



Perception of William Shakespeare in The Republican Era Turkish Novel

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Abstract

This study will focus on Shakespeare's influence on Turkish literature based on Harold Bloom's idea that Shakespeare cannot be seen simply as a Western canon, but that he is a world canon. Although the focus will be on the Turkish novels and novelists of the early Republican period, the influence of Shakespeare on modern Turkish literature will be briefly touched upon, starting with the earliest examples, and thus the literary heritage that nourished the writers of the early Republican period will be traced. In the 19th century, with the increase in Western-style theatres in Istanbul interest in Shakespeare also increased. In addition to the staging of his plays, Shakespeare is also mentioned in newspaper and magazine articles, further increasing his recognition among writers and readers. The influence of Shakespeare on the Turkish novel can be seen both in direct references and in allusions to his works regarding theme and narrative structure, starting with Turkish literature of the Tanzimat period, which developed under the influence of Western literature from the second half of the 19th century. This influence increases gradually with the introduction of lectures and academic studies on Shakespeare in universities. During the Republican period, this influence goes beyond the theatre and begins to be seen in poetry, short stories, and novels. Many writers who shaped the literature of the Republican period, such as Halide Edip Adıvar, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, and Peyami Safa, consider Shakespeare an important source regarding form or theme within the novel narrative. In the Turkish novel, the influence of Shakespeare is mostly seen as a direct reference to some of his characters. This is because Shakespeare's characters reflect the universal human condition and the desire to benefit from the traits of these characters who have gained an immortal place in the minds of all readers. This study will focus on the novels of writers of the early Republican period such as Halide Edip Adıvar, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Peyami Safa, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, and Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar. In addition, the influence of Shakespeare in the non-fiction works of these authors will also be mentioned to have a comprehensive evaluation of the reception of Shakespeare by

these authors. In this study, the reception of Shakespeare in the Turkish novel of the early Republican period will be analysed on the 100th anniversary of the Republic, 400 years after the publication of the First Folio.

Keywords: Turkish Literature, English Literature, Shakespeare Studies, intertextuality, novel

Introduction

William Shakespeare is among the most important sources for not only English literature but also world literature. Harold Bloom, who devoted the preface of his book *The Anxiety of Influence* (1997) to Shakespeare, also draws attention to Shakespeare's unique position. He says that Shakespeare cannot be seen simply as a Western canon, that he is a world canon and that he appeals to people from every continent, race and language (p. xv). The main reason for Shakespeare's influence on later writers and readers can be found in his desire to understand and explain human nature. Bloom also devotes a long space in his book to Emerson's criticisms of Shakespeare, which he finds quite accurate and even says that it is difficult to add something to it, and includes Emerson's following words:

He wrote the airs for all our modern music: he wrote the text of modern life; the text of manners: he drew the man of England and Europe; the father of the man in America: he drew the man, and described the day, and what is done in it: he read the hearts of men and women, their probity, and their second thought, and wiles; the wiles of innocence, and the transitions by which virtues and vices slide into their contraries: he could divide the mother's part from the father's part in the face of the child, or draw the fine demarcations of freedom and of fate: he knew the laws of repression which make the police of nature: and all the sweets and all the terrors of human lot lay in his mind as truly but as softly as the landscape lies on the eye. And the importance of this wisdom of life sinks the form, as of Drama or Epic, out of notice. 'Tis like making a question concerning the paper on which a king's message is written. (p. xvi)

Here, as Emerson points out, the "wisdom of life" found in his texts comes to the forefront. Moreover, he conveys this wisdom of life to his readers through his strong and unforgettable characters. Therefore, as Bloom states, "No strong writer since Shakespeare has been able to escape his influence," making him "the most influential writer of the last four hundred years" (p. xviii). Therefore, in this context, it is possible to trace the undeniable influence of Shakespeare in world literature from the first examples of modern Turkish literature.

Shakespeare Influences in Pre-Republican Turkish Literature

The recognition of Shakespeare in Türkiye coincides with the years after Tanzimat. After these years, Shakespeare became influential on many writers and poets. İnci Enginün, in her monumental book *Türkçede Shakespeare (Shakespeare in Turkish)* (2008), devotes a separate chapter to the recognition of Shakespeare in Türkiye and includes a chronology of the first Shakespeare translations. There is no definite information about the first translations. However, it is known that Ottoman Armenians and Greeks provided the first examples of theatre in the Ottoman Empire and had an important place in the performing arts, staged Shakespeare plays (p. 23).¹ Metin And, in his

¹ See Günakan in this special issue.

book *Osmanlı Tiyatrosu (Ottoman Theatre)* (1976), states that the most translated author in this period was Molière, who was followed by Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas. In this period, translations of Shakespeare are not yet very common. While printed translations of Shakespeare are almost non-existent, narrated texts of his works were published (And, 1976, p. 190). It is possible to explain the absence of Shakespeare translations in this period by the conditions of the time and the restrictions caused by strict control. Especially in “Shakespeare’s tragedies and historical plays, the killing of each other by the ruling family or the palace circle in the power struggle is frowned upon as it would make an association with our palace circle” (p. 170).² In these years, Shakespeare’s recognition was mostly through the Italian and French dramatic troupes that toured the Ottoman Empire.

Romeo and Juliet was staged in Turkish in the late 1860s, and *Othello* in the second half of the 1870s. However, during these years, Shakespeare had not yet achieved his fame in Türkiye. This is indicated by a footnote in a piece dated 1875/76, where Shakespeare was described through Molière as the French equivalent of Molière (Enginün, 2008, p. 29). Victor Hugo, who critically analysed Shakespeare’s works and was closely followed by the Tanzimat writers, also played a significant role in the recognition of Shakespeare.

The first translation of Shakespeare into Turkish was *Othello* in 1876, adapted from Ducis’s version (Enginün, 2008, p. 31). Osman Hüsnü, Mehmet Nadir, and Muallim Naci translated some of Shakespeare’s sonnets or selected passages from his works. The first full translations of Shakespeare into Turkish were done by Hasan Sırrı, with the earliest example being *Venedik Taciri (The Merchant of Venice)* in 1884. As can be observed from all these examples, the initial translations of Shakespeare into Turkish were more based on the preferences of the translators rather than a unified approach. Moreover, these translations were sometimes made from French translations or even from adaptations rather than directly from the source texts. In these early translations, plays like *Othello*, *Venedik Taciri (The Merchant of Venice)*, *Yanlışlıklar Komedyası (Comedy of Errors)*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Kış Masalı (The Winter’s Tale)* were often prominent.

Shakespeare’s reputation grew with the increasing number of translations during this period. It is particularly possible to talk about the influence of Shakespeare, especially on the first generation of Tanzimat writers³. Jale Parla, in her study titled *Don Kişot’tan Bugüne Roman (Novel from Don Quixote to the Present)* (2012), mentions genre hybridisation among the methods frequently used by our first novelists in the emergence of the Turkish novel, as well as the missing texts that cast their shadow on Tanzimat literature, which she describes as a phenomenon she encountered at least as frequently (p. 73). She defines these lost texts as the metonymy of the delay and new searches in Tanzimat literature (p. 74). Among these missing texts, she counts incomplete translations and adaptations of Shakespeare. This influence is also seen in our first theatre writers, some of whom are also our first novelists. Especially Abdülhak Hamid and Namık Kemal are among the writers we can mention the influence of Shakespeare in this period. They are followed by Samipaşazade Sezai. Namık Kemal was influenced by *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Titus Andronicus* in his plays (Enginün, 2008, p. 134), while Abdülhak Hamid was influenced by *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, and *King Lear* (Enginün, 2008, p. 161). These influences sometimes appear in terms of character, situation, or motifs (Enginün, 2008, p. 161). Besides, it is possible to mention the influences of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Othello* in Samipaşazade Sezai’s play *Şir* (Enginün, 2008, p. 204). These writers also mention Shakespeare in their writings and letters during these years. Especially Abdülhak Hamid stated that Shakespeare was his guide “in his literary journey” (Tarhan, 1996, p. 712). The first novel in Turkish literature where we can mention the influence of Shakespeare is Samipaşazade Sezai’s *Sergüzeşt*. In the novel, the main character Dilber is explicitly portrayed as Juliet. However, we also observe that Celâl Bey exhibits traits reminiscent of both Romeo and Hamlet (Enginün, 2008, p. 218). In light of these examples, it

² In this article, quotations from books by Turkish authors have been translated into English from their Turkish editions.

³ Since the Westernisation process of Turkish literature is considered together with the Tanzimat movement, the writers of this period are called Tanzimat writers.

is seen that Shakespeare has been alluded to by modern Turkish literature since the very first examples.

When we look at the Servet-i Fünûn period,⁴ we see that Shakespeare became a frequently discussed author. The Servet-i Fünûn writers, who were more proficient in foreign languages and all of them were good literary readers, not only read Shakespeare but also wrote various critical essays about him. During this period, the essay *Klasikler Tartışması* (The Classical Debate) and the writings of Cenab Şahabettin, Halit Ziya, Mehmet Rauf, and Süleyman Nazif on Shakespeare hold a significant place. Cenab Şahabettin later compiled the essays he published in contemporary periodicals in his book titled *Vilyem Şekspiyer* (1931) and lamented the fact that Shakespeare, whom he described as “the greatest poet of humanity,” (7) was not yet fully recognized within Türkiye. He believed that with his own writings, he would fill an important gap.⁵ Halit Ziya, in his writings, introduces Shakespeare to his readers and also translates some passages from his plays.⁶ Süleyman Nazif, on the other hand, reads Shakespeare in parallel with Fuzuli. He draws a parallel between *Leylâ and Mecnun* and *Romeo and Juliet*. In his article “Hamlet in Istanbul” published in *Hak Newspaper*, Mehmet Rauf first dwells on how accurate it is for the English to describe Shakespeare as “the greatest tragedian of the world” (nr. 56; 8 May 1912). Then he expresses his excitement at the prospect of seeing a play by one of the world’s greatest writers in Istanbul.

As stated by İnci Enginün, three names stand out in Shakespeare studies during the Second Constitutional Monarchy period. Abdullah Cevdet, who claimed that Shakespeare encompassed all the elements of the universe in his works and wrote a poem titled “Şekspir” to express his admiration for him, Muhsin Ertuğrul, who popularized Shakespeare’s influence through the plays he staged and his memorable performances, and Halide Edip Adivar, who was not only influenced by Shakespeare as a reader but also translated his works.⁷ Through their speeches and writings, all three of these individuals contributed to the recognition of Shakespeare. However, Halide Edip Adivar’s interest in Shakespeare can also be traced in her novels. This is sometimes evident as an influence on themes, characters, scenes, or topics, and at other times, it appears as direct references to various works of Shakespeare. However, although Shakespeare’s plays were not fully accessible during this period, we see that his characters begin to be associated with various events, situations and emotions in the minds of readers.

In the early years of Shakespeare’s recognition in Turkish literature, Shakespeare was mostly known through incomplete texts and adaptations. These incomplete texts and translations prevented the Turkish reader from forming a complete literary portrait of the author. In these years, the desire of some writers who had read and learnt about Shakespeare to introduce him to Turkish readers is noteworthy. All the authors who wrote about Shakespeare described him as one of the greatest figures of world literature and referred to his vivid characters and tragic plays. Because some of Shakespeare’s works were not translated in those days, we can say that Turkish readers knew Shakespeare more through secondary texts written about him than through his works directly. The fact that our early writers directly refer to these characters in some of their plays or novels shows the extent of Shakespeare’s influence over them. It is only after the Republic that we see complete translations of Shakespeare’s texts and comprehensive academic studies (Öğütçü, 2023, pp. 90-100). The first generation of writers of the Republic, whose childhood and youth years were the years when Shakespeare was just beginning to be recognised in Turkish literature, had the opportunity to get to know his literature more closely. Shakespeare became known in Turkish literature only after Turkish literature turned its face towards the West, and the young literary figures who grew up in this environment had the opportunity to know his writings more closely, and then, as in other world literatures, Shakespeare attained an undisputed position within Turkish literature.

⁴ The literary group, which was active in Turkish literature between 1896-1901, takes its name from the magazine of the same name around which they grouped.

⁵ See Vural Özbey in this special issue.

⁶ See Şahin in this special issue.

⁷ See Vural Özbey in this special issue.

Influences of Shakespeare in Post-Republican Turkish Literature

It is possible to say that in the post-republican period, the number of accurate and complete translations of Shakespeare, and consequently his readers, increased. Especially when we look at early Republican Turkish novels, we can see that many of our authors were influenced by Shakespeare or made various references to his works. During this period, Shakespeare and his works were mentioned in the novels of many writers, especially Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Halide Edip Adivar and Peyami Safa. In fact, in a study examining 146 novels written between 1923 and 1950, Shakespeare emerges as the most frequently referenced author.⁸ Shakespeare's most frequently cited plays are *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In addition to the plays, many references are made to his characters such as Macbeth, Hamlet, Ophelia, Othello, Yorick, and Horatio who have become familiar figures in the minds of literary readers. These references demonstrate the familiarity of Turkish readers with Shakespeare's works. In this period, many writers frequently made use of Shakespeare's plays and characters because they thought that they were recognised by their readers, and thus Shakespeare's characters and works started to form familiar images in the minds of Turkish readers. To describe a situation, narrate an event, or introduce a person, Turkish novelists utilized the most famous works of world literature to convey the mental state that person is in. On the other hand, they expressed their views on Shakespeare's literature through their writings on Shakespeare. The writings on Shakespeare, which had gained increased recognition among Turkish readers, evolved from mere introductions to detailed evaluations and in-depth analyses.

Shakespeare and His Works in Turkish Fiction

In the first examples of Turkish novels of the Republican period, Shakespeare's name is mentioned many times. In these mentions, his importance in world literature is emphasised. In addition to being one of the most important writers of world literature, his success in describing the character of the individual is emphasised. Shakespeare is often mentioned in the texts together with great writers of world literature such as Molière, Racine, Corneille, Voltaire, Dante, Goethe and Hugo. In these references, Shakespeare's identity as a writer is directly emphasised rather than Shakespeare's works and the content of his plays. Sometimes references are made to some of Shakespeare's famous lines. Turkish novelists considered Shakespeare one of the most important writers not only in English literature but also in world literature, and commemorated him together with other writers they liked or admired. In the novel *Fahim Bey ve Biz (Fahim Bey and Us)* (2005/1941), Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar describes his interest in Shakespeare and his respect for his works as follows:

Shakespeare, of course, attracts more attention than anyone else, and even though he is much more significant than those around us, we think that we have still not finished reading his works, and especially after receiving his share of consciousness from every branch of the sacred heritage from our ancestors, he often finds himself rich not in the sense of wealth, but full, mature, and complete with a kind of music. (p. 83)

Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, in *Çamlıca'daki Eniştemiz*, (2005/1944) characterises Shakespeare's quote "Worlds are made of the stuff of dreams. They, like these, will dissolve without a trace", which he defines as "in every respect the greatest truth of the earth and the deepest insight of human understanding" (p. 221). Hisar's approach is significant because here he repeats the view that Shakespeare's words are seen as a truth of the world and his characters as a reflection of humanity.

⁸ Zengin and Kaya, *Literary Map of Istanbul*, 2021, Scientific Research Project.

On the one hand, Shakespeare is seen as a storyteller of universal and timeless stories, but on the other hand, it is emphasized that there are aspects where he falls short in the changing world. In *Dirilen İskelet (The Risen Skeleton)* (2021/1946) by Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, speaking about Türkiye, says he knows “no one who lives comfortably, especially writers for whom it is impossible to earn money, and claims that Shakespeare, if born here today, would die of hunger” (p. 331).

Shakespeare references sometimes appear in novels as characters. These novels provide an important source for intertextual readings. In these novels, some common themes and expressions are utilized in terms of characters and events. Sometimes the fictional world of these authors and Shakespeare’s fictional world begin to intertwine. For instance, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, instead of making long descriptions to describe a female character in *Hüküm Gecesi (The Night of Judgement)*, mentions the types of witches in Shakespeare’s plays and even says that this woman is even more frightening than Shakespeare’s witches. Peyami Safa while describing Ferdi, one of the characters of the novel *Bir Akşamı (It Was One Evening)* (1980/1924), says that “you won’t find such a man in any of Shakespeare’s books”, because “Ferdi represents the most tragic of a new humanity” and is “an important man without passion” (p. 143). This approach of Peyami Safa not only shows that Shakespeare’s characters stand in a significant place to understand many people in the world, but also indicates that the changing world leads to new human types. These novels often refer to Shakespeare through their characters. This is sometimes by describing a state of mind regarding these characters. Husbands are jealous of their wives “with an Othello-like intensity,” the faces of characters pale like Macbeth, and the love letters they write are as confused and disordered as the love melodies from Hamlet’s mind to Ophelia. Therefore, it becomes possible to make a reading by classifying through these characters.

Hamlet is undoubtedly the most frequently mentioned Shakespearean character in the Turkish novel. The fundamental reasons for this can be found in the content and themes of the play. Mina Urgan, after stating that none of the great tragedies has aroused as much interest as Hamlet, explains this by saying: “In Shakespeare’s other tragedies, in Lear, Antony, Othello, and Macbeth, emotions and passions are dominant, whereas in Hamlet, it is thought that prevails” (1984, p. 364). Therefore, the reader cares more about Hamlet’s thoughts than his actions. Moreover, “the tragedy of this man of thought arises not only from the special circumstances in which he finds himself, but also from living in an environment hostile to thought” (Urgan, 1984, p. 365). Moreover, “the tragedy of this thinker does not only stem from the special circumstances he finds himself in but also from living in an environment hostile to thinking” (Urgan, 1984, p. 365). In addition, *Hamlet* became a frequently preferred source for writers not only because of its tragic story but also because it deals with subjects such as power relations, love, revenge, suspicion, mourning and death. Turkish novels also tend to refer to Hamlet accordingly. For instance, Ahmet Celal, the protagonist of *Yaban (Wild)* (Karaosmanoğlu, 2006/1932), says that he will finish what he started like Hamlet. He, like Hamlet, sets out to do a task, stumbles along the way, but decides not to deviate from his goal (133). In *Sonsuz Panayır (The Endless Fair)* (Adıvar, 1987/1946) Ayşe finds the strength to withstand her difficulties in *Hamlet*, remembering how “Hamlet, terrified of the unknown after suicide, endured ‘the scorn of the competent by the incompetent, the insult of those in position, of superiors...’” (p. 227) and decides to persevere, seeing the obstacles she faces as mere stones and thorns in her path. Considering these examples, the references to Hamlet in the novels do not refer to the events in the play, but to Hamlet’s state of mind. Rather than Hamlet’s tragic story, they refer to the final point that his experiences have brought him to. Accordingly, the characters of the novel try to understand their own situations through Hamlet’s experiences or words. In this respect, Hamlet references are both a reflection of the characters’ desire to recognise and understand themselves and the readers’ desire to benefit from a literary world they are familiar with.

The fact that the graveyard scene, which is one of the most important scenes reflecting Hamlet’s state of mind, is mostly preferred in the novels of the early Republican period also points towards this need for familiarity. The questioning of life, death, existence, non-existence and the past in this scene occupies an important place in the minds of characters who ponder over similar issues. One of the striking examples of this is in Peyami Safa’s *Dokuzuncu Hariciye Koğuşu (Ninth*

Ward of Exterior Diseases) (2020/1930). The main character's mental state due to his illness prepares a ground for him to make these enquiries. In addition, when he enters the morgue with his doctor during a hospital visit and the doctor talks about the dead in the morgue, it reminds him of the graveyard scene of *Hamlet*, which he had read a few months earlier. Even though he is not in a graveyard, being surrounded by the dead and thinking about their pasts and states causes him to "murmur the words of the Prince holding Yorick's skull like a piece of music" (p. 38). The fact that the dead bodies are stripped of all their identities and become a cadaver waiting for examination leads the patient to thoughts. He thinks about the temporariness of life. While visiting the morgue, scenes from *Hamlet* appear in his mind. Everything the doctor says about the dead bodies recalls another part of *Hamlet*. After seeing the bodies, Hamlet's words after seeing Yorick rush into his mind. From this point, the novel progresses in parallel, alternating between the present time and recollections of Hamlet:

Alas! Poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio, A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. A fruitful imagination. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times. And now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! My gorge rises at it. My gorge...

The doctor nudged me. Wrapping his hand in the sheet, he brought his finger to the corpse's mouth, slightly pulling back the blackened lip:

"Look!" he said. "Teeth! Do you know? Nothing happens to a person's teeth after they die, they stay as they were at the last breath. Here, in the mouth of every corpse, we can tell how much they cared for their teeth in life... Look, there's a decayed tooth..."

I made a gesture of disgust, and he quickly left the corpse alone.

We left the room, walking softly. What a heavy scent! It could sink a mail steamer. What silence! Our footsteps seem to echo and die without a sound. I am buried in myself.

"A thousand times he carried me on his back. Horatio! This was the most mocking of jesters. A thousand times he carried me on his back. A fruitful imagination. The lips I have kissed I know not how oft, were hanging right there. Poor Yorick!" (p. 45)

The distraction created by this ebb and flow between recollections and the present eventually catches the doctor's attention, and he asks his patient: "Did this place affect you?" The patient's response, "I am remembering parts of a play," is explained by the fact that they are very accustomed to such reactions. On the one hand, there are doctors accustomed to death, and on the other, patients curious about illness and death but also fearful of it. These enquiries about death enable him to reach a common ground with *Hamlet*. The references to *Hamlet* in the novel do not end there; they utilize appropriate quotes from *Hamlet* that fit the content of the novel. Sometimes, it directly addresses Horatio, asking him to say something. In his distress he calls out to Horatio, and refers to the most cheerful of the jesters, asking Yorick to tell him something with his songs and jokes. The encounter of Hamlet with Yorick's skeleton in the graveyard becomes one of the most referenced scenes.⁹ In *Sinekli Bakkal* (2007/1935), after Peregrini learns about Rabia's "jester" father who is in exile, he remembers "Yorick, who was kissed in life and now has a mouth of earth" (p. 74).

Macbeth is mostly remembered in writers' minds for the witch characters in the play. Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, in *Hüküm Gecesi* (*The Night of Judgement*), and Peyami Safa, in *Bir Tereddüdün Romanı* (*A Novel of Hesitation*), liken some characters to the witches in Macbeth. The

⁹ Even though the article focuses on the early Republican period, it is possible to trace the traces of the literary relation established with Hamlet in all Turkish novels. The most famous Hamlet reference in the Turkish novel is undoubtedly in Oğuz Atay's novel *Tutunamayanlar* (*The Disconnected*). In the novel's flow of intertextual references, Turgut Özben turns into a Hamlet-like jester. Meltem Gürle, in her study titled *Ölümlerle Konuşmak-Shakespeare'den Joyce'a Tutunamayanlarda Edebi Kimlik Meselesi* (*Talking to the Dead - The Matter of Literary Identity in The Disconnected from Shakespeare to Joyce*) (2003), argues that Turgut turns into his literary relative Hamlet while confronting authority.

sole content-related reference to Macbeth appears in Halide Edip Adivar's *Tatarcık* (2009/1939). Here, there is also a negative perspective towards Shakespeare. In a debate between two characters, one accuses the other of speaking in phrases borrowed from Shakespeare by saying "This must be from Shakespeare... In this era, that antiquated man's antiquated writings are irrelevant," and explains not reading Shakespeare with these words:

Why should I read it? Don't I already know what's inside? Degenerate kings like Macbeth seeing the ghost of their murdered rival at a banquet... The psychology of merchants... Great poetry, great prose, they mean nothing to me... I look at the ideas within. Does it have anything beneficial for the world order I want to establish today? That's the measure of art and science for me. (p. 206)

The approach of the character who utters these words is actually criticised by the author. According to this perspective, which disregards all elements of literary works except their content, art is deemed worthless if it does not serve an ideological purpose. It clearly ignores the human elements and emphasizes utility. However, one of the most important features of Shakespearean literature is the general value of what he says about the individual. Othello's jealousy is an example of this. Indeed, the characteristics of Shakespeare's characters become elements that many later writers utilize in their depictions of individuals. In *Muhabbet Tılsımı (The Amulet of Love)* (2011/1928), Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar says that spouses are jealous of each other with an Othello-like intensity (p. 200), or that Romeo and Juliet come to mind first when it is about love. In *Kokotlar Mektebi* (2002/1929), he questions whether Othello's tragedy is merely "a fantasy born solely from the ghost of a great poet, apart from human beauty," despite the answer being obvious (p. 350). The Shakespearean influence in these novels remains mostly in the context of character traits. As we mentioned at the beginning of this article, this is due to Shakespeare's influence on later writers because of his desire to understand and explain human nature. Shakespeare's treatment of basic emotions such as love, jealousy, betrayal, and revenge and his creation of timeless characters in the context of these emotions become an important source for writers who want to convey these emotions in their own fictional characters. They prefer to strengthen their fictional characters in texts with which they have literary affinity and even literary relations regarding characters. The Shakespearean references in these novels are not only the sources utilized by the dominant narrators of these novels to strengthen their descriptions. As can be seen in the examples above, the characters of these novels are readers of Shakespeare, and they utilize his works and characters to understand and explain their situation.

Shakespeare and His Works in Non-Fiction

The influence of Shakespeare on the writers of the early Republican period can be traced in their non-fiction works, as well as their novels. A prominent figure here is Halide Edip Adivar, who was also one of the founders of the Department of English Literature at Istanbul University. In *Mor Salkımlı Ev (Memoirs of Halide Edip)* (2020/1963), where Adivar also touches upon her childhood memories, Adivar recounts her encounter with Shakespeare in her childhood through the plays read to her by Sırrı Bey, a friend of her father who translated Shakespeare's works (p. 76). Her interest in English literature was further ignited by her English teacher, Carol, and she explains how this early exposure laid the foundation for her future career as a novelist (p. 130). In the same book, she mentions that around 1903, she began translating Shakespeare's works for her own pleasure, without any intention of publishing them (p. 150). In this respect, it can be said that Halide Edip Adivar's interest in Shakespeare was not merely at the level of a reader; she read and analysed Shakespeare sometimes as a translator and sometimes with the attention of an academic (Öğütçü, 2023, pp. 91-100). Adivar's translations of *Hamlet*, *Nasıl Hoşunuza Giderse (As You Like It)* and *Coriolanus* with Vahit Turhan, and *Antony and Cleopatra* with Mina Urgan, especially including additional sections in the translation of *Hamlet* to help readers' understanding, are significant in showing her interest

and dedication to Shakespeare's works. As mentioned in Vahit Turhan's article "Shakespeare in Turkish", written on the adventure of Shakespeare in Türkiye and the Turkish tongue, Adivar worked to make Shakespeare more accessible to readers, students, and academics. In particular "Her general courses on Shakespeare [...] which incidentally were attended not only by students of her department but by all enthusiasts of arts and letters, had a driving and inspiring force behind them" (Turhan, 1965, p. 60). Moreover, these courses are followed by Shakespeare Seminars, which she offers especially for teaching assistants and postgraduate students. Thus, Adivar made significant contributions to the recognition of both English literature and Shakespeare in Türkiye.

Halide Edip Adivar also fills an important gap with her writings on Shakespeare in the periodicals of the time. Halide Edip Adivar's first writings on Shakespeare are dated 1908. In this first article on Shakespeare, she compares Shakespeare and Zola, two great names of English and French literature. In addition to her general evaluations of both writers, she emphasises the prominent elements of their literature and their literary importance. This article is followed by a series of articles published in *Tanin* newspaper in 1914 for four issues. In these articles, she evaluates Shakespeare's life, plays and other works and various studies on Shakespeare. These are followed by her articles in *Akşam* newspaper, in which she expresses her views on Shakespeare and his works, as well as her translations of Shakespeare in Turkish and the influence of Shakespeare in Turkish literature. On 13 May 1939, in an article titled "Milli Klasikler" (National Classics), she describes herself as "a person who has been working on Shakespeare for thirty years" (p. 80). Considering the history of this thirty-year study, it is obvious that Adivar had an important role in the accurate reception of Shakespeare by Turkish readers. According to Halide Edip Adivar, who often mentioned Shakespeare in many of her articles in *Akşam Gazetesi*, Shakespeare is the author of national masterpieces that emerged after the translation of Greek classics. However, she notes that he did not hesitate to break the rules set by the classics and did not fit into any mould regarding both method and language. This, she argues, is what has made him more intriguing (p. 181). In these writings, Adivar considers the characters as one of the strong points of Shakespearean literature. She refers to the universality of these characters, which she sees as symbols of humanity and the fact that they will never grow out of date. She implies that Shakespeare will always maintain his position thanks to these vivid and well-drawn characters, all of which were influential on Turkish literature.

Conclusion

William Shakespeare, whose influence continues today in world literature, has affected the writers of modern Turkish literature from its earliest steps, both intellectually and in themes they pondered upon. Shakespeare's arrival in the Ottoman Empire through French writers exemplifies his widespread impact on world literature. Through translations and adaptations of his plays, Shakespeare has left a significant mark in every period of Turkish literature, maintaining his status as a foundational figure with whom writers grapple and strive to prove themselves, even as years progress. The courses offered in the English literature departments within universities, the academic studies on him as well as his representations in various branches of art transform Shakespeare into a tool of intellectual expression. Shakespeare's influence on Turkish literature can be traced through fiction and non-fiction texts. On the one hand, non-fiction texts, including newspaper articles and academic studies, contribute to his recognition in Turkish literature, and on the other hand, he becomes the subject of academic studies. In fictional texts, intertextual references made thanks to the richness of its connotative field added the works to the circle of world literature.

The first sources that the writers of the early Republican era turned to in Western literature were the great names of the canon. Shakespeare is the most frequently mentioned author in the novels written between 1923 and 1950. Although Shakespeare was recognised by Turkish readers at a rather late date, it is noteworthy that he rose to an undisputed position in a short time. Turkish

readers' acquaintance with Shakespeare begins when Turkish literature turns its face towards the West. The staging of his plays took place only in the second half of the 19th century, and in the last quarter of the century, while Shakespeare was still being introduced to the readers, he increased his recognition over the decades and eventually became one of the sources that Turkish literature was nourished by. This situation also supports the idea that Shakespeare is the world canon.

Western classics were the primary source of Turkish literature under the influence of Western literature. During these years, on the one hand, there were attempts to read, recognise and introduce Western classics, and on the other hand, discussions on the qualities of the classics continued. In addition to the increase in the number of translations of Shakespeare, Shakespeare's plays have been frequently performed, which has also increased the recognition of his works and characters in Türkiye. With all these characteristics, Shakespeare has become one of the most easily relatable writers in the Western canon for Turkish readers. Many writers frequently resort to Shakespearean references, both because they are deeply influenced by him and because they are sure that they can find a response in the minds of readers. Many writers and works, especially canonical writers of Turkish literature such as Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Peyami Safa and Halide Edip Adivar, are full of implicit or explicit Shakespeare references. From the early examples of Republican period novels, the course of events often unfolds with Shakespearean themes, and characters have been described and continue to be described with Shakespearean references. Four hundred years after the publication of the *First Folio*, Shakespeare has transcended English literature with his varied and multi-level literary representations in all languages, becoming a global phenomenon.

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