



Note to Editor

Turkish Notes, A Project Pertaining to Web Oriented Critical Database for The Contemporary Turkish Novel

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The body of works written in English on Turkish literature, particularly in the Republican Period novel, marks a significant research slot. What is more surprising is that the works written by the foreign authors on the Turkish novel are largely exploring the novels appeared in the 1800s. For this reason, the international readers are considerably limited with several works restricted to the earlier periods. The readers therefore are hardly involved in the modern (modernist and postmodernist) phase of Turkish literature covering the recent developments. Even further, the works exploring Turkish literature devote little space to the genre and just highlights certain periods and writers, thereby limiting the global recognition of Turkish philosophy.

A web based project is being developed to introduce the critical readings of the representative Turkish novels of the Republican Period to draw the international attention to the Turkish novel. Within this scope, an updated "Canon of 100 Turkish Novels" will be offered by principally revising the novels conscripted in the index of 100-Literary Works delivered by the Ministry of National Education in 2004, and the ones published since 1923. The critical contents to be penned in the English language can be available via the following web address (www.turkishnotes.com) and will provide a study guide with a theoretical outline. The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) or Turkish Ministry of Culture would be interested in such a project. Why not?

Turkish Notes, the envisaged web oriented critical database, promises a worldwide platform for the Turkish cultural heritage. Such a project can communicate across the globe, in a wide scale of

narratives and in a variety of domains. Congruently, it is of utmost priority to proliferate the critical works on Turkish literature, particularly the contemporary Turkish Novel, which are intended to address the international reading public, and increase the interest in the works that represent historical and cultural diversity of Turkey. Such works can provide guidance into the cultural profundity of the people living in a spatial geography not merely restricted to the demographic spaces of İstanbul and Anatolia but also extending itself to the fringes of international plurality. So, the works written in English can endow Turkish literature and culture with a voice of its own and helps us make this voice heard by the international reception.

The project is genuinely a treasured work, for it addresses the international audience, foregrounding an intact, somewhat ignored issue in terms of the image of Turkish culture and literature. The project is deliberated to emphasize on the historical and artistic movements of the Turkish novel, presenting the interested young readers with a student-friendly Study Guide like its counterparts popularized so far in the world. The executive board of the project states: “our attempt aims to reveal the theoretical panorama of the Turkish novel, and contribute to the recognition of Turkish culture on the international scale.”

This project concerns itself with the international readers, students, translators, editors and researchers and aspires to make them involved in the enriched and colourful aspects of Turkish culture through sophisticated means of literary works, fictional minds of the characters and possible worlds of the inventions of Turkish authors nurtured not only by the very historical parameters but also cultural codes that determine the imaginative realm of the people.

It would be a provoking idea that some inspiring critical contents regarding the novels are produced in terms of contemporary theories, simplified and made accessible, and are shared on the web platform. The research team can provide suggestions about which movement, theory or concept could be applied to certain texts.

The scientific influence of this planned project is that it will indorse new international studies, theses, articles, books, and translations. New, comprehensive and supplementary contents are likely to arise as a result of this project. The technological aspect of the project is that these critical readings shared on the web platform can be organically developed (easy to update) and can be offered as study guides for the students and other idle and attentive readers as well as publishers and translators. Thanks to the web platform www.turkishnotes.com accessed easily everywhere in the world, the project can prove a wide impact factor and can contribute to the integration of cultural content into prospective mobile applications and coexisting cultural heritage of the international citizens.

As for the socio-economical perspective, the project, soaring the excitement for Turkish culture and literature will lay a ground not only for expression and representation but also for the exchange of material and cultural capital. The impact on the book market as well as tourist activities based on culture, art and book fairs are considerable within this context.

Considering socio-cultural dimension, the aforementioned project would improve the visibility of Turkish culture in the global media. This, contributing to the international historical and strategic “soft power” of Turkey, that is, its culture, art, and literature, may come last but not least. Apart from that, international readers, translators, publishing houses, movie directors would be able to revisit and revise the coexistence and ambivalent harmony of the East and West with reference to Turkish case.

All in all, the number of the books produced in English that deal with Turkish literature, and especially Turkish novels, is scarce. If we look at other works written in English on the Turkish novel, the number of the articles is much higher than the number of the books in English but still inadequate to represent Turkish literature on the international scale. These works, on the other hand, deal mostly with the period before the republican era and focus on certain themes and writers. The significance of the representative novels is manifested in its pivotal place in the formation of the notion of Turkish literature. Henceforth, to help the international readers envisage a profound image of Turkish literature marks a need for critical studies dealing with representative Works of Turkish literature. A web based oriented critical database for the contemporary Turkish novel, which is presented in the global language, may bring about new possibilities and evoke fresh insights into Turkish literature.