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Translation of Chekhov's Rhizome in Vladimir Nabokov's *Ada, or Ardor*

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Abstract

The literary works of Vladimir Nabokov are often discussed in terms of intertextuality, since the writer is a known master of literary games and puzzles with numerous allusions, direct or hidden (mis)quotations, dialogues, names, and themes, echoing with multilingual works of world literature. The concept of a rhizome appears as a productive way of interpreting the architecture of Nabokov's works (Strelnikova 2018). As described by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), rhizome in its application to literature is a design with several cores and many intertwining branches of different authorships, forming the unique texture of a new narrative. Proffer (1974) in his *Ada as Wonderland: A Glossary of Allusions to Russian Literature* depicts more than twenty examples of Chekhov's plays weaved into Nabokov's *Ada, or Ardor: A Family Chronicle*. These examples constitute the basis of textual analysis in this work. The Turkish translation by Fatih Özgüven (2002) is not presented as an annotated translation and appeals to a reader who would rather perform his/her own literary investigation independently. This strategy is also in line with Nabokov's idea of an "admirable reader". An annotated translation, on the other hand, would offer a detailed map for Nabokov's inter- and sub textual terrain, for a readership with such expectation.

Keywords: Nabokov, Chekhov, Ada, or Ardor: A Family Chronicle, translation, rhizome

VLADIMIR NABOKOV'UN *ADA YA DA ARZU* ROMANINDAKİ ÇEHOV'UN KÖKSAPININ ÇEVİRİSİ

Öz

Vladimir Nabokov, dünya yazınından çeşitli yapıtlarla ilişkilendirilen çok sayıdaki açık ya da örtük gönderme, doğru ve çarpıtılmış alıntı, diyalog, isim ve konu içeren yazınsal oyun ve bilmece ustası olarak bilinir. Bu nedenle yapıtları metinlerarasılık açısından sıklıkla ele alınarak incelenir. Köksap kavramı, Nabokov'un romanlarının metinlerarası mimarisini betimlemek için elverişli bir çerçeve sunabilir. (Strelnikova 2018) Deleuze ve Guattari (1987) tarafından yazınsal inceleme için verilen tanımıyla köksap, yeni ve eşsiz bir anlatıyı kurmak üzere farklı yazarlara ait çok sayıdaki dalların ve çoklu merkezlerin bir araya gelmesiyle oluşturulan tasarımdır. Carl Proffer'in (1974) *Ada as Wonderland: A Glossary of Allusions to Russian Literature* başlıklı çalışmasında, Anton Çehov'un oyunlarından alınan ve *Ada ya da Arzu* romanının anlatısıyla birlikte örülen yirmiden fazla örnek saptanmıştır. Söz konusu örnekler bu çalışmanın metinsel incelemesi için temel alınmıştır. Fatih Özgüven'in kaleminden çıkan erek metin (2002) açıklamalı çeviri olarak tanıtılmamıştır ve böylelikle metinlerarası bağlantılarını bağımsız olarak araştırmayı yeğleyen bir okur kitlesine seslenen bir çalışmadır. Bu strateji aynı zamanda Nabokov'un 'mükemmel okur' tanımıyla da uyumludur. Öte

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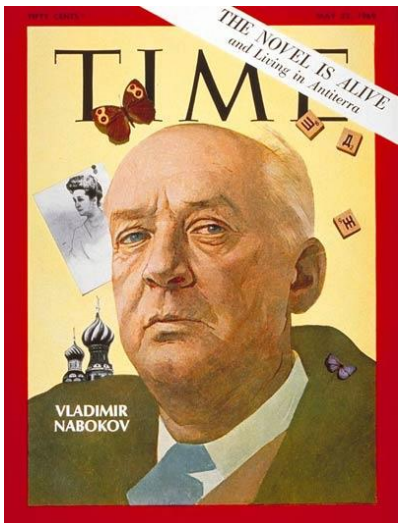
yandan açıklamalı çeviri, bu tür bir beklentisi ve arayışı olan bir okur kitlesi için, Nabokov'un çokdilli metinlerarası coğrafyasının keşfedilmesini sağlayan ayrıntılı bir harita sunabilir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Nabokov, Çehov, Ada ya da Arzu, çeviri, köksap

INTRODUCTION

In February 1959 Nabokov begins to take the first notes for his new project; a book entitled *Texture of Time*. By the end of the same year, he starts working on another book, *Letters to Terra*. Six years pass, which are six prolific years when he writes his *Pale Fire*, publishes such novels as *The Gift*, *The Defense*, and *The Eye*, translates *Lolita* into Russian, and so on. Between December 1965, and February 1966, Nabokov notices the links between the story of Ada and Van, *Texture of Time*, and *Letters to Terra*, and experiences "the first detailed flash of *Ada*" (Boyd, 1995a: xlvii). He works rapidly and finishes *Ada, or Ardor: A Family Chronicle* (*Ada* hereinafter) in 1968, nearly ten years after the first notes were made. The McGraw Hill Book Company publishes the novel in May 1969, and it immediately gains considerable and controversial attention (Cover of *Time Magazine*, *New York Times Book Review* frontpage, expanded passage in *Playboy*).

For the author, the value of his novel is quite clear. On the flyleaf of his own copy of the book, he writes, "genial'naya kniga – perl amerikanskoi literatury" ("a book of genius – the pearl of American literature") (Boyd, 1995b, p.3). If appreciation of *Ada*'s artistic brilliance, its esthetical or ethical characteristics, may vary from one critic or reader to another, in terms of intertextuality, allusions, direct citations, themes, motives, names, and puns, echoing multilingual works of world literature, *Ada* is the apogee of Nabokov's work. Reading it is challenging even for an ardent reader and "In many ways… is more demanding than Ulysses" (Boyd, 1995b, p.4). The writer combines texts and languages, mostly Russian, English, and French, with occasional dashes of German and Italian. Two protagonists of the novel, Ada and Van, make partial translations of poems, blending three languages together. The process of thorough reading demands extensive language skill, as well as close acquaintance with world literature, sometimes not only with the texts *per se*, but also with diaries, letters, and lesser-known works of an author. The choice of translation strategy is equally challenging; the decision to annotate each allusion, as well as the decision to leave the novel unannotated, has its *pros* and *cons*, specific for either case. This study attempts to describe these decisions in the only existing Turkish translation of *Ada* and to formulate an opinion on its possible alternative.



Picture 1: The cover of Time Magazine, May 23, 1969

The main purpose of this work is to follow Chekhov's intertexts in the Turkish translation of *Ada,* seeking to understand if and how the above-mentioned specifics of the source text affect the translational strategy. To be precise, this research concentrates on

ways of annotating the intertextual links on paratextual and textual levels. This research seeks to clarify if the target text is presented as an annotated translation in paratexts and if the intertextual nature of the novel is explained. The study also questions if and how the translator explains his translation strategy and gives annotations. On the textual level, this study focuses on relevant translation techniques, such as explicitation, amplification, and so on, that could have been applied to make the allusions and other types of intertextual links visible.

Chekhov's texts were chosen for two main reasons. Nabokov's commitment to Anton Chekhov started early, between the ages of ten and fifteen, and lasted for a lifetime. In his 1956 letter to Edmund Wilson Nabokov even calls Chekhov "my predecessor" (Karlinsky, 2008, p.1). Nabokov's works, and *Ada,* among them, reveal many clear affinities between these two authors. In addition to this, Chekhov's allusions in *Ada* demonstrate a rich variety in types of textual examples, some of which are a paragraph long, whereas others consist of a single word. Some them are plain and obvious, while others require significant additional research. Overall, Chekhov's intertexts constitute both an essential part of the novel and set up an interesting example of a literary rhizome.

INTERTEXTUALITY IN NABOKOV'S TEXTS; RHIZOME

As Orhan Pamuk mentions in his foreword, *Ada*'s "…amazing, bizarre, extreme and narcissistic world is childish in every respect", and the sensitive subject of the novel is a place, where "for a writer to be great, a reader should be great, too." (Pamuk in Özgüven, 2002, p.14-15).[1] This work focuses not on content, but on the narrative structure of *Ada,* which also demands a reader to be an outstanding, "great" inquirer of the multilayered text.

There is an extensive literature, interpreting the type and the structure of *Ada*'s intertextuality. Bényei (1993, p.90) calls the novel "…a verbal construction (which) is aware of itself as a part of a large system of verbal constructions…" and emphasizes the evidence of the intertextuality in numerous quotations and misquotations, allusions to dozens of writers, including Tolstoy, Chekhov, Chateaubriand, Borges, and Nabokov's own works. Hutcheon (1986, p.235) defines it as "…a kind of textual incest. …In other words, on both linguistic and narrative levels, we witness the formal realization of the major theme of the novel; sibling incest." Taylor (2005, p.266) also finds that "…the theme of incest is closely linked to the linguistic and intertextual inter-breeding inherent to the novel's style".[2] Cancogni (1985, p.251, as cited in Taylor, 2005, p.265) describes the novel as "a gigantic translation"; indeed, not only does Nabokov writes in his non-native language, he also translates the quotations and allusions from Russian, French, and other languages into English. In addition to this, the protagonists, as already mentioned above, translate poetry as a part of their daily entertainment routine. Strelnikova (2018) suggests another

[1] Unless specified otherwise, all translations from Turkish and Russian belong to the author of this work.

[2] For the same interpretation see also Steiner (1972, p.19) and Barton Johnson (1986, p.251, 253) as cited in Taylor, 2005.

interpretation of Nabokov's intertextuality: she employs the concept of rhizome[3] by Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p.3-26).

Rhizome, according to the authors of *A Thousand Plateaus*,

> …is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple. It is not the One that becomes Two or even directly three, four, five, etc. It is not a multiple, derived from the One, or to which One is added (n+1). It is composed not of units but of dimensions or rather directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and from which it overspills. (1987, p.21)

It seems a productive approach since Chekhov's (or other writers') quotations and allusions do evolve into a unique form of coexistence within Nabokov's text. They are not added to it in a plain sense of this verb, but interweaved on layers of structure, style, content, characters, dialogues, memories, and so on. It is not always possible to tell where one text begins and the other one ends, and an attempt to separate one part for analysis damages the whole living organism of *Ada*. As Strelnikova (2018: 228) puts it, "The rhizome, characterized by the principle of plurality, makes the work asymmetrical, anti-hierarchical, unsystematic, similar to assembling a machine from parts."

Bozovic (2017), although does not use the term 'rhizome' directly, employs the concept of 'roots' to describe the intertextual structure of the novel. She interprets the polymorphic intertextual roots of Nabokov's prose, in general, and *Ada*, per se, in a much wider context. Bozovic sees "…*Ada*'s new world as a forerunner of transnational literature" (2017: 10), as a new brand of contemporary literary writing, emerging World Literature, which has already given us names like Nafisi, Pamuk, Coetzee, Sebald, along with Rushdie, Eco, and Bolaño – "all, in some sense, Nabokov's children". According to Bozovic, Nabokov's prose is a new form of existence of a literary work in a modern society where so many of us have multiple ethnic and cultural origins: "…*Ada* reads differently in an era of Creoles, when so many readers are themselves hybrids and geographical in-betweens". (2017: 10) Strelnikova (2018: 225) also underlines that all allusions, reminiscences, and references have a deconstructive function, involving the text into an endless interpretation game, thus creating the new type of literary construction as an artifact of contemporary art. In other words, the intertextual rhizomes of Nabokov's novel reach much further than a challenging literary puzzle for an earnest reader. They produce the indivisible heterogeneous body of a literary work, known as Nabokov's oeuvre.

ANNOTATED TRANSLATIONS

World literature knows numerous examples of annotated translations: Nabokov's famous four-volume annotated translation of *Eugene Onegin*, 1964; Carl R. Proffer's *Keys to Lolita*, 1968; *The Annotated Lolita* by Alfred Appel Jr., 1970; "Emendations to Annotated Editions of *Lolita*" by Leland de la Durantaye, 2007; ongoing *Annotations to Ada* by Brian Boyd, 1993-2008, and his latest critical study *Nabokov's Ada*: *The Place of Consciousness*, released online in December 2001; Gennady

[3] Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines rhizome as "a somewhat elongated usually horizontal subterranean plant stem that is often thickened by deposits of reserve food material, produces shoots above and roots below, and is distinguished from a true root in possessing buds, nodes, and usually scalelike leaves."

Barabtarlo's *Phantom of Facts: A Guide to Nabokov's Pnin*, 1989, to name only the relevant ones.[4] In each case, the fact that the translation is annotated is presented on the front page as a sort of additional value.

In her informative work Bontilă (2008: 13) states that "very much like in the case of certain literary works which cry out their translatability, the same goes for some such works which cry out their annotability. […] [They] have annotation thrust upon them, so to speak." She also specifies several reasons why these texts attract the attention of annotators. Two of those reasons are especially important in the case of *Ada*:

> (1) the paramount feeling of intimidation the reader (novice or not) has in front of the maze of literary/ historical/ political/ religious/ cultural allusions; (2) the innumerable language games they display.

The abovementioned publications introduce two main ways to annotate these intimidating allusions and innumerable language games: the appendix at the back of the book (A. Appel's *Lolita*) or hypertext with highlighted links (Boyd's comments). The notes can also have a format of prefaces, introductions, fore notes, and afternotes. The next chapter elaborates the method for analysis of annotations in Turkish translation of *Ada* both on paratextual and textual levels.

METHOD

The paratextual stage of research follows the questions, formulated in the Introduction, focusing on the covers, introductions, foreword, afterword, footnotes, endnotes, and so on.

The textual corpus is based on a seminal work by Carl R. Proffer, *Ada as Wonderland: A Glossary of Allusions to Russian Literature* (1974, p.249-279), where he depicts twenty-three allusions to Tolstoy, twenty-three to Pushkin, seven to Pasternak, seven to Aksakov, five to Turgenev and twenty to Chekhov. These twenty textual examples establish the textual corpus of this study. In Proffer's work, each entry is tripartite and includes the number of the relevant page and line(s), then a citation from *Ada* in inverted commas, followed by a brief comment. As the author himself explains, "The entry '123/1-4 (115)' means that the allusion is found on page 123, lines 1-4 of the hardcover, and on page 115 of the paperback."

The target text (TT hereinafter) is *Ada ya da Arzu. Bir Aile Tarihçesi* by Fatih Özgüven (Özgüven, 2002 hereinafter), with the number of the relevant page shown in brackets. The concept of overt and covert allusion, used in the comments, is defined as follows: Overt allusion is more or less obvious and direct, already explained in the original text (see examples 1 and 2 below). Covert allusions, on the other hand, cannot be understood without extra research or annotation. Definitions of techniques like explicitation or amplification are based on the relevant chapters in Baker, 2005 (p. 80-85) and Berk, 2005 (p.124).

[4] Bontilă (2008: 13) also lists Don Gifford's *Ulysses Annotated,* 2008; *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* by Roland McHugh, 1991; Herman Melville's *Confidence Man,* edited by Hershel Parker, 1971; Paul Brians' project *Annotating The Satanic Verses: An Example of Internet Research and Publication,* 2004. Recently published Turkish translations of annotated versions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* (*Açıklamalı Notlarıyla Alice Harikalar Diyarında. Aynanın İçinden*, Everest, 2020) and *Sherlock Holmes* (*Açıklamalı Notlarıyla Sherlock Holmes,* 2013) can also be added to this list.

The first chapter below outlines the structure and the storyline of the novel. The Examples chapter presents and comments on the examples of Chekhov's allusions in the Turkish translation of *Ada.* The Findings and Conclusion sections outline the paratextual and textual findings and share reflections on the issue of annotated translations in general, and possible annotated translation of *Ada*, specifically.

SYNOPSIS

In essence, the novel is a memoir, written by an elderly Van and edited by Ada, who is only two years younger. The main text belongs to Van, while Ada leaves her notes, corrections, and comments in brackets or margins and Van sometimes replies in the same manner. The story begins in Ardis, the summer mansion of Ada's family, where fourteen-year-old Van comes to spend his summer holidays. Ardis is situated in a land called Antiterra, a nonexistent territory, surrounded by other fictional places with semi-fictional names, such as Canadia or Ladora. In the beginning, Ada and Van are introduced as cousins, their fathers are brothers, and their mothers are sisters. As the story continues, we understand that they are siblings and know it. They fall in love and become intimate; this passionate and sensual relationship continues throughout their lives, with ups and downs, separations and reunions, and physical infidelity, on one hand, and emotional loyalty or even obsession, on the other.

EXAMPLES OF CHEKHOV'S RHIZOME IN *ADA*

Example 1

115/16-18 (93-94)[5]

"They've all gone and left me behind, as old Fierce mumbles at the end of the *Cherry Orchard* (Marina was an adequate Mme Ranevski)."

In the concluding speech of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* the servant named Firs (pronounced 'Fierce') says, "They've gone away… (He sits on the divan.) They forgot about me…" Mme Lyubov Ranevskaya is one of the main characters – Marina is the type-cast.

TT: "Hepsi gittiler, beni burada tek başıma bıraktılar, diye homurdandı *Vişne Bahçesi*'nin sonundaki ihtiyar Fierce gibi (Marina, Madam Ranevski rolünde 'idare eder'di.)" (p. 122)

A partly overt and rather obvious allusion, including explained quotation: Nabokov does not mention the name of the author, but mentions the name of his famous play and its characters (*The Cherry Orchard*, Fierce, Mme Ranevski). TT does not contain any addition or amplification.

Example 2

193/26-27 (151)

"…as in your Chekhov 'We shall see the whole sky swarm with diamonds'."

[5] The format of Carl Proffer's (1974, p.249-279) text is preserved. He places the page and line number before the quotation and its annotation.

> Sonya, at the end of Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* (produced in 1900), says, "We will rest! We will hear angels; we will see the whole sky covered with diamonds; we will see all earthly evil, all our torments disappear in the mercy with which the whole world will be filled, and our life will be peaceful, tender, sweet as a caress…"
>
> **TT:** "…sonra senin Çehov'da dendiği gibi 'tüm gökyüzünün şıkır şıkır elmaslarla parladığını' göreceğiz." (p. 195)

A partly overt allusion. Both in the source and target texts, we read the name of the author, but not the name of the play and/or a character who says the words. This allusion is briefly explained by Nabokov in "*Notes to Ada* by Vivian Darkbloom" (Vivian Darkbloom is an anagram of Vladimir Nabokov. See **Findings** for details): "Allusion to a line in Chekhov's play *Uncle Vanya*: We shall see the sky swarming with diamonds." (Nabokov, 1990: 597). Özgüven in "*Ada ya da Arzu'ya Notlar*. Vivian Darkbloom tarafından" translates this annotation without any addition or amplification: "Çehov'un *Vanya Dayı* oyunundaki bir dizeye anıştırma; gökyüzünün elmaslarla dopdolu olduğunu göreceğiz." (Özgüven, 2002: 566)

Example 3

> 193/28 (151). "Did you find them all, Uncle Van?"
>
> Checkov's *Uncle Vanya*.
>
> **TT:** "Hepsini toplayabildin mi, Van Amca?" (p. 195)

In English, it is a partly overt allusion, 'Uncle Van' sounds similar to 'Uncle Vanya'. Ada here addresses Dementiy (Demon) Veen, her theoretical paternal uncle or 'amca' in Turkish. Therefore, the allusion to *Uncle Vanya* (*Vanya Dayı* in Turkish) disappears by necessity.

Example 4

> 233/10-13 (179). "…when I was rehearsing that scene with Kachalov at the Seagull Theater, in Yukonsk, Stanislavski, Konstantin Sergeevich, actually wanted him to make that cozy little gesture."
>
> Meaning Scene 7 in *Woe from Wit*. Kachalov was a famous Russian actor at the Moscow Art Theater.
>
> The 'Seagull Theater' is the Moscow Art Theater, founded by Stanislavsky. Its first success was Chekhov's *The Seagull* (1898). In recent Soviet times, the seagull sewn on the curtain has been replaced by a metal mobile representing a seagull.
>
> **TT:** "…-ben Yukonsk'daki Martı Tiyatrosunda Kaçalov'la bu sahnenin provasını yaparken, Stanislavski, Konstantin Sergeyeviç, gerçekten onun bu küçük cici el işaretini…yapmasını istemişti." (p. 230)

The covert allusion to a real place (The 'Seagull Theater'), and a play by Chekhov (*The Seagull*). TT does not include any explanation for The Seagull Theater, its founder, or its relation to Chekhov's play.

Example 5

> 235/14-18 (180).[6]
>
> "Well? *Tout est bien?*" asked Van after a sketchy kiss. "No worries?"
>
> She glared, or feigned to glare, at him.

[6] Proffer presents this quotation in a shorter form. The longer quotation is presented here to clarify the purpose of the allusion. In this scene Ada comes back home after her visit to gynecologist (Seitz) with the suspicion of pregnancy.

"Van, you should not have rung Seitz! He does not even know my name! You promised!"
Pause.
"I did not," answered Van quietly.
"*Tant mieux*," said Ada in the same false voice, as he helped her out of her coat in the corridor. "*Oui, tout est bien*. […] Let me pass, please."
"Ada!" he cried.
She looked back, before unlocking her (always locked) door. "What?"
"Tuzenbakh, not knowing what to say: 'I have not had coffee today. Tell them to make me some.' Quickly walks away."
"Very funny!" said Ada, and locked herself in the room."

This parallels and is partly a direct quotation from Act Four of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*.
Tuzenbakh (upset). No. no! (*Quickly moves away, stops in the alley of trees*.) Irina!
Irina: What?
Tuzenbakh (not knowing what to say): I have not had coffee today. Tell them to make me some… (*Quickly walks away*.)

TT: "Ee? *Tout est bien?*" diye sordu Van üstünkörü bir öpücük kondurduktan sonra.
"Kaygılı mıyız?"
Gözleriyle ateşler saçtı ona Ada ya da saçıyormuş gibi yaptı.
"Van, Seitz'i aramamalıydın ! O benim adımı bile bilmiyor! Söz vermiştin!"
Sükut.
"Aramadım," diye cevap Verdi Van sakin bir sesle.
"*Tant mieux*," dedi Ada aynı sahte ses tonuyla, Van koridorda onun paltosunu üzerinden çıkarmasına yardım ederken. "*Oui, tout est bien.* […] Bırak geçeyim lütfen.
"Ada!" diye haykırdı.
Kapısının kilidini açmadan önce (hep kilitlerdi) geri dönüp bakar Ada: "Ne?"
"Tuzenbah (ne diyeceğini bilmez): 'Daha kahve içmedim bugün. Söyle de bana biraz kahve yapsınlar!' Hızla uzaklaşır gider."
"Çok komik!" dedi Ada, odasına girip kapıyı arkadan kilitledi. (p. 232)

A covert allusion. Tuzenbakh in *Three Sisters* loves Irina unrequitedly. After these words about coffee, Tuzenbakh goes to a duel and gets killed. Van here may imply that his feelings for Ada are also unrequited and draws a parallel between the possibility of Ada's infidelity and death. This is one of the most manifest examples of Chekhov's rhizome, where two texts compose a new narrative texture, a stem with deep semantical dimensions, or roots. This is the second one of three allusions, briefly annotated by the author in "*Notes to Ada* by Vivian Darkbloom": "Van recites the last words of the unfortunate Baron in Chekhov's *Three Sisters* who does not know what to say but feels urged to say something to Irina before going to fight his fatal duel." (Nabokov, 1990: 598) Özgüven translates the allusion and the annotation without explicitation or amplification: "Van, Çehov'un *Üç Kızkardeş*'inde ölümcül düellosuna giderken ne diyeceğini bilemeyen fakat kendini birşey demek zorunda hisseden talihsiz Baron'un son sözlerini anıyor. (Özgüven, 2002: 567)

Example 6

245/11 (188). "She likes," said Van, "what all our belles like – balls, orchids, and *The Cherry Orchard*."
An earthly play by Anton Chekhov.

TT: "…bizim kızların sevdiği her şeyi seviyor – baloları, orkideleri, *Vişne Bahçesi*'ni." (p. 241)

A partly overt, although rather obvious, allusion. Both in the source and target texts, we read the name of this well-known play, but not the name of the author.

Example 7

272/5-10 (209). "Van!" called Ada shrilly. "I want to say something to you, Van, come here."
Dorn (flipping through a literary review, to Trigorin): "Here, a couple of months ago, a certain article was printed…a Letter from America, and I wanted to ask you, incidentally" (taking Trigorin by the waist and leading him to the front of the stage), "because I am very much interested in that question…"

An exact quotation from Dorn's last speech in Chekhov's *The Seagull*, just before he tells Trigorin that Treplev has shot himself.

TT: "Van!" diye bağırdı Ada tiz bir sesle. "Sana bir şey söylemek istiyorum, buraya gel."
Dorn (edebiyat dergisini karıştırarak, Trigorin'e): "Burada, birkaç ay önce bir makale yayımlanmıştı…bir Amerika Mektubu, senden bir şey isteyecektim, sırası gelişken" (elini Trigorin'in beline dolayarak sahnenin önüne getirir), "şu soru beni oldukça ilgilendiriyor da…" (p. 267)

A covert allusion. Van here is about to find out that Ada had been unfaithful to him. The quotation from the play draws a parallel between this news and the news about Treplev's death in *The Seagull*. Along with example 5 above, this is another clear sample of an intertextual rhizome. Only a reader who has already read *The Seagull* will have access to the deeper connotational layer of the passage. Nabokov shortly explains the allusion in his "*Notes to Ada* by Vivian Darkbloom": "Trigorin etc.: a reference to a scene in *The Seagull*." (Nabokov, 1990: 600) TT provides the same short information without an attempt to make it more explicit: "Trigorin vs.: *Martı*'daki bir sahneye gönderme." (Özgüven, 2002: 569)

Example 8

333/10-12 (254). "She has been cast as the deaf nun Varvara (who, in some ways, is the most interesting of Chekhov's *Four Sisters*)."
In Chekhov's *Three Sisters* the "fourth" sister, i. e. their sister-in-law, is Natasha, who is not at all a nun.

TT: "Bizimki sağır rahibe Varvara rolünü üstlendi (birçok bakımdan Chekhov'un Dört Kızkardeş'indeki en ilginç oyun kişisi). (p. 323)

Shadursky (2004) offers a different explanation for the unusual number of sisters. According to him, Chekhov, in his letters, mentions difficulties he had, while writing *Three Sisters*. The author writes that the play in general is boring, gloomy, and uneasy because it has four female characters. Chekhov also admits that he is not satisfied with one of them and cannot decide what to do with her (Shadursky, 2004: 68). Shadursky suggests that Van here refers to this uncertainty in the number of sisters and maybe to a mournful and aloof Varvara from *The Cherry Orchard*. Apparently, *four* here is not a mistake or a slip of the tongue; a reader needs a profound knowledge of Chekhov's biography and art to recognize the allusions. TT does not include any additional explanatory techniques or annotations.

To avoid repeating the same conclusion every time, we sum up that TT neither contains any paratextual annotations nor applies the techniques like explicitation, addition, or amplification to make the allusions more distinct. See Findings and Conclusion for details.

Example 9

> 399/15 (303). "Sumerechnikov! He took sumerographs of Uncle Vanya years ago."
> Chekhov's play *Uncle Vanya* again. Sumerechnikov means "twilight".
>
> **TT:** "Sumereçnikof! Yıllar önce Vanya Dayının sümerograflarını çekerdi." (p. 386)

A partly overt allusion, Nabokov mentions the name of the play, but not the name of the author. Unlike in example 3, here the Turkish name of the play (*Vanya Dayı*) is preserved.

Example 10

> 426/33-34 (324). "…Anton Pavlovich, who was always passionately fond of long dark hair."
> A.P. Chekhov was married to an actress with long dark hair.
>
> **TT:** "…Anton Pavloviç'in ki uzun kara saçları her zaman tutkuyla sevmiştir." (p. 412)

A covert allusion to a fact from Chekhov's biography. Once again, a reader needs to know certain specific facts of Anton Chekhov's life to see the allusion clearly.

Example 11

> 427/4-9 (324-25). "What is more, both appeared in Chekhov's *Four Sister*s. […] Durmanova is superb as the neurotic nun, having transferred an essentially static and episodical part into *et cetera, et cetera, et cetera*."
> Varvara the neurotic nun is the sister added to the version of Chekhov we are more familiar with. Masha becomes Marsha.
>
> **TT:** "Dahası, ikisi de Çehov'un *Dört Kızkardeş*'inde oynamışlardı. […] 'Durmanova nevrotik rahibe rolünde kusursuz, temelde durağan ve epizodik bir rolü bir *bilmemne, bilmemne, bilmemneye dönüştürmüş…*" (p. 412-413)

See the comment to example 8. *Three Sisters* became four with "Varvara the neurotic nun", a possible reference to *The Cherry Orchard*. Examples 11-17 are taken from Part Two, Chapter 9, where Ada tells Van about her acting experience in Chekhov's *Four Sisters* as Irina. Thus, all allusions here are overt and quite obvious.

Example 12

427/31-32 (325). "…Stan's protégé Altshuler in the role of Baron Tuzenbach – Krone – Altschauer…"
Nikolay Lvovich Tuzenbach-Krone-Altschauer is a main character in *Three Sisters*.

TT: "Stan'ın 'himaye'sindeki Altshuler, Baron Nikolay Livoviç Tuzenbach – Krone – Altschauer rolünde…" (p.413)

Nabokov here shuffles similar names and surnames, like "Stan Slavsky (no relation, and not a stage name)" or "Stan's protégé Altshuler", playing Baron Altschauer. Özgüven's strategy preserves the vagueness of the source text: "…Stan Slavski'den de (öbürünün akrabası değil, bir sahne ismi de değil)…"

Example 13

428/4-7 (325). Irina (sobbing): 'Where, where has it all gone? Oh, dear, oh, dear! Al is forgotten, forgotten, muddled up in my head – …"
This is an exact quotation of Irina (talking to Olga) in Act Three of *Three Sisters*.

TT: "İrina (hıçkıra hıçkıra ağlayarak): 'Nereye gitti hepsi? Hepsi, hepsi unutuldu, kafamın içi çorba gibi-…'" (p.413)

A partly overt allusion: we know that Ada is talking about Chekhov's play, but we do not know that this is the exact quotation of Irina's words.

Example 14

429/3-4 (326). "Varvara, the late General Sergey Prozorov's eldest daughter…"
This is the father's name in the real play, but as noted above our Terra's Prozorov had no Varvara.

TT: "Müteveffa General Prozorov'un en büyük kızı Varvara…" (p. 414)

See comment to example 8. This is the third time when Nabokov uses the 'incorrect' allusion, positioning Varvara as the fourth sister and is an allusion to both *Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*. Besides this, in Chekhov's text the late General's name is Andrey, not Sergey; another one of Nabokov's 'mistakes', omitted in TT.

Example 15[7]

429/13-14 (326) "…Tchechoff (as he spelled his name when living that year at the execrable Pension Russe, 9, rue Gounod, Nice) crammed into the two pages of a ludicrous expository scene all the information he wished to get rid of…"
In January, 1901, while *Three Sisters* was in rehearsal, Chekhov lived in Nice. The address is given quite correctly.
"…a ludicrous expository scene" is Nabokov's critique of the opening scene of *Three Sisters*, which was rewritten only by Nabokov.
TT: "…Çeçof (o yıl, Nice'de Gounod Sokağı, dokuz numaradaki o iğrenç Pension Russe'de kalırken adını böyle yazıyordu) iki sayfalık gülünç bir açılış sahnesine başından atıp kurtulmak istediği bütün bilgileri […] tıkıştırır…" (p. 414)

[7] Two examples in Proffer are combined here.

A covert allusion to a fact from Chekhov's biography. Once again, a reader is expected to have a close acquaintance with the life and works of the author.

Example 16

> 430/2-5 (327). "…and somebody called John Starling had been cast as Skvortsov…whose name comes from *skvorets*, starling."
> Real characters from *Three Sisters*. "Skvortsov" does mean "starling" – and is a name of a minor character in Nabokov's *The Gift*.
>
> **TT:** 'John Starling' adında biri ise Skvorzov…rolünü oynuyordu ki Skvorzov adı *skvorze*'den türetilmişti, yani 'starling', yani saksağan. (p. 415)

A 'double' allusion, both to Chekov's and Nabokov's works. While the allusion to Chekhov's play is quite obvious, the allusion to *The Gift* requires certain expertise.

Example 17

> 430/23 (327). "Dawn *en robe rose et verte*, at the end of Part One."
> Dawn plays Chekhov's Natasha, sister-in-law of the three sisters, who wears a 'rose' dress with green sash in Part One.
>
> **TT:** "Dawn, *en robe rose et verte*, 1. Perde'nin sonunda." (p. 416)

Nabokov in his "Notes" (1990: 603) translates the French expression: "*en robe* etc: in a pink and green dress", without any further explanations about Natasha and her dress. Özgüven (2002: 573) employs the same strategy: "üzerinde pembeli-yeşilli bir elbise".

Example 18

> 455/33 (346). "Your father prefers to pass for a Chekhovian colonel."
> Colonel Vershinin in *Three Sisters*, a well-meaning cad.
>
> **TT:** "Baban Çehov'vari bir albay olarak tanınmayı tercih ederdi.' (p. 437)

Unlike examples 11-17, this example is not given in the *Three/Four Sisters* context and therefore requires special erudition on the reader's side. Both the source and target texts keep the allusion covert.

Example 19

> 498/16-17 (377-78). "…had I not known you belonged to the Decadent school of writing, in company with naughty old Leo and consumptive Anton."
> Demon Veen's interpretation of Antiterran Tolstoy and tubercular Chekhov.
>
> **TT:** "…eğer senin Dekadan Yazı Ekolüne mensup olduğunu bilmesem, yaramaz ihtiyar Leo ve müteverrim Anton'la birlikte." (p. 476)

A covert allusion to a fact from Chekhov's biography.

Findings

Ada ya da Arzu by Fatih Özgüven is not presented as an annotated translation on the cover or the flyleaf. The source text has an additional final chapter, "*Notes to Ada* by Vivian Darkbloom" (Nabokov, 1990, p.591-606), also translated in the target text as "*Ada ya da Arzu'ya Notlar*. Vivian

Darkbloom tarafından" (Özgüven, 2002, p.559-576). Vivian Darkbloom is an anagram of Vladimir Nabokov; this fact is not clarified or otherwise explained in the target text.[8]

The *Notes*, mainly, include translations of numerous Russian, French, German, and other words and sentences, scattered all over the text. In addition to this, the *Notes* also explain certain allusions to Dickens, Rimbaud, Proust, Tolstoy, Lermontov, and other authors. It contains three annotations, related to examples 2, 5, and 7, given in Examples.

Furthermore, the book includes a foreword by Orhan Pamuk. Named *Mercilessness, beauty, time* (*Acımasızlık, güzellik, zaman)* the foreword contemplates the place and role of Nabokov's texts in Pamuk's life, expounds on the merits of Nabokov's prose, and briefly comments on the intertextual nature of *Ada*. These comments are quite short and sporadic, Pamuk calls Nabokov "a father of a postmodern trick" or mentions his "literary games and allusions" (Pamuk in Özgüven, 2002, p.15, 16), but does not offer a detailed examination or explanation of *Ada*'s intertextuality. Finally, the target text does not contain any footnotes or endnotes.

Based on the data, *Ada* contains two allusions to *The Cherry Orchard*, two allusions to *The Seagull*, three allusions to *Uncle Vanya*, three allusions to Chekhov's biography, and ten allusions to *Three Sisters*. As already mentioned above, only three of these are annotated in *Notes* by the author himself. The translator (or the editor, or some other participant of the translation process) does not provide the additional annotation in any format. In other words, all questions, posed in the Introduction chapter, should be answered negatively. The target text is not presented as an annotated translation in paratexts, the intertextual nature of the novel is not specifically explained, and neither is the general translation strategy. The intertextual references are not clarified in any way, yet they should not be expected to be. Similarly, Özgüven leaves numerous words and sentences in Russian, German, Italian, and French untranslated. It seems like a consistent, deliberate, and reasonable strategy since one remark would inevitably lead to a long list of them. Furthermore, most of these words are already translated in the *Notes by Vivian Darkbloom*. On the other hand, the *Notes* annotate only three allusions to Chekhov, out of twenty. On a textual level, the translation does not include any techniques to make Chekhov's references in Nabokov's text more explicit.

CONCLUSION

This translational strategy is in line with the concept of an ideal reader of Nabokov himself. The author repeatedly underlines the importance of "intelligent reading" (Nabokov, 1981, p.7), when a reader is, to a certain degree, a co-creator of a literary work and a vigilant explorer of the hidden subtexts. In his epigraph to *Lectures on Western Literature* (1980) Nabokov describes his course as a "…a kind of detective investigation of the mystery of literary structures". Indeed, the passion for the deciphering of Nabokov's works metamorphosed into the International Vladimir Nabokov Society, also known as *The Nabokovian*, and its branch ADAonline, a website of annotations, fore notes and afternotes for "Vladimir Nabokov's longest and richest novel."[9]

[8] Vivian Darkbloom is also one of the characters in *Lolita*. (Boyd, 1991: 221)

[9] ADAonline, The Introduction.URL: http://www.ada.auckland.ac.nz/ (Last accessed: 28.05.2021)

In his chapter "Russian Writers, Censors, and Readers" (1981, p.7) Nabokov gives a detailed definition of an admirable reader:

> The good, the admirable reader identifies himself not with the boy or the girl in the book, but with the mind that conceived and composed that book. […] The admirable reader is not concerned with general ideas: he is interested in the particular vision. […] he likes the novel because he imbibes and understands every detail of the text, enjoys what the author meant to be enjoyed, beams inwardly and all over, is thrilled by the magic imageries of the master-forger, the fancy-forger, the conjuror, the artist. Indeed, of all the characters that a great artist creates, his readers are the best.

According to the author's intention, his ideal reader would rather enjoy a laborious process of literary investigation, than have ready answers in a booklet of annotations. Viewed from this standpoint, the target text complies with Nabokov's purpose. Boyd mentions that Nabokov prepared the "*Notes to Ada* by Vivian Darkbloom" at his friend and German publisher Ledig Rowohlt's request. Rowohlt was concerned that *Ada*'s ambiguity would make it extremely difficult to translate. Nabokov prepared the *Notes* quite reluctantly, and acted "..as if he wanted to avoid making them […] an accidentally integral but distracting component of the received text itself." (Boyd, 1991: 569, 571). To summarize, the author's annotations to *Ada* were not an organic part of the novel initially. They are to a certain degree a concession, a result of a compromise between Nabokov and his publisher. This fact supports the assumption that *Ada*, according to the author's intention, was not supposed to be annotated.

On the other hand, in his days of lecturing at Cornell, Nabokov himself provided his students with the most precise details, considering it the key point to a full comprehension of a literary work: "In my academic days, I endeavored to provide students of literature with exact information about details, about such combinations of details as yield the sensual spark without which a book is dead." (Nabokov, 1981, p.7) Another fact to be mindful of: one of the most unusual annotated translations of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* belongs to Vladimir Nabokov. The translation contains over one thousand pages, while the source text is approximately a hundred pages long.

Priscilla Meyer (1994: 327) notes that although the inclination of Nabokovians to annotate is sometimes found upsetting by other scholars, annotation is an important practice of literary criticism and a constructive alternative to hermetic reading. Proffer (1974: 250) observes that certain allusions are too complex even for an 'admirable' reader to grasp and claims that "…*Ada* cannot be read intelligently if the clusters of allusions to works by Lermontov, Tolstoy, Pushkin, and Chekhov remain beyond the consciousness of the reader." Meyer (1994: 331), commenting on detailed and comprehensive *Guide to Pnin* by Barabtarlo, points out that "The study of Nabokov's novels, especially *Ada*, would profit from a great deal more of this kind of work, preferably by scholars as multilingual and attuned to Nabokov as Barabtarlo is."

This utmost appreciation of detail characterizes Nabokov, both as a lecturer and as a writer. The textual examples given above especially examples 5 and 7, split the surface of *Ada, Or Ardor* and reveal the depth of intertextual and subtextual reminiscences. Examples 10, 15, and 19 interweave Chekhov's biography with Ada and Van's life story. Example 8 makes Chekhov's letters a part of Nabokov's narrative. After all, there can be more than one way to appreciate and

explore this new type of literary construction, unique artifact of contemporary writing. Özgüven's work appeals to those readers who would appreciate the excitement of an autonomous literary investigation. An annotated translation would address those who welcome the slow reading process of several parallel texts, not missing the smallest detail. In conclusion, the Turkish translations of annotated versions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* (2020) and *Sherlock Holmes* (2013) have been released in recent years. In the light of all these facts, one may conclude that the time has come for annotated translation of *Ada*, as well, or even a series of annotated translations, addressing an interested segment of the reading audience.

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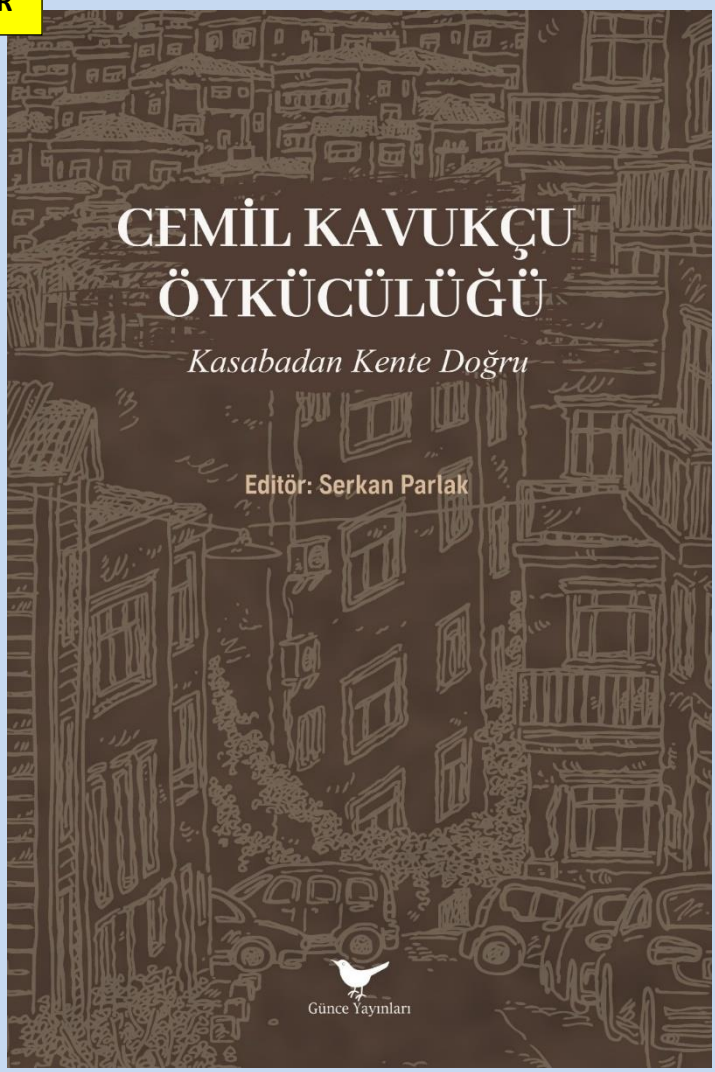
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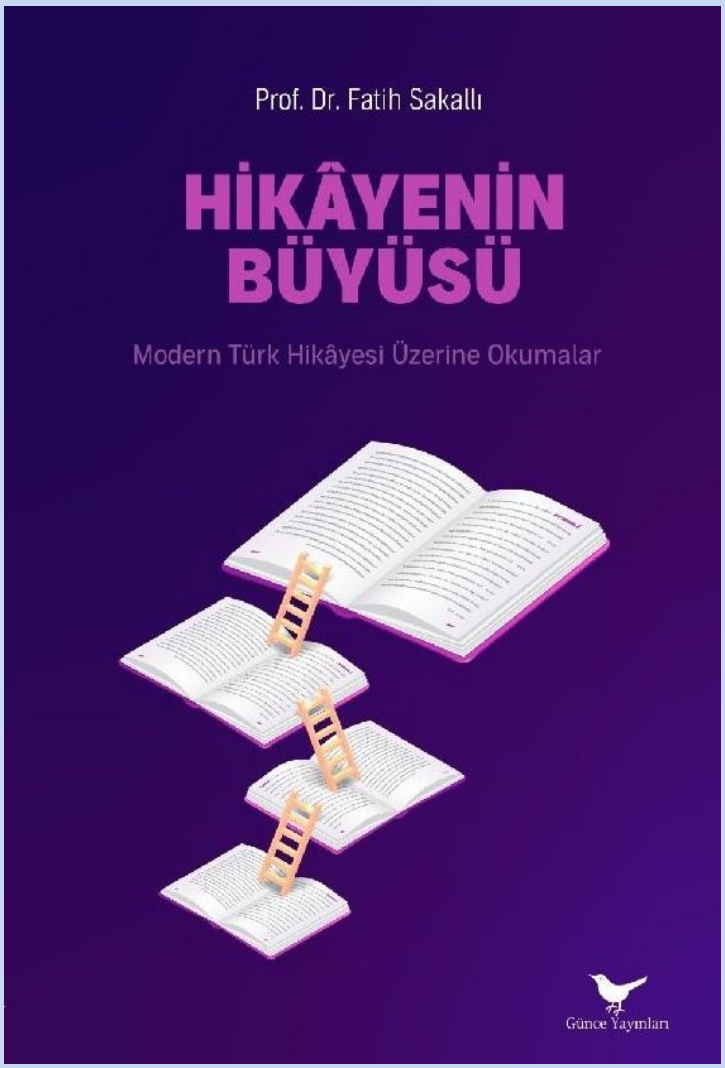
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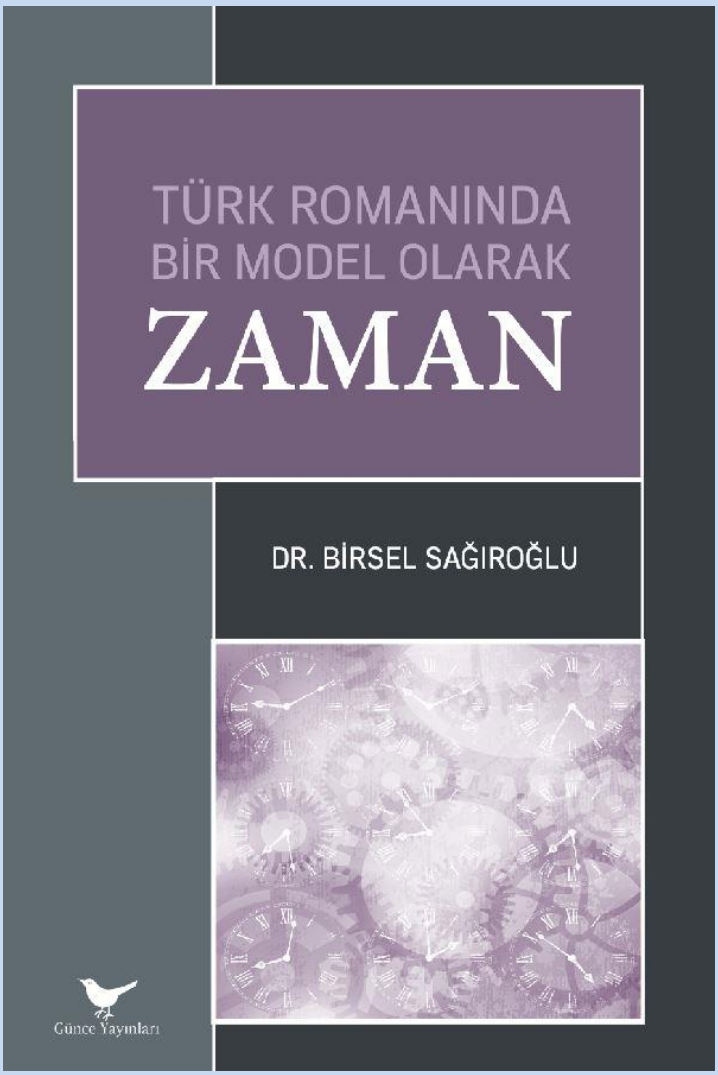
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