**Hybridity and (re)contextuality as a conceptual tool in Selma Ekrem’s *Unveiled* and its Turkish translation**

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**Abstract:** This study aims to identify and compare the signs of hybridity in immigration literature produced by a Turkish woman writer and its Turkish translation by delving into both texts as translation products. To this end, a comparative and critical approach is adopted to discover how textual and agential hybridity affects the translational aspects of both texts, which are (re)contextualized in the relevant culture. The main discussion evolves around whether the difference and/or hybridity is retained or neutralized in the texts and the mechanisms behind their (trans)formations. The corpus of this study is composed of two autobiographies: *Unveiled* (1930), written by Selma Ekrem in English, and its Turkish translation *Peçeye İsyan: Namık Kemal’in Torununun Anıları* [Rebellion against the Veil: Memoirs of Namık Kemal’s Granddaughter] (1998), translated by Gül Çağalı Güven. The study consists of four sections. The first section provides a literature review on the concepts of hybridity and (re)contextuality from a translational point of view. The second section elaborates critically on the concept of hybridity and proposes the stratification of hybridity into agential and textual levels. Agential hybridity lays the groundwork for an explanatory framework, which contributes to rationalizing the translation behaviors in both texts. The third section dwells on (re)contextualization as a conceptual tool for shaping the (trans)formation and reception of English writing in translation and Turkish translation. The fourth and last section concludes by providing some insights on interrelationship(s) between hybridity, (re)contextuality and their repercussions for the concept of translation by focusing on Selma Ekrem, a Turkish woman and migrant in the 20th-century US, and her autobiographical works in English and Turkish as a case study through the lens of translation studies. It is revealed that writing in translation might be used as both an escape from one’s “former home” and a gateway to resistance against Orientalist thinking, as well as a means of meeting the expectations of the same Orientalist thinking, which makes writing in translation a locus of tension. Drawing on (re)contextualizing practices, it is unravelled that the “same” work might be presented as different narratives in different cultural contexts. Therefore, the notion of hybridity as a textual property oscillates between the different contextual environments, and translating the writing in translation opens up another dimension to be explored, with its special implications for the (trans)formation of the hybrid text in a given culture. Future research may focus on other women writer-translators writing in translation.

**Keywords:** textual hybridity, translation, agential hybridity, (re)context, identity, woman, writing in translation

**1. “Hybrid” and “contextual” perspective in translation studies**

The notions of hybridity and contextuality are implicitly and explicitly deployed in many studies informed by various paradigms of “cultural turn” (Bassnett 2007), “postcolonial turn” (Bassnett 2013), “power turn” (Tymoczko and Gentzler 2002), “sociological turn” (Simeoni 1998; Wolf and Fukari 2007) and “performative turn” (Wolf 2017) in translation studies. However, neither notion yet holds any particular position in the wide variety of methodological frameworks developed by the above-mentioned research lines. This paper attempts to operationalize these two notions specifically as a conceptual tool for analyzing the selected corpus.

The word hybrid is defined as something that is a mixture of two different things in the Cambridge Dictionary,1 which provides a superfluous definition in a restricted sense. It is used as an adjective to describe something of “mixed character”, which is further used to refer to the offspring of humans of different races, mostly in a pejorative sense. As a counter and fruitful argument to this essentialist thinking, the term hybridity is essentially developed by postcolonial theorists to describe cultural forms emerging from colonial encounters, which take place in an asymmetrical power relation (Spivak 1993; Bhabha 1994; Young 1995).2 The term is incrementally employed by scholars in a wide range of fields such as migration, transnationalism, globalization and translation.

The perspective of translation studies on the concept of hybridity is mainly based on the textual properties of the translation product. A workshop at the EST Congress, held in 1995, titled Translation as Intercultural Communication – Contact as Conflict, centers on the idea of the hybrid text in translation. Drawing on the discussions, Schäffner and Adab (2001, 3) provide an encompassing definition of the hybrid text as follows:

A hybrid text is a text that results from a translation process. It shows features that somehow seem 'out of place'/'strange'/'unusual' for the receiving culture, i.e., the target culture. These features, however, are not the result of a lack of translational competence or examples of 'translationese', but they are evidence of conscious and deliberate decisions by the translator. Although the text is not yet fully established in the target culture (because it does not conform to established norms and conventions), a hybrid text is accepted in its target culture because it fulfills its intended purpose in the communicative situation (at least for a certain time).

The main assumption here is that hybridity arises from the encounters of different cultures and/or languages, which are dealt with from the perspective of the target culture. Another significant point in this definition is to locate the hybrid text in a positive and productive context, which is in contrast to the dominant approach to the idea of the hybrid text within translation studies. Schäffner and Adab (2001, 11) conclude by reviewing the contributions and approaches of all authors participating in the workshop to the notion of the hybrid text:

There is a recognition of the hybrid text as a means of identifying conflict between differing values and ideas, through the transmission of the unfamiliar within a framework of the familiar, ensuring accessibility and maybe, eventually, acceptance.

This view of the hybrid text refers to conflict and then—maybe—acceptance, which implies a cross-fertilization process at the end of the conflict between diverse values and ideas. More importantly, its presuppositions are based on the dichotomy of target and source text, culture and language. However, transgressing the borders of the strict dichotomy embodied in the source and target poles requires an enlargement of the conceptual discussions to enable them to tackle “other” forms of writing such as translation, which is less discussed in translation studies. As such, migration literature, which is broadly defined as all literary works written in an age of migration (Frank 2008), opens new avenues for the notion of hybridity to be rigorously explored in translation studies.

Migration literature produced by the “others”3 in the English language has received some scholarly attention from various scientific perspectives within translation studies (for postcolonial translation studies, see Tymoczko 1999, Bassnett and Trivedi 1999, St-Pierre 2000, Crăciun 2019; for studies on bilinguality, see Chan 2002; for studies on textless and/or rootless back-translation, see Guo 2017, Chen and Li 2018). Especially in recent years, literary works written in an acquired language have been a productive area of inquiry for hybridity and its various forms. The main discussion themes mostly evolve around self-translation (Akbatur 2010; Cordingley 2013; Evangelista 2013; Wanner 2017; Castro, Mainer and Page 2017; Takahashi 2019, 2020; de la Puente 2014), traveling (Bassnett 2004; Cronin 2010), migration (Polezzi 2012; Pas 2013) and multilingualism (Ramakrishna 1997; Martín Ruano 2003). Among these studies, the research papers of Pas and Martín Ruano are noteworthy in that the notion of hybridity is deeply scrutinized, with the translation of textual hybridity in the form of linguistic plurality. These studies reveal that translating hybrid literary works in a given language and culture hints at two directions at work regarding the translated product: “one in which translation seems to be at the service of a “national” literature and another which explores the possibilities of translation as an openly multicultural and multilingual space” (Martín Ruano 2003, 191). As such, the notion of hybridity and its repercussions for the concept of translation as product, process and practice must be clearly defined in order to draw a framework for the analysis.

Translation has recently served as a metaphor to describe the experience of displaced, hyphenated subjectivities, of “restless hybrids” (Papastergiadis 1995), who become perpetual translators in our reading of a multilingual world (Mehrez 1992, 122-137). In the cases where cultures and languages create a complex interwoven network, “translation emerges as the mental process of becoming aware of cultural differences, and thus as a *locus* of resistance against the prevailing tendency towards homogenizing and neutralizing diversity into standardized codes” (Martín Ruano 2003, 193). However, it has to be underlined that translation as a *locus* and practice of resistance is destabilized by the fact that translation is a *locus* and practice of meeting the expectations of a definite world view, which is supposed to be resisted in order to avoid the pitfalls of a single perspective on the concept of translation. Therefore, it may well turn into a *locus* of tension, which experiences shifting balances on a slippery slope.

Before designating the concept of translation in this paper, it needs to be noted that, informed by George Steiner and Paul Ricoeur’s insights into the notion of translation,4 Evangelista (2013) contends that writing in an acquired language would be a process of both specific and generic translation, a translation process where the writer translates both language and self. Drawing on these insights into the concept of translation, in this article, I use the term to designate the translation process occurring on two levels: (i) when a bilingual and/or multilingual writer chooses to write in a second and/or acquired language, translation thereby forming an integral part of the “original” creative writing process; (ii) when this literary work is brought home to the so-called “target language and culture”, translation thereby forming the whole process between two languages.

After designating the concept of translation, this paper proposes that the concept of hybridity is supplemented by the concept of (re)contextualization rather than imputing to it a historicized principle of resistance and/or acceptance. The concept of hybridity and its repercussions for the case study are critically discussed in a framework drawn with the insights offered by the concept of (re)contextualization in this study.

Lastly, the genre of autobiography holds a special place within the growing body of literary works written in a second language, due to narrative, identity, gender and (a)symmetrical power structures between languages. It represents a blurry space intersecting fiction and non-fiction, in that it might provide conflicting and/or parallel narratives of real-life situations because of the temporal distance between past experiences and the author-translator’s writing them down, and because of the author-translator’s intended and/or unintended deviations from their real-life experiences. In addition to these factors, the author-translator’s identity and gender interact with the making of the narrative in a second language, which foregrounds (im)balances between the languages of the author-translator. Being a non-Western woman and/or representing a portrait of an Eastern woman imposed by an Orientalist Western thinking creates discrepancies between real-life experiences, fictive and/or non-fictive narration of these experiences and usage of an acquired language.

Autobiographies written in an acquired language by Turkish5 writer-translators have gained currency among scholars from different disciplines, such as English language and literature, comparative literature and American studies (Cebeci 2004; Ezer 2010; Wallinger 2016). However, they have recently become an object of study from a translational perspective, and the number of studies is limited. Among these writers, Halide Edib Adıvar6 stands out as a woman writer and self-translator. Studies on her autobiographies tackle the (re)construction of English and Turkish texts, her translation decisions, and the portrayal of various subjectivities of Halide Edib as writer/self-translator in different languages through the lens of ethnomethodological concepts (Bilir Ataseven and Araboğlu 2015). Other studies focus on self-censorship mechanisms in Edib’s *Turkish Ordeal* and its Turkish translation, along with the role the social, cultural and ideological atmosphere in Turkey played in its creation (Külünk 2017), with a special emphasis on its profound relationship with national history, authorial identity and language (Özdemir 2017).

This study delves into the works of Selma Ekrem—a marginal figure, in contrast to the popularity of Halide Edib—her autobiography (1930), written in an acquired language during her self-exile in the US; and its Turkish translation (1998), which appeared more than half a century after its English edition.

**2. Stratification of hybridity on two levels: agents and texts**

In this study, I suggest tentatively that hybridity as a conceptual tool might be operationalized in two intertwining dimensions of text production: (i) *agential hybridity*, referring to the multiple and intersecting identities of agent(s) as an integral part of creative writing/translating processes; and (ii) *textual hybridity*, referring to hybrid stylistic aspects of texts written in translation and translated into Turkish.

**2.1. Agential hybridity in *Unveiled* and its Turkish translation**

Agential hybridity refers to multiple identities of agent(s) having a role during the production, selection and publication process of a literary work. In this study, four agents’ sociocultural trajectories are thoroughly discussed as an integral part of the agential hybridity shaping the (trans)formation of the narrative in the relevant cultures.

Selma Ekrem (1902–1986), one of three agents in this paper, was born to a Westernized and Muslim upper-class family that witnessed the transition from the Empire to the Turkish Republic. Her paternal grandfather was Namık Kemal (1840-1888), a famous Young Ottoman and literary figure, whose liberal ideas had inspired generations of Ottomans and later Turkish nationalists; her father was Ali Ekrem (1867-1937), an important literary figure. As a child, she was mostly educated at home by older relatives and a French governess. She briefly studied the Koran with a hodja and Turkish with a male teacher. Ekrem later went to the American College for Girls in Istanbul.

In Ekrem’s family, with its bureaucratic and literary credentials, education was considered important for both boys and girls. Therefore, Ekrem was raised in a multicultural environment of freedom and domestic equality with boys, while facing the pressures that late Ottoman society placed on girls and women. She had a good command of several languages: French, English, Arabic and Greek, as well as Ottoman-Turkish. In her extended family, there were both Westernized and quite traditional figures such as an Ottoman-Turkish nurse, a French governess, Greek maids, and an Armenian nurse and retainer, whom she respected and loved equally. In the outside world, however, as she grew up, Ekrem faced public harassment from both male and female passers-by for not wearing the loose black gown called the charshaf. The issue became an existential matter for Ekrem, and she took a vow not to wear the charshaf or the veil. Upon her ensuing realization of the merits of modernity, around 1923, she went to the US on a quest for a new life of freedom. She made a living there giving lectures about Turkey to US audiences and writing regularly for newspapers and journals, such as the Christian Science Monitor, until the 1970s (Goffman 2005, v). It is noted that there was a marked demand for hearing about the Ottoman period and the new Turkey from a “Turkish” woman during the 1930s in the US (Ekrem 1959). Against this background, Ekrem’s books were published one after another: *Unveiled* (1930), *Turkey, Old and New* (1947) and *Turkish Fairy Tales* (1964), which is a children’s book.

Her ideological stance combines an Ottomanism (Ottoman patriotism) mostly inherited from her family’s bureaucratic and military position7 with a modernizing and liberal attitude critical of the Hamidian absolutist regime and later Turkish nationalism8 (Köksal 2016, 251). Although she tried to disrupt the Orientalist conventions about Eastern women, there were times when she could not escape acting in accordance with Orientalist stereotypes (see Ekrem wearing Oriental dress and welcomed as an Oriental Guest by the Rocford Woman’s Club in 1933; Wallinger 2016). Pultar (2005, 317) argues that she “needed to Orientalize herself, as she was required, in order to get published, to be worth the ‘spectacle’”. In addition to trying to break the confines of the Orientalist bias towards the East, she engaged in Ottoman Orientalism in *Unveiled* (Ezer 2010) by presenting Ottoman urban centers and her ethnic background as superior to the rural areas and the “Ottoman Other”.

Discussion of agential hybridity in *Peçeye İsyan* [Rebellion against the Veil], the Turkish translation of *Unveiled,* needs to be focused on the publishing house, its owner and director, and the translator as a driving force behind the translation product, since each agent plays a significant role in (re)shaping the narrative of Turkish translation.9 The first agent is the publishing house and its owner and director. The Turkish translation was published by *Anahtar Kitaplar* in 1998 and reprinted in the same year. In an interview, Mehmet Atay (1946-), owner and director of the publishing house, states (2018) that he established *Anahtar Kitaplar* in order to create a large and varied selection of books on history, media, ecology, psychology, strategy and wisdom, which had not been published in Turkish before, in 1993. Considering the limited and diverse portfolio of the publishing house, it may well be pointed out that it functions as a boutique publishing house in terms of low publication and sales figures.10 When reviewing its publication portfolio, one can clearly see that *Peçeye İsyan* stands out as a singular example both in the memoir series and in the field of history among the books published by *Anahtar Kitaplar*. Moreover, the (re)transformation of Turkish translation is subtly determined by the publisher’s singular subjectivity. For that reason, Atay’s subjectivities need to be taken into consideration to support the explanatory framework of this study, which is presented in the following sections. Atay clearly defines himself as a leftist with anti-imperial and Kemalist values, who was highly active in 1968’s student protests, which were indeed preceded by other organized protests by students and workers in Turkey.11 He adds that the ’68 generation in Turkey was “a product of republican ideology”,12 by which he implies Kemalist cultural reforms in a broader sense. Even if he no longer seeks active opposition opportunities in 1990s and 2000s Turkey, he retains his critical attitude towards Turkish politics, which is reflected through the selection and presentation of books for publication. The last agent directly involved in the compositional process of the Turkish translation is Gül Çağalı Güven, who is a competent translator holding a master’s degree in the field of history on the late Ottoman period.13 With over 80 translations, some of which are no longer available on the book market, she has mostly translated historical books, both in the academic and in the popular sense. Her expertise and experience in the field of history are traceable in her translation behaviors, which are disclosed in the textual analysis in the following section.

**2.2. Comparative textual hybridity in *Unveiled* (1930) and its Turkish translation *Peçeye İsyan* [Rebellion against the Veil] (1998)**

Against this backdrop, when we think of the hybrid text as translation, *Unveiled* can hardly be ascribed to a particular culture because of the plurality of cultural codes and languages embedded in the text. Rather, it is deterritorialized, as it emerged from the borderland, which lies amidst various cultures but belongs to none of them.

In this context, the English and Turkish translation offer a great variety of forms of textual hybridity, which sometimes overlap each other and differentiate themselves from one another. A diachronic and dialogic approach is adopted to discuss the examples of textual hybridity, in that discussions on textual hybridity in *Unveiled* and *Peçeye İsyan* are separately conducted by referring to the cultural trajectory of each textual unit and to the translation strategies at work. This section ends with the comparison of textual hybridity in both texts.

**2.2.1. Textual hybridity in *Unveiled***

*Unveiled*, which is written by Ekrem to narrate her own personal history, is heavily laden with multicultural and multilingual codes. To deal with this plurality in a subtle manner, textual hybridity is categorized into four groups, which represent culture-specific factors, respectively cultural expressions and elements, proper nouns, forms of address, and idioms.

**2.2.1.1. Cultural expressions and elements**

The concept of culture pertaining to the task of translation is elaborately discussed in translation studies, and various classifications and taxonomies for cultural units have been offered by translation scholars (Newmark 1988; Baker 1992). It is noteworthy that different terms are employed by scholars to denominate this concept, such as culture-specific items, cultural words and culture-bound concepts. Each term is so widely encompassing that one can hardly provide a clear-cut definition of the concept. Even though Peter Newmark (1988) proposes five categories of cultural words—ecology; material culture; social culture; organizations, customs and ideas; and gestures and habits—he eschews defining the concept of cultural words. Aixelà (1996) states that culture-specific items depend on the context of the source text and the target text. Due to this subjective character of cultural aspects, in this paper, cultural items are defined by adopting the principle of being unknown in the target culture (Baker 1992). Depending on the corpus, the term “cultural expressions” refers to traditional sayings of indigenous people that are totally unknown in the target—here the US—culture, whereas cultural elements specify goods and objects such as traditional food, clothes etc. In *Unveiled*, one can observe many instances of cultural expressions and elements, but here a small selection of them are tackled with their hybrid features.

The first example displays Turkish and English items within the same sentence. There is no explanation regarding the Turkish word *vallahi,* which is an oath that originates from Arabic.

Example 1 (E-1): “**Vallahi**! You were going to have tea without me” (p. 3)

Other Turkish sayings (in bold) below (E-2, E-3 and E-4) are explicitated with their English translations, which convey the semantic meaning of Turkish cultural expressions. However, it must be noted that the word *Allah* is retained. In E-4, there is a slight orthographic change for the word “alayim”, which is written as *alayım* in Turkish.

E-2: “**Bereket virsin**. Let **Allah** grant plenty.” (p. 26)

E-3: “**Adam sende**, what do I care…” (p. 30)

E-4: “**Eskiler alayim**, let me buy the things that are old” (p. 33)

E-5: “**Taze simit**, **kitir simit**, **haniya aksham simiti**—fresh simits, brittle simits, where are the evening simits?” My mouth watered at the thought of these favorite pastries, a sort of Turkish pretzel, covered with sesame seeds” (p. 5)

A conspicuous textual example (E-5) in *Unveiled*, embodying cultural elements, shows that Turkish cultural elements (in bold) are initially kept as they are and then explained in translation. The hyphenated sentence (fresh simits, brittle simits…) is the semantic equivalent of the first sentence, but it is noteworthy that the Turkish word *simit* is kept intact. In the following sentence, the word *simit* is explicitated by depicting the physical features and contents of the snack. The example displays how Turkish and English expressions are juxtaposed within the same sentence structure.

As can be seen in the textual examples, Ekrem was prone to retaining Turkish cultural expressions and elements as they were by using various translation strategies, explicitation and transliteration, which means adjusting Turkish words to conform to English orthography with slight changes for the intended audience in the US. These textual examples can be considered as a significant marker of the intrusive language retaining certain expressions and elements symbolically, and of the coexistence of various cultural codes in *Unveiled*.

**2.2.1.2. Proper nouns**

The second category of textual hybridity in *Unveiled* is proper nouns, which include personal and place names, and have a multicultural dimension. The examples are as follows: (E-6) “Ferhounde” (p. 41) for a Turkish personal name *Ferhunde*, (E-7) “Isaac” (p. 6) for an Armenian retainer called *İshak*, (E-8) “Kalnick Doudou (my nurse’s name)” (p. 41) for an Armenian nurse called *Kalnick Dudu*, with a brief explanation inserted within the brackets, (E-9) “Beraet” (p. 51) for the Turkish personal name *Beraat*, (E-10) “Tchataldja” (p. 37) for the Turkish rural district *Çatalca*, (E-11) “Constantinople” (p. 37) for the Turkish city name *İstanbul* and (E-12) “Holy Sepulchre” (p. 41) for the place both of the crucifixion and of the tomb of Jesus of Nazareth in Jerusalem.

In the examples E-6, E-9 and E-10, three personal names and one place name are transliterated to conform to the phonic or graphic rules of English. In E-8, a similar translation strategy is applied, with a minor addition providing brief information about the Armenian personal name. In E-7, the name of the Armenian retainer is stated as Isaac, which has theological implications for Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The name Isaac is used in religious texts of Judaism and Christianity, while the name Ishaq14 appears in Islamic texts. It needs to be underlined that Ekrem directly preferred to use the English counterpart of the personal name in question. A similar attitude is observed in E-11 and E-12, which portrays a Western point of view via adopting Western naming practices for the place names in question.

E-13: “**The Seraglio point** was a glimmer of windows, all those old palaces watched us mutely. Back of them stood **Santa Sophia**, like a ship at anchor, and farther back the graceful lines of **Sultan Ahmed** with its slender minarets […] On top of a hill stretched **Yildiz, the palace of Abdul Hamid**”(p. 49).

Lastly, E-13 displays various proper nouns that cannot be limited to a particular cultural circle. On the one hand, Ekrem used the Latin word Santa Sophia for Hagia Sophia and the English word Seraglio point for Turkish place name *Sarayburnu*; on the other, she retained the Turkish names *Sultan Ahmed* for the mosque and *Yildiz,*15 with a brief explanation, for the palace, both of which represent a significant area of Ottoman culture, It is observed that inconsistency pervades Ekrem’s translation strategies for proper nouns, and various translation strategies (transliteration, retaining Turkish proper names, replacing Turkish proper names with English counterparts etc.) are utilized by the author-translator.

**2.2.1.3. Forms of address**

The third category of textual hybridity in *Unveiled* is forms of address, which signify veneration, kinship and/or (un)official position within a society. Some textual examples listed below offers a variety of forms of address in *Unveiled*.

E-14: “‘Mehmed **aga**’, mother calls out to the coachman…” (p. 3)

E-15: “**Djanim effendim**, lady of my life, you are…” (p. 7)

E-16: “Do tell me a fairy tale, my little dear **dadi**…” (p. 26)

E-17: “I don’t want **Mademoiselle Lucy**, I want you” (p. 26)

E-18: “**Hanimdjim**, Allah grant you long life” (p. 29)

E-19: “We children called him ‘**Enishte bey**’, brother-in-law mister, which phrase we had picked up from my father” (p. 35)

E-20: “(…) he had not yet paid his respects to the **grand vezir**…” (p. 43)

E-15 and E-18 display the honorifics in bold, a form of address indicating respect and kindness, in Turkish; they are transliterated to conform to the orthographic rules of English. In a similar vein, E-14, E-16 and E-19 show that Turkish titles *ağa,* an honorific title for a person of high social position in the Ottoman Empire*,* *dadı,* a title for a nurse who is paid for her labour, and *bey*, an honorific title conferring respect on a person,are retained in translation, with slight changes such as replacing Turkish letters *–ğ* and *–ı* with –g and –i. E-19 also includes a kinship title, the Turkish word *enişte*, referring to male spouses of one’s aunts, which is transliterated in line with the phonic rules of English and then supplied with extra information—“brother-in-law mister”—carrying the semantic meaning of the former title combination. E-17 displays a courtesy title used for the French governess of Ekrem. The fact that this term is seemingly natural and English does not hinder us from taking into consideration the multicultural environment in which Ekrem was embedded, which witnesses some cultural intersections. As a conspicuous example of this cultural intersection, in E-20 Ekrem combines the Turkish word *vezir* (vizier in English) with the English word “grand”, which produces hybridity on the word level. In parallel to translation strategies in previous categories, it is clear that inconsistency prevails in Ekrem’s translation strategies for titles and that textual hybridity is sustained on the word level.

**2.2.1.4. Idioms**

The last category of textual hybridity in *Unveiled* is idioms, which refers to phrases with a figurative and non-literal meaning in a given language and culture.

E-21: “**You bring food through our noses**” (p. 28)

E-22: “Don’t answer, **you have a tongue as long as shoe**” (p. 29)

E-23: “Mlle. Lucy, who knew the monastery as she **knew the inside of her own pocket**, said…” (p. 96)

The excerpts demonstrate that the transformative nature of translation resulted in further textual hybridity in *Unveiled*. In E-21, E-22 and E-23, Turkish idioms (in bold) are literally translated into English no matter what figurative meaning they include. The idiomatic phrases are seemingly English but radically métisse—(un)familiarly hybrid. This kind of hybridity becomes apparent through an interlanguage resulting from the filtering of one language with another. It might be contended that these expressions are invented out of a need to voice the author/translator’s hybrid identity by expressing herself on her own creative and/or translative terms.

**2.2.1.5. Discussion on textual hybridity in *Unveiled***

Within the four categories of textual hybridity in *Unveiled*, one can easily observe many instances composed of various cultural codes and elements, which reflect the multicultural environment of Ekrem. Ekrem’s writing is accepted as an English text by the US audience, but it is written in a hybrid translated language, which requires Ekrem to render her thoughts, experiences and self in a second language by positioning herself with competing identities and ideologies through the lens of a dominant language. The transformative role of the second-language usage rightly produces a great deal of hybridity on grammatical, word and cultural levels in translation. The translation includes many familiar elements in Christian culture and elements known by the English-speaking world, because of Ekrem’s multicultural surroundings and her (forced) travels in Ottoman lands. Additionally, it embodies a great variety of foreign elements that can be attributed to various (intersecting) cultures, such as Armenian, Greek, French and Ottoman-Turkish, which might create a distance between the English text and the audience.

Ekrem’s hybridity on the textual level might pose uncertainty: is it conscious resistance? Is it just a lack of language competence, or is it a strategy for the American publisher and editor to portray a specific image of an Ottoman-Turkish woman to the English-speaking world? Given Ekrem’s identity as hybrid subject, her educational background, her forced migration and the poetics of her writing in translation, which is a mixture of Turkish elements with English, it might be considered as a purposeful act. Moreover, it might be traced through her writings that she combined Ottomanism and later Turkish nationalism during her lifetime. Even though she made her living through her writings telling stories about modern Turkey and the Ottoman period, it is clearly observable that there is a balance between her economic conditions, which might impose some preconceptions on Ekrem and her writings, and her nostalgic yearning for her homeland, as well as a tension that becomes concrete in *Unveiled* in the form of intrusive language use motivated by her nationalist views. The coexistence of various cultural codes and expressions, which break the normative rules of English, implies a resistance against Western monolingual, monocultural and/or standardizing programs as well as a means for the voice of a hybrid subject to be heard during the 1930s in the US.

Ekrem’s writing in translation portrays diverse translation strategies, some of which are conflicting and inconsistent in a way that makes it hard to generalize about the author/translator’s behaviors. One aspect is certain: that Ekrem utilized transliteration, explicitation, addition and literal translation in making her hybrid text.

**2.2.2. Textual hybridity in Turkish translation titled *Peçeye İsyan* [Rebellion against the Veil] (1998)**

The issue of translating writing in translation—so-called hybrid texts—poses some challenges for translators. However, in this case, cultural and linguistic elements in *Unveiled* are brought back to a relatively familiar environment in the Turkish translation, titled *Rebellion against the Veil*. Before tackling the translation of the textual hybridity in *Unveiled* into Turkish, it is necessary to dwell on the textual hybridity in the Turkish translation per se.

The textual hybridity in the Turkish translation arises both from the multicultural and multilingual environment of the Ottoman Empire and from the historical and ideological distance between the Empire and modern Turkey. To exemplify the reflection of the multicultural and multilingual surroundings of Ekrem in the Turkish translation, a few excerpts from the Turkish translation are as follows:

E-24: “*L’œil du maître engraisse le cheval*” (p. 119); E-25: “*Le Beau Djelal*” (p. 120); E-26: “*El Yahud*” (p. 92); E-27: “*Christos Anesti, İsa dirildi* [meaning ‘Christ is risen’]” (p. 93); and E-28: “*piyanola*” (p. 159)

E-24 and E-25 display French expressions directly used by Ekrem to transfer literally what her grandfather told her. Translator notes at the end of the page provide their literal meanings for the Turkish audience. E-26 is an example presenting the transliteration of the Arabic word *Al Yahud*, which refers to Jews. There is no explanation for this word, probably because this phrase is preceded by the word Jews within the context of the narrative. E-27 is a Greek expression for greeting each other on Easter Sunday, and as can be seen in the excerpt, this phrase is followed by its literal translation into Turkish. E-28 is another example of the transliteration of an English word (pianola) in the Turkish translation. It is briefly explained in the translator’s note at the end of the page.

Another aspect, in which the textual hybridity is traced throughout the Turkish translation, is temporal—namely historical and ideological—distance between the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey. This kind of distance is reflected through historic terms and concepts belonging to the Ottoman administrative system. Most of these terms, originating from Arabic and Persian, are no longer used in modern Turkish and, therefore, might create some degree of unfamiliarity for the Turkish audience. A group of selected examples of historic terms and concepts is as follows:

E-29: *Heyet-i vükelâ* (p. 51), referring to the cabinet; E-30: *nâzır* (p. 51), referring to a minister; E-31: *kâtip*, referring to a secretary; E-32: *mutasarrıf* (p. 62) referring to a governor; and E-33: *şehremini* (p. 55), referring to a mayor.

It is noted that translator Gül Çağalı Güven was meticulously sensitive about using historic terms and positions used in the Ottoman Empire by sticking to a specific terminology and kept the historicized aspect of the narrative intact via her language use.

**2.2.3. Comparative textual hybridity in *Unveiled* and *Peçeye İsyan***

The textual hybridity in *Unveiled* and in its Turkish translation is of an overlapping nature, in that both translations include a great number of cultural codes and expressions symbolizing Armenian, French, Greek, English, Arabic and Ottoman-Turkish culture. On a more general scale, it might admittedly be suggested that the Turkish translation does not include as many hybrid textual features as the English text, and this results from the fact that the English text is mostly laden with Ottoman-Turkish cultural codes.

As for translation strategies, the translated texts by Ekrem and Çağalı Güven reflect diverging attitudes to translation strategies, even if some of them seem similar. Ekrem interrupts her narrative by explaining mostly Muslim traditions and rituals (see Ramadan, Sacrifice Feast, etc.), and Ottoman-Turkish cultural codes (see Shadow Theatre) at great length. Additionally, it is observed that she is prone to retaining Turkish proper nouns and Turkish cultural expressions and items by transliterating and adding brief explanations within the narrative. It is striking that Ekrem preferred to translate Turkish idiomatic expressions literally into English, which probably makes little sense for the US audience. Conversely, when these elements are translated into Turkish, they are brought back to a familiar environment without requiring the special attention of the translator. When looking at the portrayal of French and Greek expressions in both translations, one can see different and similar attitudes towards them. Ekrem preferred to use French expressions directly, and the editor did not find it necessary to add any explanation or English translation of those French expressions. However, in the Turkish translation, the literal meaning of those French expressions is explained in the translator’s note. The Greek expression *Christos Anesti* is retained and followed by its literal meaning in the relevant language, which is dictated by the narrative.

A distinctive aspect of the textual hybridity in the Turkish translation is temporal distance, in that the narrative took place in the first half of the 20th century in Ottoman lands, and the Turkish translation was published in 1998. Regarding this issue, it is contended that Çağalı Güven paid meticulous attention to preserving the temporal distance by historicizing the terms and concepts in the Ottoman administrative system.

The general tendency in the translation behaviors of Ekrem and Çağalı Güven indicates that Ekrem mostly preferred transliteration, literal translation and addition in the form of explaning and describing cultural elements, whereas Çağalı Güven mostly added brief explanatory footnotes, which provide the literal meaning of the cultural expressions and elements in question. The stark difference between Ekrem’s translation strategies and Çağalı Güven’s translation strategies surfaces in their approach to French culture. While Ekrem, who grew up with a French governess and her familial culture’s strong ties with French culture (being educated in France and reading and speaking French), did not feel the need to explicate French expressions in English, Çağalı Güven found it necessary to add the literal meaning of French expressions in the Turkish translation.

**3. (Re)contextualizing *Unveiled* and *Peçeye İsyan*: “Same” work, “different” narratives**

(Re)contextualization of a literary work has a variety of implications for the transformation and reception of the literary work in question in each language and culture. The degree of transformation of a literary work shifts in line with the language and culture pair in which it is contextualized. In fact, there are numerous factors embedded in every language and culture pair, which determine the end product into which the literary work is transformed and the way(s) in which to transform the literary work. *Unveiled* and *Peçeye İsyan*, as a product of (re)contextualization in American culture and Turkish culture respectively, open a field of different possibilities of meaning that can be attributed to a singular work.

**3.1. *Unveiled* in the Orientalist discourse as an autobiography**

Tracing the ways in which *Unveiled* is (re)contextualized in the US culture requires delving into several sources, which have serious implications for how the literary work is presented and read by the US audience. These sources include paratextual elements (the title, the introduction note, visual materials, a brief note on the series, etc.), the publisher, the reviews and the agential hybridity reflected in the persona of Ekrem.

The full title of the literary work represents a specific image of Ekrem’s narrative, which situates her narrative in an Orientalist discourse. *Unveiled: The Autobiography of a Turkish Girl* demonstrates that a familiar symbol of Ottoman womanhood is made explicit by relating it to a Turkish girl’s life story, which clearly creates a homogenizing effect in the form of a single identity—Turkishness—on the American audience. Additionally, the full title implies that the concept of veiling is subtly degendered. Unveiling is attributed not only to Ottoman women’s private life but also to the restrictions on male activities, which form the Ottoman public and private life as a whole. However much the Western reader is versed in “Eastern world(s)” through anti-Orientalist photographs both on the cover and inside the book depicting Selma Ekrem as a young woman embracing the best of all her worlds—namely East and West, Turkish and American, Christian and Muslim, etc.—it is obvious that Ekrem was sometimes forced to fit into the Orientalist conceptions about “Eastern womanhood” in the US, as mentioned in the previous sections, and also participated in these Orientalist expectations at the same time. Therefore, Goffman (2004, xi) rightly remarks that “‘veiling’ is more than a sartorial or religious practice: it becomes part of the dynamic act of reading and writing across cultures”.

As an extension of the Orientalist thinking, some reviews on *Unveiled* are conspicuous regarding the curiosity of the US audience and Ekrem’s English use. Comparing Ekrem’s autobiography to Halide Edib’s autobiography in English, Edwards (1931, 520) notes that Ekrem’s autobiography is “less artistic, less well-written, less-selfconscious”; but “not less useful to an understanding of Turkish life” in his review titled *Turkish Life*. In *The* *Macon Telegraphy*, Harry S. Strozier (1931, 34) underlines that “the subject matter is novel and the style is unusual. Striking peculiarities of expression, due perhaps to the author’s thinking in the Turkish idiom through writing in English, give the book an especial force and charm”. Strozier implies that her English use contributes to a kind of exoticism with which the book is surrounded, but Edwards approaches the style of Ekrem from a two-sided perspective. While stating that “though the writing is loose and often faulty, it is surprisingly good from one who learned her English in Turkey”, he claims that “often a literal translation of a Turkish idiom gives quaint and lively emphasis to the narrative”.16 Edwards’ dual viewpoint, embedded in the Orientalizing rhetoric of the West, is unearthed when his implication about Ekrem’s English in a negative sense is transformed into a “positive” aspect of the narrative, which fulfills the Orientalist expectations from an Eastern woman.

*Unveiled* was reprinted four times after its initial publication in 1930,17 which testifies to Ekrem’s success and to public demand for the book. This study deals with the facsimile reprint of *Unveiled* by Gorgias Press in 2005, within the series titled *Cultures in Dialogue*; thus, Gorgias Press and its series are discussed in this paper. This series consists of a mix of memoir, travelogue, ethnography, and political commentary written by Ottoman, British and American women from the 1880s up to the 1940s. Thirteen literary works have been published in this series, which aims to trace the range of opinion found among Western and Ottoman women in this period and to investigate how their dialogue influenced and defined each other’s views (Heffernan and Lewis 2005, ii). Based on a dialogic perspective on numerous women writing/translating during the period in question, it seems that Ekrem’s autobiography is situated in a critically examined field, which is thought to be in reciprocal relationship with other women writers interested in and/or writing on the Ottoman life and the new Turkish Republic.

**3.2. *Peçeye İsyan* in a self-reflexive discourse as a memoir**

The Turkish translation of *Unveiled* was published in 1998, two decades after Ekrem’s death in 1986 and 68 years after its first appearance in English. Paratexts of the Turkish translation, including the title, the publisher’s foreword, notes and the family tree of Namık Kemal—Ekrem’s grandfather—provide significant clues for the way(s) Ekrem’s autobiography is (re)contextualized in Turkish language and culture.

The full title, *Peçeye İsyan: Namık Kemal’in Torununun Anıları*, [Rebellion against the Veil: Memoirs of Namık Kemal’s Granddaughter] makes the relation of Ekrem with the veil implicit and highlights Ekrem’s relative relationship with a specific reference to her renowned grandfather Namık Kemal. The phrase *Rebellion against the Veil* portrays Ekrem as a feminist woman rejecting the veil, which is a reminiscent symbol of the Ottoman Empire in the eye of the Republic of Turkey. On the other hand, the fact that the font size of the full title is bigger than that of the author implies figuratively “veiling” the authorial voice of the narrative. This could also be interpreted as a marketing strategy, since Selma Ekrem is a little-known figure among the Turkish audience. However, the publisher’s (re)contextualization of this autobiography strengthens the tendency to veil the authorial voice by foregrounding the historical period spanning from the 1900s to the 1920s with a special emphasis on Kemalist ideology and the Western reforms that the new Republic of Turkey underwent. In the foreword and on the back cover, Mehmet Atay, the owner of the publishing house, (1998, 9-12) focuses on a series of events chronologically paving the way for the founding of the Republic of Turkey. He presents Ekrem as a young woman who rebels against the social pressures during the late Ottoman period and “is troubled by Ottoman policemen and bigots instead of fighting against the enemies occupying Istanbul”.18 Not interested in Ekrem’s personal dilemmas and ideas, he creates a nationalist account to support the foundation and modernization process of the Turkish Republic by bypassing her agential hybridity. To this end, Atay emphasizes the oppressive administration and the social pressures on women, especially regarding their dress code (veil, charshaf etc), during the dissolution period of the Ottoman Empire by detaching Ekrem from her own subjectivities.19 In addition to the publisher’s foreword to the translation, other appendices (the family tree of Ekrem’s grandfather Namık Kemal and notes on historical persons and events) indicate a strong tendency to veil the authorial voice of Ekrem and to transform the narrative telling the life story of Ekrem into a “historical document” as a part of the grand narrative of the nationalist history in Turkey by shifting the focus to the depersonalized details during the historical period in question. This depersonalizing approach to the narrative is clearly uttered by Atay in defining the book as “the historical record, which is far from subjectivity” and as a “useful resource for younger generations”.20 This creates an illusion in the Turkish translation that Ekrem wrote *Unveiled* to record historical events and ascribes an educational function to the (personal) narrative. It is noteworthy that Atay frankly states21 that the publishers made some additions to the book, which the English edition did not include, but it is clear that these additions function as a supplementary tool to reinforce the historical background of the narrative.

Atay describes the long journey of *Unveiled*, beginning from 1969, when it was discovered by a Turkish couple temporarily residing in the US, and concluding in 1998 when the Turkish translation was published by *Anahtar Kitaplar* in Turkey.22 What drew the interest of Dr. Mualla Tosuner to *Unveiled* was Ekrem’s personal character as a feminist and confident woman rebelling against the traditional conventions imposed on women in the Ottoman Empire and searching for freedom at the far end of the world. After returning to Turkey in 1984, Dr. Mualla Tosuner and Dr. Berhan Tosuner tried to find a publisher to publish *Unveiled* in Turkey, but in Atay’s words, “no publisher was interested in the book”.23 It took twelve years for Dr. Mualla Tosuner to find a publisher to have *Unveiled* translated and published in Turkey. She met with Atay at Istanbul International Book Fair in 1996, and afterwards, within a short period, *Unveiled* was translated into Turkish and published in the series titled *Memoir*. As clearly seen, the motivations behind the publication of the Turkish translation and Ekrem’s writing in translation differ in line with the subjective aims and agendas of the agents before and during the publication process in the relevant culture, which results in the (re)transformation of the literary work in translation.

**4. Concluding remarks**

This paper proposes to operationalize the concept of hybridity on the agential and textual level and to complement the textual analysis with the insights gained from the perspective of (re)contextuality in a given culture. In a case study of Selma Ekrem’s autobiography *Unveiled* and its Turkish translation, the agential hybridity encompassing any persons or institutions before and during the publication, writing and translating process of the books in question is taken into consideration in order to provide an explanatory framework for the textual hybridity and translation strategies at work in both literary works.

Ekrem’s hybrid identity, grown out of her multicultural, multiethnic and multilingual environment, is reflected through various cultural codes such as Armenian, French, English, Arabic and Ottoman-Turkish in *Unveiled*. Her translation strategies for these cultural codes include transliteration, explicitation and literal translation. The only exception that Ekrem retains as it was without any explicitation or explanation is cultural expressions of French language and culture. This might be partly explained by the fact that Ekrem and her family had strong ties to French language and culture, and that French language and culture are a significant part of Western civilization just like the US. Ekrem’s constructed “Ottoman Turk in the US” identity gives her a role to play that meets America’s desire for the exotic “Other” in a “foreign” language, but she playfully subverts English by integrating “foreign” elements into English, in which the language is transcending the Orientalist binaries. The fact that Ekrem transliterates several cultural codes, especially proper nouns, and adds longer explanations implies her efforts to find a middle way between “being readable”—conforming to the phonic rules of English—and distortion of the normative formation of English—unconforming to the language conventions. The way the textual hybridity is (re)produced in the English text challenges the status of English as a hegemonic language by breaking established linguistic norms and creating a hub for features of interlinguality and intralinguality within the text. Although *Unveiled* is fraught with various cultural codes, and dominantly with Ottoman-Turkish ones, textual hybridity in its Turkish translation is limited to some Ottoman-Turkish cultural codes, and therefore it includes fewer elements of textual hybridity than the English literary work. As for translation strategies in the Turkish translation, Gül Çağalı Güven, an experienced translator, prefers to provide the literal translation, and a brief explanation of all cultural codes that she considers to be “foreign” and/or incomprehensible by the Turkish audience, in the footnotes. The few Ottoman-Turkish cultural codes pertaining to administration create some degree of textual hybridity in the Turkish translation because of the temporal and ideological distance between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. It is noted that Çağalı Güven meticulously adheres to historicizing the key terms used in the Ottoman adminisration. No matter how similar the patterns the translation behaviors of Ekrem and Çağalı Güven exhibit, the (re)contextualization process, which both literary works undergo, results in different narratives. *Unveiled* appears as an autobiography of a Turkish girl with its underlying subjectivities, while its Turkish translation is presented as a history book, which is useful for the younger generations in Turkey and a vital part of the grand narrative of the national history by the publisher. The shifting focus resulting from the (re)contextualization of the literary works indicates that agential hybridity might have a significant potential to transform the literary work into a different work in line with the current agenda.

This study reveals that a Turkish woman writer in 1930 might use writing in translation as an escape from her “former” home, a practical means to construct a new identity for herself, a gateway to resistance against Western stereotypes and standardizing codes and, at the same time, a vehicle to meet the Orientalist expectations to some degree. Depending on these contesting functions, writing in translation opens a field of tension, and translating these literary works might be strictly dependent on the agents’ subjectivities, such as their cultural agenda, etc. It is firmly contended that the traditional view of translation is destabilized by hybrid texts and hybrid identities, which could be further elaborated on in future studies. It further appears that the possible trajectories of hybridity and (re)contextuality as complementary conceptual tools might be explored within the realm of agent-oriented research in translation studies by specifically focusing on hybrid identities writing in a second and/or acquired language and their (possible) translation behaviors during their creative writing process.

**Endnotes**

1. Cambridge Dictionary, “Hybrid.”

2. It must be noted that Bhabha’s conception of hybridity draws on the inspiring insights of Mikail Bahtin (1981) on the notion of hybridity in his linguistically-driven research.

3. I refer to non-Westerners to highlight Western-oriented thinking and the problematic dichotomy it implies by using “others”.

4. In *After Babel*, George Steiner (1998, 49) openly states that “inside or between languages, human communication equals translation”; while Richard Kearney (2006, xiv-xv) explains in his introductin to Paul Ricoeur’s essays in *On Translation* that [translation] “in the more generic sense […] indicates the everyday act of speaking as a way not only of translating oneself to oneself but also and more explicitly of translating oneself to others”.

5. I use this term to encompass all people living in a definite geographical area known as Turkey today and/or adopting Turkishness as a meta-identity, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, etc.

6. Halide Edip or Edib is a prominent figure of the early Turkish republican period and later. As a prolific writer and influential figure, she took on multiple roles (orator, journalist, translator, writer, editor, nurse and soldier) from the period of the Turkish nationalism movement to the end of her life (parliament member and professor). Her autobiography was published in English as two volumes (*Memoirs of Halide Edib* and *The Turkish Ordeal*) in 1926 and in 1928, which mark the first years of the period in which she and her husband Adnan Adıvar lived in self-exile in London. The fact that *The Turkish Ordeal*, narrating “Edib’s pivotal role in the nationalism movement and particularly in the Independence Struggle, was written for a self-defense as a response to *Nutuk* by Atatürk (founder of the modern Turkish Republic)” (Adak 2003, 511) makes the autobiography and the self-translator mostly a subject of political discussions. For these reasons, Halide Edib as a subject of study has gained currency among scholars of a number of disciplines, including critical theory, comparative literature, gender studies and translation studies in Turkey (Durakbaşa 2000; Adak 2003).

7. Her grandfather Namık Kemal (1840-1888) was a prominent intellectual, writer, poet, playwright, journalist and reformer during the period of 1871 and 1888. He was exiled from the Ottoman Empire in 1867, when he found refuge in Paris, France for only one year, and in 1873, when he took refuge in Cyprus until 1876. He was particularly eminent for introducing the notions of freedom and fatherland in the Ottoman-Turkish cultural field by writing numerous plays and poems. There are archival documents indicating that his literary works were banned during the Hamidian regime in the 1890s (Demirel 2012) because of his works being used as a means of opposition against the Hamidian regime by the political dissidents and being published without a publishing permit, which was required by the 1864 Press Law in the Ottoman Empire (Çalışkan 2019). It is indeed contended that he had enormous influence on the formation of a Turkish national identity, which requires excluding his ideas on Ottomanism.

8. There are few examples of Ekrem’s critical attitude towards the reforms in the modern Turkish Republic. In one of her lectures on modern Turkey, she criticizes the prohibition of polygamy in Turkey by referring to the claim that many women had to remain single (quot. from Wallinger, 2016: 131; Miss Here and There. “We Wish Cupid Had Never Come to Turkey.” Rockford Morning Star 1 Nov. 1933: 4).

9. In fact, *Unveiled* was explored by a Turkish couple temporarily residing in the US in 1968, which is elaborated in the third section on (re)contextualization; therefore, the agent in question is not tackled in this section.

10. The fact that the 1998 reprint edition of the Turkish translation is still on the book market in Turkey clearly demonstrates low sales figures within a limited consumption circle.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Biyografya [Biography], “Gül Çağalı Güven.”

14. Encyclopædia Britannica, “Ibn-Ishaq.”

15. Yildiz shows a slight orthographic adjustment in English by using the letter –i, instead of retaining the Turkish name *Yıldız* as it is.

16. Ibid.

17. *Unveiled* went into the fourth printing in 1936.

18. Ibid, 10.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid, 12.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid, 9-12.

23. Ibid, 11.