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**TURKISH TRANSLATIONS OF STEPHEN KING'S
NOVELS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF HORROR
FICTION IN THE TURKISH LITERARY POLYSYSTEM¹**

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Abstract

The dynamics of the development of horror fiction in the Turkish literary polysystem are related to the socio-cultural and literary contexts of Turkey throughout years. It was observed that both the original horror fiction books in Turkish and the translations of the well-known works of the gothic genre were very limited before the 1980s. The main reasons for the low number of productions in horror fiction can be explained with the literary views of the early novel writers who primarily aimed for the modernization of the society. This tendency continued between 1960 and 1980 in the literary atmosphere of social realism. With the political and socio-cultural transformations of Turkey during the 1980s, though, genres of popular literature started to develop considerably. Translations of the best-seller works of the west played a crucial role in this development during those years. Since Stephen King was one of the most prolific and widely read horror fiction writers of the time, his novels had a pioneering influence on the development of horror fiction. Through the analyses and discussions of the present article, it was identified that the translations of Stephen King's horror fiction books had a central position in the development of the genre in the Turkish literary polysystem. The central position of King's works was evidenced by the number of the translations, their reprints and editions over the years. In addition, the significant place of the author's horror novels in the Turkish literary system can also be observed through their influence on the Turkish horror fiction writers after the 1980s particularly in terms of the themes and the language style of their books.

Keywords: Stephen King, horror fiction, translations of popular literature, gothic, literary transfer.

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INTRODUCTION

Stephen King is widely acknowledged as one of the most popular and well-known writers of American literature as he is the ninth writer on the list of the "Top 50 Most Translated Authors" according to the statistics of the Index Translationum, supported by UNESCO (Index Translationum, 2019). It is mostly through translations that his popular books reach people from various cultural backgrounds and take part in the literary systems of different languages all over the world. Although King has produced literary works in a variety of genres like science-fiction, crime and fantasy since the 1970s, he is generally recognized with his horror fiction books. This article focuses on the literary contributions of the translations of Stephen King's horror novels to the Turkish literary system in terms of the development of horror fiction, particularly, after the 1980s.

It is noteworthy to state that the publication of Stephen King books in Turkish towards the end of the 1970s corresponded to a significant turning point in Turkey concerning both cultural and literary aspects. Before the 1980s, there were not many original works in Turkish representing the genres of horror fiction or fantasy. It was only after that period that these genres started to develop in the Turkish literary system (Türkeş, 2005; Uğur, 2012; Yücesoy, 2007). The reasons for this situation can be found in the literary and cultural dynamics of the Turkish society before and after the 1980s as well as the changes in the themes and the conventions of horror fiction as a genre in general.

Socio-cultural reasons for the earlier stagnation and the later increase in the number of the original horror fiction books in Turkish are mainly related to the changing socio-cultural contexts of the Turkish society after the year 1980. Literary themes, conventions and the popular forms of writing changed dramatically after the transformations during those years.

Historically, starting with the first examples of the modern novels in Turkish during the Tanzimat Period in the mid-nineteenth century, novel writers initially produced didactic and realistic works under the influence of westernization and modernization movements. These early novel writers of Turkish were highly influenced by the realistic and modern features of the French literature. For these writers, the fundamental function of literature was to educate people and to modernize the society by breaking with the past and the traditional ways of living and thinking. As Ayar (2015) mentions, the Ottoman modernization perspective viewed modernization as the westernization of the society. During this process, literature aimed to fulfil the tasks of applying what is new and popularizing it. Writers of the late nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire were regarded as "authorities" in the modernization of literature. Therefore, it was not surprising that these writers had no place for the imaginative worlds, creatures, or unrealistic features in their literary works which aimed to achieve "enlightenment" in a didactic way.

As a matter of fact, such unrealistic features were considered to be belonging to the past and the traditional forms of oral literature. Stories about the unrealistic and mystic events, creatures, spirits and the jinn were told in the oral tradition among people. However, early novel writers in Turkish literature did not include such features in their works as they viewed them irrational. For instance, Moran (2004) states that one of the most prominent writers of the time, Namık Kemal, regards stories like "Ferhat ile Şirin" and the supernatural events in the old stories of "Muhayyelat" as childish and lower forms than the novel because, for him, the novel tells a real or at least a realistic story.

Thus, Moran (2004) concludes that according to Namık Kemal and his contemporaries, transition from the old forms of story-telling to the modern novel, was a transition from myth to realism and a transition from being childish to being mature. The novel was viewed as a tool to achieve modernism in the society. As a consequence of this socio-cultural and literary context, horror fiction did not find a place in Turkish literature in the late-nineteenth century except a few examples.

The same situation continued during the first half of the twentieth century. With the influence of social realism, novel writers ignored fantastic stories and horror fiction. Instead, they focused on the problems of the society with a realistic perspective. After the coup d'état in 1980, though, literary tendencies started to change considerably together with the socio-cultural transformations in the country. During those years, the writers started to focus on the conflicts of the 'individual' rather than the political and the social problems. In addition, new forms of expression started to appear including various genres of popular literature. These changes in tendencies are mentioned by Uğur (2012) in his work on the development of popular literature in Turkey after 1980:

Coup d'etat in 1980 reconstructed all the social and political balances in Turkey. During this process, litterateurs avoided to handle political subjects and in time, they became more interested in popular literature. Another factor which led to the development of popular literature was that the readers had more opportunities to reach western popular fiction. During this period, in addition to the old genres, popular genres developed in the country. (p.418)

In addition to these socio-cultural reasons for the later development of horror fiction in Turkish, there are particular factors resulting from the changes in the literary conventions of the horror genre in the west. Such changes of the prevalent themes, settings and the plots in the literary works of the western horror fiction writers had an inevitable influence on the Turkish readers' interest in similar stories.

In particular, during the second half of the twentieth century, horror fiction moved towards more common themes related to people's fears. After those years, the traditional elements of gothic literature in the past like werewolves, vampires, fallen angels, devils, monks, demons and witches as well as the settings like old castles with secret passageways were not appealing to the taste of the contemporary readers anymore. In the post-war period, readers demanded stories reflecting their real anxieties like nuclear wars rather than the traditional monsters of gothic literature (Dziemianowicz, 2017, p. 37).

Consequently, horror fiction underwent a significant shift towards reflecting the personal fears of the individual in the modern societies that are highly industrialized and alienated. According to Russell (1996), in the twentieth century, "religion lost its power as a source of supernatural events. Horror had to be believable within a world where more and more could be explained rationally. While the genre still kept its connection to the more general concerns of society, the source of the horror was more personal" (p.19). Similar to this shift in the themes, plots and the characters of the modern horror fiction, the settings of the modern horror novels were also different from the settings of the old gothic tradition:

Settings changed to some extent but the evil that is told continues to exist. Observing back-streets of the big cities, shelters of the homeless people, shanty houses, tent cities, old suburbs, and old cemeteries including the auto

graveyards, big shopping malls, and deserted platforms of the train stations show that gothic spaces are still here with us alive... (Polikar, 1999, p.12)

As Polikar (1999) states, the settings that were used to create horror effect on the readers changed in the second half of the twentieth century as the feelings of horror in modern societies were mainly based on the struggles of the individual in a highly globalized and industrialized world. It can be claimed that while creating similar lives for the people from different cultures, globalization creates similar anxieties for them.

These changes in the themes, plots, characters and the settings of the horror genre contributed to the popularity of horror fiction in Turkey after the 1980s. To the Turkish readers, fear elements in the gothic stories of the past like the vampires, werewolves, demons, the settings like the castles or derelict churches and the themes like the insanity or familial secrets of aristocracy, etc. can be unfamiliar. However, the readers can easily empathize with the fears of the modern individuals in the face of rapid scientific and technological advances and their alienation in the industrialized world. In consequence, it can be concluded that as the world became global, the sources of fear became global, too. This situation was reflected in the changes of the literary conventions of the horror genre, which contributed to the increasing popularity of horror fiction in Turkey after 1980.

TURKISH HORROR FICTION: A BRIEF LITERARY HISTORY

There are examples of horror fiction in Turkish literature before the 1980s although their number is very limited. First of all, it is claimed that Ahmet Mithat Efendi produced the first literary work which displays the characteristic of horror fiction in Turkish during the nineteenth century (Uğur, 2019). His book *Cinli Han* was published in 1885 and it was based on a strange story that was told to him by one of his friends. Other examples of the early literary works that can be considered as horror fiction in Turkish belong to Suat Derviş. It is observed that *Ne Bir Ses Ne Bir Nefes* (1923) and *Buhran Gecesi* (1924) by Derviş display conventions of the horror genre. Particularly, *Buhran Gecesi* contains many elements of horror fiction as the main character of the story is a female ghost, Zehra. The book tells the story of Zehra who was deceived by the Satan to kill her husband and how she turned into a ghost at the end of the events (Kaya, 2018).

Other examples of the novels that contain gothic characteristics during this early period are *Gulyabani* (1913) and *Mezarından Kalkan Şehit* (1928) by Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar. It should, however, be underlined that despite their gothic features, Gürpınar did not write these literary works for the purpose of creating horror fiction for the readers. Gürpınar's primary aim with these books was to defend scientific thought over supernatural beliefs in the society. In *Gulyabani*, for instance, supernatural events that create horror in the story are presented in order to show that they actually have rational explanations in the real world.

Adaptations from the well-known horror fiction books of the west also took place among the few examples of horror fiction during this early period. For instance, Ali Rıza Seyfi's *Kazıklı Voyvoda* (1928) is an adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Nazmi Erman's *Canavar Frankenştayn* (1944) series are also examples of such adaptations from the western horror fiction books.

While listing the early representatives of the horror fiction writers in Turkish, it is essential to mention the works of Kenan Hulusi Koray. As Özkaracalar (2005) states, the

collection of *Bahar Hikayeleri* (1939) which was written by Koray included eight stories and three of them were in gothic genre. In addition to these, there were notable horror fiction books among the series published with the name “On Paralık Romanlar” between 1930 and 1950s. These series were very similar to the trend of “pulp magazines” in America. Cemil Cahit Cem’s series which included *İkiz Şeytanlar* and *Kan İçen Hortlak* (1931) are thought to be two of these early fantastic and horror fiction works in Turkish (Danacı, 2012). Daniş Remzi Korok’s *Ölü Ciğeri Yiyen Adam: Yamyam Yusuf* (1944) was also published as “On Paralık Romanlar” and is considered to be in the genre of horror.

In addition to these, Özkaracalar (2005) mentions that in *Lord Lister* series (1944) written by Vedat Örfi Bengü, there are novels that can be classified as examples of horror fiction. Notably, Kerime Nadir’s *Dehşet Gecesi* (1958) is also significant to mention among the few literary works that display the characteristics of horror fiction in Turkish before the 1980s. Lastly, it can be recorded that while *Ölmez Adamların Evi* (1955), which was produced by Hamdi Varoğlu, is usually mentioned as an original horror fiction book in Turkish literature, it is actually a translation of Claude Farrere’s *La Maison des hommes vivants* (Danacı, 2014). Farrere’s book was also adapted by Selim Nüzhet Gerçek and published as *Canvermezler Tekkesi* in 1922.

The limited number of the original horror fiction works mentioned so far shows that horror fiction was not preferred by the Turkish authors for a long time. Similar to the early periods of novel production, the period between 1960-1980 was regarded as a quiet period for the horror genre in Turkish literature (Türkeş, 2005; Yücesoy, 2007). As mentioned before, there were political turbulences in the country during these years and the dominant tendency in literature was social realism. Under those circumstances, it was not surprising that horror fiction dealing with the extraordinary elements did not find a place in the literary productions at that time.

In consequence, it can be concluded that there was a very limited number of original horror fiction books in Turkish and the genre emerged and survived mainly through translations until the 1980s. In fact, translations played a crucial role in the later development of horror fiction in the Turkish literary polysystem after the 1980s, as well. With the socio-cultural and literary transformations in the country, Turkish authors searched for new literary forms and they were influenced by the western literary productions of the time. As an example, Moran (1994) mentions that after 1980, “when Turkish writers needed a new type of novel, postmodernist novel provided them an exit and the translations from the works of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Jorge Luis Borges, and Italo Calvino helped them in this regard” (p.57). Similarly, in their search for new novel forms, Turkish writers started to use metafiction, magical realism, fantasy and horror fiction as existing models from the west. In this sense, as stated by Moran, translations of the western novels had a significant influence on the Turkish writers during the 1980s in terms of providing new models of literary expression. Since it is acknowledged that many genres of popular fiction developed to a considerable degree in Turkish literature specifically after the 1980s, it is significant to analyze the possible influence of the translations on the development of horror fiction as one of these genres.

**THE PLACE OF THE TRANSLATIONS OF STEPHEN KING'S HORROR FICTION
NOVELS IN THE TURKISH LITERARY POLYSYSTEM**

An examination of the influence of the well-known horror fiction books of the west, on the development of horror fiction in Turkey after the 1980s should inevitably consider the place of Stephen King translations during this process. Until Turkish translations of Stephen King's books started to be published towards the end of the 1970s, nearly none of the well-known horror fiction novels of the west were translated with as many editions and reprints as King's. It is, in fact, interesting that many famous horror fiction works started to be translated into Turkish only after 1990. For instance, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* was published as a full text in Turkish through Zeynep Akkuş's translation in 1998. H.P. Lovecraft's selected stories were translated by Dost Körpe and published as *Gotik Öyküler* in 1994. Lovecraft's other works were mostly translated in 2000s. Similarly, as one of the earliest examples of the horror genre, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, was first translated into Turkish after 2000.

In addition, among the famous representatives of the gothic literature, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* by Ann Radcliffe, was first translated into Turkish by Ahmet Mithat Efendi in 1890 with the name *Udolf Hisarı*. The book was republished by Dergah Yayınları in 2015. Until that year, the book was not published again and there had not been any other translations of it. Being one of the most well-known horror fiction books, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, on the other hand, first appeared and continued to be published as adaptations of the book rather than the translations until nearly the 1990s. Concerning a more recent horror fiction book, *Rosemary's Baby*, by Ira Levin, it is observed that the book was translated a few years after its publication. The original book was produced in 1967 and its Turkish translation by Gülten Suveren was published in 1971 with the name *Bebek*. The book was reprinted in 1974 and other than this reprinting, it has not been published again.

While referring to the notable works of the horror genre and their Turkish translations, *Interview with the Vampire* by Ann Rice should also be mentioned. The original book was published in 1976 and it became one of the best-sellers of the 1970s. The book was translated into Turkish fifteen years later in 1991 by Roza Hakmen and it was published with the title *Vampirle Konuşma*.

These examples of the outstanding works of horror fiction and their Turkish translations demonstrate the fact that until the 1980s, translations and reprints of the horror fiction books were very limited to be influential on developing the genre in the Turkish literary polysystem. Conversely, it is observed that since Stephen King's horror books started to appear in the book market at the end of the 1970s, they have been translated into Turkish in a very short time and they have had many editions and reprints. The writer's first book, *Carrie*, was published in 1974 and it was translated into Turkish by Esat Ören in 1986 with the title *Göz*. The translated book has been reprinted by the publisher, Altın Kitaplar, at least eight times in different years until 2022. One of his most popular books, *The Shining* (1977), was translated by Mehmet Harmancı and it was published with the title *Medyum* in 1977. After its publication, the book was reprinted in 1980, 2004, 2008, 2010, 2016 and 2019 by the same publisher, Altın Kitaplar.

As another example, King's well-known horror fiction book, *IT* (1986), has been a popular book of the writer in Turkey, too, as indicated by the continuous reprints and the editions throughout years. The first Turkish translation of the book by Gönül Suveren was published by Altın Kitaplar in 1987 and it was reprinted in 1999, 2003, 2006, 2007 and

2010. In addition to these reprints, the book was retranslated by Oya Alpar in 2015. This retranslation was also published by the same publisher, Altın Kitaplar and it has been reprinted at least eight times since its first publication.

These examples and translations of many other works of Stephen King show that King's novels were translated into Turkish in a very short time after their publication in their original language and these translated books were reprinted many times in the following years. This situation indicates their continuous popularity in Turkey and their positive reception by the Turkish readers. It should also be mentioned that during the same years, there were other horror fiction writers whose works were also translated into Turkish like Dean Koontz. However, it is also a fact that "several writers, including Peter Straub, Anne Rice, Dean R. Koontz, Clive Barker, and Robert R. McCammon, achieved best-seller status, a reality all but unthinkable before the phenomenon of Stephen King" (Dziemianowicz, 2017, p. 40).

Considering the few number of original horror fiction novels in Turkish and the limited number of translations from the other languages before the 1980s, it can be claimed that the translations of Stephen King novels occupied a significant position in the development of horror fiction in the Turkish literary polysystem after the 1980s.

In addition to the number of his translated works and their reprints, this position can also be observed through the influence of King's horror fiction on the early examples of Turkish horror fiction books after the 1980s particularly in terms of the literary themes and the language styles. It is acknowledged that Stephen King has had a considerable influence on the literary productions in horror fiction since the publication of his first novel towards the end of the 1970s. As Dziemianowicz (2017) stated, "the second half of the twentieth century also saw the emergence of Stephen King, whose best-selling fiction had an incalculable impact on horror fiction written in the wake of his phenomenal success" (p. 36). Therefore, such an impact of King's horror fiction on the Turkish horror fiction writers can be discussed through a comparison of the themes that Stephen King uses in his books with the themes that are found in the horror fiction novels that were written in Turkish after the 1980s.

Basically, when the popular novels of Stephen King are examined, it can be observed that King's themes and the settings are related to the fears and the anxieties of the people who live in modern societies. These themes and the settings are actually the fundamental features which signify the difference between the conventions of the gothic genre in the past and the horror fiction during the second half of the twentieth century. In his books, King successfully reflects the struggles of the individuals and the societies in the globalizing world of the twentieth century. His characters are usually the ordinary people living in towns and the cities. The themes of his books focus on these people's fears such as the threats of uncontrolled science and technology, fearsome illnesses like the spread of a deadly virus or the alienation of the individual as a result of the modern lifestyles in industrialized cities.

In *Carrie*, for instance, the despair of a high school girl is described. Carrie is bullied by fellow students at school due to her appearance and strange behaviors. She becomes a social outcast since she is psychologically abused by her fanatic and despotic mother. *Cujo* is about the fear of a mother to see her child killed by a rabid dog. While telling the horrific story of the child and her mother trapped in a car and attacked by the rabid dog, King describes the mundane lives of the middle-class people in the background. In another book, *Firestarter*, the theme is the anxieties of the modern day individuals about

the uncontrollable developments in science. As another example, *The Stand*, appeals to the people's fear of fatal illnesses. It is about a lethal influenza virus which is produced as a biological weapon and kills more than half of the population in the world. Such themes in Stephen King's horror fiction books underline the fact that "in the Gothic story, we accept devils and evil monks as integral parts of the world of the priests, crosses, and holy water by means of which the evil is destroyed. Now we believe in the power of science to create the new monsters of modern horror and also to help us control them" (Russell, 1996, p.19).

Having described the themes that can be observed in Stephen King's horror books, it is critical to examine the themes of the original horror fiction books that appeared in the Turkish literary system after the 1980s with the aim of searching for any similarities. The purpose of this examination is to reveal the position of Stephen King's horror fiction books in the development of the genre in the Turkish literary polysystem not only in terms of the number of his translated books but also in terms of their literary influence.

The first examples of the horror fiction books written by the Turkish authors after the 1980s include Levent Aslan's *Karanlığın Gözleri* (1991), Elif Karakaş's *Lanetli Genler* (1995), Farah Yurdözü's *Madrit'te Metafizik Bir Aşk* (1995) and *Yaşam Bir Korku Filmidir* (1999), Sadık Yemni's *Muska* (1996) and *Öte Yer* (1997). It is also noteworthy to state that since the 2000s, there has been a remarkable increase in the number of the original horror fiction books in the Turkish literary polysystem. Many horror fiction books have been produced by the Turkish writers throughout the 2000s until the present day.

In order to discuss the influence of Stephen King novels on the early productions of the Turkish horror fiction writers after the 1980s, two of these original horror books, Elif Karakaş's *Lanetli Genler* (1995) and Sadık Yemni's *Muska* (1996) can be examined in terms of their themes and characters. Firstly, in *Lanetli Genler*, the writer mainly tells the story of the fictional character, Elisabeth. The character commits murders as she inherits cursed genes from her grandfather, Theodore, who was also a criminal in the past. The story takes place in Istanbul and at the end, she confesses her crimes to a psychologist. The psychologist reports her to the police. After a while, her story is filmed and the actress who plays Elisabeth is influenced by her so much that she tries to kill Elisabeth's psychologist to take revenge.

Apparently, the source of evil in *Lanetli Genler*, is the genetic code that the main character inherits. This location of the evil is well in tune with the trends of the modern horror fiction that became popular with the contributions of Stephen King novels. It is possible to suggest that the supernatural effects that were used by the early gothic authors were usually located outside the human. In *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, Jackson (2009) states that "within a supernatural economy, or a magical thought mode, otherness is designated as otherworldly, supernatural, as being above, or outside the human. The 'other' tends to be identified as an otherworldly, evil force: Satan, the devil, the demon (just as good is identified through figures of angels, benevolent fairies, wise men)" (p.31).

Towards the end of the twentieth century, though, the source of evil started to change in the genre of horror. As Horner (2010) states, "it is a truism that whereas earlier Gothic authors relied on supernatural effects to induce fear in the reader, modern Gothic novelists look into the human psyche and its obsessive desires, murderous impulses and dysfunctional fantasies in order to explore the origins of evil" (p.70). This shift in terms of the roots of creating fear is very well reflected in Stephen King's literary productions.

Magistrale (2006) argues that in King's novels, the source of evil is both the individual character and the social contexts s/he takes part in. The characters in his books submit to the temptations of the evil inside themselves but they are also the victims of the predestinate social conditions that they cannot control. In line with King's theory of 'predestinate horror', most of his characters are directed towards committing evil acts due to the pressures that exploit already existing weaknesses inside them (pp.14-15). Just like Elisabeth in *Lanetli Genler*, Jack Torrance in *The Shining*, for instance, is pressured by a personal history which is destructive for him. Jack resembles his father in the sense that both of them have alcohol addiction and a tendency towards violence.

Lanetli Genler also underlines the loneliness of the individuals in their struggle to deal with the problems of the modern life, which is a similar theme in King's novels such as *Carrie*. The following extracts from the book, *Lanetli Genler*, are examples of such an alienation of the individual in the society:

"She felt grudge and hatred again. Maybe this hatred resulted from the endless loneliness that she experienced every night. Whatever she comes through during the day, however people treat her, she goes back to her loneliness every night. She hated this. She used to feel sorry for herself in the past but now this feeling turned into hate and violence. She believed that she could beat this unhappiness by taking revenge from the other people" (Karakaş, 1995, p.68)

"Is this real? Can she be a real friend? Can she trust her? She thought about how much she wanted to trust someone... ! Someone she can rely on. A friend that will be with her all the time. Someone that will love and protect her without any profit. Oh God! How beautiful it is to think about these; but Elisabeth knew that all these ideas were utopias that would never be real!!..." (Karakaş, 1995, p.130)

As another example for the literary influence of Stephen King novels on the literary productions of the Turkish horror fiction writers after 1980, Sadık Yemni's *Muska* (1996) can be examined. The book tells the story of the characters who combat their forces to beat the evil, named Kara Nesne (The Black Object). The story involves the fictional events that take place in the neighborhood of the 94th street in İzmir, which is a cosmopolitan city of Turkey. In the book, different times and different places can be seen through a spiritual 'mirror'.

It is noticed that the themes and the settings in the book follow the general trends of horror fiction after the 1980s. Just like Stephen King's *IT*, for instance, *Muska* describes different time periods of a neighborhood in a particular city. *IT* mainly depicts certain historical events and lifestyles during the 1950s and 1980s in a fictional American town. In a similar vein, *Muska* reflects the events and the lifestyle of the 1920s and 1950s in İzmir. According to Özgüven (1997), "the attempt of reflecting the soul of a place (which was attempted by Atilla İlhan in some of his novels taking place in İzmir or by Orhan Pamuk in *Sessiz Ev*, though not detailed much) can be found notably at the top of both *Muska* and *Öte Yer*. It can even be argued that this is actually the subject of these books: the soul of middle class urban life 'in action'" (p.56).

Indicating another similarity in terms of the themes and the plot, in both *Muska* and *IT*, the murders in the neighborhood take place at certain intervals. In *IT*, the evil force kills the children nearly at 27-year cycles and in *Muska*, the murders happen every six years. In addition, in both of the novels, the characters beat the evil by combining their forces.

In the novel, *IT*, the children Bill, Richie, Ben, Beverly, Eddie and Mike engage in a kind of spiritual ritual to fight with the evil force:

"Mike took Eddie's hand and Richie took Beverly's other hand. For a moment Ben only looked at them, and then, like a man in a dream, he raised his bloody hands to either side and stepped between Mike and Richie. He grasped their hands. The circle closed.

(Ah Chüd this is the Ritual of Chüd and the Turtle cannot help us)"

(King, 1986/2017, p.923)

Similar to this ritual, the characters Cemile, Ayzit, Seher, Sarp and Tahir in the novel, *Muska*, join their psychic powers to beat Kara Nesne (The Black Object). They collectively engage in folk rituals and use spiritual objects in their battle to beat the evil:

"When he went, three women sat Indian-fashion around the brazier. On their faces, there were tense lines that they were trying to hide from each other. After a while, Cemile asked Seher "Which prayer did you put into the amulet?"... As the woman finished her words, there was silence again. When Ayzit nodded, they started a sacred chant belonging to the past" (Yemni, 1996, p.247)

Accordingly, the source of evil has a relation with the underground system of the city in both *Muska* and Stephen King's *IT*. In *Muska*, the center for the dark evil to hibernate and to be immortal is a well in the garden of an old house and in *IT*, the evil creature hibernates in the sewer system of the city. The final battle between the good and the evil takes place in the garden, near the well in *Muska* and it takes place in the tunnels of the sewer system in *IT*. Furthermore, the evil force changes shape according to the fears of the characters in both of the novels. In *IT*, the evil is usually in the form of Pennywise the Dancing Clown but it changes shape easily. For instance, it appears as the Creature from the Black Lagoon in order to scare Eddie, as a giant bird to scare Mike and as a werewolf to scare Richie. In addition, the evil force takes the shape of Beverly's father as she is very afraid of him:

"I worry about you, Bevvie... I worry a LOT!"

She turned, swirls of red hair floating around her face, to see her father staggering toward her down the hallway, wearing the witch's black dress and skull cameo; her father's face hung with doughy, running flesh, his eyes as black as obsidian, his hands clenching and unclenching, his mouth grinning with soupy fervor"

(King, 1986/2017, p.585)

Just like the evil in *IT*, Kara Nesne (The Black Object) has a shape-shifting feature to scare the characters in the novel, *Muska*. For instance, similar to taking the form of Beverly's father in *IT*, the evil appears as Tahir's father in *Muska* with the aim of scaring him:

"Tahir almost felt that the thing which was disguised as his father had to bear his characteristics as well. He opened the jar lid and poured what was in it on the face of the black serpent. The Black Thing retreated a little as it was startled.

'Leave what you are holding in your hand. I tell you .. Or you'll be punished more'
Hearing its voice, Tahir felt that the creature's confidence was getting lower..."

(Yemni, 1996, p.267)

As illustrated in these examples, the themes and the settings of the initial horror fiction books after the 1980s in Turkish are in line with the literary trends of the western horror fiction in the second half of the twentieth century, which were primarily pioneered by Stephen King during those years.

Additionally, the place of Stephen King translations in the Turkish literary system can be evaluated in terms the language use and the writing style. A comparison of the writing style that is used in King's novels and the style in the productions of the Turkish horror fiction writers yields interesting similarities. In order to carry out such a comparison, first, it is necessary to determine the writing conventions of the Turkish horror fiction writers. As a matter of fact, these conventions were investigated in a study conducted by Karagöz (2012) at Istanbul University. In that study, writing style and the language use of the Turkish horror fiction writers were compared with the style in the translations of the western gothic fiction, particularly the works of Lovecraft. Through the analyses, it was identified that the conventions of the Turkish horror fiction were different from the language use and the style that were observed in the translations of Lovecraft's gothic novels, which were mostly translated with a source-oriented approach.

In this sense, the results of the study that was carried out by Karagöz (2012) mainly demonstrated that the translations preserved the textual features of the original works of the early gothic literature. These features are described as long sentence forms, long paragraphs, using adjectives subsequently for descriptions, etc. Conversely, it was stated that the features of the Turkish horror fiction are short sentence forms, short paragraphs, and use of local language. The study compared the textual styles of the selected books which are originally in Turkish with the ones which are translations. As a consequence of the analyses, it was concluded that the textual style of the translated works as exemplified by Lovecraft's gothic fiction is considerably different from the textual style of the original Turkish horror fiction books (Karagöz, 2012, pp. 131-138).

Based on these findings, however, it can be claimed that the textual features of the Turkish horror fiction books mentioned by Karagöz (2012) are seemingly in line with the language use and the writing style of Stephen King. According to Davis (1994), King "does not try to bog down his readers with overdeveloped, complex plots and language" (p.23). In his book *On Writing: A memoir of the craft* (2000) Stephen King expresses his writing preferences as a writer and he states that he does not dress up the vocabulary and does not prefer long and grandiloquent words, either. For instance, he suggests for good writing, you should "make yourself a solemn promise right now that you'll never use 'emolument' when you mean 'tip'" (p.117). In the same book, King (2000) also comments on the sentence structure by declaring that "you might also notice how much simpler the thought is to understand when it's broken up into two thoughts. This makes matters easier for the reader, and the reader must always be your main concern" (p.124).

Considering these points in comparison to the findings of Karagöz's study (2012), it can be claimed that the textual style of the early gothic writers and their translations do not resemble the textual style of the original horror fiction novels in Turkish. However, the features of these original Turkish horror fiction novels that are mentioned in the study are similar to the style of Stephen King as described in the book *On Writing: A memoir of the craft* (2000) by the writer, himself.

As a result of all these arguments, it can be asserted that the horror fiction work of Stephen King has had a notable place in the development or horror fiction in the Turkish literary polysystem after the 1980s.

CONCLUSION

In a historical perspective, it can be noticed that both the original horror fiction books in Turkish and the translations of the horror novels from the western languages were few before the 1980s. The reasons for this literary stagnation of the genre were related to the socio-cultural context of the country and the literary tendencies of the Turkish writers before those years. With the aim of the modernization of the society, early novel writers preferred to produce realistic works and they associated the supernatural and fantastic elements with the irrational beliefs among the people. Due to this didactic view prevalent from the end of the nineteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century, horror stories which contained fantastic elements survived in the oral tradition and did not find a significant place in the literary works of the Turkish writers. The same situation continued between 1960-1980 with the influence of social realism as a literary movement.

During the 1980s, on the other hand, political, socio-cultural and literary developments in Turkey and the shifts in the literary themes and the conventions of the horror genre in general led to the proliferation of the horror fiction books. Obviously, translations of the well-known horror fiction novels of the west played a crucial role in this process. Being one of the most productive and successful writers of the genre, Stephen King had an indispensable effect on this development. King's novels contributed tremendously to the development of horror fiction in the Turkish literary polysystem after the 1980s. As an indication of this significant literary position, soon after the publication of his novels in their original language, they were translated into Turkish and they were edited and reprinted many times in subsequent years. Until the publication of his translated works, best seller horror fiction books of the other writers were not translated in such short time after their release and they did not have many reprints, either. In fact, most of the notable works of the genre were translated into Turkish only after 1990. Consequently, it is determined that Stephen King's books had a considerable place in the development of horror fiction in Turkey.

In addition, the influence of King's literary works on the productions of the Turkish horror fiction writers can be observed in terms of the themes, settings and their literary styles. When the early examples of the Turkish horror fiction books after the 1980s are examined, it can be seen that there are similarities between Stephen King's horror fiction and the initial productions of these Turkish horror fiction writers such as Elif Karakaş and Sadık Yemni. As a consequence, it can be concluded that translations of Stephen King's horror fiction books occupied a central position in the development of the horror genre in the Turkish literary polysystem as evidenced by the number of the reprints and the editions of his novels as well as their literary influence.

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