

Retrospectives on Turkish Studies in Canada

Kanada'da Türkoloji Çalışmalarının Geçmişi

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ABSTRACT

Howard A.Reed in 1997, "Turkish Studies in North America" has informed the public by publishing this article. After more than 15 years of this study, making it a bit more specific, we refer to the work done Turcology in Canadian universities today. We have also added an element of comparison in terms of Canadian studies and documents about the Turkish Republic in the university archives.

Between the years 1914-1947 a thesis information Turcology made in the areas of Canadian universities are absent, at McGill University in 1948, When examining the period 1948 to the present day;T.L.B. O'Neill's work began with data entry. Canada is working with insufficient Turcology studies but gradual increase shows that it is possible to have a bigger research one day.

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KEYWORDS

Canada, Turcology, Turkey, Turkey-Canada, Turkish studies

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ÖZ

1997 yılında Howard A. Reed, “Kuzey Amerika’da Türk Çalışmaları” adlı makalesini yayınlarken kamuoyunu bilgilendirmiştir. Bu çalışmanın ardından 15 yıldan fazla bir zaman geçtikten sonra ele aldığımız konuyu, biraz daha spesifik bir hale getirerek, başlangıcından günümüze Kanada üniversitelerinde yapılan Türkoloji çalışmalarına değindiğimiz bu metni ortaya çıkarttık. Bir kıyaslama unsuru olması bakımından Türk üniversitelerindeki Kanada çalışmaları ve Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivindeki ilgili belgeleri de ekledik.

1914-1947 yılları arasında Kanada üniversitelerinde Türkoloji alanında yapılmış bir tez bilgisi bulunmazken, 1948 yılında McGill Üniversitesinde, T.L.B. O’Neill’in çalışması ile veri girişi başlamıştır. 1948’den günümüze kadar geçen süreç incelendiğinde; Kanada’da Türkoloji çalışmalarının yetersiz olmakla birlikte bir istikrar yakaladığı ve yavaş yavaş artış gösterdiğini söylemek mümkündür.

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ANAHTAR KELİMELER

Kanada, Türkoloji, Türkiye, Türkiye-Kanada, Türkiye çalışmaları

INTRODUCTION

In 1997, *Middle East Journal* published Howard A. Reed's article "Perspectives on the Evolution of Turkish Studies in North America since 1946"(Reed, 1997: p.15-31). Now, one and a half decades later, it is about time to reflect on the developments since then in retrospect. Different from Reed's paper, this overview does not refer to all of North America but to Turkish studies in Canada only, and it includes a quantitative approach to relate the developments into to other areas of research.

Approach for the topic was done using the word "Canada" from Higher education thesis search engine, findings were 1 from medical school thesis, 13 PhD thesis, 27 master thesis (yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi: retrieved March 05, 2016). Some of the thesis are commodities that are imported from Canada, but they are still classified as Canada related¹.

A second research was done with the Prime Ministry Republican achieves that are placed in Ankara. Search results were 104 entries among those only 15 were related to education. A student from Canada writing a letter to Turkish prime minister asking for brochures (PMA: fund.030.01, place.5.25.5.), the scholarship issues related to Turkish student body in Montreal (PMA: fund, 030.18.01.02, place. 97.122.19).Turkish Commissioned military officers and their pay from the government (PMA: fund, 030.18.01, place.130.73.15.), permits related to Turkish academicians (PMA: fund, 030.18.01.02, place.292.96.12.). There had been wide range of different topics, hopefully would bring light to comparative studies.

Turkish Studies at Canadian Universities

As Reed pointed out in 1997, programs in Turkish Studies at Canadian universities were organized differently from those in the United States. Whereas there Turkish Studies (i.e. studies on Ottoman and modern Turkey) were taught within the scope of Middle East Programs from the late 1940s on, Canadian universities applied a far broader approach.

At McGill University in Montréal, Québec, Turkish Studies formed part of the subjects that were offered from the Graduate Institute of Islamic Studies (Reed, 1997: p.23). Ever since its foundation as component of McGill's Faculty of Arts in 1952, the institute offered studies on the religion, history and civilization of the whole Islamic world, including also language courses(mcgill.ca/islamicstudies: retrieved March 13, 2015). In order to further promote and facilitate research on the contemporary Middle East, McGill

¹ Thesis Screening Center of the National Council of Higher Education of Turkey, the pre-1992 Canadian theses does not show any data. In previous years, it could not be included if the statistical studies conducted at various universities.

University and Université de Montréal collaborated to form the Interuniversity Consortium for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (ICAMES) (mcgill.ca/icames: retrieved March 13, 2015). Nowadays, the Middle East Studies program at McGill is an interdisciplinary program organised from the Institute of Islamic Studies, the Institute for the Study of International Development and from the ICAMES (mcgill.ca/mes/middle-east-studies-program: retrieved March 13, 2015). In respect to degrees, McGill offers the opportunity to obtain a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Middle East Studies, and a Master of Arts (MA) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Islamic Studies. Noteworthy, the Department of Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies at the Vancouver Campus of the University of British Columbia (hereafter, UBC) also offers an BA in Near Eastern Studies but, and very much in contrast to the degree of the same name from McGill, the BA program from UBC only relates to studies on ancient Mediterranean or Middle East cultures and on early Islam.

About the opportunity to engage in Turkish Studies at Simon Fraser University (hereafter, SFU, established in 1965) in British Columbia, Canada's westernmost province, Reed communicated in 1997 that there the subject Middle East was only to be studied within a "tri-continental division of the world for foreign area studies" (Reed, 1997: p.23). In principle, this is still the case because at SFU all programs about the major world regions, i.e. the various continents, cultures and historical periods, are run under the auspices of the Department of History at Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. In 2006, the interdisciplinary Centre for the Comparative Studies of Muslim Societies and Cultures was established at SFU which is subordinate to the History Department (Colcleugh, 2006: v.7)². A drawback at SFU is that Turkish language as subject is not regularly part of the university calendar (iti.sfu.ca/languages_offered/other_languages/courses: retrieved March 13, 2015).

At the time when Reed's article appeared the University of Toronto (UToronto) had already begun to re-structure and broaden its approach to the field of Middle Eastern studies, similar to the model that McGill university represents. In Toronto, the merger of the formerly separate departments of Near Eastern Studies and of Middle East and Islamic studies resulted in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, founded in 1996 as part of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (turkish-studies.com/Study_Turkish_Ontario_Toronto.html: retrieved March 14, 2015). The department offers BA, MA and PhD degrees in Near and Middle Eastern

² http://www.sfu.ca/archive-sfunews/sfu_news/archives/sfunews12010602.shtml and http://www.sfu.ca/archive-sfunews/sfu_news/archives/sfunews11300618.shtml. Students focusing on Middle East Studies can enrol in a Middle East concentration in addition to their degrees in history (B.A., M.A. or Ph.D., see http://www.ccsmsc.sfu.ca/mei_concentration, retrieved March 14, 2015).

Civilizations, allowing also for collaborative MA and PhD programs with other departments (sgs.utoronto.ca/Near-and-Middle-Eastern-Civilizations.aspx: retrieved March 14, 2015).

As a result of more recent developments there are two further Canadian universities that allow for academic involvement with the Middle East albeit to lesser extent as e.g. McGill or UToronto. At the University of Windsor in Ontario, the Department of Political Science offers courses that relate to Middle East Studies at undergraduate and graduate level (uwindsor.ca/polsci/middle-east-studies: retrieved March 14, 2015). And at the University of Alberta, the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies at the Faculty of Arts enables students to graduate with a BA in Middle Eastern and African studies but offers no graduate program which would build on this degree (registrar.ualberta.ca/Arts/Honors-Major-Minor-Requirements: retrieved May 5, 2015).

In conclusion, Turkish Studies in Canada have certainly undergone a positive development since 1997, with more universities providing opportunities for students to engage with studies on Turkish history and culture. It should also be mentioned that the occupation with topics that fall within the scope of Turkish were possible also outside of the programs mentioned above, e.g. programs of sociology, politics, linguistics, art history or film that are offered from various Canadian universities, a fact which became obvious when looking at Canadian theses that relate to Turkish topics in more detail.

Canadian theses in Turkish Studies over the past 100 years

The number of Canadian post-secondary institutions that allow for studies in Turkish Studies has increased over the last decades. Should this positive development be ascribed mainly to an increased interest of students in the subject itself or does it rather reflect the increase of student numbers and expansion of Canadian universities in all fields of research? In order to discriminate between these two possible explanations, a survey of Canadian theses from the past 100 years (1914 to 2013) was performed.

In order to identify theses that focus on topics from the field of Turkish Studies, searches were performed in the two most relevant databases that are accessible online, namely Érudit and AMICUS. AMICUS, the Canadian national catalogue, was accessed through the webpage of library and archives Canada (amicus.collectionscanada.gc.ca/aaweb/aalogine: retrieved May 14, 2015). From this database, all entries from the period 1914 to 2013 that contained one or both of the phrases “Turkish” or “Ottoman” as “Subject Keyword” were pulled out. Érudit, a non-profit society and multi-institutional publishing consortium (Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and Université du Québec à Montréal) that was established in 1998, allows access to entries from many Canadian scholarly and cultural publishers, including

Canadian university presses. Èrudit’s database was searched for the phrases “Ottoman” or “Turkish” in the category “Titel, Abstracts oder keywords”.

Several hundred entries were pulled out, including not only theses but also articles in Canadian scientific journals, music pieces or catalogues. From these a subset of entries was isolated that contained only Canadian theses. A significant portion turned out to be duplicates or triplicates of the same original work which had found entry into the data bases either because they had been entered from different institutions, e.g from the National Library of Canada or from the university where they had been written at, or because they had been published in various forms, such as a type-written manuscript, microfiches, microfilm or as electronic pdf-file which recently has become the most popular form (Peksevgen, 2004). For the purpose of this study only the earliest entry from each set of multiple versions were included into the further analysis.

Finally, a set of altogether 157 Canadian theses was retrieved that address to Turkey’s history, language or culture and correspond to MA, PhD or equivalent degrees, all of which are listed in the bibliography given below. To illustrate the findings, the numbers of identified theses per year were plotted against time. Since the first Canadian thesis in Turkish Studies, namely O’Neill’s thesis on “British policy in the Italo-Turkish war”, was submitted only in 1948 (O’Neill, 1948), the years shown in the table below were limited to the mid-1940s to 2013.

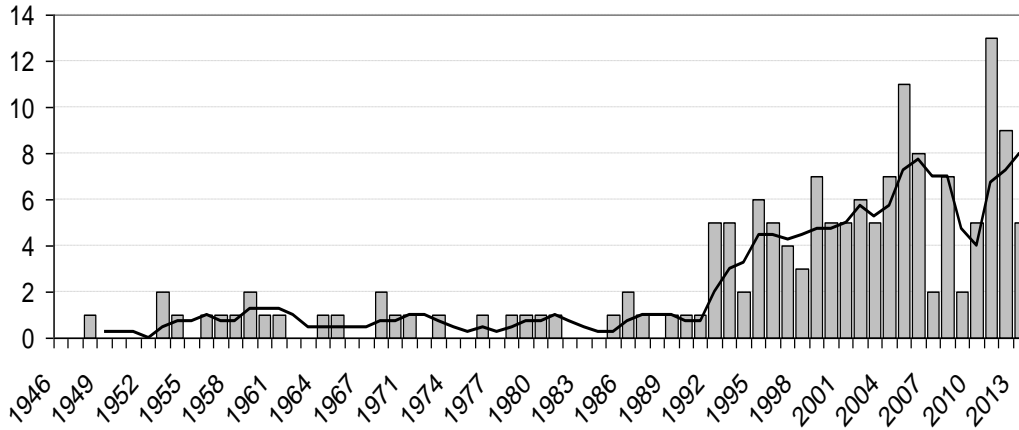


Table 1: Canadian theses in Turkish Studies from 1946 to 2013
The number of theses per year is plotted against time. The trendline represents the moving average of four year intervals.

It cannot be ruled out completely that some Canadian theses dealing with Turkish Studies were submitted already before 1948 and simply did not make their way into the databases (Bryce – Toynbee, 2005). Nevertheless, the findings fit well with Reed’s remark that before 1946 only a “handful of books and doctoral theses” had been written in North America, and only primarily by Americans who had taught or done research in Turkey (Reed, 1997: p.15-16).

In the period 1948 to 1991, the number of theses in Turkish Studies that were composed at Canadian universities remained more or less stable over the years with at maximum two works per year. In 1992, the number jumped up to ten. In the following years until 2013, the numbers still increased but varied considerably with the years. Yet the trendline, based on four year intervals, indicates a positive development also for the most recent years.

Nationwide comparison with theses in other academic fields

Next, the results were viewed in connection with the general developments. Therefore, official data from Statistics Canada on postsecondary graduates were consulted (statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26: retrieved June 16, 2015)³. Calculations revealed that between 1992 and 2011, the longest interval for which official data were available when the manuscript was composed, the number of MA, PhD and equivalent degrees that were issued from Canadian universities in the humanities increased by roughly 20 percent. At the same time, the number of degrees in Turkish Studies increased by 38 percent, whereas that in all academic fields together more than doubled by an increase of 114 percent⁴.

As the numbers of degrees dealing with Turkish Studies are still low and show high fluctuations it seems presumptuous to predict the future developments. However, the survey demonstrates that over the past decades the research on Turkish history and culture gained significantly ground in Canada and that nowadays Turkish Studies form a well-established niche within the Canadian academic landscape.

CONCLUSION

Although Canada and Turkey; geographically separated with no crossroads in history, mutual points in educational field, conclude that research on both countries are converging. Far apart by distance yet with modern communication means, there had been more and more thesis written in Canada on Turkish topics. This is a reflection of mutual interest in one another. The researchers may conclude different findings, our point has been to make a initiative for future researchers who would use this as a reference material.

³ For further information see <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/imdb>: retrieved June 16, 2015.

⁴ Calculations were performed on basis of the data given in table 477-0014 from Statistics Canada.

Our research has outlined and identified topics and studies that were conducted in Canada between 1914 until 2013 on Turkey. We can say that there is a focused interest on Turkey over the years. A quick observation and findings on the bibliography indicate a positive interest on part of researchers during the last quarter of the twentieth century. This creates a building block for a future study on Turkish topics by Canadian researchers.

Bibliography: Canadian theses in Turkish Studies 1914-2013

1914-1947

No Canadian theses in the field of Turkish Studies could be identified for 1914-1947.

1948

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1953

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2. **Harshaw, Robert Lloyd**, "Anglo-Russian relations in the Ottoman Empire, 1907-1914." Thesis (MA), University of Toronto, 1953.
 3. **Jennings, Peter R.**, "British foreign policy with regard to the Macedonian question 1903-1908." Thesis (MA), Dept. of History, McGill University, 1953.

1954

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4. **Kortepeter, Carl Max**, "Turkish Language Reform: A Step in the Modernization of Islam in Turkey." Thesis (MA), McGill University, 1954.

1956

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5. **Ustun, Ali**, "Historical, sociological and political aspects of modern Turkish nationalism: a constructive factor in world politics." Thesis (MA), University of Ottawa, 1956.

1957

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6. **Rezek, Gabriel E.**, "The fiscal system of Jordan." Thesis (MA), Dept. of Economics, McGill University, 1957.

1958

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7. **Gwyn, Julian R.**, "The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles: 1902-1923: (a study of French and British policies)." Thesis (MA), Dept. of History, McGill University, 1958.

1959

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8. **Carson, Beatrice Margaret**, "The Mevlevi Tarikat Considered as Organized Mysticism in Turkish Islam." Thesis (MA), McGill University, 1959.

9. **Romeril, P.E.A.**, “War Diplomacy and the Turkish Republic: a Study in Neutrality, 1939-1945.” Thesis (MA), McGill University, 1959.

1960

10. **Marsan, Mahmut K.**, “The Air Carrier Liability Under Turkish Law. Thesis (Master of Law), McGill University, 1960.

1961

11. **Federspiel, Howard M.**, “Hajj Muhammad Amin al Husayni as Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and president of the supreme Muslim council, 1921-1937.” Thesis (MA), Dept. of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1961.

1964

12. **Dirlik, Andre**, “The meaning of Arab Socialism : an analytical study of the origins, the content and the implications of Egypt's Arab Socialism.” Thesis (MA), Inst. of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1964.

1965

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1968

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1970

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1971

17. **Blackburn, John Richard**, “Turkish-Yemenite political relations, 1538-1568.” Thesis (PhD), University of Toronto, 1971.

1973

18. **Rose, John Donald**, “British policy and the Turkish question 1918-1923.” Thesis (MA), McGill University, 1973.

1976

19. **Thomas, David S.**, “The Life and Thought of Yusuf Akcura (1876-1935).” Thesis (PhD), Dept. of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1976.

1978

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1979

21. **Mishanie, Mark Elliott**, “The Ottoman-Egyptian conflict, 1831-1841 : its origin and evolution.” Thesis (MA), Inst. of Islamic Studies, McGill University 1979.

1980

22. **Tschirgi, Necla Yongacoğlu**, “Laying the foundations of contemporary Turkish foreign policy, 1945-1952.” Thesis (PhD), University of Toronto, 1980.

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1985

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1986

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1987

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1989

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(and year and place of MA thesis appeared also under Behièry, Valerie Anne, reflecting the author's surname change.)

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