

68. Translation adventure of French crime novel in Turkey¹

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Abstract

The inclusion of crime novel, which have only lately been acknowledged as a literary genre in the history of world literature, in academic studies dates back to recent history. It is thought that it is challenging to give the crime novel a precise definition, as it has many sub-genres and different forms of creation, which is defined as the novel that chooses its subject from the events falling under the jurisdiction of the police in the Dictionary of the Turkish Language Institution. It is necessary to evaluate this book genre, which emerged in the 19th century, in the historical and cultural conditions of that period. This genre, which is regarded to be the main factor of industrial cities, was initially written in the style of a classic book but subsequently evolved into a distinct category with set guidelines. It took the 1960s for crime novel to be adopted as a competent genre by literary critics. In this study, it is explained how the crime novel genre, which has recently attracted the attention of critics, emerged, how it spread all over the world, and how French crime novels in Turkey, in particular, had an impact on crime novels in Turkey through translation. Additionally, the introduction of this genre into our literary system through translation in the Tanzimat Period as well as its development process are included.

Keywords: Crime novel, influence of French detective novel, Tanzimat Period

Fransızca polisiye romanların Türkiye'deki çeviri serüveni

Öz

Dünya edebiyat tarihinde son zamanlarda edebî bir tür olarak kabul edilmeye başlanan polisiye eserlerin akademik çalışmalara konu olması yakın tarihlere dayanmaktadır. Türk Dil Kurumu Sözlüğünde, konusunu polisin görev alanına giren olaylardan seçen roman şeklinde tanımlanan ve birçok alt türü ve farklı oluřturulma biçimleri olduğundan, polisiye romana sabit bir tanımlama yapılmasının zor olduğı düşünölmektedir. 19. Yüzyılda ortaya çıkan bu roman türünü, o dönemin tarihi ve kültürel şartlarında deęerlendirmek gerekmektedir. Sanayi şehirlerinin temel etken olduğı düşünölen bu tür ilk önce klasik roman gibi yazılmaya başlamış olsa da daha sonra kesin kuralları olan belirgin bir kategoriye dönüşmüştür. Polisiye romanın, edebiyat eleřtirmenleri tarafından yetkin bir tür olarak benimsenmesi 1960'lı yılları bulmuştur. Bu çalışmada, son zamanlarda eleřtirmenlerin dikkatini çeken polisiye roman türünün nasıl ortaya çıktığı, tüm dünyaya nasıl yayıldığı ve Türkiye

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özelinde Fransızca polisiye eserlerin Türkiye'deki polisiye eserleri çeviri yoluyla nasıl etkilediği açıklanmıştır. Ayrıca bu türün edebiyat dizgemize Tanzimat Döneminde çeviri yoluyla girişine ve gelişim sürecine de yer verilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Polisiye roman, Fransız polisiyesinin etkisi, Tanzimat Dönemi

1. Introduction

The inclusion of crime novel, which have only lately been acknowledged as a literary genre in the history of world literature, in academic studies dates back to recent history in our country. In the emergence of crime novel, which is defined as "the novel that chooses its subject from the events falling under the jurisdiction of the police (2011: 1937)" in the Dictionary of the Turkish Language Institution, and which is thought to be difficult to make a precise definition since it has many sub-genres and different forms of creation, the industrial cities, in which an environment of misery, danger and insecurity sprouted, along with progress and development in the historical and cultural conditions of the 19th century, are seen as one of the main factors (Solmaz, 2014). The crime novel, which has been around for more than one hundred and fifty years, was initially written in the the typical novel form before becoming a unique genre with set guidelines (Vanoncini, 1995:7). Literary historians or expert critics have accepted that the crime novels as a sub-branch of the novel started with Edgar Allan Poe's *Murder in the Rue Morgue* (1841), *The Mystery of Marie Roget* (1843) and *The Purloined Letter* (1845).

Afterwards, the works of Gaboriau and Wilkie Collins in 1860 and Sherlock Holmes by A. Conan Doyle in 1880 became an example of this genre (Vareille, 1986). Critics mostly accepted crime novels as a competent genre between 1966 and 1991 (Tilbe, 2016). The popularity of crime novels, which are on the bestseller list and adapted into many movies and television series, is still rising today. The crime novel, which has started to make a name for itself in the field of literature and has proven to be a qualified genre, has recently started to be evaluated within the framework of literary studies. In this study, the translation adventure of French detective novels is mentioned and its effect on detective novels published in Turkey is examined. First, the development of French and Turkish is provided as support for this.

12. Importance of French for Ottoman and Contemporary Turkey

D2.1. Development of French

The number of people who speak French now is estimated to be 264 million, of which 119 million are native speakers and 135 million are francophones or second-language speakers. Today, French is used as the official language in 29 countries such as France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Canada and various countries in Africa.

France, as other European countries in the Middle Ages, was a bilingual country. The clergy and scholars spoke Latin, while the local population spoke vernacular French, which was made up of different dialects and differed from region to region. The legal foundation for the usage of the Oil dialect throughout all of France was set with a rule issued by François I in 1539. Although Latin continued to be taught in churches and universities until the 17th century, French has now become widespread both in the literary, political and legal fields. The establishment of the French Academy in 1635 increased the power of the French monarchy as well as the influence of the language, so much so that the treaties written in Latin

were replaced by French. Thus, the empire of French, which became a national language, even surpassed the political and economic power of France (Académie française, 2021).

In the 18th century, French became plain and close to the language that is spoken today, and it became the diplomatic language of Europe with many works in this period. The Age of Enlightenment played a major role in the spread of French. At that time, French was spoken not only in England and France, but also in Eastern Europe and Scandinavian countries. The aristocrats of European countries such as Romania and Russia started to favor the language over their mother tongue when it reached its peak in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

On the other hand, the development of colonialism allowed the French to spread outside Europe. Thus, France became the metropolis of the colonial empire. In the 20th century, when English began to compete with French in the diplomatic and financial fields, the Treaty of Versailles, which ended the World War I, was prepared in both languages, and then, after the defeat of France in the World War II to Germany, French left its dominance to English (Ennasser, 2010).

D2.2. Development of Turkish

The existence of hundreds of inscriptions written in the Gokturk alphabet between the 7th and 10th centuries shows that Turkish was also used as a written language at that time. Turks, who became Muslims in the 10th century, continued to use the Uighur alphabet instead of the Arabic alphabet even in the 11th century. According to Ercilasun, Mahmud Kashgari stated that in the 1070s, the Turkish script was the Uyghur script, and the Turks consisted of 20 tribes. Turkish is therefore believed to have been spoken in the 11th century from the Byzantine border in the Balkans in the west to the heartland of China and Mongolia in the east (Ercilasun, 1999).

According to the Turkey Religious Affairs Foundation's Encyclopedia of Islam, scientifically, Ottoman Turkish is a written language that continued from the 13th century to the beginning of the 20th century and also included Old Anatolian Turkish. The Turkish used today is its continuation. There are many Arabic and Persian words in Ottoman Turkish and these words have been integrated into the language and culture due to the need. Ottoman Turkish was used for works in many fields such as literature, history, law, medicine, and economics. Turkish gained popularity and began to be used as an official language during the Anatolian Principalities, although Persian was used throughout the Anatolian Seljuks period (Özkan, 2021). Especially with the disintegration of the empires, Turkish started to spread with the famous decree of Karamanoglu Mehmed Bey (1277) in Konya, which stipulated that the Turkish language should be spoken in the council, palace, parliament and among the people from now on (Strauss, 1995).

The intellectuals of the Tanzimat Period saw a need for change in society, and this need was reflected in the language as well, and formulaic expressions were transferred from French, the language widely known by the intellectuals of the period. Dissolutions began in Ottoman Turkish, which contained Arabic and Persian and had a complex structure.

The idea of simplification of Turkish started with Sinasi and he stated that it was necessary to use a language that people could understand, especially in newspapers, and then the writers of the period such as Ahmet Mithat Effendi, as well as Munif Pasha, Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, Ziya Pasha, Namık Kemal, Ali Suavi, Ahmet Vefik Pasha had ideas on the simplification of our language (Argunşah, 2021). Classical

Ottoman Turkish came to an end with the new language movement in 1911, Modern Turkey Turkish began, and the Turkish alphabet was adopted as the Latin Alphabet with the alphabet reform in 1928 (Özkan, 2007).

02.3. Ottoman Intellectuals and French

Although the written language was Ottoman Turkish in the Ottoman Period, the Ottoman Empire was a multilingual society due to its multicultural nature. Although Ottoman Turkish is spoken as *Lingua franca*, it is known that nearly a hundred different languages were spoken, especially Arabic, Greek, Armenian, Serbian and Bulgarian. Some of these languages disappeared, and some are about to disappear (Strauss, 1995). Recent developments in the western world had begun to affect the Ottoman state and all communities under its rule, and therefore languages. While Italian was one of the main European languages used in the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century, the influence of French emerged, especially from the 19th century. French had become the language in which the Ottomans communicated with the Europeans, either directly or through a translator. Arabic and Persian, which were used as second languages in official institutions at first, were replaced by French (Davison, 1995).

One of the effects of the spread of French in many parts of the world was thus also seen in the Ottoman Empire. The first capitulations were given to the French, the volume of trade with them grew, so the language spread along with it. In the 18th century, religious schools were established in many places, while the nobles and merchants were speaking French in the big cities, a community of French origin, also called Levantines, began to develop (Gümüüş, 2009). All these developments allowed the French to spread widely. The French officer Count de Bonneval and the French diplomat and general Baron de Tott joined the sultan's service during this century as the Ottoman Empire felt the need to open up to the west in order to regain its supremacy in the region. The first military engineering schools were established by teaching mostly works that were translated from French (Etensel İldem, 2007). In 1821, under the leadership of Yahya Effendi, the Translation Chamber, which consists of two units, the department for language education and the department to work as a translator, was established in order to teach French to talented civil servants (Aydın, 2007).

The Translation Chamber, which became a self-sufficient institution after overcoming certain difficulties, such as in language education at first, played a huge role in the Ottoman period as a translator between the eastern and western world thanks to the multilingual and multicultural elites during the Tanzimat period, at a time when major reforms were made in educational, administrative, social and cultural fields (Timur Ağıldere, 2007). Especially since the 1840s, the Chamber began to train qualified politicians to reach high positions in the bureaucracy, and important personalities such as Ahmed Vefik Pasha, Âli Pasha, Grand Vizier Ahmed Arif Pasha were trained in the Translation Chamber (Aydın, 2007). Institutions such as *Encümen-i Daniş*, which was expected to undertake the task of academia in order to maintain the cultural relationship with the West, where valuable works were written and translated despite its short life, and *Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i Osmaniye*, which promoted modern Western science while promoting Turkish scientific studies, were also opened in the Ottoman Empire (Paker, 1987).

The last period intellectuals of the Ottoman Empire, who were educated in France, demanded the establishment of Higher Education institutions in order to apply what they learned when they returned to their countries, and During the reign of Abdulhamit II, they founded educational institutions named the Mekteb-i Hukuk-i Sahane (1878), Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi (1883), Hendese-i Mülkiye Mektebi

(1883), Hendese-i Mülkiye Mektebi (1883), Baytar Mektebi (1895). In this period, although the nationalities of the lecturers were predominantly Turkish, it was seen that there were also French lecturers. For instance, it is known that the courses taught in Mekteb-i Hukuk-i Şahane (1878) were taken from the French Law Faculties' curricula through translation and reconstructed by making adaptations considering the conditions of the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile, it is seen that French language education course was among the courses given in the Faculty of Law. In fact, equal hours are allocated for French and Mecelle lessons (Yörük, 2008). In addition to this, the French language preparation requirement was introduced in other schools.

T3. The First Translations from Europe in the Tanzimat Period, Literary Genres and Notable Translators of the Period

The following translations are seen as the three leading translations from French to Turkish in the field of literature in the Tanzimat Period: İbrahim Şinasi's *Tercüme-i Manzume*, the first translation from western poetry to Turkish and published together with the French, Münif Pasha's *Muhaverat-ı Hikemiye*, the first translation selected from philosophical speeches, and Yusuf Kamil Pasha's first translation in the novel genre *Terceme-i Telemak* (Paker, 1987). Thus, translations were made in three different literary genres from French in 1859: novel, philosophical speeches and poetry translation.

According to Tanpınar, especially Munif Pasha, Ahmet Cevdet Pasha and İbrahim Sinasi played a constructive role between the years when Western works were first translated in our language and 1865, when the New Ottomans emerged. The work of these persons laid the groundwork for the work of the next generations (Tanpınar, 1988:159 7th edition). Ahmed Mithad Effendi, on the other hand, continued the language simplification movement started by Sinasi, and in his article titled *Dilde Sadeliği İltizam Edelim* and his other important articles, he expressed this issue and made suggestions despite all the criticism (Okay, 2021).

13.1. İbrahim Sinasi

İbrahim Şinasi is a Turkish journalist, poet, playwright, thinker and translator. The translator, who was among the writers who influenced and directed Turkish literature in the 19th century, argued that progress can be made by taking the West as an example and became one of the pioneers of the westernization movement. While translating from French to Turkish, he displayed an attitude of translation in a plain language that people could understand. It is seen that France, where he went and lived for about 10 years in three different periods, had serious effects on Sinasi. He met and spent time with intellectual writers and Turcologists in Paris, exchanged ideas, and what he did and read at that time was reflected in his works and worldview. He drew inspiration from thinkers such as Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Diderot who helped shape the French Revolution, and he wanted to filter the information he gathered from there in his own mind before expressing the viewpoints he believed were essential for his society (Aydm, 2000; Tanpınar, 1988: 189). Sinasi stated that he wanted to develop and change the society not only in terms of literature, but also in terms of architecture, and in this respect, it is thought that he was influenced by Voltaire, who produced opinions and projects in different fields such as law, politics, economy and municipality. It was stated that he was influenced by Montesquieu in terms of defending the law and the rights of the people with laws (Aydm, 2000). Sinasi Effendi made many translations, mostly from French, and wrote comedies. He was the first to realize the importance of popular language and wrote many poems. One of his main works is the collection of Turkish proverbs

that he carefully collected, and he tried to integrate dialectism into his linguistic treasure. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences still has his dictionary draft (Kunos, 1899).

M3.2. Munif Pasha

Munif Pasha was born in 1828, so he is considered from the same generation as Cevdet Pasha, Sinasi and Ziya Pasha (Tanpınar, 1988:179). He was a qualified scientist, man of letters, lawyers, and philosophers who built a bridge between the Tanzimat and the Republic, and laid the groundwork for the letter revolution with his works (Akın, 1991). Munif Pasha, who entered the Translation Chamber in 1852, learned French from Muhtedi Emin Effendi, went to Berlin in 1855 and learned German there. This precious person, born to teach, used his journalism as a teaching institution until the end of his life (Tanpınar, 1988:179-180). He became the pioneer of the national library initiative by establishing a library in Cem'iyyet-i İlmiyye-i Osmaniyye. One of the most important intellectual and cultural achievements of Münif Pasha, who knew Arabic, French, German, English and Greek languages, is considered as *Mecmûa-i Fünun*, which was published under his leadership (Doğan, 2006).

A3.3. Ahmed Vefik Pasha

One of Turkey's first Turkologists and Turkists, lexicographer, translator, statesman Ahmed Vefik Pasha is thought to know about sixteen languages, including Arabic, Persian, French, English, Russian, German, Italian, Latin, Greek and even Hebrew (Akün, 1989). Ahmed Vefik Pasha was able to follow the Western countries very closely and was among the rare Ottoman intellectuals who could analyze the West without having a complex. He served as ambassador, Prime Minister, Speaker of the Assembly and Governor, primarily working in the Translation Chamber, translated his first theatrical play from Moliere, later wrote many different plays and guided the researchers after him with his thoughts on scientific issues (Sarıçoban, 2018).

A3.4. Ahmed Mithad Effendi

Ahmed Mithad Effendi is considered to be the first name that springs to mind when it comes to popular novels. He was the "head teacher" of the modern Turkish language with the title of "Hâce-i Evvel", an enlightenment worker, a writer who made the best as a writer for forty years in his age, produced works in almost every genre of literature, showed his art with good intentions towards the public, who used the language to appeal to the public and used a style that speaks to the public. In fact all his works function as a public reading room (Tanpınar, 1988:455-458). He is the father of not only Turkish novel but also Turkish prose (Argunşah, 2012). People started to devote time to reading with Ahmet Mithad Effendi's books, family members gathered around those who could read and began to discuss and listen to what is being read. He taught the Turkish society to read novels and influenced his readers, whom he regarded as his family, with his knowledge-filled works reduced to the level of the people (Tanpınar, 1988: 459-460). Although Ahmet Mithad's literary writing style and being a popular novelist were belittled by the literary community and criticized him for being a common writer, it was his conscious choice (Uyepazarcı, 2019: 88). The main reason for mentioning Ahmed Mithad Effendi in this study is that he is the author of *Esrâr-ı Cinayât*, the first copyrighted crime novel in Turkey. In addition to this work, *Hayret*, *Bandit Montari* and *Müşahedât*, the first example of the naturalist movement in our country, are novels written in crime fiction (Uyepazarcı, 2019:84). Ahmet Mithad also translated into our language the famous novel *The Mystery of Orcival*, in which Emile Gaboriau used the detective Lecoq for the first time (Uyepazarcı, 1997:72-73).

In the light of all this information, it is understood that the first novel came to our language through translation from French and later took its place in the polysystem of Turkish literature. In addition to this, the first detective novel translation is *Les Drames de Paris* written by Ponson du Terrail, translated from French by Ahmet Munif (Uyepazarcı, 1997:71). In this case, first of all, the development of the novel as a literary genre and then its transmission through translation may be examined.

4. Emergence and Origins of the Crime Novel

In order to understand the first emergence of crime novels, it is necessary to talk about the concept of serialized novel (fr. roman feuilleton). In the 19th century, besides the novel, the media also became stronger, and serialized novels emerged as the joint product of these two for the first time in France. Because of the popularity of these works and the way that the magic of fiction may distract readers from reality, authorities and cultural guardians despised this genre and see it as the opium of the people (Queffélec-Dumasy, 2008:2). Serialized novels enabled large masses to read novels besides the traditional upper-class readers, and there was masses of serial novel addicts similar to those who follow serials today (Uyepazarcı, 2019:37-39). As serialized novels become cheaper, they are now published with pictures and movies are made, it has begun to be described as bad literature that appeals to women, children, the elderly and the common people. By contrast, as the form of distribution dominates the market, it became the mandatory transit for all writers from Balzac to Zola, from Eugène Sue to Gaston Leroux, from Dumas to Maurice Leblanc (creator of Arsène Lupin), from Gautier to Barbey d' Aureville, also from Duranty to Huysmans. In this period, when there were no literary awards yet, the reception of the works was seen in this way (Queffélec-Dumasy, 2008:2-3).

4.1. Founders of Crime Novel

After mentioning the emergence and origins of the crime novel, to mention its founders, Edgar Allen Poe, Emile Gaboriau, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Maurice Leblanc and Gaston Leroux can be listed as the first names.

In *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, with the Dupin (detective) character who has superior analytical skills and lives with an impoverished aristocrat in Paris, does not trust the police and conducts his own investigation, Poe used all the indications used in crime novels such as the mystery of the closed room, the apparent or real cause, the witnesses gathered at the beginning, the false suspect, and the deceptive at first glance. Thus, Poe's main character, Dupin, became the first hero to make the novel entertaining and fascinating with the explanations of his cerebral faculties, which does not excite the reader by engaging in an action (Vanoncini, 1995:24-27).

With Gobariau, the murder attributed to the ape has now become an act of a man with a social identity and a justification. Gobariau used Priest Tabaret as an investigator in *L`Affaire Lerouge*, but the priest accused an innocent despite his correct observations. The mistake he makes is that he does not understand how determinative blood ties are in people's attitudes and behaviors. However, in his later works, Tabaret was replaced by the inspector Lecoq and he added the thematic potential of the tradition novel and adventure novels to the emerging crime novel genre (Vanoncini, 1995:27-29). Given that Gobariau was the first author of a true detective book series, it is reasonable to assert that the detective novel has French origins as opposed to English origins. It can be said that social and political problems are more prominent in his novels than in Poe and Conan Doyle's novels (Mandel, 1996:38-39).

Leblanc created Arsene Lupin, the world's flirtatious hero who is both a thief and a detective, in the crime novel that was ordered to be worth the British Sherlock Holmes value for France. Of course, this work was also serialized in the monthly journal *Je Sais Tout* before being published as a book in 1905. Arsene Lupin's distinctive feature is ubiquity and polyvalence. The most deadly weapon of this hero, an aristocratic-looking anarchist, is his witty words. In his thefts, he harms unpopular people or institutions, rushes to the aid of the poor and oppressed, and even donates some of what he stole to them. The flirtatious Lupin is also the protector of women. Although the first period novels do not fully contain the tendencies of the crime novel, they have turned into novels that contain these elements after the World War II. Leblanc's work, like Conan Doyle's, has been very popular and loved in our country and all over the world, and has inspired many detective series written after him (Üyepazarcı, 1997:45-49; Vanoncini, 1995:34-35).

While solving a murder he deals with in *The Mystery of the Yellow Room*, Leroux creates a detective named Rouletabille with passion, moral principles and ideology. Contrary to Detective Holmes, this is a related typology that can be affected enough to get depressed when the events he solves are related to himself (Vanoncini, 1995:32; Üyepazarcı, 1997:50-52). Considering these founders, it would not be wrong to say that the French made a breakthrough in crime novels.

U5. Turkish Translations of French Crime Novels

The first translated detective novel in Turkish literature is Ponson Du Terrail's *Les Drames de Paris*, translated from French to Turkish. This work was published in Ceride-i Askeriye Printing House in 1881, its translator is Ahmet Munif and it consists of 406 pages.

Secondly, Ahmet Mithat Effendi translated the famous novel *The Mystery of Orcival*, which was written by Emile Gaboriau, one of the founders of the crime novel and mentioned above, in which Lecoq typography was used for the first time, from French to Turkish in 1884. The aforementioned work was first published as a serial in the newspaper Tercüman-ı Hakikat, and then published as a book. The third translated crime novel is Pierre Delcour's *Le Secret du Juge d'Intruction*, and it was translated by a translator named A. Nihat. Leon de Tinseau's *Priest's Mystery*, was also translated by Ahmet Mithat Effendi in 1888, and later, other works of Emile Gaboriau were gradually transferred to our language (Üyepazarcı, 1997:71-75).

In this period, translators translated many crime novels, especially from French, into our language. These main translators can be listed as follows: Ahmet Munif, Ahmet Mithat Effendi, Selanikli Tefvik, Ali Kemal, Mustafa Fazıl and A. Raif (for more detailed information, see: Üyepazarcı, 1997). The aforementioned translators both worked as translators and published their own copyrighted works. Especially in the Tanzimat Period, works were started to be translated from the West into our language, and new works were written in the same style, inspired by western sources. When considered in this context, it shows the importance of French crime novel translations in the emergence and development of crime novel genre in Turkish literature, especially since copyright novels and translated novels in Turkish crime novel genre coincided with almost the same period (Arslan Özcan and Güzelyürek Celik, 2013: 172).

C6. Conclusion

It is known that the novel genre first appeared in prose in the 13th century. The first prose form is associated with French, although some epic writings have been published before. When the novel first emerged as a literary genre, it was not wanted to be accepted, criticized and even demanded to be banned. Later, it started to be adopted, translated into all world languages and accepted as a literary genre. However, this time the detective novel, which emerged in the 19th century, suffered the same fate. For years, it was not seen as a literary genre and was belittled by literary circles. Despite all these negativities, especially starting from the Tanzimat Period, crime novels have made an important debut in Turkey with their rapid rise in the world. Since the intellectuals of that period knew French, crime novels published in France were soon translated into Turkish. The translation of French crime novels into Turkish shortly after their publication is of great importance in terms of including crime novels in the Turkish literature system and publishing copyrighted works on these subjects.

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