

## *The End of the Journey?*

### **THE TWIN LIBRARY PROJECT**

Welcome to the last issue of our Twin Bulletin.

A quite odd school year is coming to an end and the partner students and teachers are all longing for their well deserved holiday time!

Lots of memories and thoughts have kept us company during the last months, new concerns and perspectives are waiting for us in the next ones.

But one thing is surely positive about this school year, our Twin Library Project that has given us the opportunity to meet and work together.

The partner schools from Italy (Saronno, Pesaro and Sassari), Greece (Ioannina), Spain (Tarragona), Turkey (Izmir) and Portugal (Pinheiro) have been sharing their interest, their efforts and their enthusiasm about reading in the native language and in English and have experienced interesting forms of collaborative work through the use of ICT.

Even during the months of the pandemic they have kept in touch and carried on their common work finding creative ways to communicate and cooperate.

They have also carried out evaluation activities in which they have expressed their satisfaction for the best results of the project and pointed out flaws and weaknesses to be addressed in future activities.

The partner teachers are happy with the final results and this new network of contacts that is always ready to welcome more partners on board.

To all students, teachers and supporters of the Twin Library Project we wish you peaceful and relaxing *reading* holidays.

*The Twin Library Team*

*"Books are mirrors, you only see in them what you already have inside you"*  
*Carlos Luis Zafón*



## AUTHORS AND BOOKS

### MEETING GAIA RAYNERI



Gaia Rayneri was born in Turin in 1986. She graduated in comparative literature. She published “Pulce non c’è” for Einaudi in 2009 (winner of Premio Bergamo, Premio Parole d’Autore, Premio Kihlgren Opera Prima Milano, Premio Zocca Giovani, Premio Kriterion), from which was made a film directed by Giuseppe Bonito, with Pippo Delbono, Marina Massironi and Piera Degli Esposti in 2012. Gaia Rayneri worked as a playwright with Paolo Rossi and as a screenplay author for cinema and television. For Rizzoli Ragazzi she published “Ugone” (2011)

### DIPENDE COSA INTENDI PER CATTIVO

***(“What do you really mean with evil?”)***

“Dipende cosa intendi per cattivo” (Einaudi, 2018) is apparently the story of Costanza, a girl from a good family (but with a monkey in her head) who is dragged by a mother anxious to do good in a popular house for a volunteer project.

There, through uninterrupted screams, theoretical physics and a desperate need of love, she meets Sandra, the “madwoman of the palace”, who takes her dogs to the park in two plastic bags so they don’t get dirty.

With her there is Hubble, a teenager like Costanza but who is made unique by the scars that life brought about for her, her wounds, which let her experience so much pain but also other worlds.

While the world of adults seems so absurd and upside down that it can no longer stand upright, the two girls explore what appears out of the cracks: a crazy and magical life, where you have to be willing to take risks to find out that madness and healing are not complete opposites.



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Her last novel, “Dipende cosa intendi per cattivo”, was published by Einaudi in 2018. She currently lives in Great Britain, where she writes children’s novels and positive books for adults, draws, sings and enjoys life.

Gaia Rayneri met the students of ITCS “G. Zappa” in an online Zoom meeting on May 4th 2020.

She told them about her decision to become a writer and her future plans. She also provided insight in some of the most curious aspects of her novel and showed her sensitivity and creative approach to life and writing.

The students of 3 ARI of Saronno had also the chance to meet her again for a formal interview.

An extract of the interview is available [here](#) in Italian.



## MORE CONTENT

On our dedicated [website](#) you can find the book trailers of Gaia Rayneri’s novel created by the students of 3 ARI.

A special graphic creation by Nicolò Evangelista (3 ACA) is also displayed [here](#).



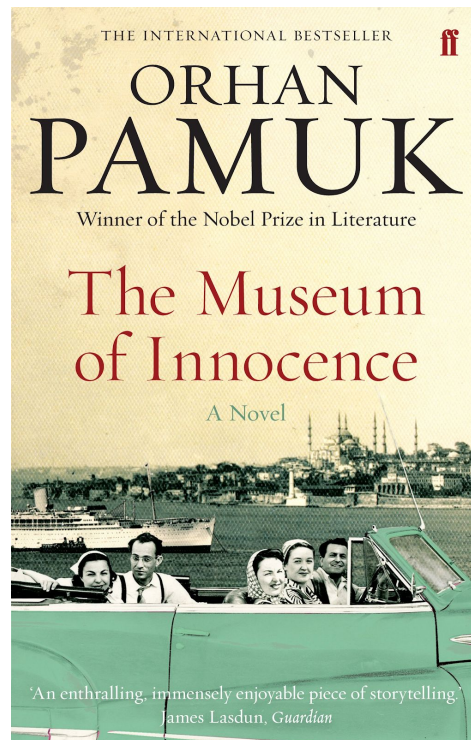
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## MEET TURKISH LITERATURE

### ORHAN PAMUK



#### About the author

Orhan Pamuk (born in 1952), is the author of many celebrated books, including *The White Castle*, *Istanbul* and *Snow*. In 2003 he won the International IMPAC Award for *My Name is Red*, and in 2006 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. His novel *The Museum of Innocence* (2008) was an international bestseller, praised in the *Guardian* as 'an enthralling, immensely enjoyable piece of storytelling.' Orhan Pamuk lives in Istanbul.



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## THE MUSEUM OF INNOCENCE

The Museum of Innocence is both a novel by Orhan Pamuk and a museum he has set up. From the very beginnings of the project, since the 1990s, Pamuk has conceived of novel and museum together. The novel, which is about love, is set between 1974 and the early '00s, and describes life in Istanbul between 1950 and 2000 through memories and flashbacks centred around two families – one wealthy, the other lower middle class. The museum presents what the novel's characters used, wore, heard, saw, collected and dreamed of, all meticulously arranged in boxes and display cabinets. It is not essential to have read the book in order to enjoy the museum, just as it is not necessary to have visited the museum in order to fully enjoy the book. But those who have read the novel will better grasp the many connotations of the museum, and those who have visited the museum will discover many nuances they had missed when reading the book. The novel was published in 2008, the museum opened in Spring 2012.

## THE PLOT

It is 1975, a perfect spring in Istanbul. Kemal, scion of one of the city's wealthiest families, is about to become engaged to Sibel, daughter of another prominent family, when he encounters Füsün, a beautiful shopgirl and a distant relation. Once the long-lost cousins violate the code of virginity, a rift begins to open between Kemal and the world of the Westernized Istanbul bourgeoisie—a world, as he lovingly describes it, with opulent parties and clubs, society gossip, restaurant rituals, picnics, and mansions on the Bosphorus, infused with the melancholy of decay—until finally he breaks off his engagement to Sibel. But his resolve comes too late.

For eight years Kemal will find excuses to visit another Istanbul, that of the impoverished backstreets where Füsün, her heart now hardened, lives with her parents, and where Kemal discovers the consolations of middle-class life at a dinner table in front of the television. His obsessive love will also take him to the demimonde of Istanbul film circles (where he promises to make Füsün a star), a scene of seedy bars, run-down cheap hotels, and small men with big dreams doomed to bitter failure. In his feckless pursuit, Kemal becomes a compulsive



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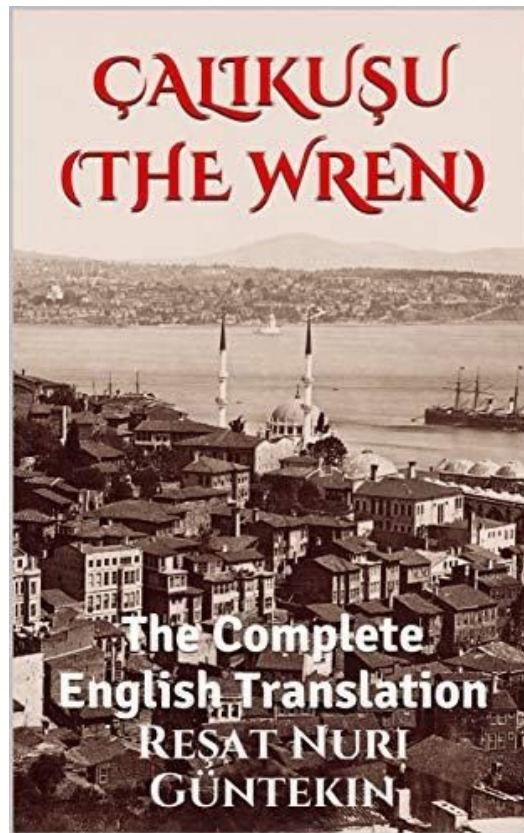
collector of objects that chronicle his lovelorn progress and his afflicted heart's reactions: anger and impatience, remorse and humiliation, deluded hopes of recovery, and daydreams that transform Istanbul into a cityscape of signs and specters of his beloved, from whom now he can extract only meaningful glances and stolen kisses in cars, movie houses, and shadowy corners of parks. A last change to realize his dream will come to an awful end before Kemal discovers that all he finally can possess, certainly and eternally, is the museum he has created of his collection, this map of a society's manners and mores, and of one man's broken heart.

A stirring exploration of the nature of romantic attachment and of the mysterious allure of collecting, *The Museum of Innocence* also plumbs the depths of an Istanbul half Western and half traditional—its emergent modernity, its vast cultural history. This is Orhan Pamuk's greatest achievement.





## REŞAT NURI GÜNTEKİN



### About the author

(1889 - 1956) was a Turkish novelist, story writer and playwright. His novel, *Çalılıkusu* ("The Wren", 1922) is about the destiny of a young Turkish female teacher in Anatolia; the movie was filmed on this book in 1966, and remade as TV series in 1986.

His narrative has a detailed and precise style, with a realistic tone.



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His other significant novels include Yeşil Gece ("Green Night") and Yaprak Dökümü ("The Fall Of Leaves").

## THE WREN

The events in the novel take place in the early twentieth century, in a warweary Ottoman Empire that is about to collapse. Most of the novel is narrated in the first-person point of view by Feride.

In the first section, Feride narrates her childhood and the events that brought her to the alien hotel room which she indicates she is in.

The second and the largest section of the book is constituted of Feride's diary entries.

The third section is the only one written from the third person point of view, and recounts the events during Feride's visit to her family.

Feride is the orphaned daughter of an army officer, and as a teenager attends Lycee Notre Dame de Sion in the winter, and stays with one of her late mother's sisters during the summer holidays. She is given the nickname "the Wren" during her time at school for her vivacity and mischief, two characteristics considered unusual and even a bit inappropriate for Muslim girls at that time. She gets engaged to her charming cousin, Kamran, whom she leaves the night before their wedding, upon discovering that he has been unfaithful to her.

She runs away from home to become a teacher in Anatolia, although she remains desperately in love with Kamran. She is forced to move from town to town several times during her first three years as a teacher, as a result of the incompetence of officials, the malice of colleagues and the unwanted attention she gets from men because of her beauty and her lively manner.

Meanwhile, she adopts a little girl called Munise, finds out that Kamran has married the woman he had cheated on Feride with, and develops a friendship with Hayrullah Bey, an elderly military doctor who treats Feride with fatherly affection. At the end of these three years, Munise dies and Feride is forced to resign from her post and marry the doctor because of the rumors about her "indecent behavior".

A couple of years later, Feride returns to Tekirdag to visit one of her aunts and her cousin Mujgan, where Kamran, now widowed and with a small child, also happens to be. He has never got over Feride, painfully regrets having cheated on her, and confesses to have married the other woman only out of pity after he heard false rumors about Feride being in love with another man.



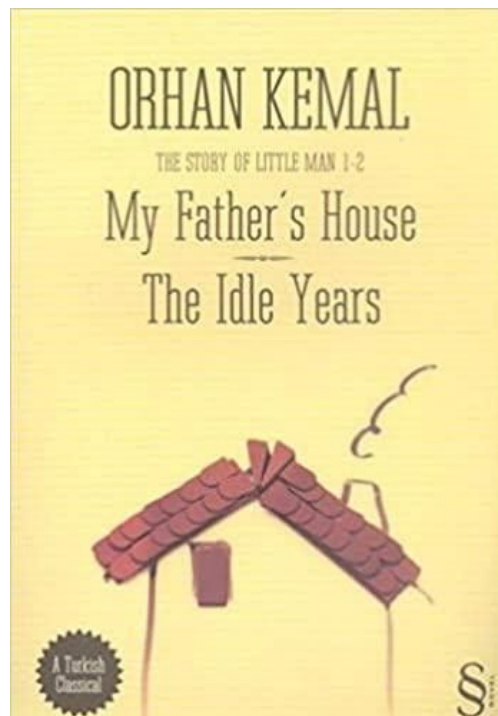
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The night before her arranged departure, Feride confesses to Mujgan that her marriage to the doctor has never been consummated and he has in fact died recently. He told Feride to revive her ties to her family as his last wish, and gave her a package to be entrusted to Mujgan. Mujgan takes the package to Kamran, which turns out to be Feride's diary which was hidden and preserved by the doctor. Finding out that Feride is still in love with him, Kamran arranges to be wedded to Feride the next day without her knowledge.

The novel ends with their long-awaited reunion, and Kamran's confession that he betrayed her all those years ago because of his insecurity about her love for and loyalty to him, due to her ostensible frivolity and harsh treatment of him.

## ORHAN KEMAL



### About the author



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Orhan Kemal (1914 - 1970), was born in Adana, Ceyhan.

Many of Kemal's stories, especially *My Father's house* and *Idle Years* carry hints of the years he spent in exile with his father. The landmark work that depicted his prison years was the novella *72. Koğuş*, which was also the first instance of the "prison story" genre in Turkish literature.

This novella relates the hardships the convicts had to endure due to poverty and deprivation. The convicts were not only rejected by society, but also had to withstand abuse and isolation inflicted by other convicts. In 1967, Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu (The Ankara Art Theater) adapted *72. Koğuş* for the stage, earning Kemal the "Best Playwright" award of the Ankara Society for Art lovers.

Many of his works carry traces of his childhood years spent in cotton fields. His novels deal with the conflicts between wealthy landlords and farm workers, and between factory owners and workers.

These novels portray characters from various walks of life; from the small time clerk to the young girl who dreams of becoming a famous singer.

After exposing the troubles of workers and wage earners in Anatolia, he wrote novels and stories dealing with the phenomenon of migration, just as he experienced it in his own life.

Kemal has been celebrated as the mastermind of dialogues in Turkish literature. His titles are amongst those rare treasures one encounters in life. Only a few other authors can impress and shape the reader like he does. Orhan Kemal shows us the way to gain hope and be optimistic again.

## MY FATHER'S HOUSE - THE IDLE YEARS

Being one of the most well-loved books of Orhan Kemal, an author known for including autobiographical elements in his writing, *My Father's House* is also the first title in the series "The Little Man's Novel".

One of the best examples of a coming-of-age tale in Turkish literature, *My Father's House* is a prequel to another well-known novel, *The Idle Years*. Though they can be read independently of one another, these novels carry that subtle world view that is present in all works by Orhan Kemal.

*My Father's House-The Idle Years* is an autobiographical novel by Orhan Kemal, one of the giants of Turkish literature.

The novel's explicit focus is on a boy who grows up pursuing self-realization in a working-class atmosphere.

The story takes place during a period of abrupt transformation when the Republic of Turkey, newly born out of the ashes of the collapsed Ottoman



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Empire, is adapting to oppressive conditions introduced by a burgeoning capitalism. Scholarship on Orhan Kemal has extensively uncovered and charted his socialist realism and unorthodox look at the history of Turkey, but it has not concerned itself enough with the issue of masculinity, which is an indisputable part of Kemal's view of labour and political power.

This paper is an initial attempt to approach Kemal's autobiographical novels with theories of masculinity. I argue that **My Father's House–The Idle Years** explores rites of passages into manhood in what can be referred to as a crisis of imperial loss: the boy grows in an attempt to restore his father's victimized manhood, in a symbolic parallel to the transformation of the disintegrated Ottoman Empire into self-governed nation-states.

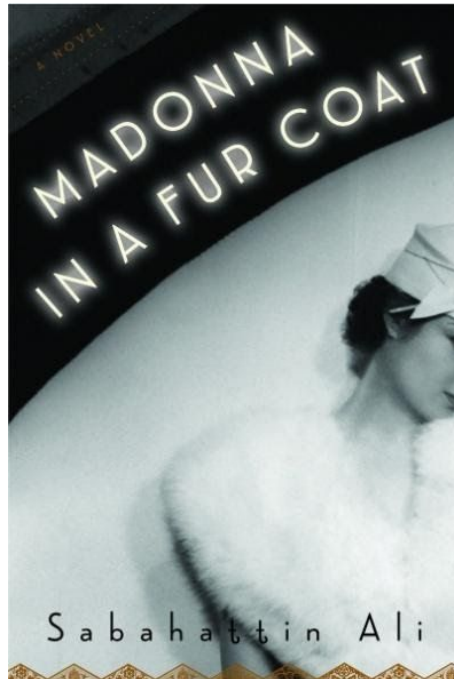
Kemal handles the loss metaphorically, using the instability generated by the gender anxieties of a young boy who fails to be like his father to represent the instability generated by the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.

I examine **My Father's House–The Idle Years** as the Oedipalized story of post-Ottoman Turkey.

**SABAHATTIN ALI**



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*'It is, perhaps, easier to dismiss a man whose face gives no indication of an inner life. And what a pity that is: a dash of curiosity is all it takes to stumble upon treasures we never expected.'*

The bestselling Turkish classic of love and longing in a changing world, available in English for the first time.

A shy young man leaves his home in rural Turkey to learn a trade in 1920s Berlin. The city's crowded streets, thriving arts scene, passionate politics and seedy cabarets provide the backdrop for a chance meeting with a woman, which will haunt him for the rest of his life.

Emotionally powerful, intensely atmospheric and touchingly profound, **Madonna in a Fur Coat** is an unforgettable novel about new beginnings and the unfathomable nature of the human soul.

'Passionate but clear . . . Ali's success [is in ] his ability to describe the emergence of a feeling, seemingly straightforward from the outside but swinging back and forth between opposite extremes at its core,



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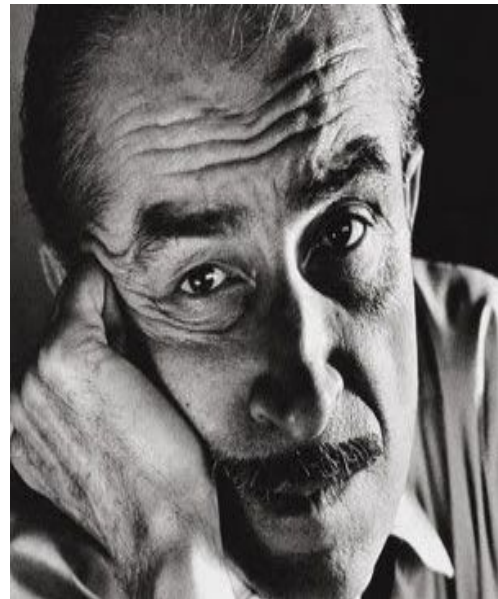
revealing the tensions that accompanies such rise and fall'.



Sabahattin Ali  
(1907 - 1948)



Reşat Nuri Güntekin



Orhan Kemal

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Special thanks to the students of 15 Temmuz Şehirler Anadolu Lisesi in Izmir for their contributions.

You can find a wider list of Turkish novels in English translation under this [link](#).

Visit [our website](#) with all presentations about the works of modern and contemporary literature of the partner countries of the Twin Library project.