work of Bolaño and Pamuk as writers writing from 'peripheries' of the Western world. Finally, one might even say that the tensions that run deeply through Bolaño's and Pamuk's works are neatly captured in Beatriz Sarlo's reading of Borges's writing, writing situated at the crossroads between a multiplicity of discourses: 'Placed on the limits between cultures, between literary genres, between languages, Borges is the writer of the orillas, a marginal in the centre, a cosmopolitan on the edge' (Sarlo 1993: 6).

CONCLUSION TO THESIS

As this thesis draws to a close, I want to reemphasise the significance of negotiating world literature encounters between modern and contemporary Turkish and Latin American literatures. At the centre of my research endeavour has been the task of fostering a dynamic conversation between these two disparate literatures in an attempt to generate new world literature encounters by showing how Turkish and Latin American writers engaged with aesthetic modes such as

magical realism, the fantastic, and the fairy tale among them, whilst simultaneously reflecting on fraught national and geopolitical processes. These literary practices established a close correlation between the particular and the universal, the global and the local, the national and the international, as part of a world literature framework that Mariano Siskind defines as 'denouncing both the hegemonic structures of Eurocentric forms of exclusion and nationalistic patters of marginalization' (2014: 6). In this way, by reframing world literary encounters through Turkish-Latin American imaginaries, this thesis has made a significant contribution to current debates concerning the possibilities of world literature that transcends Anglophonic and Eurocentric literatures and historiographies, thus reinscribing alternative exchanges marginalised by global modernity. By exploring comparative histories where power relations are not 'concealed' but actually 'revealed' (Shih 2015: 79), the thesis has examined the complicated circulations of Turkish and Latin American texts in an attempt to imagine alternative worldviews through previously under-represented literary exchanges.

Given that much of the thesis has revolved around issues of reception, translation, and adaptation, the genre of magical realism – the world literature genre *par excellence* – travelled to Turkey through the first translation of Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, emerging as one of the most important aspects of Turkish-Latin American relations:

> Without the universal horizon that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* opened up for magical realism, a vast array of novels of marvel could not be read in world literary contexts, as part of a transcultural generic formation, including such disparate works as Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* (1977) and *Beloved*, Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1980) and *Shame* (1983), Latife Tekin's *Dear Shameless Death* (1983), Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* (1991), Mia Couto's *Sleepwalking Land* (1992), Mo Yan's *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* (1996). Without the global horizon of magical realism, all of these novels would have been considered in relation to nationally or locally bound ethnic and generic formations: respectively, African Americans int the USA, post-partition India and Pakistan, Anatolian folklore in Turkey, Animist beliefs in postcolonial Nigeria, political unrest in Mozambique or in rural China. (Siskind 2014: 353)

As the convoluted indirect translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* revealed, the process established interconnections across multiple geographical spaces, from Colombia to Buenos Aires – where the novel, *Cien años de soledad*, was originally published in 1967 by *Editorial Sudamericana* (founded by the Argentine editor Victoria Ocampo, among others) – and then the novel migrated to the Anglophone world to be rendered into English by Gregory Rabassa, the acclaimed American translator who had previously translated Julio Cortázar's *Rayuela* (1963) into English, *Hopscotch* (1966). Within these planetary circulations, *Cien años de soledad* emerges as a palimpsestic text, diasporically uprooted, its next migratory stop to Turkey, resulting in a series of cultural exchanges that culminated in the historic Turkish translation rendered by Seckin Selvi; a translation that I identified not as a lesser work because of its indirectness but, instead, as a richer, denser, polysemous work predicated on multiple layers of signification and superimposition that destabilised strict Anglophonic readings while inscribing Turkishness through and through.

Deeply embedded in world literary encounters, the rest of the chapters propose Turkish-Latin American relations through a series of discrete comparative case studies that revolve around the notion of literary affiliations. These affiliations operate on a number of levels, combining questions of genre, style, cosmopolitanism, vernacularism, and planetary concerns through the practice of writers who luxuriate in transcending the boundaries of the nation and 'elliptically' shifting towards world literary space, to borrow one of David Damrosch's key terms. These writers challenged narrow nationalisms to delineate a worldly form of writing that belongs both to the national, the local, and to the world, enabling the development of comparative readings based on reciprocities, mutualities, and solidarities, but also divergences, differences, and distances.

For example, conjoined chapters within the thesis draw deep connections between Latife Tekin and César Aira by examining constellations of texts from both authors. Looking back, then, the thesis orchestrated polyphonic, generative processes that I defined as 'world literature encounters', exploring what style and genre meant to writers like Aira and Tekin in relation to the tumultuous histories of Turkey and Argentina and the deep systemic inequalities prevalent in global South cities like Buenos Aires and Istanbul, epitomised in the tropes of the *gecekondu* and the *villa miseria*. As I showed, they used literature, the phantasmagorical, the fantastic, the surreal, and the magical realist to empower new forms of social justice that highlighted wealth and power inequalities.

Similarly, the thesis imagined a world literature encounter between Roberto Bolaño and Orhan Pamuk through the complex dynamics between the national and the global that staged new textual trajectories inscribed in their respective critiques of dominant national histories, thus proposing new cosmopolitan modernities that recorded the lives of dislocated characters submerged in multiple spaces and temporalities. While Kemal, the main character of *The Museum of Innocence*, seeks refuge in the possession of everyday objects, Pereda in 'The Insufferable Gaucho' clings to the anachronistic and outmoded notion of the gaucho. Both characters are contextually and temporally linked through their representation of kaleidoscopic spaces. Pamuk's palimpsest is the pre-1923 capital of Turkey, Istanbul, while Bolaño's reimagines the pampas landscape in Greater Buenos Aires. Their works engage with the complex experience of modernity, industrialisation, and national identity, highlighting an understanding of an alienating past and skewed historical processes. Through the distorting lenses of the gaucho and the museum, they problematise national and collective identities.

Concomitantly, the thesis revealed traumatic national histories through the gender intersections of Marina Enríquez's *Things We Lost in the Fire* and Elif Shafak's *Honour*. The fruitful dialogue between these two texts and between these two women has continued and developed into illuminating exchanges between Turkish and Latin American literature in contemporary writings, exploring aesthetic and socio-cultural aspects and feminist perspectives and orientations. Despite coming from different cultural contexts, the texts reflect on the harrowing realities of femicide and honour killing in Turkey and Argentina respectively, offering bold and provocative storylines denouncing the sexism, injustice, and discrimination of women's experiences, as well as exclusion and marginalisation through discourses of class, gender, nation, and sexuality. They show how these women fought long and hard to resist these abuses and exclusions by forming alternative feminist movements of resistance (Enríquez) that used fire and combustion as their incendiary symbols, while Shafak uses the idea of travel and diaspora as alternative spaces through which women and families could escape and recreate their identities.

All in all, in its sheer totality the thesis functions as an alternative cultural space that stages periphery to periphery world literature encounters and that creates new zones and literary patterns where innovative, dynamic relations are constantly reimagined. In this way, the thesis fosters new literary histories conceived from the margins, helping to create and delineate exchanges enabled by writers determined to challenge homogenised national histories and Anglophonic and Eurocentric canons in order to recognise the destabilising power of the margins. My choice of texts and authors was, therefore, predicated on these types of intersections that established the alternative literary horizons I have described. The reasons why such comparative questions—especially those connecting Latin America and Turkey—have not previously been explored in such depth are multiple and instructive. Much of this absence is the result of entrenched disciplinary

boundaries and methodological habits within comparative literature and world literature studies. As outlined in my introduction, the field has long privileged center–periphery models, focusing on the movement of texts from 'major' to 'minor' literatures or vice versa, rather than considering the rich possibilities of periphery–periphery and South–South dialogue. This has led to a lack of robust critical frameworks for analyzing direct and indirect connections, 'elliptical refractions' in Damrosch's terms, between regions like Turkey and Latin America. Furthermore, linguistic barriers, a scarcity of direct translation networks, and limited institutional support for transregional projects have contributed to the invisibility of these encounters and the under-theorization of their significance. The result has been a disciplinary siloing that this thesis seeks to disrupt, as it foregrounds the creative, hybrid, and multipolar modes of literary negotiation that emerge in the contact zone between Turkish and Latin American texts.

By foregrounding these overlooked dialogues, this thesis constitutes an intervention at several levels. Within the discipline of world literature, it demonstrates the intellectual and methodological value of a comparative framework that moves beyond binary or hierarchical models and instead privileges multipolar, dialogic, and 'elliptical' approaches. By adopting Damrosch's and Casanova's world literature theories, and Apter's concept of the 'translation zone,' the thesis models a new way of reading that is attuned to the fluid boundaries, refracted affiliations, and productive frictions generated when literatures from different peripheries meet.. It calls attention to the emergence of new translation routes, the rise of direct Turkish–Spanish and Spanish–Turkish exchanges, and the importance of recognizing how both direct and indirect translations help re-shape literary canons and critical horizons. These developments have the potential to foster greater mutual recognition, solidarity, and creative collaboration across the global South, and to challenge the dominance of Eurocentric models in world literature.

At the same time, the thesis has also shown the immense potential of Turkish-Latin American relations and how new areas of research may potentially be explored in future studies. Scholars might expand this comparative approach to other regions with similar histories of marginalization, translation, and cultural negotiation, or explore new axes such as gender, diaspora, and digital literary networks within and beyond the Turkish and Latin American contexts. There is also a pressing need to further examine the ethics and politics of translation and reception, particularly as global literary markets, digital platforms, and new "contact zones" continue to evolve. For example, new modes of reception and circulation based on a globalising world where translation activities from Turkish to Spanish and from Spanish to Turkish are no longer mediated by indirect but by direct translations. A new generation of translators have now become involved in newly emerging networks and dialogues geared towards direct processes of translation, as part of the 'born translated' phenomenon described by Rebecca Walkowitz in her book of the same title published in 2015. While, at face value, this may strike many as a positive development, it also raises crucial questions. For instance, how have these new markets and circulations affected Turkish-Latin American relations? Has it homogenised, flattened, or universalised these relations? These are some of the more recent questions that highlight the convoluted ways in which this cultural imaginary has been recently reshaped by globalising forces.

In sum, this thesis has approached Turkish-Latin American relations as worldly encounters of alternative modernities and literary histories, creating new constellations of writers and works that destabilise Anglocentric and Western-centric canons in order to open up productive spaces of innovation, affiliation, and circulation that I hope may serve as fitting examples of new world literature paradigms. Ultimately, it is my hope that this work will inspire not only further

scholarship but also a broader reimagining of what world literature can mean: a field grounded in multiplicity, reciprocity, and a genuine openness to the plurality of voices, histories, and aesthetic forms shaping our shared literary world. In this sense, the thesis both reflects and advances the comparative, transnational, and theoretically engaged spirit that animates its introduction.

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