

# Method in *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*: Albert Thibaudet's Influence on Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar\*

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## Abstract

In Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's *Ondokuzuncu Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* [*The Nineteenth Century History of Turkish Literature*], the analysis of the literary texts, authors, and historical context relies primarily on the literary historian's particular understanding of the narrative of modernization in Turkish literature and a critical perspective behind this narrative. This perspective, which also shapes the aesthetics of Tanpınar's literary works, is in constant dialogue with various methods of literary historiography and critical theories. In his introduction, Tanpınar proclaims that he studied leading methods of literary history writing of Hippolyte Taine, Ferdinand Brunetière Julius Petersen, Eduard Wechsler, and Albert Thibaudet, and then embodied some of their approaches in order to survey the 19<sup>th</sup> century history of Turkish literature. This article argues that, although in his introduction Tanpınar refers to different literary historians and methods, his literary history displays greater influences from the French literary historian and critic Albert Thibaudet's method compared to others. In this context, the article analyzes the influence of Albert Thibaudet on the formation of Tanpınar's perspective on both literary historiography and literary criticism. More specifically the paper examines the influence of Albert Thibaudet on the formation of Tanpınar's perspective on the literary historiography and literary criticism in general, which has been neglected by the studies on Tanpınar in order to show how his extensive use of Thibaudet's method provided opportunities for him and caused a few methodological and structural shortcomings in the *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*.

## Keywords

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Albert Thibaudet, literary history writing, *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, creative criticism.

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## Introduction

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar begins his *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (1949) (*The History of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Turkish Literature*) by saying that he does not adhere to any single approach to critique, and arguing that theory and method can only be a starting point. Method can only be shaped “at the behest and bidding of the subject”; and one must not “force facts too hard to constrain what is warranted by history and the subject (...) to the boundaries of a particular theory” (Tanpınar *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* ix). Called “remaining rather fluid in method” by Tanpınar (ix), this approach is firstly indicative of a selective attitude and distance towards empirical criticism in particular, and other literary historiography methods of Western provenance. Nevertheless, fluidity in method does not signify that Tanpınar was equidistant to all literary historiography methods of the period. One of the literary historiographers and critics who Tanpınar mentions in the foreword to *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* is Albert Thibaudet, whom he says has influenced him with his views on generations. Besides the mention in the introduction, there are three other references to Thibaudet while discussing specific texts in the book. Although there are only four instances, a keen reader of *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* will notice the renowned French critic's influence on the text, beginning with classification as it becomes manifest in the “contents” section, and extending to the review and historicization of the texts and their authors, which is more pervasive compared to the influence of other methods and critics. The testimony of Tanpınar's assistant Ömer Faruk Akün that he “read and re-read” Thibaudet in preparation for his literary history, and the testimonies of his students that Tanpınar designed the syllabus of the 19<sup>th</sup> century literature course he taught prior to writing the book according to Thibaudet's approach show that he was more influenced by Thibaudet than is immediately visible (Akün 12). More importantly, Thibaudet seems to have influenced Tanpınar not just in terms of literary history writing, but in literary critique as a whole. He even says as much in his own words. Interviewed on the March 30, 1956 issue of the *Yeni İstanbul Gazetesi* newspaper, Tanpınar responds to the question, “What were the motives that drew you to this vocation? What are the roles of your teachers, the books you have read, and your personal interests? What issues or subjects do you write about most often?” by naming Thibaudet among his three key influences:

I consider attention to be above all in art and science. I do not know of an equally magic word. Yahya Kemal, Fuat Köprülü were our teachers. Y. Kemal taught me how to take pleasure in history and the discipline to read an author in their entirety. Rather young at the time, Prof. Köprülü also taught me a lot. The French critic Albert Thibaudet was a major influence. This interesting man is all but forgotten now. He was one of the most agile minds of his time. Even today, there is no serious book on method or critique that does not refer or respond to him. I am sure he will be back in fashion someday. Books are being published about him. Thibaudet's extensive associations and "theory of generations" suited me very well. (Tanpınar, *Yaşadığım Gibi* 331-332)

It is worthwhile to note that Tanpınar names Albert Thibaudet as a greater influence on him than Yahya Kemal and Fuat Köprülü, who were his teachers, personal friends, and rather obvious influences. Other than his teachers, Tanpınar does not name any other critic or thinker who had naturally influenced him with their books, literary histories and essays, but only mentions Thibaudet, which serves to show how much this "interesting man" and "agile mind" has an effect on him.

In recent years, the place of Albert Thibaudet in interbellum literary criticism has been rediscovered thanks to the works of literary critics such as Antoine Compagnon (*Réflexions sur la littérature*). Classification by generations, which Tanpınar says has influenced him, and is central to Thibaudet's approach to literary history, is not simply a method for literary historiography, but is part of a comprehensive approach to literary criticism that considers the literary text in tandem with its author and the period in which it was written. Albert Thibaudet builds his approach to criticism and literary history based on a critical confrontation with previous approaches and is therefore considered the pioneer of French metacriticism (Buch-Jepsen 626). According to Thibaudet, 19<sup>th</sup> century approaches to criticism, chief among them empirical criticism, that view history as holistic and reducible through deterministic reason are narratives that produce grand historical myths. Instead, Thibaudet mentions the necessity of avoiding the thought that history is a governable phenomenon, based on the concept of Creative Evolution by Henry Bergson, who was his teacher, but also argues that classification as required for literary historiography must be based on

generations for practical reasons (Turquet-Milnes 610). Bergson's influence on Thibaudet's critical approach is often underlined by critics (Majorel 53). J.C. Davies, author of the 1955 *L'oeuvre critique d'Albert Thibaudet*, which may be one of the "books published" that Tanpınar mentions in his 1956 interview without naming authors, says that core elements of Thibaudet's criticism, which are the use of intuitive imagination, close sympathy with the author or work being analyzed, pluralism, and significance of contradictions, are Bergsonian influences. According to Davies, just as Bergson's ideas were a reaction against the rigidity of the deterministic attitude of positivism, Thibaudet's criticism was a reaction against the dogmatism and excessive intellectualism of 19<sup>th</sup> century criticism (50).

On the other hand, the presence of Bergsonian influence does not mean that Thibaudet entirely rejects 19<sup>th</sup> century criticism and literary historiography. According to Thibaudet, literary historiography by generations is not a new ideal. The first person to suggest the use of generations, a post-Enlightenment concept that was initially biological in origin, to classify writers and poet according to their dates of birth, thereby making literary history a "literary device", was Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve (Hentea 571). Julius Petersen, another literary historian that Tanpınar mentions, defines literary generations in his 1930 essay "Literary Generations" ("Die literarischen Generationen") through commonalities in literary historical periods, such as having gone through similar education, being in contact with each other, and writing in a common literary language (Hentea 575). Another German literary historian mentioned in the foreword, Eduard Wechsler, also focuses on the concept of successive generations in his work *The Young Generation and Their Fight for a Form of Thinking (Die Generation als Jugendreihe und ihr Kampf um die Denkform)* (Jaeger 277). Albert Thibaudet also considers work by Petersen and Wechsler to reconcile the idea of generational literary history writing, which was already popular in 1920s postwar Europe, with the critical approach of another 19<sup>th</sup>-century literary critic, Hippolyte Taine, which he believes violates the singularity of writers and poets. In this reconciliation, generation provides a structure that clearly identifies the social circumstances in which an author was raised and would have to interact, both textually and historically, and allows for comparison with authors originating from similar circumstances. Thibaudet applies his generational literary historiography approach, developed starting with his book on Bergson as a critic

in 1923 and his work *The Physiology of Criticism*, which boosted his popularity as a critic, to *The History of French Literature from 1789 to the Present* (*Histoire de la Littérature Française de 1789 à nos jours*), an incomplete work, just like Tanpınar's, that was published immediately after his death in 1936. The approach classifies poets and writers into five generations between 1789 and 1914, two major breaking points in political history. For Thibaudet, the concept of generations is the result of the effort to place the history of texts into the general history of humans and institutions. It derives its power not from its practical benefits, but from the fact that common experiences and psychologies may be verified by historical materials and texts (Girardi 34). Therefore, literary historiography must be conceptualized via generations to which the the dynamics of collective time and space are intrinsic, rather than resorting to a rigid deterministic strategy and using abstract major concepts like emancipation, individualization and progress, or artificial literary conventions like style or the evolution of language. Thibaudet attempts to legitimize his method by saying that generations have a concrete and historical selfhood, as opposed to the artificial distinctions which he views to be traditional. Accordingly, a historian of literature must ensure that authors who comprise a generation do not lose their singularity while attempting to impart the meaning of similarities and differences with preceding and succeeding generations in the mind of the reader. On the other hand, Thibaudet's work on French literature is incomplete. The writer rewrites its chapters, like Tanpınar would after him, over and over again, after changing generational boundaries or coming up with new generations (Hentea 581).

Thibaudet's metacriticism perspective is of particular importance in his influence on Tanpınar. In his foreword where he says he was "fluid in method", Tanpınar names four others in addition to Albert Thibaudet: Julius Petersen, Eduard Wechssler, Ferdinand Brunetière and Hippolyte Taine as his sources in methodology; however, these names –especially Brunetière and Taine, who were more popular than others due to their significance in 19<sup>th</sup> century literary history writing– can be said to have influenced him vicariously through Thibaudet, and not directly like Thibaudet himself. It is also significant that Thibaudet's effort to evaluate a writer based on their personality and specific historical circumstances is consistent with the selective attitude revealed in the foreword to Tanpınar's *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*. The "warrants" of history and the subject, or their uniqueness,

requires resisting the imposition of “particular theories”. Therefore, neither “forcing facts too hard” from a historical or circumstantial perspective, nor explaining anything new simply by “personality” would be the right thing to do. That is because “a generation is a number of things that coexist: literary circles and movement, time, place, race, literary genre, and the artist themselves.” Consistent with the approach that is immediately reminiscent of Thibaudet, he considers the history of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Turkish literature “the history of a great crisis and the gradual building of an internal order around new horizons and values”, and attempts to “describe this crisis and change with its social and historical reasons” in *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, while explaining why he “dwells too long on the lives of artists” while attempting to understand the literary work with “not overlooking the work’s conversation with its period” (x). Under the circumstances, Tanpınar has appropriated Thibaudet’s selective attitude towards Taine’s rigid empirical approach, and reads 19<sup>th</sup> century Turkish literature based on this.

A similar consideration and selectivity are shown towards Brunetière’s approach based on the evolution of genres. Thibaudet’s criticism of Brunetière via literary historiography based on his analogy between biological evolution and the evolution of genres stems from Bergson’s concept of *élan vital* that was posited as a reaction to Darwinist evolution. Accordingly, a genre is both cut off from the time before the moment of its creation, and is continuous across lateral generations, connecting them to future generations. However, this continuity does not bear a normative character according to the artist, so cannot be reduced to a deterministic principle. The *élan vital* of the artist transforms the story unpredictably, at every moment, like the story in a work of fiction.

Thibaudet states these opinions in the chapter dedicated to the newspaper genre in the beginning of his literary history (Thibaudet 12). The association this chapter builds between the newspaper and the building of the new reader and society within the context of the modernization of French literature is mostly consistent with Tanpınar’s emphasis in the “Şinasi’den Sonra Nevilerin Gelişmesi” chapter on the transformation of the newspaper reader to the novel reader, and the founding role of the newspaper in “the making of the public opinion” in the context of the modernization of Turkish literature (249). It must be noted that Bergson’s objection to the application

of evolutionist determinism to history, even if not related directly to the evolution of genres, is also mentioned in Fuad Köprülü's 1913 essay "Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi'nde Usûl", and that Tanpınar was naturally aware of these objections (11). The evolution of genres is not the core classification in Tanpınar; it is complementary to generation-based transformation. Therefore, if one is to make any mention of fluidity, it must be of the selectiveness in Thibaudet's approach, and Tanpınar's history of literature shows that he finds this fluidity in Thibaudet.

This similarity between Tanpınar and Thibaudet shows that Tanpınar saw more than a suggestion for classification in Albert Thibaudet's comprehensive understanding of literary history. Tanpınar notices the possibility of a holistic approach to literary studies in Thibaudet's conception of literary history - just as Thibaudet intends. There are traces of this in his writings before *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*. Tanpınar's observations on Turkish literature in a series of essays published in 1936 titled "Son 25 Senenin Mısraları" in reference to Thibaudet's idea of a generational canon that multiplies and produces a substance are an example. In the essay, Tanpınar says that Turkish poetry from Namık Kemal to Yahya Kemal is the product of disjointed generations, with particular emphasis on Servet-i Fünûn poetry:

Novelty in our literature has a peculiarity that I believe one would not encounter in other literatures: Literature for one generation; poetry for one generation. Obviously, every literature is an expression of generations. But once those generations pass, their literatures develop a substance that is either outside their own particularities or is a combination of their particularities and those of their predecessors, which substance continues throughout time as, in the words of one Western poet whom I admire, a "never-ending love song". Our old poetry used to be like this. Works had more or less followed each other, but among them, poetry and pleasure had been interlinked with golden chains. In the proteges of Namık Kemal, this chain is abruptly broken. What follows is a succession of literatures specific to one generation. When those who train their preferences with the works of that generation withdraw from life, so does that poetry; it is replaced by the experience of another generation. (Tanpınar, *Edebiyat Üzerine Makaleler* 382)

Considering the above words of Tanpınar with the literary history that he was to start writing later, it becomes apparent that *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* is consistent with the attempt to link the literatures of disparate generations using chains that were Thibaudet's metaphor for the relationship between generations. The first manifestation of this effort is the positioning of statesmen such as Mustafa Reşit, Fuad Paşa and Ali Paşa, the historian Cevdet Paşa, and the actors of Tanzimat modernization such as poets İzzet Molla and Akif Paşa, a generation of transition, within two different generations. Then, in a chapter titled "A New Generation", he describes the progressive Tanzimat authors "who were born between 1826 and 1840 (...) and were educated in new schools, learning foreign languages" as "approximately the third generation of the new age" (220). This fourteen-year generation, from Şinasi's year of birth 1826 to Namık Kemal's year of birth 1840, also includes Şinasi, Münif Paşa, Ali Suavi, and Ziya Paşa. The second generation –actually, the fourth generation of Ottoman modernization according to Tanpınar's classification– that follows Şinasi is Namık Kemal, and he in turn is followed by the generation that is called the Abdülhak Hâmid-Recaizade Ekrem school. This generation is distinct from Namık Kemal for placing autonomy before the social function of art, and possibly includes Sami Paşazade Sezai and Nabizade Nazım due to their years of birth. Headings of chapters that explain period delineation and classification are also designed with generations in mind, emphasizing chronological distinction such as "before", "after" and "contemporary": İbrahim Şinasi, Neo-Ottomans Society after Şinasi, Şinasi's Contemporary Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal after Şinasi, Namık Kemal's Contemporary Ahmet Mithat Efendi, Recaizâde Mahmud Ekrem after Namık Kemal, and Abdülhak Hâmid after Namık Kemal. Quoted from the second edition, these headings show that Ahmet Mithat was included in the Namık Kemal generation, and Muallim Naci was included in the Recaizâde-Hâmid generation after being omitted in the first edition.

Shaped by this classification, the text bears the strong influence of Thibaudet's theory becoming manifest in his concept of generations, and his approach to individual authors, not just in classification, but in the description of Tanzimat authors as well. Consistent with Bergson's definition of genius, Thibaudet argues that creation, just like life, does not revolve in orbit and is unpredictable (Girardi 27). Instead of melding this thought with his view



that criticism is a form of creative art and reading into the lives of the authors who are the subject of his research with comprehensive determinism, he tries not to reduce them into singular personality profiles and builds writers and poets like novel characters. Believing that only an essentially creative style can explore into the inner workings of a text, he views criticism itself as an autonomous artistic creation, and pushes the literary history knowledge of the literary historian into the background (Girardi 29). According to Thibaudet, the form that suits artistic criticism the best is the monographic style based on spontaneous conversation, which eliminates academic language in both singular critiques and in literary histories in general. We observe a similar form and style in Tanpınar: By bringing biographical notes to the foreground, Tanpınar penetrates the reasoning behind the literary choices of Tanzimat authors to keep the difference between generations as well as between specific authors alive. As such, Tanzimat literature is presented as a dynamic field shaped by personal differences, meaningful commonalities, contradictions and conflicts. But more importantly, the insistence of previous criticism to depict a monolithic and static personality portrait is superseded by Tanpınar's piecing together a profile that transforms through meaningful interjections and evolves with different influences. Many times, a generalization about a writer or poet, and an observation or statement that negates the generalization are joined together with conjunctions like "nevertheless", "notwithstanding" or "on the other hand". The result is that writers or poets emerge as though they were novel characters with complexities and differences, rather than static personality profiles. The author "builds and creates what they intend to say by using language just like a plastic art when expressing their observations, statements and judgments" (Yetiş 216).

In literary history, this approach to the subject of research corresponds to Tanpınar's monographic form, which is more conversational than in essay style. For Tanpınar, monography is a literary style that allows presenting the literary capacity of the subject author as a composite of their historical, political and social circumstances, and identifying literary orientations that critics may compare and classify. Therefore, the corpus of *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* on authors consists of facicles that are composed of monographies about Namık Kemal, Ahmet Mithat, Abdülhak Hâmid, Muallim Naci and Recaizade Ekrem that are always in conversation with each other. It must be noted that Tanpınar initially designed his literary history in facic-

les before, as quoted by Mehmet Kaplan, “going back to another form that would excuse [his] laziness”. The monographic style of the four entries he wrote for the Encyclopedia of Islam in 1941 and 1942, and the extensive foreword of the *Namık Kemal Antolojisi* also published in 1942 may be viewed as precursory attempts whereby he became convinced that the form of *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* is appropriate for writing a history of literature. Indeed, Ömer Faruk Akün considers these writings as the first seeding of his literary history (13). The *Yahya Kemal* monograph he wrote after Yahya Kemal's death in 1958 is consistent with the monographic form and style of *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*. He describes Yahya Kemal by comparing the poet to his contemporaries and predecessors in a way that is consistent with *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* and how authors are presented there, and “introduces him like a protagonist, with a careful and balanced choice of words” (Kara 323).

Like Thibaudet, who focuses on the French tradition of criticism and tries to avoid the continuity and permanency of this traditional form of criticism, Tanpınar is inclined to avoid the grand history that is predominant in previous literary histories, both in quality and quantity. The importance he places on Cevdet Paşa, whom he considers one of the three great authors of novelty and dedicates a chapter to, and the many references he makes to him when giving historical background show that he considers social history more useful in understanding Ottoman modernization compared to conventional political history. Tanpınar's literary history makes frequent references to Cevdet Paşa's comments about the ramifications of political history on everyday life, rather than the information he gives about political history itself. The imitation by court women and city-dwellers of wealthy Egyptians and Westerners who arrived in Istanbul after the Egypt Incident and the Crimean War in practical aspects of life such as attire, jewelry and carriages; the interest in Western-style restaurants, homes and hotels; rumors and other details about literary circles; in short, information about everyday life shows that historical background only becomes meaningful for Tanpınar if it is reflected on cultural superstructure. For the *alla Franca* personality types in novels, the historical background turns into both an instrument, and a narrative that derives meaning from the literary material.

Despite his claim of fluidity in the prologue, the closeness to Thibaudet's historiography and criticism in *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* is indicative not of simple evolution of method, but of a complicated relationship. Thibaudet was influential on Tanpınar not just during the writing of his literary history, but from the beginning of the evolution of his unique critical approach with his writings in *La Nouvelle Revue Française*, one epicenter of early 20th century French literary criticism which Tanpınar was also known to follow, his works such as *Physiology of Criticism*, *Reflections on Literature*, *Novel Reader*, and his monographs on poets like Stéphane Mallarmé, Gustave Flaubert and Paul Verlaine. Indeed, Tanpınar's direct references to Thibaudet in his literary history and other critiques, or allusions to him made through rephrasing Thibaudet's words such as "each work (...) is a conversation with its period", "today's novel is the critique of the novel", "the novel is the critique of the preceding novel reader" and "novel is an outcome of societal evolution" illustrate Thibaudet's influence in Tanpınar's critical perspective. In an essay on Paul Morand published in 1931, Tanpınar makes a reference to an essay published in *Nouvelle Revue Française*, in 1929 ("Paul Morand ve Seyahat Edebiyatı" 4-5). Witnesses to his reading and re-reading Thibaudet while preparing to write his literary history are not simply indicative of discipline and preparedness in method. The act of reading and re-reading also shows conviction in method, and in any case, Tanpınar's intent is to get to the substance of the matter, which is the history and issues of Turkish literature.

On the other hand, Thibaudet's literary historiography is wrought with significant shortcomings as well. These also become visible in Tanpınar's literary history. The first is Tanpınar's skeptical attitude towards history. Above, I had mentioned that Tanpınar's specific approach to the historical material in the prologue bore his intent to distance himself from the grand historical narrative. Although the historical narrative guided by the notion of history based on progress is less pervasive compared to other literary histories, Tanpınar is actually loyal to the predominant paradigm of nation-state literature, and the grand historical narrative behind it. As seen in his choice of generation names such as "1789 Generation" or "Napoleonic Generation" in his *History of French Literature from 1789 to the Present*, Thibaudet's literary history is not independent of the history of the French nation-state. For both Thibaudet and other French literary historians and

critics, the relative inexistence of a literary language other than French in the French mainland renders a homogeneous French literature and culture possible. Thibaudet considers this presumption adequate for the legitimacy of the literary history of a nation state, and does not feel the need to discuss this. Rather than taking up an issue with this presumption of Thibaudet and other literary approaches, Tanpınar considers Thibaudet's cultural nationalism a pointer in the right direction, and adheres to it. His work, which is "the literary history of an era that is of utmost importance to our society" as he says in the foreword (x), looks at the 19<sup>th</sup> century from the lens of the 1940s nation-state. In Tanpınar's eyes, despite the bold name of the book, 19<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman literary modernization consists of the modernization of Turkish literature after 1859, or at least after 1839. Prior to 1859, novelty in Turkish literature is presented as a change corroborated by a handful of controversial voices, and the literary aspect of tradition as a phenomenon that is no longer with the times. The word "domestic" often used by Tanpınar describes Turkish literary texts written in the Arabic script, and the subjects and forms found in these. Texts were written in the Arabic script but in languages other than Turkish in the Imperial capital are absent from *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*. Although we may avoid the fallacy of judging Tanpınar by some texts that we know today but he did not at the time of his writing his literary history, the fact that an author who is so meticulous and precise in method and in historical sources that he uses to justify his general perspective does not even attempt to go beyond the authors and texts in preceding literary histories confines his work to the tight boundaries of a history and criticism that he actively seeks to avoid. As such, *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* adheres to the national literary history paradigm, primarily Fuad Köprülü. Loyalty to canonic writers and works constrains his work to a limited number of writers and poets. In fact, some canonical writers who were omitted in the first edition are only considered worthy of inclusion in the second edition. The names of other writers and poets of the time are mentioned to the extent that they are related to the canonical writers, or to support an observation or information previously given in the text. The interest he shows in the evolution of genres results in the creation of a hierarchy among a writer's works in the mind of Tanpınar, who then ignores works that he considers not to contribute to evolution. The idea of literary influence and the resulting continuity that determines

the relationship between generations arrives at a choice where method determines preference of material. This hampers monographic critique and overshadows the authenticity of the writer or poet.

*XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* also shows an amalgamation of the canonic fallacy in question with a practical issue posed by classification into generations. When it is certain that the attempted link between generations is established, Tanpınar does not ask any questions about the existence of those outside the chain. Realizing that the scope is an issue which arises from the classification method he uses, Thibaudet had actually found a practical solution to this matter. The solution is intermediate or semi-generations that are concerned with the same problems that the central generation deals with, and offer different solutions (Z. H. 76). This way, literary history turns into a medium where plural voices apparently find representation, both in quality and quantity. In Tanpınar's literary history, plurality is achieved through tandem analogies and comparisons both among the members of one generation and between successive generations. On the other hand, this plurality is deceptive because the word "generation", used more than 80 times in Tanpınar's literary history, does not permit "semi-generations" that live during the same period and generate more conventional responses to what literature should be. For example, classical poetry is all but a silent voice from modernization in literature beginning with Namık Kemal, except the subjects added in the second edition. A great contradiction to the title of his work, this fact gives rise to a concatenation of generations from Namık Kemal onwards, where the members of these generations and their works only converse among themselves or establish dialog with successive generations while being the unchallenged dominant force of their own times. The singularity of voice –which may appear plural in terms of quantity but is singular in quality– is somewhat broken by Muallim Naci in the second edition. The vulnerability arising due to classification by generations, and the solution the same classification proposes yet Tanpınar avoids is so obvious that his student Mehmet Kaplan would later attempt to solve this problem by introducing intermediate generations like Thibaudet proposed, including some fifty authors who were overlooked by Tanpınar.

Another matter that stands out in *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* apart from the benefits and vulnerabilities brought by the method I discussed above

is the complicated and problematic relationship with Bergson inasmuch as it illustrates the multidimensional nature of influence. Tanpınar, in his essay “Son 25 Senenin Mısraları” that I mentioned above, points out as a “peculiarity” of new Turkish literature: the “golden chain that interlinks” poetry and pleasure is abruptly broken in the “proteges” of Namık Kemal, starting what he complains to be “literature for one generation; poetry for one generation”. Implied within his complaint of this fragmentation that he believes one “would not encounter in other literatures” is envy of the continuity in Western literatures (Tanpınar, *Edebiyat Üzerine Makaleler* 382). References to Bergson in Thibaudet’s notion of criticism offer a solution to the discontinuity which is an issue for Tanpınar. Linking generations together throughout literary history by their qualities amounts to rebuilding continuity. Meanwhile, literary history as a genre is in categorical contradiction with Bergson’s philosophy: Founded on élan vital, Bergson’s ideas always place the singularity of the writer and each of their texts in the center, which is essentially against the nature of literary historiography, where the singularity of authors is eliminated by locating them within a homogeneous framework. In this regard, Bergson’s creative criticism may be defined as resistance against the effort to clump texts in a collective whole by considering their singular particularities. Thibaudet’s effort is to reconcile these two tendencies: Bergson’s creative criticism, and literary historiography (Girardi 29). By establishing a vicarious relationship with Bergson through Thibaudet, Tanpınar builds a unified history that is interlinked with the concept of generations, which draws him away from Bergson.

## Conclusion

Much has been said about the relationship of Tanpınar’s literature with Western fiction; however, the same is not true for the complicated relationship with a theoretical text and method. One dynamic behind the issues and possibilities we observe in Tanpınar’s critique today is the relationship he builds with Western literatures and model of criticism. Tanpınar has a very selective acquisition strategy in this relationship. French critic and literary historian, Albert Thibaudet, has a special importance for Tanpınar in literary criticism in general, and literary historiography in particular. Albert Thibaudet’s critical perspective and philosophy of literary historiography play a definitive role on *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, chief among which

are classification, esthetic style in approaching the subject of research, and commitment to individual evaluation. Sometimes, the conventional attitude towards text selection, and the fallacy brought by the analogy he uses to interlink the texts emerge as the explicit or attendant issues in *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*. Meanwhile, Tanpınar's key concern is creative dialog in relationships with sources. This becomes visible in Tanpınar's proposition of a solution to the internal issues of Turkish literary history inspired by the critical perspective of Albert Thibaudet, and his implementation of this solution in *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*.

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# *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*'nde Yöntem: Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'da Albert Thibaudet Etkisi\*

Veysel Öztürk\*\*

## Öz

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'ın *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*'nde metin, yazar ve tarihsel bağlam odaklı okumalar, yazarın zihnindeki belirli bir Türk edebiyatı modernleşmesi anlatısına ve bu anlatının gerisindeki bir eleştirel perspektife dayanır. Tanpınar'ın edebî eserlerindeki estetiği de şekillendiren bu perspektif, farklı edebiyat tarihyazımı yöntemleri ve eleştiri kuramlarıyla diyalog içerisindedir. Edebiyat tarihinin girişinde Tanpınar Hippolyte Taine, Ferdinand Brunetière, Julius Petersen, Eduard Wechsler ve Albert Thibaudet'nin edebiyat tarihyazımı yöntemlerini değerlendirip bu yöntemlerden uygun gördüğü nitelikleri seçtiğini söyler. Giriş yazısındaki bu açıklamalara rağmen Tanpınar'ın edebiyat tarihi Fransız edebiyat tarihçisi ve eleştirmeni Albert Thibaudet'nin yönteminden diğer yöntemlere nazaran daha büyük etkiler taşır. Bu makale Tanpınar'ın hem edebiyat tarihyazımı hem edebiyat eleştirisi perspektifinin oluşumunda Tanpınar çalışmalarının adını geçirmekle yetindikleri fakat nasıl bir teorik ilişki kurulduğunun tartışılmadığı Albert Thibaudet'nin etkisine odaklanıyor. Thibaudet'nin yaklaşımının yoğun kullanımı Tanpınar'a sağladığı imkânların yanında *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*'nde görülen birtakım aksaklıkların nedenlerinden birisi olduğunu gösteriyor.

## Anahtar Kelimeler

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Albert Thibaudet, edebiyat tarihyazımı, *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, yaratıcı eleştiri.

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# О методе в «Истории турецкой литературы XIX в.»: влияние Альбера Тибодэ на Ахмета Хамди Танпынара\*

Вейсель Озтюрк\*\*

## Аннотация

В книге Ахмета Хамди Танпынара «История турецкой литературы XIX в.» анализ текста, автора и исторического контекста основан на определенном турецком литературном нарративе модернизации в мировоззрении его автора, а также на критической точке зрения, лежащей в основе этого повествования. Эта перспектива, с одной стороны, во многом определяющая эстетизм творческих работ Танпынара, вступает в диалог с несколькими методами написания истории литературы и критическими теориями. В своем предисловии к работе Танпынар пытается прояснить, как он рассмотрел и использовал методы написания истории литературы Ипполита Тэна, Фердинанда Брюнетьера, Петерсена, Векслера и Альбера Тибодэ, чтобы исследовать историю турецкой литературы XIX века. Среди них, подход Альбера Тибодэ, французского историка литературы и критика, оказал самое решающее влияние на литературную историю Танпынара по сравнению с другими методами, упомянутыми во введении. В этой статье основное внимание уделяется влиянию Тибодэ на Танпынара, о котором уже упоминалось во многих критических публикациях о Танпынаре, но ни одна из подробностей пока не уточнялась. Можно утверждать, что широкое использование метода Тибодэ принесло некоторые неудачи наряду с огромными возможностями, что можно проследить в «Истории турецкой литературы XIX в.»

## Ключевые слова

Ахмет Хамди Танпынар, Альбер Тибодэ, написание истории литературы, «История турецкой литературы XIX в.», творческая критика.

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