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Creating Reading Habits Through Translation in Turkey (1840–1940)

Ahu Selin Erkul Yağci

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Le traducteur et ses lecteurs
Translators and their Readers

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Article abstract

Although translated books and readers are visibly and inextricably linked, readers, readers' expectations, attitudes and habits have only been partially analysed in translation research. In a similar vein, the relationship between translation and reader was rather left undiscovered by scholars studying translation/book/reading history. The aim of this paper is to present the findings of my comprehensive doctoral research on the pioneering role translation played in the history of reading and readers in Turkey between 1840 and 1940 by problematizing the relationship between translation, readers and their reading habits. This hundred year period is characterized by an apparent transformation in the literary production (especially in the number of translated works) and the publishing industry, which created an expansion in the number of readers and the development of new forms to suit the needs and tastes of this new readership. Data from a variety of sources including readers' letters and auto/biographical accounts will be used in this article to investigate readers, their reading habits and the transformative process they experienced through this reading (r)evolution. In the absence of library records and marginalia due to the inherent characteristics of the period under study, these letters and auto/biographical accounts are of primary importance in providing evidence of what and how the readers were actually reading. Their active involvement in the process (of selection and consumption of translated and/or indigeneous works) is also reflected through the views, experiences and perceptions that are present in these letters and accounts.

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MÉMOIRES DU LIVRE
STUDIES IN BOOK CULTURE

CREATING READING HABITS THROUGH TRANSLATION IN TURKEY (1840–1940)

Ahu Selin ERKUL YAĞCI
Ege University

ABSTRACT

Although translated books and readers are visibly and inextricably linked, readers, readers' expectations, attitudes and habits have only been partially analysed in translation research. In a similar vein, the relationship between translation and reader was rather left undiscovered by scholars studying translation/book/reading history. The aim of this paper is to present the findings of my comprehensive doctoral research on the pioneering role translation played in the history of reading and readers in Turkey between 1840 and 1940 by problematizing the relationship between translation, readers and their reading habits. This hundred year period is characterized by an apparent transformation in the literary production (especially in the number of translated works) and the publishing industry, which created an expansion in the number of readers and the development of new forms to suit the needs and tastes of this new readership. Data from a variety of sources including readers' letters and auto/biographical accounts will be used in this article to investigate readers, their reading habits and the transformative process they experienced through this reading (r)evolution. In the absence of library records and marginalia due to the inherent characteristics of the period under study, these letters and auto/biographical accounts are of primary importance in providing evidence of what and how the readers were actually reading. Their active involvement in the process (of selection and consumption of translated and/or indigeneous works) is also reflected through the views, experiences and perceptions that are present in these letters and accounts.

RÉSUMÉ

Bien que les œuvres en traduction soient visiblement et inextricablement liées à leur lectorat, la recherche en traduction n'a offert jusqu'à présent qu'une analyse partielle de ces lecteurs, de leurs attentes, attitudes et habitudes de lecture. De même, les chercheurs en histoire de la traduction, du livre et de la lecture se sont assez peu intéressés à la relation entre la traduction et le lecteur. Cet article présente les

résultats de mes recherches doctorales sur le rôle primordial joué par la traduction dans l'histoire de la lecture et des lecteurs en Turquie entre 1840 et 1940, et problématise le lien qui unit la traduction aux lecteurs et à leurs habitudes de lecture. Cette période de 100 ans se caractérise par une transformation manifeste de la production littéraire (en particulier quant au nombre d'œuvres traduites) et de l'industrie de l'édition, qui engendra une expansion du lectorat et le développement de nouvelles formes répondant aux besoins et aux goûts de celui-ci. Des données de sources diverses, dont des lettres et des récits (auto)biographiques de lecteurs, seront utilisées dans cet article pour révéler les caractéristiques du lectorat et des habitudes de lecture, ainsi que les changements qu'ils connurent durant cette (r)évolution de la lecture. En l'absence d'archives de bibliothèques et de notes marginales, absence inhérente à la période à l'étude, les lettres et les récits (auto)biographiques revêtent une importance primordiale si l'on souhaite établir ce que les lecteurs de l'époque lisaient réellement ainsi que la manière dont ils le faisaient. Leur participation au processus (de sélection et de consommation d'œuvres traduites ou indigènes) se reflète également dans les points de vue, les expériences et les perceptions consignés dans ces lettres et récits.

Over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century, the newly emerging Ottoman/Turkish reading public was introduced not only to a new literary genre through translation, but to a new social phenomenon, the "novel." Ahmed Midhat Efendi, a "cultural entrepreneur" in the late Ottoman literary tradition,[1] who introduced many genres, techniques and novelties to the Ottoman-Turkish "culture repertoire,"[2] held a leading position in the introduction of the novel to the Ottoman-Turkish readership through a variety of translation-based textual production strategies, as well as his indigenous writing. He described the novel in his foreword to *Nedamet mi? Heyhat!* as follows: "The novel is not only about narrating an entertaining or strange (*garip*) incident. The plot also (indirectly) provides information about sciences, technology, philosophy, geography, and history, and broadens the knowledge and learning of the readers."[3]

As this definition reveals, the novel for the Ottoman Turkish literary field in the late nineteenth century was not only a literary genre but rather a kind of narrative that served a variety of entertaining and didactic purposes. It was, in this context, used as an umbrella term[4] that covers all kinds of works of narrative fiction including novels, short stories, folk tales, but excludes other literary genres, such as drama and poetry.

The close ties between the emerging readership and the novel have been subject to scrutiny from several perspectives, especially by Western scholars.[5] Many international examples demonstrate the extent to which reading revolutions, described as "the momentous transformation in the function, type and role of reading practices,"[6] have modified the social, political, cultural and economic structure of peoples, communities and countries. Novels, and especially those "whose now unfamiliar titles recur with such frequency in the catalogs of lending libraries, the diaries and letters of readers,"[7] were usually taken as the driving force behind this transformation. Rather than being an actual moment in history, the reading revolution[8] is a term coined in hindsight by modern researchers, implying "an interpretive model that conceives the secular change as a revolutionary transition from "intensive" to "extensive" reading."[9] A "reading revolution" may also be said to have occurred in Turkey, where the proliferation of literary production, which targeted larger masses, resulted in the emergence of a reading public,[10] and in my view, this has been a process closely linked with translations from Western literatures. In this paper, by presenting the findings of my doctoral research on the pioneering role translation played in the history of reading and readers in Turkey between 1840 and 1940,[11] I aim to reveal the role of translation in the emergence of a new readership and the creation of reading habits. Moreover, by highlighting the interaction between the readers and translated as well as indigenous novels, I aim to underline the active role readers have, in addition to writers/translators and publishers, in the dissemination of the novel as a popular genre.

In this study, which is situated at the juncture of translation/book history on the one hand and book reading history on the other, I borrow the basic concepts of the theoretical framework from these fields (i.e. culture planning, culture repertoire, market, agent, reading revolution) as well as from sociology and reception theory (i.e. field and habitus). Itamar Even-Zohar's concepts of "culture repertoire" and "culture planning" are used to problematize the role of translation in the formation of a reading public. The readers are taken as "consumers" who acted as active agents in creating new options for the repertoire. The concept of the "market" is also of primary importance in the discussion of the role of the "consumers". The concept of the "market," after Even-Zohar, is "the aggregate of factors involved with the selling and buying of products and with the promotion of types of consumption."[12] These

factors include not only goods, sales and marketing strategies, but also producers, suppliers and consumers of goods. The market is not only used to refer to the "selling and buying" of products, but also includes the "production and consumption" of goods in the wider sense of this process. Since the main argument is related to readers as agents and to their reading habits and the fields in which they operate, a cultural and sociological model is needed. Pierre Bourdieu's cultural theory and related concepts are adopted in this study since his conceptual framework enables greater understanding on both the individual and social levels.[13] Bourdieu's concept of "habitus" allows the researchers to take into consideration both the structuring and structured qualities of agents in a given field, thus offering a broader outlook that encompasses both the subjective and the objective facts of life.[14] In this study, Bourdieu's model of the cultural field is used to define the literary field in the period between 1840 and 1940, during which readers together with other agents, such as writers, publishers and translators occupied important positions. I use the term "reader's habitus" to describe a series of dispositions that generate practices and perceptions.

Research with a Historical Focus on Readers, Books and Translation

Research on book and reading history (involving book production and consumption) in Turkey is rather limited and incomplete. Important contributions to this subject come from a combination of works in the fields of history, literary studies and translation studies. Most of these do not directly focus on readers; rather, they usually contribute to the field by investigating different elements that constitute the literary and publishing fields in Turkey.

Historical studies have mostly highlighted the importance of the multi-ethnic structure of the Ottoman Empire and its influence on readers and reading practices. Johann Strauss discussed the different segments of the Ottoman "reading public," with a special emphasis on publications in various languages of the Empire (i.e. "in the languages of the Turks, Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians, Jews, Arabs and Levantines").[15] In addition to his emphasis on the multi-ethnic structure of the readership, he asserted in his article "Who Read What in the Ottoman Empire (19th - 20th Centuries)?" that the Ottoman

world of letters went through a revolution in the nineteenth century.[16] His assertion overlaps with the generally accepted perception of "the reading revolution,"that is transformations in the reading habits of the Ottoman/Turkish society after the mid-nineteenth century. Strauss linked the reading revolution with the emergence of a reading public, that became primarily involved with Western literatures and Western genres (ibid), and especially the genre of the "novel."[17] This reading public would undergo a reading revolution described by Nurdan Gürbilek as a process where the proliferation of literary production targeted at larger masses resulted in the emergence of a reading public.[18] Gürbilek focused on fictional readers in the early novels, and the way reading and readers (especially women readers) were depicted. The concept of "reading revolution" in her study is investigated through fictional characters and the transformation these characters experienced under the influence of translated novels (ibid). Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar, in an earlier study on Ottoman/Turkish literary history, similarly underlined the relationship between the selection of the texts to be translated and the readers. He further claimed that the standard of works selected improved as the reading public developed, and with the establishment of "a community of 'readers of novels' in Thibaudet's terminology."[19] Tanpınar hailed Ahmed Mithat as the first "reader of novels," the patron of the reading public, and labels his complete oeuvre as the "public reading room."[20] Correspondingly, Ahmet Ö.Evin correlated the publication of popular novels and readers' expectations, claiming that the "publication of such adventure and mystery novels as those by Defoe, Dumas, Radcliffe and Montépin, regardless of discrepancies in sub-genre and literary value, is an indicator of an established audience for popular fiction and a guaranteed commercial success."[21] This means that these publications (novels) helped further enlarge the audience and create the habit of reading for pleasure among the middle class.

Furthermore, the concept of the "reading revolution" has been investigated quantitatively and qualitatively within the discussions on the Language/Alphabet Reform. The literacy rate both before and after the Alphabet Reform has been thoroughly analyzed in discussions of the impact of this challenging phase. Since no official record for the literacy rate in the Ottoman period was kept, the numbers provided are basically estimations based on different indicators, such as the number of primary schools or the

annual number of books published. François Georgeon estimated that in 1914 (just before the First World War), only 10 to 15 percent of the Ottoman people were literate. Georgeon challenged the widely held hypothesis on the low literacy levels existing before the Republican era, stating that the wartime losses (casualties and territory losses) may be seen as the primary reason explaining this misperception, which was commonly manipulated by the Republican ideological stance.[22] However, even taking into account these ideological manipulations aimed at underestimating the literacy rates and the strength of the publishing sector in the Ottoman period, it is impossible to deny the notable success achieved in literacy rates after the Alphabet Reform. The literacy rates increased from 8.15 percent in the 1927 population census (10.6 for the citizens above age 7) to 20.4 percent in the 1935 and to 30.5 percent in 1945, a clear indicator of the scale of the mobilization. Geoffrey Lewis, defining the Alphabet Reform and the subsequent Language Reform with the term "catastrophic success," produced a comprehensive survey of the dual effects of this revolutionary phase, focusing on both the social and political background.[23]

The reasons behind the reading revolution in Ottoman/Turkish society have also been studied recently from different perspectives. The new style of schooling, related reforms and important outputs in the Ottoman Empire have all been the subject of thorough and comprehensive research.[24] More specifically, Benjamin C. Fortna attempted to take a holistic approach to these two periods by focusing on the mechanics of reading, textbooks, books as commodity, and the early memoirs of Turkish writers' investigation into the process of learning to read and childhood reading in the late Ottoman Empire and the early Republican period, in *Learning to Read in the Late Ottoman and Early Republican Turkey*.[25] Fortna's study contributes to research on the foundations of the reading revolution in the Ottoman/Turkish society and may be seen as one of the rare studies focusing exclusively on readers and reading habits in Turkey.

In addition to studies that establish links between the reading revolution and the Alphabet Reform, Sinan Çetin made use of catalogues as indicators of new marketing strategies adopted by booksellers to investigate this transformation.[26] A number of scholars attempted to evaluate the reading revolution through the literary works available in the period under study.

Sıddıka Dilek Yalçın, for instance, in her doctoral dissertation entitled "XIX. Yüzyıl Edebiyatında Popüler Roman,"[27] first defined the "popular novel" through secondary sources, before providing detailed lists of translated and indigenous popular novels published from 1840 to 1900. Erol Üyepazarcı's influential and comprehensive work *Korkmayınız Mister Sherlock Holmes! Türkiye'de Polisiye Romanın 125 Yıllık Öyküsü*[28] is a two-volume study investigating the largely obscure history of Turkish detective (crime) fiction, dating back to the Ottoman period. This work may be cited as a pioneer in the field of book history, and includes a detailed bibliography of both translated and indigenous detective fiction in Turkey.

In a similar vein, a number of recent studies in the field of translation history contribute to research in book and reading history, representing a wide range of focuses. Şehnaz Tahir Gürçağlar's use of the notion of "network" to expand the framework of translation historiography and thus provide a fuller inventory of translation-related phenomena in the initial phases of research seems to have clear parallels with Darnton's above-mentioned concept of "communication circuit."[29] Tahir-Gürçağlar adopted the "network analysis" model, previously applied in several social and natural disciplines, in order "to expand the methodological range in translation studies, providing room for issues such as translator's agency, translation processes or interpersonal dynamics in the fields of translation and publishing."[30] Tahir-Gürçağlar attempted to trace a network within the field of popular literature in Turkey, entering the network from the starting point of the publishing company Altın Kitaplar, from where she maps out the intricate relationships among publishers, translators, writers, translation strategies and genre/literary status. The inclusion of "translator" into the communication circuit may be considered a major contribution to book history research. In *The Politics and Poetics of Translation 1923–1960*,[31] she analyzed the publishing industry and the writer-publisher-translator-reader network in the Republican period from a translation point of view. The issues she explored, the arguments she proposed and her methodology generated many pioneering ideas in the field of translation history. In an analysis of the literary polysystem in Turkey in 1923–1960, Tahir-Gürçağlar also discussed "the different groups of readership and the kinds of material they read."[32] She identified three types of readership based on a survey of statements by writers and scholars. The first consists of the educated urban classes reading translated and indigenous

canonical and semi-canonical books. The second group is formed of a rural population who read folk tales, and the third group consists of readers interested chiefly in detective and adventure fiction.[33] This classification seems to be in tune with that of other men of letters of the period. More importantly, Tahir Gürçağlar employed reception theories in an analysis of readers' letters in the magazine *Varlık* to survey the readers' expectations towards translation.[34] She suggests that such letters are important tools to reveal that rather than being silent, passive and invisible, as often they were thought, readers could be one of the several "gateways" into translation history in Turkey.[35] My research is accordingly triggered both by the desire to enter this gateway, and by the deficiency of comprehensive studies on readers and the formation of a new readership through different channels.

Data Collection

In spite of this body of research, therefore, still little is known about either the publishing industry that made possible the rise of the book industry in the Ottoman and Republican periods, or the readership that maintained it. In the initial phase of my research, difficulties in accessing sources related to readers and their reading habits stood as an obstacle. The lack of archival material, especially library records, prompted a search for a range of new sources, and a wide range of methodologies to exploit them. The most easily accessible sources were bibliographies, which provided data on the production of novels. I decided, therefore, to list translated and indigenous novels published between 1840 and 1940 in order to offer a fuller panorama of the production of novels. By taking this approach, I planned to access information on readers by reversing the method, that is, by gaining insight into consumption through production. While working on the lists that were later consolidated into the catalogue (later published on the Internet),[36] and simultaneously reading memoirs, interviews and biographical accounts, I realized that titles published in book form constituted only part of the production of novels and my research would not be as comprehensive as initially planned unless it included serialized fiction published in newspapers and journals. Still, I carried out a preliminary research in newspapers and journals published in the period under study, and I found that these were inextricably linked to the production of novels, not only through the publication of serialized fiction, but also through the advertisements and reviews that were published to market novels.

These advertisements and reviews constituted the marketing phase, i.e. the visible links, between the production and consumption phases. In a similar vein, I scrutinized some of the booksellers' catalogues that were identified in the bibliographies researched. My research in newspapers and journals provided me with a variety of first-hand material such as advertisements, reviews, readers' letters, articles, illustrations and photographs that served both the marketing and consumption phases. Moreover, I collected and read a great variety of memoirs, biographies and autobiographies in order to identify the material most popular with readers of the period. In brief, the sources for the present came piecemeal from the meticulous scrutiny of a variety of sources.

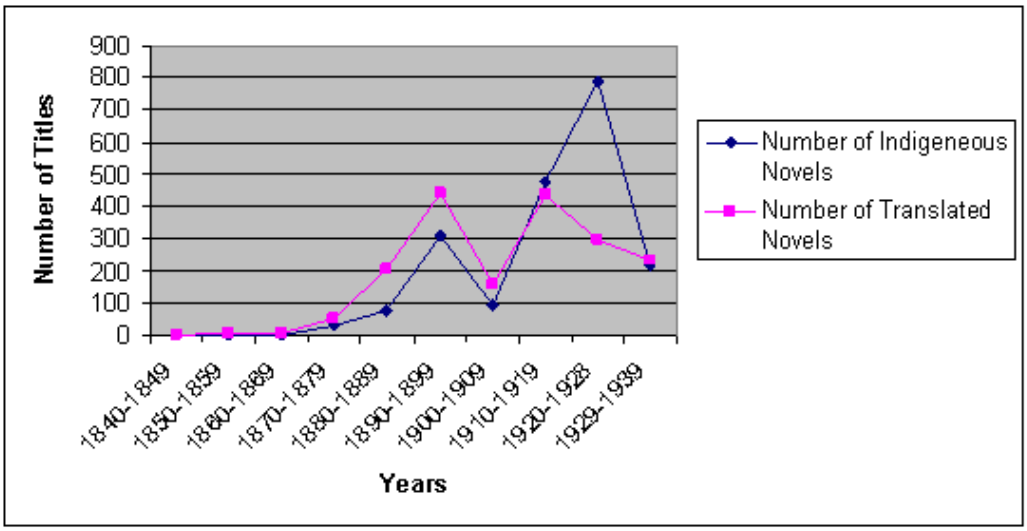
What Was Produced?

In order to analyze readers and their reading habits, I used an indirect strategy by focusing on the production phase through bibliographical material. The patterns in the production of novels between 1840 and 1940 are studied through the catalogue, whose aim is to identify and classify the indigenous and translated "novels" published in book form between 1840 and 1940.[37]

According to data from the catalogue, the proportion of translations constitutes 15–20 percent of the total book production, which is an important figure to draw the macro-level panoramic view of the publishing industry between 1840 and 1940. The proportion of novels within the total production was 6.26 percent and a high proportion of these, 46 percent, were translated titles. This predominance was the first striking evidence of the formative role of translation in the production of novels. The annual figures for novels were compared to the total book production to assess the chronological development of the genre through the numbers of both indigenous and translated titles. I suggest that the figures, and especially their distribution across decades (Fig. 1), represent quantitative evidence for the reading revolution experienced at this time. The very low number of novels in the first half of the nineteenth century dramatically increased into the hundreds after 1880, and thereafter fluctuated in accordance with socio-political and cultural events. For instance, the decline in book production at the beginning of the 1900s was clearly related to the strict censorship, while the recovery of the 1920s was sufficiently strong to absorb the short-term shock of the war

periods. The prevalence of translation, moreover, is another indication of its pioneering and innovative role in this revolutionary transformation, marked by a shift from intensive to extensive reading.

Fig.1



The catalogue, moreover, provided other parameters that may be used for further bibliographical analysis on the production side. For instance, the scrutiny of the printers, publishers, and booksellers active in the late Ottoman period especially revealed the non-professional organization of the publishing market and the agents involved in the production. Both technical and commercial aspects of book production were done by the same groups of agents who were involved in different phases, such as production, distribution, marketing and sales. Most of the individuals in the market were simultaneously printers [tabi], publishers [naşir] and booksellers [kitabçı]. Printing houses printed books from multiple publishers and booksellers, and it was also common for publishers and/or booksellers to have their own printing house. Their symbiotic relationships were reflected in bibliographical material. The transition from this symbiotic relationship to a more professionalized organization in the period after the Alphabet Reform was also observable in the catalogue, in which it was apparent that the tasks of printing and bookselling were carried out by different agents. A similar scrutiny of the most prolific writers and translators of the period strongly suggests that writers and translators were also part of this organization

scheme, based on multi-tasking, which gives a clear indication of the profile of novel producers.

The list of most translated authors and statistical data on format/series and reprints and retranslations, moreover, helped to make connections between the production and consumption phases. The high proportion of the French titles both in first editions and in reprints and retranslations, for example, may be taken as evidence of readers' habits, and the preferences of the agents in the publishing market. Another obvious remarkable change in readerly tastes in the period after the Alphabet Reform is the rise of the number of translations from Russian literature. Studying the format, including page numbers, formula stories, and series, provided insightful data on the marketing strategies in the formation and maintenance of a readership and readers' preferences, though indirectly. Reprints and retranslations accordingly establish concrete connections between the producers and consumers since they give an approximate indication of the popularity of a work. Data from the catalogue, in brief, through an indirect strategy to investigate readers and reading habits, strengthens the main argument that novels, in translation, played a formative role in the creation and maintenance of a new kind of readership.

How They Were Advertised

Advertisements and reviews published in book catalogues, newspapers and journals revealed more tangible links between the production and consumption phases. They were the main sources from which the readers themselves learnt about new publications, literary trends and issues. Thus, the study of the marketing strategies served a dual purpose, since they do not only provide insightful information on the ways new publications were introduced to the readers, but also on the contexts in which the readers of the period received them.

Advertisements and reviews as primary sources provided a unique opportunity to learn how translated and indigenous titles were presented to the readers. Reviews, in a similar vein, illustrated issues related to translation and literature within their historical context. The high frequency of advertisements for translated novels in catalogues, newspapers and journals

discloses the predominance of translated novels within the literary market. Indigenous titles were also advertised, but less often than the translations. This higher proportion may be considered evidence for both the publishers and booksellers' innovative roles as "agents of change," and also for the popularity of translated titles among the readers. Quite surprisingly, the predominance of translation in the market becomes more visible through advertisements consisting of lists of titles translated by a particular translator in newspapers and journals. Special columns were allocated to the advertisements of the works translated by distinguished and prolific translators such as Ahmed Midhat Efendi, Ali İhsan (Tokgöz) and Haydar Rifat. These lists were also included inside the translated books themselves. This fact clearly shows the central position of translators as "agents of change" within the literary market.

The ways in which translations and indigenous novels were presented to the readers were remarkably different. In general terms, for translated titles, popularity with the readers was underlined, while in advertisements for indigenous titles, the writers and their fame, as well as their previous works, were emphasized, especially in the period before the Alphabet Reform. The foci of the advertisements seem to be changed after the Alphabet Reform, when translated titles began to be marketed with a special emphasis on their literary merit, endorsed by the reviews of literary critics. This demarcation may be taken as evidence of the transformation of readers' habits, which evolved over time. Literary quality and value were added to the other characteristics stressed in the booksellers' catalogues and in newspapers and journals advertisements, such as pleasure and knowledge. However, not all translated titles were initially marketed with an emphasis on their literary value. The old approach was not completely eliminated, though, especially for works of popular literature. These different approaches may be seen as proof of the professionalization of the market, bolstered by the emergence of the implementation of different strategies to attract the attention of different groups with different readers' tastes and preferences. The analysis of advertorial material thus proved to be a rich and valuable source in tracing the profile of readers and reading habits, which seems to have evolved in accordance with the changing conditions and dynamics of the market.

Consumption: Who Were the Readers? Reading Habits?

A great variety of textual and visual sources such as readers' letters and biographical accounts were investigated in order to enlighten the consumption and reception phase. Visual materials collected from a variety of sources were also studied, presenting valuable visual evidence on readers as consumers and the transformative process they experienced. In the absence of library records and marginalia, sources that were most directly linked to readers, letters and biographical accounts, were of primary importance in accessing direct evidence on readers.

As far as letters are concerned, my research on a small number of newspapers and journals published in the late Ottoman period proved to be fruitless, as I was unable to find any readers' letters published in the period. Nevertheless, the correspondence between bookseller Arakel and Hüseyin Hüsnü Efendi, an Ottoman military officer in Yemen, allowed us to hear the voices of the Ottoman readers. These letters (eleven letters by Arakel and two letters by Hüseyin Hüsnü Efendi), included information on book orders, financial matters and the variety of services bookseller Arakel provided to his customers. It is evident that these letters offer first hand evidence on the reading habits and preferences of readers in Ottoman provinces and their active involvement in the purchase of books. They provided, moreover, lists of both indigenous and translated titles ordered by Hüseyin Hüsnü Efendi and other readers. Some of the titles were recommended by Arakel himself, highlighting his role as an active participant in the selection process. The booksellers' position as "agents of change" in the formation and maintenance of a readership and the dissemination of reading habits is thus underlined via these letters.

The readers' letters published in the newspapers and journals after the Alphabet Reform,[38] on the other hand, had a rather different agenda. These letters were written to serve public purposes and their content was generally related to contemporary discussions and events. Among the most common topics of newspapers and journals were the new alphabet, the new publishing and education system, the formation of a new readership and the dissemination of reading habits. Readers were encouraged to read more and devise new strategies to improve reading habits through a wide range of

textual and visual material including articles, interviews and advertisements published frequently in newspapers and journals. Readers participated in these discussions through letters suggesting ways to improve the reading habits among citizens, or requesting new publications, especially new translated titles. The letters also criticized the deficiencies of the book market and recommended steps (such as planning translation activity and improving the conditions of the libraries) that should be taken to enrich the "culture repertoire" and disseminate reading habits. In brief, the scrutiny of readers' letters was important in demonstrating that readers were not silent, or passive, but rather active participants in the reading process, including selection, distribution, consumption and reception.

The study of biographical accounts provided evidence of what and how individual readers actually read throughout the period. In the narratives,[39] the predominance of novels, and especially translated novels, may be taken as an indicator of the emergence of a reading public with a particular reading habitus. The biographical accounts seem to reinforce the central position of translation in the culture repertoire, as already put forward above. The heterogeneity of reading practices and their blurred contours is illustrated by the fact that most readers cited both works of high literature together and a range of popular texts. However, the recurrent themes, such as the passion for reading and the influence of the family, are important as witnesses to the birth of reading as consumption and as a solitary activity, thus a new reader habitus. The acquisition of this habitus is evidenced in the reception of religious and heroic stories, the memoirs related to book ownership, the way individual readers narrated their personal involvement with books, and the titles they selected as most favoured.

The analysis of the visual material that was based on the recurrences of certain key themes throughout the period contributed to the present research by presenting a visual image of the readers and their transformation between 1840 and 1940. The visual materials were indirect sources, and due to their inherent characteristics, were hard to interpret. I do not pretend to have carried out a full-fledged visual analysis and I suggest that further research into the indirect evidence will prove to be beneficial in addressing deficiencies in the representation of common readers. By investigating cultural representations of reading in both literature and in graphic arts, which offer

indirect and interpretation-bound evidence on the act of reading, researchers may be able to achieve both a clear overall view as well as detailed insight into the readers and their reading habits. Information about literary characters, their reading habits, the books they read (indigenous texts and/or translations) together with photographs and paintings showing the activity of reading may thus be used to complement the profile of readers.

Reading Habit(use)s and Reading (R)evolution

My overall aim in these three separate but interrelated parts was to present each phase in relation to others through a number of sources, as well as related methodological tools, namely, quantitative methods (bibliographical analysis and statistics), extratextual analysis, and discourse analysis. It was an attempt to fuse together qualitative and quantitative material on the different phases of reading activity, namely production, marketing and consumption.

As stated, this research emerged as a response to the vacuum in the fields of book/reading history research, since there is an apparent neglect, or even lack of willingness to address the position of translation and translators within this area of research. Its approach to the role that translation played in the formation and maintenance of a readership, and the detailed information presented on the reception of translations by readers have thus contributed to the field of reading history, positing an alternative way to view the history of readers. As one example of this, the popularity of translated titles among the readers and the participation of the translators as multi-tasking agents in the production phase may expand the borders of research in book/reading history. The focus on translation and translators also contributes to the analysis of the dynamics of the market by the establishment of discernible links between production and consumption. The present research has revealed the possibility for expanding Robert Darnton's term "communication circuit," currently understood as a network beginning with authors and publishers, filtering through printers, shippers, reviewers and booksellers, to the reader, and from there back to the authors. This expansion would be the inclusion of translators within the circuit.

The findings, moreover, have complemented, to some extent, ongoing international research in book/reading history, since it provided empirical

data from Turkey, and thus expanded the geographical reach of reading history studies. It attempted to trace the itinerary of the novel through the titles in the catalogue, but my comments were inevitably rather limited since my aim here was solely to survey the role played by translators and translation in constructing a new genre, reading habits and a reading public. However, I believe that to a certain extent I was able to address the question "What kind of history of the novel would emerge if we focused on these and other similar data, rather than on a few canonized works and authors?". I was able to do this by expanding conventional studies on literature, by avoiding oversimplification especially on the arguments about what was produced and consumed. In other words, materials presented in the present study may be further analyzed in order to re-assess the chronological development of the genre of the novel and trace its itinerary in Turkey, not only from the conventional view, but from the consumption perspective, through titles that were specifically produced and advertised for, and read by, the readers of the period.

Lastly, I suggest that my research and its holistic perspective covering both producers and consumers in the period between 1840 and 1940, i.e., the periods before and after the Alphabet Reform, has allowed for a more thorough contextualization of the continuity and discontinuity in production, marketing and consumption phases. For instance, as far as the production phase is concerned, it was possible to trace the fluctuations in the number of translated and indigenous titles, the rise of the concept of the series in the market, the gradual substitution of the format of installments with book format, and the apparent professionalization of the market through the division of labor among printers, publishers and booksellers. Similar transformations were observable in the marketing strategies. For example, it was possible to see that the way in which translations and indigenous titles were advertised changed through time. This also reflects a transformation in the readers' profile, seen especially in the readers' letters, which show their increasing involvement in the selection process and in the creation of a new "culture repertoire."

Thus far, I have commented on the methodological issues and contributions to the existing and prospective research on the empirical level. There are further implications, however, especially on the conceptual level. The

examination of the development of the novel and its readers provided bibliographical, extratextual, biographical as well as first-hand evidence on the reading revolution Ottoman/Turkish readers experienced in the period between 1840 and 1940. It also proved that, although the term "reading revolution" is generally used to describe the transformation in readers and their habit(us), what the Ottoman-Turkish readers experienced and participated in was in fact an evolution, rather than a revolution in the habits of the readers, shaped over time by a number of socio-political and cultural factors.

The readers investigated lived in a period marked by wide-ranging changes in production, marketing and consumption. In that period, both the number of readers and the amount read increased. Novels were a staple of individual and family reading sessions, increasingly filled leisure time, and contributed to the idea of betterment in life and self-improvement. People read to educate themselves and to slake their thirst for knowledge in every aspect of life. The nature of reading changed throughout the period from "intensive" to "extensive," through the shift from old habituses to newer ones. At this point, I believe that I would conclude that the systemic concepts of "culture repertoire" and "market" were successfully adopted in the investigation of the Ottoman-Turkish case, where the market was defined not only to include goods, sales and marketing strategies, but also producers, suppliers and consumers of goods. The readers at the center of the study thus were taken as "consumers," who acted as active agents, together with the producers in the market, in creating new options for the repertoire. These two theoretical concepts were chosen to explain the specific conditions under which mass literacy spread and reading (both for didactic purposes and for pleasure) became popular.

Furthermore, the term habitus, the symbolically structured sets of dispositions that relate individuals to institutional rules through customary norms,[40] was most suited to the description of the readers of the period and the way in which they acquired their reading habitus which shaped their reading materials and methods.

By taking into account both the structuring and structured qualities of agents, I propose that readers' habituses were structured over time by the

intervention of the many agents active in the field, such as publishers, booksellers, translators and writers. The material studied, namely the titles published and their related advertisements, reviews and illustrations, may all be considered evidence of the options available, and the way in which these options structured readers' habituses. The biographical accounts and the photographs of readers examined, in a similar vein, display not only aspects of each reader's unique habitus, but also the similarities in habituses due to the fact that these individual readers were exposed to the same or similar "culture repertoire" and experienced similar contexts. The early memoirs of reading, the influence of the families narrated recurrently in the biographical accounts may be taken as further examples that illustrate the way in which readers acquired their habituses. For instance, Hüseyin Cahit's personal reading history depicts the way he acquired his original reading habitus and how this changed over time due to many factors.

Moreover, I believe that my research has shown the active participation of readers in the reading (r)evolution in progress between 1840 and 1940. In other words, the readers' own agency in the structuring power of their habituses was also highlighted in this study. There are many instances in which readers' active involvement became visible. The correspondence between bookseller Arakel and Hüseyin Hüsnü Efendi may be cited as an early example where the readers (represented in this case by Hüseyin Hüsnü Efendi) were mobilised to transform their habituses. The correspondence revealed bookseller Arakel's attempts to modify the habituses of readers by encouraging more reading, thus introducing a new habitus. This was clearly an attempt to re-shape the existing habitus. Hüseyin Hüsnü Efendi actively participated in this attempt and responded by helping other readers acquire similar habituses. Reviewers in the late Ottoman period aimed at a similar change by promoting certain works worthy of reading. The way they categorized readers and promoted reading of certain kinds of works were all attempts to replace the existing habitus. Newspapers and journals both before and after the Alphabet Reform regularly published articles aimed at promoting reading, by extolling the characteristics of a typical modern reader. Reading thus became an acclaimed activity. The articles, illustrations, interviews, advertisements and reviews may be seen as stimulants used to promote the acquisition of a new habitus. Readers' letters, in this sense, may be regarded as the symptom of a change in the reception patterns of the

readers, who became more experienced and started acquiring a different kind of cultural and literary habitus as a result of the reading revolution, which was created by the joint efforts of all these agents. Readers of newspapers and magazines, whether for entertainment or didactic purposes, became exposed to the discourse extolling the characteristics of the modern reader, a discourse which may have been instrumental in their acquisition of the new habitus. In response, they wrote letters that reflected their views, their experiences and perceptions, in short, their habituses. In this way, they became active participants in this transformation process, and the making of a new repertoire. Not only was the presence of readers seen in the letters they wrote, but the photographs taken of them while reading were also important instances of readers proudly exhibiting themselves and their new habitus. These readers sent their photographs to journals and newspapers to demonstrate their acquisition of the new cultural habitus and membership to the modern and lauded readership, thus actively participating in the process of creation of this new habitus. These photographs were accordingly published to promote reading as a prestigious activity, a cultural habitus that every modern citizen had a duty to acquire. Thus, readers contributed to the establishment of a new reading habitus, not only through their letters, but also their photographs.

To sum up, I suggest that the Bourdieusian term "habitus," which facilitated the evaluation of the materials studied, enabled us to analyze readers as active agents, who either possessed, or were in the process of acquiring a "reading habitus" that shaped their choice of reading materials and methods. The catalogue and advertisements conveyed the options available in the market and highlighted the desirable qualities of materials. Recurrent themes concerning the acquisition of the habitus encountered in biographical accounts reveal that these were structured and learned dispositions. The heterogeneity of reading activities portrayed in biographical accounts and visual elements were important in displaying the variety of habituses, and readers' letters were important in reflecting these changes as well as readers' active involvement in the structuring of these changes. In fact, I believe that I would conclude that it is possible to redefine the term "reading revolution" as an evolution, i.e. the transformation in readers' habituses, which generated new dispositions and perceptions, or rather, a gradual transformation of the habitus through modifications of the dispositions, in contrast to the sudden

change implied by the term "revolution." Future research can further investigate this reading (r)evolution, which was marked by the changes in readers' habituses, by exploring those aspects which were not fully included within the scope of this study and therefore remain less developed.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE

Ahu Selin Erkul Yağcı is an Asssistant Professor in the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Ege University, Izmir. She received her PhD from Boğaziçi University with her doctoral dissertation entitled "Turkey's Reading Revolution: A Study on Books, Readers and Translation (1840-1940)" (2012). Her research interests are translation history, book and reading history and reception studies. She currently works on translator-writers and their role in translation history in Turkey. She has been teaching practical and theoretical translation courses for over ten years.

Notes

[1] Saliha Paker, "Bir Kültür Planlamacısı Olarak Ahmed Midhat," paper presented at the *Symposium on Ahmed Midhat Efendi* (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Turkish Language and Literature Department, 2004).

[2] Itamar Even-Zohar, "Culture Planning and the Market: Making and Maintaining Socio-Semiotic Entities," (1994), http://www.tau.ac.il/itamaez/papers7plan clt.html.

[3] My translation, first published in 1898, quoted in Berna Moran, *Türk Romanına Eleştirel Bir Bakış I* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), 18–19.

[4] I claim that by the late nineteenth century and during the first half of the twentieth century, advertising booksellers, reviewers and, concomitantly, readers accepted the novel as a distinct category, even though it encompassed a great many narrative forms: fables, romances, biographical and autobiographical memoirs, historical accounts, satirical tales and exchanges in letters. Similar situations were also valid for the earlier European counterparts. Rev. Edward Mangin defines the word novel as "a generical term; of which romances, histories, memoirs, letters, tales, lives, and adventures, are the species." Mangin quoted in James Raven, "Britain 1750–1830," in *The Novel Volume I History, Geography and Culture,* ed. Franco Moretti (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 429.

[5] Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader* 1837–1914 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). Stefan Bollmann, *Women Who Read Are Dangerous* (U.K: Merrell Publishers, 2008).

[6] Reinhard Wittmann, "Was There a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?", in *A History of Reading in the West,* ed. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 285.

[7] Jonathan Zwicker, "Japan 1850–1900," in *The Novel Volume I History, Geography and Culture,* ed. Franco Moretti (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 509–21.

[8] The term "reading revolution" is not only used for the transformation from "intensive" to "extensive reading"; we may also talk about reading revolutions such as transition from the oral to written literature, from reading aloud to silent reading, and from manuscripts to printed texts. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, "Introduction," in *A History of Reading in the West,* trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 22–29.

[9] The terms "intensive reading" and "extensive reading" here are used to define the materials read and the manner of reading. "Intensive reading" usually involves the selective reading of holy texts where people read the same text again and again for various purposes (learning by heart, extracting morals or as part of a ritual). "Extensive reading," on the other hand, refers to a more widespread reading practice where people read a greater variety of texts with miscelleneaous purposes (didactic or informative purposes, reading for pleasure). Ibid., 24.

[10] Nurdan Gürbilek, "Erkek Yazar, Kadın Okur," in *Kadınlar Dile Düşünce Edebiyat ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet,* ed. Sibel Irzık and Jale Parla (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006), 275–307.

[11] The period under study, especially the period after 1870, was a period of expansion in the number of readers and the development of new forms of publications to suit their needs and tastes. Indeed, this century was marked by a series of revolutions that deeply affected political, social and cultural life, and included the Second Constitutional period (1908), the foundation of the Turkish Republic (1923), and the Alphabet Reform (1928). The end of the period of the current research was chosen as 1940, another key date, at least for translation history, when the state-sponsored Translation Bureau (1940–1966) was founded under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, and undertook, in particular, the translation and publication of a considerable number of canonized literary works. The rapid popularization of the novel shortly following its entry into Turkey via translation in the second half of the nineteenth century and the impetus this provided for the formation of a readership are the main reasons for choosing novels as the case in point.

[12] Even-Zohar, "Culture Planning and the Market," 22.

[13] Pierre Bourdieu, *In Other Words* (London: Polity Press, 1990).

[14] Ibid., 10.

[15] Johann Strauss, "Who Read What in the Ottoman Empire (19th–20th centuries?)," in *Middle Eastern Literatures* 6, no. 1 (1998): 39–76.

[16] Ibid., 39.

[17] Johann Strauss, "'Romanlar! Ah o Romanlar!' Les Débuts de la lecture moderne dans l'empire ottoman (1850–1900)," in *TURCICA* XXVI (1994): 125–63.

[18] Gürbilek, "Erkek Yazar, Kadın Okur," 300.

[19] Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2006), 265.

[20] Ibid., 412.

[21] Ahmet Ö. Evin. *Origins and Development of the Turkish Novel* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1983), 40.

[22] François Georgeon, "Lire et écrire à la fin de l'Empire Ottoman : quelques remarques" in *REMMM* 75–76 (1995): 169–79.

[23] Geoffrey Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[24] For further information, see Selçuk Somel Akşin's *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839–1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (2001), and Benjamin C. Fortna's *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (2002).

[25] Benjamin C. Fortna, *Learning to Read in the Late Ottoman and Early Republican Period* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan Publishing, 2011).

[26] Sinan Çetin, "Booksellers and Their Catalogs in Hamidian Istanbul, 1884–1901" (Master Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2010).

[27] Sıddıka Dilek Yalçın Yalçın, "XIX Yüzyıl Edebiyatında Popüler Roman" (Ph.D.diss., Hacettepe University, 1998).

[28] Erol Üyepazarcı, *Korkmayınız Mister Sherlock Holmes! Türkiye'de Polisiye Romanın 125 Yıllık Öyküsü.* (İstanbul: Oğlak Yayınları, 2008).

[29] Robert Darnton, "First Steps Toward a History of Reading," in *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1990), 181–9.

[30] Şehnaz Tahir-Gürçağlar, *Kapılar* (Istanbul: Scala Yayıncılık, 2005), 25–63.

[31] Şehnaz Tahir-Gürçağlar, *The Politics and Poetics of Translation in Turkey, 1923–1960* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2008).

[32] Ibid., 242.

[33] Ibid., 242–3.

[34] Tahir Gürçağlar, *Kapılar,* 165–89.

[35] Ibid., 188.

[36] A. Selin Erkul Yağcı, *The Catalogue of Indigenous and Translated Novels Published between 1840 and 1940*, July 2011, http://kisi.deu.edu.tr/selin.erkul/Erkul_Catalogue_July_2011.pdf .

[37] Three main sources were screened to build the bibliographical catalogue of novels originally written in Turkish and those translated into Turkish. The first one is Seyfettin Özege's *The Catalogue of Turkish Works Published in Arabic (Old) Script* (*Eski Harflerle Basılmış Türkçe Eserler Katalogu*), which includes a comprehensive bibliography of the works published in Ottoman-Turkish in Arabic script before the Alphabet Reform in 1928. The second source is an unpublished doctoral dissertation entitled "Popular Novel in Turkey" (*Türkiye'de Popüler Roman*) (1998) by Sıddıka Dilek Yalçın, which provides lists of indigenous and translated novels that were published until 1900. The related three volumes of the Turkish national bibliography, *Bibliography of Turkey* (*Türkiye Bibliyografyası*), constitute the third source that provides bibliographical data on the Republican era. These three sources have been the main references but other sources were required to complete the lists and to cross-check unclear information that frequently occurred due to the complex and even ambiguous nature of that kind of historical research. During the data collection process, other sources such as the internet, encyclopedias, literary histories, memoirs, etc. were also frequently resorted to. The catalogue consists of 3933 titles and translated, indigeneous, and anonymous titles, which were each listed in a single file but marked by different colours.

[38] In order to hear the voices of the readers of the period after the Alphabet Reform, I scrutinized readers' letters in *Vakit* (1929, 1934 and 1935), *Cumhuriyet* (1929, 1930, 1935 and 1939) and *Yedigün* (1935–1939), *Yarım Ay* (1935), *Hafta* (1934, 1937).

[39] The readers whose narratives or biographical accounts will be presented range from popular figures who played important roles in Turkish history, to well-known doctors, writers, and scholars, such as Latife Hanım, Halide Edip Adıvar, Mina Urgan, Leziz Onaran, Muhibbe Darga, etc.

[40] Bourdieu*, In Other Words*, 10.

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