Institutional Translators' Field and Habitus in the Late Ottoman Period

Geç Osmanlı Döneminde Kurumsal Çevirmenlerin Alan ve Habitus'u

Research/Araştırma

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the institutional translators' field and habitus in the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century. Little research on institutional translators, particularly for those in the government institutions, has been so far carried out from a historical point of view in translation studies. Setting out to fill this gap in the literature, the present study benefits from Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus. It deals with the professional and political careers of seven different institutional translators who worked for the Ottoman state during the 19th century and discusses their common dispositions. Translation Chamber was established in 1821 in order to replace Greek dragomans with qualified Turkish Muslim translators to facilitate communication with leading European powers as talented diplomats. Professional and political lives of these seven historical figures display some similarities during their promotion in the imperial hierarchy. The present study argues that the Chamber functioned as a field for young students to start a bright career in the Empire. Similarly, diplomatic missions in various European capitals and the post of imperial court dragoman required the acquisition of a similar habitus that was likely to pave the way for a highly prestigious post, i.e. ministry.

Keywords: Translation history, habitus, field, Translation Chamber, Ottoman Empire.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, 19. yüzyıl boyunca Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda çalışmış kurumsal çevirmenlerin sahip oldukları alan ve habitus'a odaklanmaktadır. Çeviribilimde kurumsal çevirmenler, özellikle de devlet kurumlarında çalışanlar, bugüne kadar tarihsel bir bakış açısıyla ile pek ele alınmamıştır. Bu boşluğu doldurmak amacını taşıyan mevcut çalışma, teorik olarak Bourdieu'nün alan ve habitus

kavramlarından yararlanmaktadır. Mevcut çalışma, 19. yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti'ne hizmet etmiş yedi farklı çevirmenin mesleki ve siyasi kariyerlerini ele alarak bu kişilerin bazı ortak özelliklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Tercüme Odası 1821 yılında kurulduğunda Rum dragomanların yerine yetenekli diplomatlar olup önde gelen Avrupalı güçlerle iletişim kurabilecek Türk ve Müslüman çevirmenler getirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmadaki söz konusu yedi tarihi kişiliğin de mesleki ve siyasi hayatları, imparatorluk hiyerarşisi içinde yükselirken benzerlikler sergilemiştir. Mevcut çalışma da Tercüme Odası'nın Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda parlak bir kariyere adım atmak isteyen genç öğrenciler için bir alan işlevi gördüğü iddiasındadır. Bu yüzden, Avrupa'nın çeşitli başkentlerindeki diplomatik misyonlar ve divan-ı hümayun tercümanlığı makamı, saygın bir makam olan nazırlığa giden yolda benzer bir habitus edinmelerini gerektirmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Çeviri tarihi, habitus, alan, Tercüme Odası, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu.

1. Introduction

Translation history tends to focus on the text and text production process more rather than the individuals who took part in those processes and produced those texts. Drawing attention to the importance of translator's agency as an object of historical research, Pym (1998) argues that translation history scholars should approach "the translator" as an "individual" because this will help researchers understand social and cultural translations in which these translators emerged and were engaged in their activities (pp. ix-5). Therefore, despite the relatively increasing number of studies on agency in translation in the last two decades, more studies dealing with the translator as a historical figure need to be carried out within the framework of translation studies in order to explore relatively unknown figures of translation in different cultural contexts.

A striking example of lesser studied fields of historical research is institutional translators. It can be observed in the existing literature that translators employed by government offices and official institutions in Turkey in the past, particularly those in the Ottoman Empire, were not comprehensively studied. Even today's institutional translators have found themselves little space in recent academic studies. Only a couple of studies which directly deal with institutional translators and their activities are found in the existing literature. For instance, in his MA thesis, Sarıgül (2015) focuses on institutional translators' image with a comparative perspective from the early fifteenth century to modern Turkish Republic and concludes that their image gradually worsened during the republican period due to various changes in state policies although it was very positive during the time of Ottoman Empire (p. 109). Similarly, in her MA thesis, Üstünsöz (2010) draws on various legal cases and regulations to demonstrate how translators, including those working for a certain institution, from time to time, had to defend their status and profession before the court due to "a threat of conviction" (p. 4). Boy and Özsöz (2015) pay attention to part-time and freelance translators working for EU and study their activities in general. It cannot be denied that institutional translators need more research from both a contemporary and historical perspective.

Field and habitus have already been widely used as sociological approaches to translation in Turkey, as is manifested by various studies in the current literature. However, the popularity of these two concepts in the research on translation history and institutional translation has particularly increased over the last decade. As for translation history, for example, Tahir Gürçağlar (2008) sets out to analyse literary translation activities in the early Republican period in Turkey and reveals the contribution of the "politics" and "poetics" of literary translation to cultural transformation through the glass of habitus. In a similar study, Tahir Gürçağlar (2010) contextualises literary habitus of readers in Turkey by analysing pseudo- and concealed translations in the Republican period. In her MA thesis, Özkul (2009) takes a sociological approach by using habitus as a tool to observe Ahmet Vefik Paşa as one of the leading figures of the Tanzimat period. Erkul Yağcı (2011) examines the role of translation in the Ottoman-Turkish society's reading habits and benefits from the concept of habitus to understand readers' individual and group choices. In another PhD thesis, Demirkol (2015) deals with literary modernization in the second half of nineteenth century and situates literary translation as cultural products in Bourdieu's field of cultural production. As for the use of field and habitus for institutional translation, Bulut and Parlak (2012) shed light on the "symbolic power" and "institutional habitus" of academic translator training institutions with a case study on Translation Studies Department at Istanbul University. In her PhD thesis, Kayhan (2015) focuses on the translation in Turkey as a field for translators with a view to social, economic and cultural aspects through the analysis of their habitus and capital. Taşkın and Bogenç Demirel (2019) delve into the position of translators with disabilities in the professional field of translation thanks to habitus and field. Similarly, Seçkin and Bogenç Demirel (2019) analyse hiring process of and expectations from an institutional translator within the context of field and habitus. Bringing translation history and institution translation together, the present study too focuses on the importance of Translation Chamber (henceforth the Chamber) and its impact on institutional translators' diplomatic/political career via the concepts of field and habitus.

The present study poses three main research questions: (1) In which ways did the Chamber function as a field for institutional translators? (2) What were the common dispositions in the political/diplomatic careers of these translators that helped them develop a similar habitus? (3) How were these two interrelated in the Ottoman context? In this respect, I will first give a brief history of the Chamber in order to contextualize the conditions that led to its emergence. Afterwards, I will analyse the translator training and translation office functions of the Chamber. Later, I will touch upon seven different statesmen living in the 19th century, namely Ahmet Arifi Paşa, Ahmet Vefik Paşa, Keçecizade Fuat Paşa, Mehmet Emin Ali Paşa, Namık Paşa, Sadullah Paşa and Saffet Mehmet Esat Paşa, in order to discover the similarities among their political/diplomatic lives. I selected these figures because all of them started their career in the Chamber, were later sent to an Ottoman embassy or mission in Europe, and were appointed as a dragoman at the imperial court and, later, as a minister. Thus, they set a fairly good example for habitus analysis as a group of statesmen. Lastly, I will clarify the relationship

between field and habitus within the context of the present study to explain their relevance and dependency.

2. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The present study benefits from the concept of institutional translation/translator as a theoretical framework to gain insight into famous statesmen in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire. Institutional translation can be defined as the activity of "translating in or for specific organizations such as the Translation Bureau of the federal government of the Canada" (Kang, 2009, p. 141). It can be thus said that institutional translators usually work for government institutions varying from a local to national degree, and generally translate official administrative, bureaucratic and legal documents. Translators in academic, technical institutions as well as NGOs, too, can also be categorized as institutional translators. Considering that Translation Chamber was a government institution, a group of institutional translators is the main focus of the present study.

Translation studies has always been a multidisciplinary field in close contact with other disciplines in social sciences such as sociology, history and literature. Therefore, the present study employs Bourdieu's field and habitus concepts as a theoretical framework. Although Bourdieu mainly addresses artistic and literary production by means of these concepts, it has been demonstrated by many translation scholars that his theoretical stance can also be applied to various case studies on translation and translators. While defining these concepts, rather than giving a general definition, Bourdieu prefers listing distinctive qualities of 'field' and 'habitus' to enable his readers to grasp their nature. In addition, he supports his theoretical ideas with numerous examples from artistic and literary world in France. I plan to use a similar methodology and delve into various qualities of Translation Chamber as a field and seven translators' political/diplomatic careers as a habitus by referring to what Bourdieu gives as certain qualities of field and habitus. Thus, I will demonstrate how they can be explained point by point thanks to Bourdieu's definitions of field and habitus, and related examples.

3. The Birth of the Chamber

Institutional translation and translators in the Ottoman Empire had existed since the mid-fifteenth century. Throughout this period, dragomans from various ethnic and religious backgrounds worked for the Ottoman sultans. Until 1821, Christian converts of Greek, Armenian and Slavic origin were employed as translators and interpreters at the imperial court because Muslim Turks often preferred learning Arabic and Persian as a second language rather than major European languages (Aydın, 2007, p. 41; Balcı, 2007, p. 9). These dragomans interpreted for the Ottoman sultan during formal meetings with European ambassadors and translated official documents containing secret information about the imperial affairs, which gave them a strong hand in the state hierarchy (Paker, 2009, p. 552).

Among these dragomans, the Greek outnumbered other nations from the late seventeenth century as those residing in the Fener (Phanar) district of Istanbul dominated the Ottoman court with 34 dragomans for 150 years until 1821 (Balcı, 2007, p. 64). The reason underlying their quick rise was their immense wealth earned from commercial activities (Findley, 1980, p. 92). As a result of their financial power, their sons were able to receive a satisfactory education abroad, particularly at leading universities in Europe (Balcı, 2007, p. 76). Thus, they could be more easily appointed to critical diplomatic posts as dragomans. Referring to the high number of the Greek dragomans in the Ottoman state, Orhonlu (1993) states that the position of head dragoman led to a fierce rivalry among Phanariot families in this period (p. 177). This rivalry sometimes reached to such an extent that Greek dragomans replaced their post with their sons in a hereditary manner because of its high prestige (Paker, 2009, p. 551). Furthermore, growing relationships with European powers during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century remarkably strengthened their positional power. However, an idea of nationalism and independence sparked among the Greek in early nineteenth century, encouraging Greek dragomans to cooperate with European states against the Ottoman Empire by abusing their power in the imperial court (Bilim, 1990, pp. 33-4). When a revolt took place in the Mora Peninsula following a turmoil that was provoked by the Greek rebels, Ottoman officials found out that three dragomans had secretly exchanged letters with the rebels (Akyıldız, 2011, p. 504). Thus, it was not surprising for the state to distrust Greek dragomans and dismiss them after they had dominated the imperial court for a long time (Balcı, 2007, p. 82).

It was not easy for the Ottoman Empire to quickly replace Greek dragomans because no Turkish and Muslim dragomans had then been available for this position (Findley, 1980, p. 133). A lack of qualified dragomans made translation and interpreting activities even more important after the Greek revolt had ended. This brought about a need to train for Turkish and Muslim translators and interpreters who would fluently speak Western languages and translate from/into these languages to handle frequent diplomatic relations with major European powers (Eruz, 2010, p. 170). Although state officials tried employing Turkish Muslims for this activity and appointed a few people to the post at the imperial court, the position was despised and not considered as a prestigious profession among the elite (Bilim, 1990, p. 35). Ottoman Empire finally decided to maintain a more professional approach towards the issue, and established the Chamber in 1833. The institution provided Turkish and Muslim students and translators/interpreters with numerous educational and professional opportunities to fill the position left by the Greek, which helped them enjoy a privileged position in the Ottoman hierarchy.

4. Translation Chamber as a Field

Bourdieu (1993) lists three main features of a typical "field". The first one is that a field is always a stage for "principles of hierarchisation" and a "site of struggle" for power, and those having the power in a dominant position usually aim to minimize the number

of those who want to attain a similar position (p. 30). Secondly, a field usually owes its social endurance to the progressive substitution of the "established figures" by the "young challengers", which results in the reproduction of that field (pp. 56-7). Thirdly, agents in a certain field may claim their recognition through or against the institutions operating in the field (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 63). Therefore, Bourdieu (1993) recommends a social sciences researcher to focus on the conditions that govern these struggles and norms of that respective field instead of evaluating power holding agents individually (p. 42). In this respect, to give a broader picture, the struggle that occurred and evolved within the Chamber must also be discussed along with the above-mentioned states-men's careers.

The principles of hierarchisation and the resulting struggle in a field are some-times influenced by an external factor such as the outbreak of a revolution or a political crisis (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 57-8). When we take the establishment of the Chamber into account, it can be noted that it followed the dismissal of Greek dragomans, which cre-ated a major gap in the diplomatic relations of the Ottoman Empire due to a lack of qualified staff for the position. This was a new prospect for the young Turkish and Mus-lim translators since the post of imperial post dragoman that passed from father to son during the dominant period of Greek Phanariots was not a dream for them now if they managed to join the Chamber. According to Bilim (1990), even a famous saying was coined in this period: "The Chamber can turn a poor grocer's son into a minister" (p. 40). Thus, it can be suggested that the power at stake turned out to be in favour of young Muslim Turks in the field with the birth of a new institution and that the Chamber sig-nalled the end of a struggle between Muslim and non-Muslim institutional translators in the 19th century, resulting in Muslim translators' capturing non-Muslim dragomans' dominating position. Similarly, Bernard Lewis associates young Turkish and Muslims' high interest in the Chamber with its structure suitable for the formation of a new "bi-lingual elite" who could replace military and religious authorities (as cited in Arslan, 2009, p. 425). The Chamber can be also said to have ignited the spark of a new struggle between different state authorities in the following years.

How did the Chamber manage to maintain its 'reproductive' nature in this pe-riod? The answers to this question are strict admission criteria and curriculum. Accord-ing to Bourdieu (1993), each field has its own certain characteristics which also define the "conditions of entry" which are "tacitly" stated or "explicitly codified and legally guaranteed" such as an "entrance examination" (p. 43). The Chamber conforms to the latter because a specific regulation entered into force for training civil servants with lin-guistic abilities. At first, applications to the Chamber were accepted without any specific entrance exams. However, when the number of potential students far exceeded the ex-pectations, Tecelli Mehmet Efendi, the head master, was appointed to organise an en-trance exam which would meticulously select talented young students (Bilim, 1990, p. 38; Balcı, 2007, p. 106), which made the selection process more severe. In the following years, the Chamber was divided into two sections as "Language Office" and "Translation Office" where students learned foreign languages such as French, Arabic and Persian,

and later translated diplomatic texts (Bilim, 1990, pp. 38-40). Similarly, Balcı (2007) reports that a *sınıf-ı sani* (second grade) and a *sınıf-ı evvel* (first grade) were formed for students with different levels of language proficiency and that it was not possible to resume the first grade without reaching a satisfactory level in speaking and translating a foreign language (pp. 101-4). Moreover, because French was then the *lingua franca* in the diplomatic world, the Chamber obliged its students to attain the highest level of French as possible within a period of five years (Balcı, 2007, p. 108). All of these implementations can be considered as a mechanism for the Chamber to obtain the highest efficiency as a translation institution where young candidates who competed with other fellow students created a source of "reproduction" for future translators of the Chamber. In addition, these students can be considered as the "young challengers" who would replace the "established figures" of the Empire in various diplomatic positions in the future.

Being permanent member of the Chamber was not an easy task because newcomers feared the consequences of failing the training in the Chamber. This is not surprising as individuals "who have made their mark" in a field will always aim to preserve their position and persist in their "recognition" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 60). This mechanism can be observed in the Chamber's students who were determined to preserve their recognised status as a member of a distinguished state institution. Yet there is a mutual interaction here. It was also the field, i.e. the Chamber, forcing the individuals within it to continue existing in the field as much as the individuals made efforts themselves to do so. This is apparent in the 1824 regulation which stipulated that a student would be dismissed and replaced by another student if he displayed a poor performance (Balcı, 2007, p. 88). In addition, displaying good manners was another criterion for passing the class because teachers' attitudes towards the students were quite strict, and any incompetent or lax behaviour was not tolerated (p. 101). Hence, the Chamber required the students to be careful to maintain their positions and recognition in the field.

Power held by social agents within a field cannot be separated from the "quantity of specific capital" that comes along with their determinate position (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 30). At this point, Bourdieu's notion of "symbolic capital" emerges as a complementary aspect of the field as it precipitates the gaining process of this 'capital' by the agents in the field. Bourdieu (1977) defines symbolic capital as a "form of prestige" associated with a social group such as a family and considers it as "the most valuable form of accumulation in a society" which helps the group in question to obtain further "economic capital" (p. 179). Being at the intersection of the Ottoman political and diplomatic network, the Chamber served as an institution that offered a remarkable quantity of symbolic capital for its young students and civil servants that would receive a distinct translation education and training and later pursue a distinguished career in politics and diplomacy, which could be seen as the "economic accumulation" of the "symbolic capital" that they attained during their time in the Chamber. Such popularity also helped the Chamber become a major authority as a school, thus fulfilling "its own logic as a field" (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 38-9) and imposing its "own norms and sanctions on the whole set

of producers" (p. 40), i.e. the students. As a result, through its strict admission, assessment and training processes, the Chamber gained a certain degree of autonomy as the sole institution to train young diplomats who would later come to higher imperial posts.

The Chamber also exemplifies a ground for Bourdieu's notion of "doxa" for students and translators who spent time there in the given period. Doxa can be defined as the experience of accepting social and mental structures and schemes of thought in an established order which employs quite different mechanisms to naturalise itself for agents adherent to that order (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164). This "philosophical doxa" later moves from one generation to another via "academic routine" and creates the "common sense" of those generations as the time passes by (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 32). It is observed that the Chamber enabled its students to develop a similar "academic routine" because students from different parts of the society and studying there in different time periods were educated by the same curriculum and later gradually built themselves a distinct translator, diplomat, politician and intellectual identity thanks to their educational background in the Chamber. In other words, the repercussions of the Chamber as a field with its own 'academic doxa' were reflected in their entire lives. In the end, the famous saying pointing to the transformation of ordinary young students into successful statesmen became a reality thanks to those students' internalisation of the collective academic culture within the body of the Chamber.

The application of Bourdieu's concept of field to translation encountered some criticism due to discrepancies between literary/artistic practices and translation activities. For instance, Wolf (2007) argues that Bourdieusian concept of field does not suffice to explain the mediation process in which translations take place and thus the borders of a potential "translation field" must be redefined (p. 112). The reasons for her argument are likely to lie in translators' relatively low "prestige" in the society due to a number of gaps in the legal regulations, which makes it possible for anyone to call him/herself a translator without any official training document, resulting in a lack of professional institutionalisation (pp. 111-6). However, as discussed above, these problems are not witnessed in the Chamber as it laid the legal grounds to become an official translator, helped candidate translators acclaim prestige and functioned through its distinct identity as a translation institution. What Wolf (2007) claims may be true for literary translators who work on a freelance basis without the domination of any visible translation institution as powerful as the Chamber. However, the Chamber was the leading institution in which translator candidates of the period competed with each other to join and study for a better professional career. In this sense, I believe that Bourdieu's concept of field can be used to analyse the Chamber as a solid example of 'field' in the late Ottoman period.

5. From the Chamber to Professional and Political Career as a Habitus

Bourdieu (1977) defines habitus as a structure forming "a particular type of environment" in which social agents perform some practices and are endowed with some dis-

positions "objectively adapted to their goals" without any prior conscious attempt towards a certain end (p. 72). Thus, "identical past practices" sometimes reach to such an extent that two different social agents with the same habitus appear as if they were regulated by another group of social agents possessing the same habitus (p. 73). However, these overlapping experiences must be understood and analysed in relation with social agents' real life positions since each case of habitus needs a "complete description" of the relationship between a social agent and "cognitive and motivating" structures constituting his/her interests (p. 76). In this respect, before giving details about these seven translators' educational and professional lives, I will first briefly lean on the practices of the Chamber that paved the way for their similar habitus. Unlike the previous section which portrayed the efforts of the Chamber to strengthen its position as an autonomous field, I will discuss below the way in which the Chamber implicitly guided its students to follow a similar career as politicians and diplomats. This is a significant point because these policies heavily affected these individuals' career choices in the long run and built a suitable environment for similar professional and diplomatic experiences.

Despite being the first example of a modern diplomacy school in the Ottoman Empire, the Chamber could not attract young students' attention and only produced a few highly qualified intellectuals until the late 1830s (Bilim, 1990, p. 37). However, those who enrolled in the Chamber did not remain as translators since the Chamber later decided to promote its qualified staff to various positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to conduct diplomatic affairs with European states. Findley (1980) states that this decision was the most important element that shaped the future of Ottoman diplomacy until the end of 19th century (p. 186). As a precursor to more prestigious diplomatic positions in the future, Mahmud II asked the Chamber to assign successful translators with Ottoman ambassadors to major European capitals such as Paris, London, Berlin and Vienna. This strategy helped young translators to improve their language skills and become familiar with different cultural and diplomatic communities. In addition, getting accustomed to European culture and lifestyle was another benefit that the diplomat intellectuals of the future enjoyed (Akyıldız, 2011, p. 505). To put it another way, their past educational life in the Chamber and diplomatic missions in various European capitals functioned as an internship for the students of the Chamber, which could be regarded as the first common disposition in their habitus. Let us now take a glance at these figures' career in a chronological order.

Namık Paşa is considered as one of the most successful members of the Chamber thanks to his success in learning French from renowned teachers such as Bulgarzade Yahya Efendi, the first head master of the Chamber. He worked as a translator in the diplomatic negotiations between Ottoman Empire and Russian diplomats. Thanks to his distinguished ability to translate, he was appointed as a military attaché to St. Petersburg in 1829. He also worked as an ambassador in London to mediate between the Ottoman Empire and England for the solution of Egyptian question in 1834. Following his

tenure in the embassy, he returned to Istanbul. He was later appointed as Baghdad governor, and finally he served as the Navy Minister in the last years of his political career (Saydam, 2006, p. 379).

Mehmed Emin Ali Paşa was one of the first members of the Chamber because he started his career in1833. After completing his education in the Chamber, he went to Vienna as a head clerk of council to conduct diplomatic affairs and developed his French skills there. Later, he conducted a diplomatic duty in St. Petersburg. When he came back to Istanbul, he was appointed as the head dragoman of the imperial court in 1837. Later, he accompanied then grand vizier Mustafa Reşit Paşa for a mission in London in 1838. He was appraised for his contributions and exemplary service there. In 1846, he became the foreign minister and was later promoted to the position of grand vizier in 1852 (Beydilli, 1989, pp. 425-6).

Saffet Mehmed Esad Paşa studied French in the Chamber after learning Arabic and Persian in the religious schools known as *medrese*. He also worked as a translator in the Translation Office of the Chamber because more civil servants were needed during mid-1830s. He became a first class dragoman at the imperial court in 1837 and deputy head dragoman in the following year, and finally the head dragoman in 1840. He was later promoted to the post of Minister of Commerce in 1861. Performing this duty until 1865, he continued his career as the ambassador to Paris in 1865. After his return to Istanbul, he was appointed as Minister of Education and Foreign Minister in 1868 and 1879, respectively (Özcan, 2008, pp. 467-8).

Ahmet Vefik Paşa must probably be the most well-known of all politicians and intellectuals that were trained in the Chamber. He started attending the Chamber in 1837 and, three years later, accompanied the ambassador to London as the chief scribe. He was appointed as the head dragoman at the imperial court in 1847. During a career of 30 years, he occupied quite significant positions as an ambassador to Paris, minister of state, foundations and education. Finally, in 1880, he was elected as the first president of the first modern assembly in the Ottoman Empire (Eruz, 2010, p. 111).

Keçecizade Fuad Paşa studied medicine before changing his career path and decided to pursue a career in the Translation Chamber. He was then appointed as a first class dragoman in 1839. Afterwards, he was appointed as a clerk in the Ottoman embassy in London for four years, followed by two missions in Spain and Portugal, respectively. He later became the head dragoman at the imperial court in 1845. Thanks to his success in tax collection in Egypt, he was appointed as the grand vizier in 1852. He worked as the grand vizier four more times in the following years (Köprülü, 1996, pp. 202-3).

Ahmed Arifi Paşa joined the Chamber in 1843. He became quite proficient in French and German and later displayed distinguished skills in translation activities. He was later appointed as a clerk in the Ottoman embassy in Vienna. After completing his tenure in Austria, he returned to the capital and was appointed as a dragoman at the

imperial court during 1850s. Finally, he was promoted to the post of grand vizier in the late 1850s (Aydın, 2007, p. 63).

Sadullah Paşa started his career in the Chamber much later compared to the previously mentioned figures, in 1853, when he was only 18 years old. His knowledge of French was appreciated the Chamber, and thus he was promoted to the post of head dragoman at the imperial court twice until 1874. During the Hamidian era, he was appointed as the grand vizier in 1881 thanks to his success in his previous duties. He also later worked as the ambassador to Vienna in 1883 (Akyıldız, 2008, p. 433).

A brief account of these seven translators' professional and diplomatic career demonstrates that, despite joining the Chamber in different time periods, they shared quite similar experiences in their respective careers. Bourdieu (1977) explains the crucial role of overlapping experiences in a habitus environment as follows:

> […] the harmonization of agents' experiences and the continuous reinforcement that each of them receives from the expression, individual or collective (in festivals, for example), improvised or programmed (commonplaces, sayings), of similar or identical experiences. The homogeneity of habitus is what - within the limits of the group of agents possessing the schemes (of production and interpretation) implied in their production - causes practices and works to be immediately intelligible and foreseeable, and hence taken for granted. […] The objective homogenizing of group or class habitus which results from the homogeneity of the conditions of existence is what enables practices to be objectively harmonized without any intentional calculation or conscious reference to a norm and mutually adjusted in the absence of any direct interaction or, a fortiori, explicit coordination." (p. 80)

One thing particularly catches attention in these institutional translators' resumes: All of them started studying in the Chamber, went abroad for a duty in an Ottoman embassy/mission, worked as a dragoman at the imperial court and finally were appointed as a minister or grand vizier. Therefore, their past experiences are "harmonized" since all of above-mentioned career steps were taken by each of these historical figures. In other words, as Bourdieu clarifies above, they coincided with other successful career owners' destiny in the imperial hierarchy without any prior calculation or obligation on the part of them. Whether these individuals started the same career path with the same motivation and intention of obtaining a high level imperial post cannot be fully understood as it would be the focus of a more detailed and comprehensive study. Nevertheless, given the fact that all of them ended up in very similar diplomatic positions, it can be assumed that they decided to take similar actions at similar points of their career to reach the same objectives, which implies that they shared a similar habitus. This is an important detail that must be taken into account because they could have easily pursued different careers following the time they spent in the Chamber. As a result, as Bourdieu (1977) also points out, the prospective career of an individual studying or working in the Chamber became almost "foreseeable" (p. 80) within time, pointing to the gradual emergence of a shared habitus for the students of this institution.

Bourdieu (1977) states that a social agent's habitus might also be the result of a "strategic calculation" related to that agent's expected personal objective (p. 76). When considered from this point of view, these institutional translators' apparent harmonization in a similar habitus environment may seem misleading because they did not go through same professional experiences in the same chronological order. For example, Mehmed Emin Ali, Keçecizade Fuad, Ahmed Vefik and Ahmed Arifi Paşa worked in an Ottoman diplomatic mission before their career as a dragoman at the imperial court, whereas Namık, Sadullah and Safet Mehmed Esat Paşa went abroad after having worked as a dragoman. However, Bourdieu also adds that such differences do not always mean an absolute "deviation" from the habitus but should be regarded only as a "personal style", which, one way or another, results in the integration of the members of the same class (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 86-7). Even though these translators may have deliberately taken different steps in accordance with their career expectations or own personal conditions at the time, such nuances in their careers should not be considered separate or unrelated individual experiences that demolish the integrity of their shared habitus because the only thing that varies is the chronological order of their career choices rather than their professional and diplomatic experiences such as working as a court dragoman or ambassador.

Another important point about the habitus is the confrontation between the positions of different individuals as these positions are never legally secured and always open to challenge by other members in the same field (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 61-2). Institutional translators' similar habitus in the Chamber, too, displays a similar tendency. For instance, their posts as a grand vizier or minister were never permanent and could be immediately ceased by an imperial edict without any legal prosecution, ending up in their replacement by a diplomat or politician in the same rank. In addition, they also risked losing their prestige in case of an unsuccessful term in their respective position and thus not find a chance to be promoted to a higher rank. It can be thus said that they managed to withstand against the struggles in the field by climbing the ladder in their similar habitus environments thanks to their solid educational background in the Chamber.

The above-mentioned examples do not necessarily predicate that the relationship between field and habitus is always a mechanical one. More often than not, a dynamic cycle is at work here as positions in a field shape dispositions in the habitus. Bourdieu (1993) expresses this relationality by mentioning how "available positions" in a field require an individual to possess certain dispositions, while it is also likely for individuals with appreciated dispositions to increase the value of that specific position (p. 65). In this respect, it can be stated that the Chamber forced these institutional translators to obtain various dispositions through their hard work during the education process in the Chamber, as shown in the previous section. Meanwhile, their consequential success in their respective political and diplomatic careers also increased succeeding students' motivation to join the Chamber as a respectable educational institution, as manifested by the growing number of new students in the upcoming years. Thus, it is possible to speak

of a mutual relationship between the Chamber as a field and political/diplomatic career as a habitus within the context of the late Ottoman period.

6. Conclusion

Institutional translators play a major role in today's world where numerous institutions hire translators to handle their paperwork in foreign languages. However, this does not mean that they were peculiar to the 21st century and didn't exist in the past. Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus can be employed to explore the case of institutional translators of the past as they offer a useful theoretical framework for contextualizing spatial and temporal conditions in which those translators emerged and worked. Combining these two different theoretical perspectives, the present study attempted to outline the role of Translation Chamber as an example of field and diplomatic/political lives of seven institutional translators who studied in the Chamber as an example of habitus.

In the first quarter of nineteenth century, Ottoman Empire's urgent need for dragomans who would be in charge of correspondence with European states forced state officials to establish a school and train skilled translators. Adopting a more systematic manner compared to previous periods when Christian converts with bilingual skills were directly hired, Ottoman Empire established Translation Chamber. Therefore, this study argued that the rivalry among bright students-to-be who aimed to enrol in the Chamber made it a field of struggle in the course of time because it offered them a great opportunity to be promoted to higher ranks. In addition, it was also maintained that the Chamber witnessed its popularity among young candidates and elevated itself to the status of a prestigious school by organizing strict admission exams as well as a detailed and arduous education process. As a result, in a short time, it created an academic culture that increased the number of successful students who would later have a voice in the state administration.

This study also put forward the idea that the Chamber's policy of guiding its students towards diplomatic posts in Ottoman embassies and missions in Europe led to the emergence of a new prospect for them as they were able to recognize the details of modern diplomatic relations. Seven different institutional translators' diplomatic and political careers analysed in the present study suggest that their school background and short-term tenures in the diplomatic area greatly contributed to their professional development process because all of them took similar steps during their educational and professional lives and thus went through a similar career path, being finally appointed as the heads of different ministries. It was thus concluded that a shared habitus, which can also be considered as a type of 'class habitus', came to existence among institutional translators in the late Ottoman period.

The present study attempted to shed light on a relatively unstudied area in the translation history of Ottoman Empire and institutional translation. In addition, it also proved again that the notions of field and habitus could be applied to specific areas other than literature and art. However, it needs to be improved because it dealt with a

fairly limited period of time and number of people, which risks making some hasty generalizations for the period in question. Future studies which explicate possible individual variations in these translators' personal dispositions in a more detailed manner should be carried out. Additionally, no matter what the differences and/or similarities of their careers are, other translators working as statesmen for different institutions should also be studied under the scope of field and habitus in order to reveal a potentially larger network of official institutions and translators in the Ottoman period.

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