



A HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL SURVEY OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN TURKEY

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Abstract

This study presents a historical and critical evaluation of the studies of comparative literature in the Turkish, focusing on literary studies in the field of comparative literature and comparative (cultural) studies from the past to day. It is also discussed here what theoretical and practical approaches and perceptions of the Turkish academics related to comparative literature in a new comparative (cultural) literary light are. On the other hand, comparative studies are being observed comparing the situation of comparative literature in Turkey to the other countries' ones with minuses and pluses. Whereas, establishment of departments of Comparative literature in Turkey have been possible after the 1990s, comparative studies dating back a thousand years before the past are also brought to the light.

Keywords: Comparative literature, theory, perception, classic Turkish literature, modern Turkish literature.

TÜRKİYE'DE KARŞILAŞTIRMALI EDEBİYATIN TARİHSEL VE ELEŞTİREL DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

Öz

Bu çalışma, geçmişten günümüze karşılaştırmalı edebiyat ve karşılaştırmalı (kültürel) çalışmalar alanında yapılan edebi çalışmalara odaklanarak, Türkçedeki karşılaştırmalı edebiyat çalışmalarının tarihsel ve eleştirel bir değerlendirmesini sunuyor. Türk akademisyenlerinin karşılaştırmalı edebiyata olan teorik ve uygulamalı yaklaşımlarının ne olduğu, karşılaştırmalı edebiyat disiplini ve yeni bir karşılaştırmalı (kültürel) edebiyat ışığında, nasıl bir karşılaştırmalı edebiyat algısı taşıdıkları da burada tartışılıyor. Diğer yandan, Türkiye'deki karşılaştırmalı edebiyatın durumu eksi ve artılarıyla, diğer ülkelerinkine karşılaştırılarak, karşılaştırmalı çalışmaların izi sürülüyor. Türkiye'de karşılaştırmalı edebiyat kürsülerinin kurulması 1990'lardan sonra mümkün olsa da geçmişi bin yıl öncesine dayanan karşılaştırmalı çalışmalar da gün ışığına çıkarılıyor.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Karşılaştırmalı edebiyat, kuram, uygulama, klasik Türk edebiyatı, modern Türk edebiyatı.

A Comparative Survey

It is a fact that the definitions, scopes and methods of comparative literature lead to confusions, misunderstandings, misperceptions or wrong approaches when literary studies in Turkish are reviewed. Some comparatists fall into mistake of thinking that the word

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‘comparison’ used for studying of literary products of a single nation’s literature is the same meaning with the term ‘comparative’ comparing and contrasting two or more nations’ literatures. They present comparisons of literary figures and products that are belong to a single nation’s literature, a single culture or a single language in the name of ‘comparative literature’ or as the studies of comparative literature.

The phrase comparative literature is mixed with a comparison or comparative method as if they are the same thing and have been used instead of each other because comparison method is used in literary theory, literary criticism and the history of literature. Misunderstanding of the concept comparative literature puts it on the same side to the national literature as if both of them is the same discipline or has the same meaning. Thus the works studied on comparative literature, its history, theory and application are misinterpreted and evaluated, and most of studies of national literature or literary criticism and history are introduced as the studies of comparative literature.

Focusing the literary studies in comparative literature and comparative cultural studies from past to present I will try to evaluate the comparative literary studies in Turkish starting from the fact that what comparative literature is interested to interactions or relations between literatures, languages, cultures or literary values of at least two different nations, in one sense the text/s beyond the boundaries. Although comparative study of literature has recently become one of the popular researches for scholars in the departments of western languages and literatures and Turkish language and literature of Turkish universities, the first comparative studies in Turkish goes back earlier than a thousand years ago.

In spite of numerous comparative studies (books, essays, articles, thesis etc.) in both Turkish and all the world literature from Aristotle and Plato’s discourses on philosophy and literature today, when we look at the historical survey of the French *littérature comparée* (comparative literature in English) in Turkish, it is seen that it has been mentioned with Arabic words such as ‘mukayese’ and ‘kıyas’ that have been in use for more than one hundred and eighty years in Ottoman. Although the Ottoman language left its place in the new Turkish language and some researchers have preferred the term ‘mukayese,’ but the word ‘karşılaştırmalı’ became widespread.

We all know comparative literature as a discipline was born in 19th century, but we also know that comparative studies extend to Plato and Aristotle’s discussions on philosophy and poetry, even to the first inscriptions dated to 1500 to 3500 BC., though whose most are the financial, political, social and cultural and literary documents or laws of the Babylonian, Mesopotamian, Hittite, Assyrian, Egyptian, Indian and Chinese emperors or empires as well as

their relations, slavery and property rights, reports, wills, declamations, letters and relations between neighboring nations just as relationships of Roman and Greek literatures to each other.

Though the comparative studies and the first studies of comparative literature in French, English, German and American literatures were repeatedly discussed and discussed by foreign and native researchers; for whatever reason, the first studies in Turkish have not been investigated or noticed. Until today, Shakespeare was known as the first person to use the word ‘comparative’ in the world and Francis Meres to make the first comparative study. Unfortunately, the opinions, thoughts and decisions of the western scientists have been so quickly accepted and memorized without questioning. The issue that whether or not the comparative studies in the Turkish were done much earlier than in the West has not been investigated. We were not able to know the ‘Self’ as much as we knew the ‘Other’. In other words, we neither knew nor introduced Turkish figures such as Mahmud of Kashgar, Ali Şir Nevai who had signed comparative studies in the very earlier times than Shakspeare and Meres did.

When we compare the position of comparative literature in Turkish to Western ones, although comparative literature chairs in Turkey were established much later than in Europe, it is clear that the studies related to comparative literature has been in use for more than a thousand years. The first great Turkish linguist Mahmud of Kashgar visited several Turkic tribes and composed his encyclopedic work *Divânu Lügâti't-Türk* (The Dictionary of Turkish Language 1072-1074) that also has great important as a study of comparative dictionary of Turkish dialects written in Karahan (Hakaniye) Turkish before 926 years from our age. It is not an only dictionary, but also is a comparative cultural book focusing on the grammars, languages, literatures and folklores, beliefs, traditions and customs of Turkish tribes and containing several examples of hadiths, proverbs and poems. Therefore it can be said that Mahmud of Kashgar is the first pioneer of the comparative literature in Turkish.

After half a century from Mahmud of Kashgar, another great Turcologist Ali Şir Nevâî in his work *Muhakemetü'l- Lügateyn* (Comparative Languages or Judgements of Dictionaries 1501) written by Chagatai Turkish, compares and contrasts Persian and Turkish languages and defines that Turkish language is more superior and excellent than Persian one. The word ‘muhakeme’ that means ‘judgment, reasoning or comparative’ is mostly used in the meaning of ‘comparative’ in this work. To affirm in this term the term comparative is used in the title of his book by an Uzbek Turkish writer in the history of world literature, earlier than Francis Meres’s “A Comparative Discourse of Our English Poets with the Greek, Latin and Italian Poets” in his book *Palladis Tamia* (1598) will be not wrong. Until now, as the first and earliest use of the

word ‘comparative’ as an adjective, Shakespeare’s *King Henry IV* (Chapter I) (1597) has been shown, but as seen, it is obvious that Kashgar and Nevai used this word in their works much earlier.

Besides these works it is also known that there are some critical books that I have no chance to look into among studies of comparative literature like *Şi’r u Edeb-i Fârsî der Kişverhâ-yi Hemsâyê- Âsyâ-yı Sagîr* (The Persian poetry and Literature in the Neighboring Countries- Asia Minor, 1354) by Rıza Hüsrev-i Şâhî, *Zebân ve Edeb-i Fârsî der Kalemrov-i Osmânî* (The Persian Language and Literature in Ottoman Lands, 1369) by Muhammed Emin Riyâhî (Karaismailoğlu, 2012: 14).

If we look at the earliest use of the ‘comparative’ thought in Turkish after Mahmud of Kashgar, we will have to go back the very earlier times of the Ottoman Empire. We meet the word comparative in the works of the poets such as Mevlana Jelalu-’d-din Muhammed, Er-Rumi (1207-1273) and Yunus Emre (1238/40-1321) from famous Sufi mystic poets of 13th century, and Turkish classical divan poets like Âşık Paşa (1272-1333), Ahmedi (1334-1413), Gülşehri (14th century). After 15th century many poets like İbrahim İbn-I Bali (15th century), Fuzuli (1483-1556), Ahmedi Rıdvan (16th century), Ahmed Nami (1600-1673), Nabi (1642-1712), Şehri (Ali Çelebi of Malatya) and Filibeli Avni (17th century) frequently use as mostly a verb the words *kıyas* or *mukayese* in the meaning of *compare*, *comparison* and *comparative* in their poems. Certainly the birth of ‘comparative literature’ as a discipline’ in Turkish will start by modern Turkish literature together with revolution period.

As the first examples, Mevlana Jelalu-’d-din Muhammed, Er-Rumi (1207-1273) in his famous *Mesnevi* (1259-1268) in its six volumes contained twenty-six thousand twenty six and sixty couplets, frequently uses the words *kıyas* and *mukayese* in the meaning of *comparative*. As Mevlana refers to the first human being Adam says that the Demon (Iblis) is the first person to ‘compare’ himself to people /lights of Gods. He reminds Iblis’s words objected to God in the course of the creation of mankind and compared himself to Adam “I was created from fire, and Adam was only from black clay (soil). No doubt, the fire is more superior than the earth. In this case, let us never compare the light to dark, he is from humiliation, we are from light” boasted Iblis. Allah said, “No, there is no ancestry. It is not the inheritance of this mortal world that you will obtain it because of the ancestry... you who are created from the fire are black with this comparison, get out!”¹ ordered the God (Mevlana, 1961: 120).

¹ Tanrı nurlarına karşı birtakım kıyaslar yapan ilk defa İblis’ti. Dedi ki: “Ben ateşten yaratıldım Âdem kapkara topraktan. Şüphe yok, ateş topraktan daha üstündür. Eğer fer’i, asla nispetle mukayese edersek o zulmettedir, biz nurdan” diye gururlandı. Tanrı “Hayır, soy sop yok... Bu fani dünyanın mirası değildir ki soy sop yüzünden onu elde edesin... Ateşten yaratılan sen bu kıyaslarınla kapkara yüzlü oldun, defol!” buyurdu.

On the other hand, Yunus Emre in his book *Divan* (13th-14th century) compares some objects, concepts or God and human being by using the word *kıyas* in some lines like *Ne oran u kıyâs ne nakş u nişân* (neither ratio, nor the comparison, neither embroidery (ornament) nor emblem) (in the part 48) (Tatçı, 1990, p. 39), or *Bile idüm Hazret'de ol bî-kıyâs kudretde / Ne şerikim var idi, ne kimseyle yâr idim* (if I knew power in Hazrat (God) is incomparable / I would be neither partner nor fellow with anyone (in the part 223) (Tatçı, 1990: 183).

The *mesnevi* named *The Besharet-Name* by Refii in 1409, which is a comparatively short work- the booklet written in order to spread and promote the hurricane to the public must also be remembered. In fact, most classical divan poets compared their poems to the national and international poets, especially to Persian, Arabic, Hindi and Egyptian poets in their poems. We can give an example related to comparative literature from *Divan* of Baki lived in 1526-1600 years: “Nazm-ı eşhâsa kıyâs eyleme Bâkî şî'rin” (Küçük, nd.: 49) (Do not compare your verse Baki with the poetry of the others), here as it seems the word *kıyas* is used in the meaning of ‘compare’ as a comparative verb.

On the other hand, Nabi, who is a divan poet of 17th century, compares and contrasts him to the Persian poets like Nizami, Firdevsi, Cami etc., even he emphasizes in one of his gazelles that Turkish poetic language is more elegant than Arabic one² (Bilkan, 1997: 120), another Divan poet Lebib Efendi (1695-1768) also compares in his odes 8/85, 70/29 his poetry to Nef'î, Bağdatlı Rûhî, Nizâmî, Kelim, Firdevsî, Sa'dî, Enverî and Hâkânî's³ (Kurtoğlu, 2004: 40) poetries from masters of Turkish and Persian literatures. The poet feels superior to them or as great as them.

Apart from Divans, it is possible to come across ‘biographical works’ called *tezkire* in classical Turkish literature although they are not multi-dimensional studies. Esad Mehmed Efendi (1786-1848) in his biography (poetry anthology) book named *Şâhidü'l-Müverrihîn* (Witnesses of Historians, 1831) compares and contrasts Turkish, Persian and Arabic poets to each other's, he shortly evaluates the arts of poetry, and perfections and imperfections of the poets. It is important in terms of the first comparative examples for comparative literature, even if it is not an academic review book.

² Ol dil-güşâ makâller ol hurde nûkteler

Mümkün midür bula 'Arabistan'da sureti

³ Benim kim pençeleşsem pençeme tâb-âver olmazlar

Kelîm ü Hüsrev ü Firdevsi vü Sa'dî vü Hâkânî

.....

Bâ-husûs erbâb-ı nazma görse eltâfin bununı

Enverî olurdu nâdim vâsfinâ Şeh Sencer'i

After 1839s, together with the Age of Reform (Tanzimat) of 19th century the strong innovations started from classical literature towards modern literature. During 1860s, this new trend in the literature with coming to the light of a modern Turkish literature turned its face to the West rather than East introduced to Turkish literature the various works like François Fénelon's *Telemaque*, Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, François-Marie Arouet Voltaire's *Mikromégas*, Alexandre Dumas Père's *Le Comte de Monte Cristo*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, François-René de Chateaubriand's *Atala*, Alphonse de Lamartine's *Graziella*, Alexandre Duma Fils's *La Dame aux Camélias*, Shakespeare's *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet* through the translations. These years are the terms that disciplines or terms like the literary theory and criticism, comparative literature began to be popular and theorized. It falls in the middle of the discussions like old and new, Classicism, Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, Symbolism, Parnassism (Parnassianism) and Nationalism.

The first comparative essays of modern Turkish literature are articles titled Namık Kemal's "Lisân-ı Osmânînin Edebiyatı Hakkında Bazı Mülâhazâtı Şâmildir" (Some Thoughts on Ottoman Language and Literature, 1866) published in the gazette *Tasvir-i Efkâr*, and Ziya Pasha's "Şiir ve İnşa" (Poetry and Prose) in the gazette *Hürriyet* in 1868. After 1880s, we come across an article titled "Bir Mukayese" (A Comparison /A Comparative Study) signed by the initials of H. F. on Mustafa Reşit's work named *Bir Çiçek Demeti* in the issue 2206 of the journal *Tercüme-i Hakikat* in 1885, used the word 'comparison' related to comparative literature and comparative culture. In this article Ottoman literature is compared and contrasted in terms of old and new literary discussions. Over again in the issue 2244 of the same gazette in 1885, Ahmet Mithat Efendi writes an article titled *Mukayese-i Bahar ve Hazan* (The Comparison (Comparative Study) of Spring and Fall). Ahmet Midhat uses the comparative method in the most of his essays like "Filoloji ve Osmanlı Lisani" (Philology and Ottoman Language) in the issue 3315 of the journal *Tercüman-ı Hakikat* in 1889, and east and west civilizations in his another article "İki Münteha Birleşir" (Two Edges Combine) in the issue 3304 of the same journal. Even in the summer of 1889, Mithat Efendi who was sent as the Turkish delegation by Sultan Abdulhamit II to the Eighth International Orientalist Congress held in Stockholm, in Sweden shares orientalist and occidentalists' approaches and his impressions on the congress and his three and a half months Europe travel in his articles like "Müsteşrikin Kongreleri 1" (Orientalist Congresses), "İlm-i Mukaddeme" (Science of Preface) firstly published in his journal *Tercüman-ı Hakikat* in 1889, then the same year as a travel book in the name of *Avrupa'da Bir Cevelan* (A Traveler in Europe).

Since the beginning of 20th century comparative studies in the Turkish literature frequently start to appear. In “Kadınlık Âlemi” (Femininity) written by an anonymous writer in the issue one of the periodical *Mehasin* in 1908, life of Ottoman women and their statues in the society are compared with women behind the borders, and in following years some articles titled “comparison” as a comparative study related to comparative literature like Emine Semiye’s “Mukayese-i Hayat” (Comparison of the life) the issue 12 of *Mehasin* in 1909, “Bir Mukayese” (A Comparison) by an anonymous writer in the issue 4 of the periodical *İnci* in 1919, Süleyman Nazif’s “Musahabe: Bir Mukayese” (Conversation: A Comparison) in the issue 10 of the same periodical in 1923 and Medine Mehmet’s “Bir Mukayese” (A Comparison/A Comparative Study) focused on ideas about the art of Turkish and western people in the issue 17 of the periodical *Süs* in 1923 were published. On the other hand Meliha Cenân’s “Hayat-ı Matbuata Bir Nazar” (A Look at Printing Life) in the issue 70 of the periodical *Kadınlar Dünyası* in 1913 is a significant article compared and contrasted Turkish and European Printings.

On the other hand, we come across numerous articles in the *Journal of Genç Kalemler* on old and new literature discussions, national literature, language reforms and the efforts of innovation in literature, east and west literatures in the period of National Literature in the first decade of 20th century. For instance, Ali Canip Yöntem’s “Bizde Edebiyat Dersleri” (Literature Courses 1910), “Ati-i Edebimiz” (The Future of Our Literature 1910), “Düne Nazaran Bugün” (Today in Comparison 1911), “Edebi İnkılaplar” (Literary Revolutions 1911), “Garb Mektebi’nin Amilleri” (Ambulances of Garb School 1911), “Milli Lisan ve Milli Edebiyat” (National Language and National Literature 1911), “Milli Edebiyat Meselesi” (National Literature Issue 1911) focused on Turkish, east and west literatures, Edhem Hidayet’s “Cereyan-ı Umumi” (The General Movement 1911) compared French and Turkish poets and writers, and Kazım Nami’s “Türkçe mi Osmanlıca mı?” (Turkish or Ottoman? 1912) compared and contrasted Turkish, Ottoman (Old Turkish), Turkish dialects, Arabic and Persian languages are popular articles in the *Journal of Genç Kalemler*.

As for the first books in the field of comparative studies in Modern Turkish literature, they are usually on the languages and dialects that Ottoman language was in some interactions to Arabian and Persian languages, and they are related to literature in terms of old and new perceptions of the literary tradition to eastern and western literatures. The first of the linguistic studies is the rules of Turkish, Arabian and Persian languages compared in the book *Mikyasü'l-Lisan Kistâsü'l-Beyan* (Methods of Linguistics and Discourse) written in 1847-1851 and published in 1882 by Abdurrahman Fevzi Efendi (1802-1864) from Kütahya.

While comparative language studies progressively go on an individual scale from Mahmoud of Kashgar's age, some western scholars were also comparatively dealing with Semitic languages like Aramaic, Arabic, Hebrew. Turkish philology is among them as well. "In the first third of the nineteenth century the study of Semitic languages was centered in Paris under the guidance of Silvestre de Sacy and Quatremere, while Abel de Remusat really organized the initial attempts in comparative Turkish philology by his researches in the Tartar languages" (Loliée, 1906: 344).

Even these kinds of concerns bring together comparativism, orientalism, post-colonialism, culture, religion, folklore and mythology etc., The West with the East, the East with the West becomes accounted positively or negatively. Because the Turkish writers already known the Eastern literature together with Islam before the ages begins to meet the Western literature in the similar ways from the beginning of the 19th century, and he or she feels the need to compare her / his own literature with the other in old and new conflicts. In this respect, one of the first examples in the field of modern Turkish literature is the part preface of Ziya Pasha's *Harabat* (The Ruins 1291/1874) written in a comparative way. Here the writer compares and contrasts the masters like Racine, Lamartine, Molière of the Western literature, Nef'i, Senâî and Ferezdak of the Eastern literature. While Ziya Pasha stresses that every nation has its own characteristics and qualities and it is necessary to avoid the "imitation." He gives some comparative examples such as that Racine and Lamartine cannot write the odes like Nef'î, Senâî and Ferezdak also cannot the plays like Molière; and he pays attentions to geographical locations of the nations and situations of Occident and Orient will not be the same.⁴ (Ziya Paşa, preface 11-12) In other words "the writer describes the difference between our understanding of poetry and art with the world of Occident in the preface of *Harabat* and makes an accounting of almost valuables by standing on old poets" (Tanpınar, 1988: 300). In addition to the criticism of Ziya Pasha's book *Harabat* by Namık Kemal's *Tahrir-i Harabat* (Destruction of the Ruins 1876) and Ebüzziya Tevfik's *Numune-i Edebiyat-ı Osmaniye* (A Model (Specimen) of Ottoman Literature 1879), Beşir Fuad's *Victor Hugo* (1885) can be considered in this respect as comparative approaches to literary works.

On the other hand, when we shortly look at the first books published on comparative literature in the western literature though the phrase firstly appeared in the title of *Comparative*

⁴ Kabil mi ede Racine, Lamartine
Nef'î gibi bir kaside tezyin
Mümkün mü Senâî vü Ferazdak
Molière gibi bir tiyatro yazmak
İklimde hükmü yok mu farkın
Vaz'iyeti bir mi Garb ü Şarkın

Literature (1886) by Irish scholar Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett, we come across the comparative studies, particularly “influence studies” like Albert Schulz’s *An Essay on the Influence of Welsh Tradition upon the Literature of Germany, France, and Scandinavia* (1841), Jean Jacques Ampère’s *Histoire de la Littérature Française au Moyen âge Comparée aux Littératures Etrangères. Introduction, Histoire de la Formation de la Langue Française* (History of French literature in the Middle Ages compared to foreign literatures. Introduction, history of the formation of the French language, 1841), Adolphe de Puibusque’s *Comparée des Littératures Espagnole et Française* (A Comparative History of Spanish and French Literature 1843), Philarète Chales’s *Études sur l’Espagne et Sur Les Influences de la Littérature Espagnole en France et En Italie* (Studies on Spain and on the influences of Spanish literature in France and Italy 1847) Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett’s *Comparative literature* (1886) Charles Harold Herford’s *Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century* (1886) James Ross Murray’s *The influence of Italian upon English Literature During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1886) Conrad Hjalmar Nordby’s *The influence of old Norse literature upon English literature* (1901) Arthur Frank Joseph Remy’s *The Influence of India and Persia on the Poetry of Germany* (1901) Max Koch’s *Studien zur vergleichenden literaturgeschichte* (Studies on Comparative Literary History 1901) Ignace Kont’s *Étude sur l’influence de la Littérature Française en Hongrie* (Study on the Influence of French Literature in Hungary 1902) Louis Paul Betz’s *La littérature Comparée: Essai Bibliographique* (Comparative Literature: Bibliographic Essay 1904) Fernand Baldensperger’s *Goethe en France... Étude de Littérature Comparée* (Goethe in France... Study of Comparative Literature 1904) Martin Hume’s *Spanish Influence on English literature* (1905) Frédéric Loliée’s *Histoire des Littératures Comparées: des Origines au XXe siècle* (A Short History of Comparative Literature 1907) Alfred Horatio Upham’s *The French Influence in English Literature, from the Accession of Elizabeth to the Restoration* (1908) James Fitzmaurice-Kelly’s *The Relations between Spanish and English literature* (1910) Agnes Irwin’s *Studies in English and Comparative Literature* (1910) John Churton Collins’s *Greek influence on English Poetry* (1910) Auguste Dupouy’s *France et Allemagne: Littératures Comparées* (1913) Emeline Maria Jensen’s *The Influence of French literature on Europe; an Historical Research Reference of Literary Value to Students in Universities, Normal Schools, and Junior Colleges* (1919) between European literatures from the first decades of 19th.

Comparative literature arisen as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century together with 20th century proves its existence in world literature with works such as Paul Van Tieghem’s *La Littérature Comparée* (1931), René Wellek and Austin Warren’s *Theory of Literature* (1942), Marius-François Guyard’s *La Littérature Comparée* (1951), Rene Wellek’s

The Crisis of Comparative Literature; Concepts of Criticism (1963), Claude Pichois and A.M. Rousseau's *La littérature comparée* (1967), Ulrich Weisstein's *Einführung in die vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (1968), Jan Brandt Corstius's *Introduction to the Comparative Study of Literature* (1968), Henry Gifford's *Comparative Literature* (1969), Siegbert S. Prawer's *Comparative Literature Studies: An Introduction* (1973), C:L. Wrenn's *The Idea of Comparative Literature* (1973), John B. Alphonso-Karkal's *Comparative World Literature: Essays* (1974), Hugo Dyserinck's *Komparatistik: eine Einführung* (1977), Robert J. Clement's *Comparative Literature as Academic Discipline: A Statement of Principles, Praxis, Standards* (1978), Gerhard R. Kaiser's *Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (1980), Pierre Brunel, Claude Pichois and André-Michel Rousseau's *Qu'est-ce que La Littérature comparée?* (What is Comparative Literature, 1983), Swapan Majundar's *Comparative Literature: Indian Dimensions* (1987), Peter V. Zima and Johann Strutz's *Komparatistik. Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (1992), Yves Chevrel's *La Littérature Comparée* (1989), Gurbhagat Singh's *Differential Multilogue: Comparative Literature and National Literatures* (1991), André Lefevere's *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context* (1992), Susan Basnett's *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (1993), Claudio Guillen's *The Challenge of Comparative Literature* (1993); Charles Bernheimer's *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* (1995), Rey Chow's *In the Name of Comparative Literature* (1995) George Steiner's *What is Comparative Literature* (1995), Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek's *Comparative Literature: Theory, Method, Application* (1998), Takayuki Yokota-Murakami's *Don Juan East/West: On the Problematics of Comparative Literature* (1998), John T. Kirby's *The Comparative Reader: A Handlist of Basic Reading in Comparative Literature* (1998), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's *The Death of a Discipline* (2003), Haun Saussy's *Comparative Literature in An Age of Globalization* (2006), Dominique Jullien's *Foundational Texts of World Literature* (2011), Jacob Edmond's *A Common Strangeness: Contemporary Poetry, Cross-Cultural Encounter, Comparative Literature* (2012), Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Tutun Mukherjee's *Companion to Comparative Literature, World Literatures, and Comparative Cultural Studies* (2013).

However as a result of my researches, the first books related to comparative literature in Modern Turkish literature start to appear after the establishment of the Turkish Republic. Rıza Tefik Böllükbaşı's *Abdülhak Hamid ve Mülâhazat-ı Felsefiyyesi* (Abdülhak Hamid and His Philosophical Ideas, 1917) which compares and contrasts Turkish writer Abdülhak Hamid's poems, plays and philosophical thoughts to westerns' ones; and Mehmet Fuat Köprülü's "Türk Edebiyatının Ermeni Edebiyatı Üzerindeki Tesiri" (Influences of Turkish Literature on Armenian Literature) on 1 March 1922 (p. 1-30) in the issue 2(1) of the Journal of Darülfünun

Edebiyat Fakültesi (the faculty of literature of Istanbul university) published between 1916-1933 are the first studies of comparative literature in modern Turkish literature. Following this, “Mukayeseli Sarf ve Nahvin Usulüne Dair” (On the Method of Comparative Grammar and Syntax) (1924) by Necip Asım Yazıksız appears in the pages 349-362 of the issue 3, 7 of the same journal as a translation of an article focused on Antoine Meillet’s the method of comparative morphology and syntax. On the other side, İsmail Habib Sevük’s *Türk Teceddüt Edebiyatı Tarihi* (The History of Turkish Renovation Literature, 1924) published in the years when the Republic was proclaimed is important in terms of being the first scientific book which includes the periods of westernizations of Turkish Literature with Western contacts especially with French influence. Literary schools; Classicism, Romanticism, Realism, Parnassianism and their representatives in Turkish literature are given in a comparative method with examples from the works of classical poets and authors of French Literature. And M. Fuat Köprülü’s work called *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (The History of Turkish Literature, 1926) is a comparative study as well as Turkish literary history.

Furthermore, Ziya Gökalp’s *Türkçülüğün Esasları* (Principles of Turkism 1923), *Türk Tôresi* (Turkish Tradition, 1923), *Türk Medeniyeti Tarihi* (The History of Turkish Civilization, 1926) compared Turkish civilization’s language, history, culture, literary qualities to the other Christian and Islamic civilizations’ ones; and Halide Edip Adivar ‘s *Turkey Faces West: A Turkish View of Recent Changes And Their Origin* (1930), *Conflict of East and West in Turkey* (1935), are some significant works as comparative cultural and comparative literary studies; additionally, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar is one of the forerunners who discussed East and West dichotomies in terms of culture, language and literature in his works and comparatively given literature courses at İstanbul University about twenty years. Tanpınar’s essay “Şark ve Garp” (Orient and Occident, 1934), and his research book *19. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (The History of Turkish Literature of 19th Century, 1949), and his numerous articles which were compared national literature to East and West literatures from 1930s to his death 1962; and *Cevdet Perin’s Tanzimat Edebiyatında Fransız Tesiri* (French Influence in Tanzimat (Reformation) literature, 1946) are first comparative literary studies leading in Turkish. While the first book of comparative literature titled ‘comparative’ in Turkish is Ahmet Cevat Emre’s *Türk Lehçelerinin Mukayeseli Grameri* (Comparative Grammar of Turkish Dialects, 1949), the first thesis related to comparative literature is Hasibe Mazıoğlu’s PhD thesis named *Fuzûlî - Hâfız: İki Şair Arasında Bir Karşılaştırma* (A Comparison Between Two Poets, Fuzili and Hafiz, 1951, and 1956 as a book).

The Turkish reader's first acquaintance with a book on comparative literary theory comes from the translation of Paul van Tieghem's *La littérature comparée* into Turkish with the name *Mukayeseli Edebiyat* (in 1943) by Yusuf Şerif Kılıçel, the first articles titled "comparative literature" are Talat Sait Halman's "Comparative Literature Prospects for Turkey and the Islamic World" printed in *Council on National Literatures Report 5* (1976); and Ahmet Cemal's "Yabancı Dergiler: Karşılaştırmalı Yazın Biliminin Gelişmeleri" (Foreign Journals: The Progress of the Science of Comparative Literature, 1977) published in the issue 309 of the Journal of *Türk Dili ve Edebiyat*. By the same taken, Sadri Ertem's "Türk Edebiyatının Muhtelif Devirleri Arasında Bir Mukayese" (A Comparative Study Between Various Periods of Turkish Literature) in the issue 40 of the journal *Varlık* in 1935, Ahmet Cevat Emre's "Şahıs Zamirleri Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı bir Araştırma" (A Comparative Research on Personal Pronouns) in the issue 3-4 of the Journal of *Bellekten of Turkish Language Society* in 1940 are the first academic articles in the area of comparative studies in history of Modern Turkish literature.

Nevertheless some studies between literatures that appear to be comparative texts are not comparative literature studies. For instance although Ağâh Sırrı Levend's book named *Arap, Fars ve Türk Edebiyatında Leylâ ve Mecnûn Hikayesi* (The Story of Leyla and Mecnun in Arabian, Turkish and Persian literatures, 1959) appears like a study of comparative literature because of its title, what a pity it is not possible to mention there are any comparative literary criticisms, analyses, evaluations, or any scientific evidences about the relations among the stories. The writer summarizes and introduces the Leyla and Mecnun stories of Arabian, Persian and Turkish Divan poets in order; only he gives little short information about their interactions and responses with one another in the part of conclusion in the pages 370 to 383. Whereas although Mehmet Kaplan trained many academicians like İnci Enginün, Zeynep Kerman and Birol Emil, one of the significant scholars of Turkish literature, wrote no works in the name of 'comparative literature', but he comparatively built significant works like *Şiir Tahlilleri* (Poem Analyses, 1954), *Türk Edebiyatı Üzerinde Araştırmalar I / II* (Research on Turkish Literature I / II, 1976 /1987) in Turkish and Western context. From the second half of the twentieth century to 1990s we come frequently across comparative literature studies like Abdülkadir İnan's "Türk Dillerinin Karşılaştırmalı Grameri Üzerine Araştırmalar" (Research on the Comparative Grammar of Turkish Languages, 1956) in the issue 63 of the journal *Türk Dili*, Metin And's article "Türkiye'de Shakespeare" (Shakespeare in Turkey, 1964) in volume 1, issue 1 of the journal of *Batı Dil ve Edebiyatları Araştırmaları* and his book *Dünyada ve Bizde Gölge Oyunu* (Shadow Game in the World and in Us 1977), İnci Enginün's "Byron ve Hâmid'in Sardanapal Piyesleri Üzerinde Mukayeseli Bir Araştırma" (A Comparative Study on Byron and Hamid's Sardanapal Plays, 1967) in the volume 15 of the *Journal of İstanbul Üniversitesi, Eğitim*

Fakültesi TDE and her work “Tanzimat Devrinde Shakespeare Tercüme ve Tesirleri” (Shakespeare Translations and His Influences in Tanzimat Period, 1968), Zeynep Kerman’s “1862-1910 Yılları Arasında Victor Hugo’dan Türkçe’ye Yapılan Tercüme Üzerinde Bir Araştırma” (A Research on Translations Made from Victor Hugo Between 1862-1910 into Turkish, 1974), İnci Enginün and Zeynep Kerman’s “Türkçe’de Emil Zola Tercüme ve Emil Zola Hakkında Yazılan Yazılar Bibliyografyası (1885-1973)” (Emil Zola Translations and Emil Zola Bibliography in Turkish) in vol 22 of *Journal of İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı* in 1974 and 1976, “Türk Edebiyatında Goncourt Kardeşler” (The Goncourt Brothers in Turkish Literature, 1977) in vol. 4 of the periodical of *Türk Edebiyatı*, and “Türkçe’de Alphonse Daudet” (Alphonse Daudet in Turkish” in the issue 2 of *Dünya Edebiyatından Seçmeler*, Orhan Okay’s *Batı Medeniyeti Karşısında Ahmed Mithad Efendi* (Ahmed Mithad Efendi Against Western Civilization, 1975), Adile Ayda’s “Mukayeseli Edebiyat” (Comparative Literature) in the volume 19 of *Hisar* in 1979, Yüksel Özoğuz’s “Bir Karşılaştırmalı Yazın Çalışması: Ingeberg Bachmann ve Yahya Kemal Beyatlı’nın Birer Şiiri Üzerine” (A Comparative Literature Study: On Some Poems of Ingeborg Bachmann and Yahya Kemal Beyatlı), in the volume 1 of *Bağlam* in 1979, Gürsel Aytaç’s “Aysel Özakin ve Ingeberg Bachmann’ın Sanatçı Romanları Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir İnceleme” (A Comparative Study on Aysel Özakin and Ingeborg Bachmann’s Artist Novels), in the volume 3 of *Yazko Edebiyat* in 1982. Ali İhsan Kolcu’s works on ‘translation and influence’ *Alphonse de Lamartine Tercüme ve Tesiri* (Alphonse de Lamartine translations and His influences), Alfred de Musset Tercüme ve Tesiri, (Alfred de Musset Translations and His Influences) and *Türkçede Batı Şiiri* (Western Poetry in Turkish) in 1999 and *Albatros’un Gölgesi-Baudelaire’in Türk Şiirine Tesiri Üzerine Bir İnceleme* (The Albatross’s Impression: Baudelaire’s Influence on Turkish Poetry) in 2002.

Since 1970s, especially after 1990s because there are enormous articles, in the fact that the theoretical and practical books are limited, here instead of giving all published works in the composition of this article, I think it will be appropriate to give the pioneers and significant studies in the survey of comparative literature in Turkish. Therefore I intend to give a selected bibliography of comparative literature studies in Turkey in another article.

After 1990s the numbers of books and articles related to theory and application of comparative literature have been increasing steadily. Probably the inexplicable contributions of the philologists like Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach at Istanbul University in philology departments of the universities in Turkey were great “as the foundational figures of comparative literature who came as exiles and émigrés from war-torn Europe with a shared suspicion of

nationalism” (Apter, 2004: 77). Tulay Atak introduced him in her essay prefaced “Introduction: Wortkunst in Turkish: Leo Spitzer and the Development of the Humanities in Turkey” in her English translation (2011) with titled *Learning Turkish* of the article named Spitzer’s *Türkçeyi Öğrenirken* (1934) published in a Turkish journal (*Varlık*) also emphasizes that he plays a foundational role in comparative literature, as Erich Auerbach, Edward Said, Aamir Mufti, and Emily Apter have argued (Spitzer, 1934: 763).

Of course Spitzer or Auerbach’s roles in the Turkish universities are undoubtedly debatable; but much earlier in 1874s, it is necessary to remember that Rezaizade Mahmud Ekrem (1847-1914) taught literature in *Mehteb-i Mülkiye* (Political Sciences), in *Galatasaray* high school of Istanbul in 1878-1981 years (Tanpınar, 1988, p. 477) and he followed a western method of teaching by changing the understanding of a one sided teaching, which was continued until his time. Rezaizade introduced not only his students with comparative examples of French literature and Turkish literature, but also he translated several books like Chateaubriand’s *Atala*, Silvio Pellico’s *Mes Prisons* for his contemporaries and readers from western literatures and wrote several poems, essays and theoretical books. For instance, his criticism and theory book called *Training of Literature* (Talim-i Edebiyat, 1881) is very important for comparative literature as well as Turkish literary history and criticism. At the beginning of his book, in the preface to his book, the author states that he does not hesitate to resort to various literary products of French literature (Rezaizade, 1881: 11). In other words, he started the first settling accounts with Arabic rhetoric and aesthetics by this book and comparatively discussed the terms like mind, idea, feelings, imagination, memory, pleasure with a new perspective. (Tanpınar, 1988: 496-497). Together his contemporary with Muallim Naci he brought western literature and thought to the Turkish literature, which was flourished in the same stereotyped tradition for six centuries in heavy use of Arabic and Persian vocabularies and terminologies in terms of both form and content, even a one-sided Eastern way of thinking. Together with the Ottoman-Turkish Reformation period (1830s), the poets, writers and critics Ahmet Mithat Efendi, Namık Kemal, İbrahim Şinasi, Ziya Pasha, Abdülhak Hamit Tarhan, Tevfik Fikret, Cenap Şahabettin as well as Rezaizade Mahmud Ekrem and Muallim Naci comparatively discussed old literary tradition and modern understanding of literature in the light of new ideas on the axis of eastern and western literatures. Thus, while the concepts such as literary theory and literary criticism, which were not discussed or ignored until the Reformation period, met with Turkish literature; comparative literature consciously or unconsciously, perhaps coincidentally fell into the middle of new and old literary debates.

Not only Rezaizade Mahmud Ekrem, but also Ahmet Mithat Efendi taught world history, world philosophy and history of religions in *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* and *Darülfünun* in Istanbul. He wrote the world history books like *Kainat* (The Universe, 1870-81) in 15 volumes, *Tarih-i Umumi* (The World History, 1878) and *Mufasssal Tarih-i Kurûn-ı Cedide* (Detailed History of the Recent Centuries, 1886) in three volumes. Ahmet Mithat Efendi's comparisons between the scholarship-traditions on the emergence of the universe and human beings, ages, civilizations, literary and philosophical progressives in the world and his comparative approaches between narrations of physical sciences and rumors in these books are important in the context of first comparative researches. On the other hand, Tevfik Fikret taught Turkish and French literatures in Robert Collage and Galatasaray, Ahmet Haşim in the academy of Fine Arts taught mythology and aesthetics. And together with 20th century both writers and academics like Mehmet Fuat Köprülü (1913-1941), Ziya Gökalp (1914-1919), Yahya Kemal (1916-1922), Ali Nihat Tarlan (1933-1972), Ahmet Caferoğlu (1924-1973) were giving lectures on literature, sociology, philosophy, western and eastern languages and literatures with comparative methods in several departments of *Istanbul Darülfünun/University*. Turkish scholars and students closely knew Western literatures, and they had been familiar with especially French, German and English literatures in earlier times than forty-two refugee scholars like Spitzer and Auerbach were appointed to Istanbul University. There are the leading names of Turkey like "classical philologists Azra Erhat, Suat Sinanoğlu, literary critics and writers Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Adnan Benk, Güzin Dino, English professors Mina Urgan, Berna Moran, Romance scholar Süheyla Bayrav, Germanist Şara Sayın" (Konuk, 2010, p. 167) as well as students and colleagues of Auerbach and Spitzer, among them from international (non-Turkish) students "Rosemarie Burkart, Herbert and Liselotte Dieckmann and Hans Marchant" (Burke, 2017, p. 124) in 1938s when the refugee scholars were in Turkey, the writers and academics like Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1939-1962), Mehmet Kaplan (1939-1984), Halide Edip Adıvar (1940-1950), İsmail Hikmet Ertaylan (1939-1958), Ali Canip Yöntem (1943-1950), Muharrem Ergin (1950-1990) and Ömer Faruk Akün (1951-1993) taught the courses such as Turkish and western literatures, aesthetics, philosophy, literary criticism with comparative approaches in the Istanbul University. Despite the fact that the Turkish academicians have been very interested in the western and eastern literatures from past today, even though Turkish language and literature, western languages and literatures, Turkology and philology departments have been established in many Turkish universities since the second half of the 20th century, the courses of comparative literature could be put in the curriculums of some philology departments in last quarter of 20th century. What a pity, comparative literary chairs in the Turkish universities could be established in the first quarter of the 21st century.

As for academic books, the first book written in the name of ‘comparative literature’ and on its theory and practice is İnci Enginün’s *Mukayeseli Edebiyat* (Comparative Literature, 1992). Then we meet the other remarkable theory books such as Gürsel Aytaç’s *Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Bilimi* (The Science of Comparative Literature, 1997) and *Deneme Üzerine Bir Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Çalışması* (A Study of Comparative Literature on Essay, 2007), Ali Osman Öztürk’s *Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Araştırmaları* (Comparative Literature Research, 1999) Emel Kefeli’s *Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat İncelemeleri* (Comparative Literature Studies, 2000), Şeyda Ülsever’s *Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat ve Edebi Çeviri* (Comparative Literature and Literary Translation, 2005), Binnaz Baytekin’s *Kuramsal ve Uygulamalı Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Bilim* (Theoretical and Applied Comparative Literature, 2006), Kamil Aydın’s *Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat: Günümüz Postmodern Bağlamda Algılanışı* (Comparative Literature and Its Perception in Today’s Postmodern Context, 2008), Mesut Tekşan’s *Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Bilimi* (The Science of Comparative Literature, 2012) and Hüseyin Arık’s *Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Bilimi* (The Science of Comparative Literature, 2012). But they are almost focused on definition, theory and situation of comparative literature in Western countries rather than Turkey.

Since last decades of 20th century and beginning of the 21st century the numbers of books that put theory and methods of comparative literature into practice or related to comparative cultural literature like Cemil Meriç’s *Kırk Ambar* (Forty Storehouse, 1980), Yıldız Ecevit’s *Intellektuellenproblematik bei Max Frisch und Oğuz Atay* (Intellectual Problems with Max Frisch and Oğuz Atay, 1990), Bozkurt Güvenç’s *Türk Kimliği: Kültür Tarihinin Kaynakları* (Turkish Identity: Sources of Cultural History, 1995), Medine Sivri’s *Paul Eluard ve Nâzım Hikmet’te Renklerin Dili: Şiirde Renkler Açısından Karşılaştırmalı Bir Yaklaşım* (Language of Colours in Paul Eluard and Nâzım Hikmet: A Comparative Approach in terms of Colours in Poetry, 2008), Onur Bilge Kula’s *Batı Felsefesinde Oryantalizm ve Türk İmgesi* (Orientalism and Turkish Image in Western Philosophy 2010), *Batı Edebiyatında Oryantalizm* (Orientalism in Western Literature, 2011), Elmas Şahin’s *Batı’da ve Türkiye’de Kadın Hareketleri ve Feminizm* (Women’s Movements and Feminism in the West and Turkey, 2012), *Zamana Vuran Dalgalar: Virginia Woolf & Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar* (The Waves Hitting the Time - Virginia Woolf & Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, 2015), Jale Parla’s *Efendilik, Şarkiyatçılık, Kölelik* (Mastery, Orientalism, Slavery 2015), Vedi Aşkaroğlu’s *Trajik ve Modern Triolojik Bir Çözümleme - Oğuz Atay-Joseph Conrad-Yusuf Atılğan* (A Tragic and Modern Triological Analysis - Oğuz Atay-Joseph Conrad-Yusuf Atılğan, 2016) have considerably increased in terms of a new comparative cultural literature. On the other hand in literary and cultural contexts it is also necessary to remember contributions of İsmet Emre’s *Postmodernizm ve*

Edebiyat (Postmodernism and Literature 2005), Kubilay Aktulum's *Metinlerarası İlişkiler* (Intertextuality 1999), *Folklor ve Metinlerarasılık* (Folklore and Intertextuality, 2013,) and *Metinlerarasılık Göstergelerarasılık* (Intertextuality and Inter-Semiology, 2011), Yılmaz Özbek's *Postmodernizm ve Alımlama Estetiği* (Postmodernism and Aesthetics of Reception, 2013) to comparative cultural studies.

As seen, since the beginning of 2000's lecturers and researchers of philology and comparative literature departments have extremely felt importance of comparative literature and comparative cultural studies and more quality articles, symposium papers, theses and books have begun to emerge in the field of comparative literature, though comparative literature sometimes leads to misperception in the form of comparison with each others of the Turkish national writers as I will mention at following part.

After last decade of 20th century, innumerable international literary symposiums held by several universities, literary organizations or associations open a huge window to comparative literature. The first comparative literature symposiums are nationally held by the department of the Turkish language and literature of University of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart in 1995, 1996 and 1997 years, and comparative literature symposium is internationally organized by the same university in 1998. Since 2001, both national and international symposiums in comparative literature held by philology departments of Pamukkale, Eskişehir Osmangazi, Çukurova, Anadolu, Çanakkale, Marmara, Süleyman Demirel, Mersin, Kırıkkale, Konya Selçuk Universities are important gains for comparative literature (Gültekin ve Üyümez, 2008: 39). As well as the universities, on the other hand, after 1990s, the research centers of the universities, and some official or unofficial academic foundations and associations like KIBATEK, TUBITAK, ATAM, TDK, ICONTE have also organized many symposiums or conferences related to national, general and world literature, some papers included studies of comparative literature have been presented in these organizations as well.

As an example, since 1998 to present KIBATEK (Kıbrıs, Balkanlar, Avrasya Türk Edebiyatları Kurumu/Foundation of Cyprus, Balkans, Eurasian Turkish Literatures) has held international symposiums more than forty related to Turkish, Cyprus, Balkan, Asian, and European literatures, comparative literature and world literature, in this respect KIBATEK symposiums organized in the countries like Cyprus, Turkey, Romania, Makedonia, Ukraine, Turkistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Holland and Poland has significant contributions to progress of comparative literature in Turkish world.

The 2000s are the years of comparative literature and comparative cultural studies in terms of Turkey Tötösy de Zepetnek and Gayatry Spivak's thoughts on "a new comparative

literature.” this situation is valid in Turkey as well. Today, Turkish comparatists attempt towards a new comparative literature like Spivak and Zepetnek or the others in the light of postmodernism, intertextuality, post-colonialism, orientalism or image and translation studies. In fact, Gayatry Chakravorty Spivak’s *Death of a Discipline* (2003) is the glory of “rebirth” of a new comparative literature expanding by the relationship between cultural studies, multiculturalism and area studies in both Turkey and the abroad. Thus ‘the last gasp of a dying discipline’ gives for a new comparative literature. Even Spivak uttering “Without a transformed Area Studies, Comparative Literature remains imprisoned within the borders it will not cross” (Spivak, 2003, p. 7) is right, if not Turkish school of comparative literature turns its face towards the other’s literature, culture, language etc., it will be in the death’s door in a vicious circle within boundaries. In a global and multicultural world, today it is clear that “the discipline of comparative literature has intrinsically a content and form that facilitate the cross-cultural and interdisciplinary study of literature and culture” (Tötösy de Zepetnek, 2003: 235).

Theory, Practice and Perception

The comparative researches who are aware of other’s literary products as much as their own ones have been strongly interested in comparative studies in Turkey since 1990s. The Turkish scholars studying the relations between national arts and writers of their county as well as the texts or writers from different countries have performed various studies related to introduction, history, theory and practice of comparative literature.

However, comparative literature which is a preferable discipline us to recognize, understand, evaluate, and compare and contrast our own literature and the other’s one is misunderstood, misinterpreted and misapplied from time to time for the reason that it adopts the method of ‘comparison’ as the main instrument commonly used in the study areas such as history of literature, literary theory and criticism. Therefore, here I will initially focus on how the concept of Comparative Literature as a literary discipline is perceived at the Turkish literary chairs. As I discussed in a detail way in another article (on theory, practice and perception) that is in the publication process, I will touch upon this issue briefly here.

Although it is obvious that the phrase of ‘comparative Literature’ indicates a study of two or more literatures, even with definitions of many scholars as Paul Van Tieghem, Wellek, Pichois, Spivak, Remak, Tötösy de Zepetnek or Bernheimer, defined “comparative Literature studies the effects of different literatures according to their relations to each other” we meet misunderstanding approaches on this concept supposed that it is a study of comparisons between the works and writers of a single nation or country.” It is possible to meet many research articles related to introduction, history, theory and practice of comparative literature

including the relations between two or more nations' literary products. For instance, some academics like Gürsel Aytaç, Ali Donbay, Yavuz Bayram accept the comparisons of a single nation's literary products to each other as comparative literature, in this respect numerous articles or essays by Turkish research assistants, instructors or lecturers studying their interactions, similarities and differences between a single national literature, the works and writers of Turkish literature in the light of comparative literature scholarship have been written.

Aytaç, who is the first defender of this idea, in her book named *Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Bilimi* (Comparative Literature Scholarship, 1997) focuses on past and present of comparative literature in the west and America (there is some limited information about its survey in Turkish literature) also puts her theoretical information and approaches into some practice with some articles. As she makes comparative studies between Turkish and German literature, she compares some writers of Turkish literature to each other's, even she compares a single writer's two works to each other's. When her studies between Turkish and German can be suited to the fact essence of comparative literature, but according to the basis of comparative literature scholarship, her article titled "Peride Celal'in Kadın Yazarları" that Peride Celal's Feminine Writers was compared (Aytaç, 2001: 148) in her book is a comparison of some works of a specific national author in Turkish literature that comparative literature is used as a method, as it is known comparative literature is a study of literatures, not a single national literature.

In the beginning of her book, Aytaç who greatly contributes to development and introduction of Turkish comparative literature, defends that the role and function of researcher is to study in sort of subject, thought or form two works written in different languages (p. 7), but a few pages later she has some thoughts that as some comparisons can be made on its own works of a national literature, also made between literatures of different nations (p. 11) in the following part of her book the same writer's two works belonged to different periods can be compared as well (p. 93).

Because of Wellek's some arguments such as everybody has the right to study any question even if it is confined to a *single* work in a *single* language and everybody has the right to study history or philosophy or any other topic. We comparatists surely would not want to prevent English professors from studying the French sources of Chaucer, or French professors from studying the Spanish sources of Corneille, etc. (Wellek, 1963, p. 291) in his article "The Crisis of Comparative Literature" published in *Concepts of Criticism* in 1963, some scholars have directed towards a thought like "comparative literature is made better in the boundaries of a single national literature" probably some writers have been in a thought like that the comparisons of a single national literature's products without literatures beyond borders will be

accounted of comparative literature. Additionally Rousseau and Pichois's some references intended to Wellek as anyone's task is to take some places out (from description of comparative literature) that seem to him superficial or inappropriate to reach their own specific purpose. For example, the removing of the 'As long as may they belong to different cultures' will describe the current state of the American comparison. According to this understanding (R. Wellek), comparative literature can be made better within the borders of a national literature. On the other hand, Europeans regard crossing from the linguistic or cultural border as an 'indispensable' condition (Rousseau ve Pichois, 1994: 182-183) and they give some courage to those supporting these ideas. Whereas, if that so, Wellek's this idea is valid for comparison method, not for comparative literature. Of course, a researcher knows better his or her own nation's writers, but Wellek also knew that this is a comparison method, a literary study, a research study, not comparative literature. His real concern was to break down prohibitions and borders that is, restriction or inhibitions on freedom of interdisciplinary study.

After Rene Wellek and Gursel Aytaç, the impact of followers or authorities like Ali Donbay with his article titled "Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Araştırmalarının Yeni Türk Edebiyatındaki Gelişme Çizgisi" (Development Course of Comparative Literature Studies in Modern Turkish Literature (http://www.turkishstudies.net/Makaleler/204963160_031DonbayAli-491-550.pdf) including a large bibliography on comparative literature studies in Turkey (but most of them are national literature studies) and Bayram Yavuz with his article named "Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat ve Bir Uygulama" (Science of Comparative Literature and A Practice) (http://turkoloji.cu.edu.tr/YENI%20TURK%20EDEBIYATI/yavuz_bayram_karsilastirmali_edebiyat_bilimi_uygulama.pdf) that he compares "Bâkî and Taslıcalı Yahyâ's Gazelles" (pp. 7-17) of two Divan poets of Turkish literature as a study of comparative literature will undoubtedly be greater for the groups that are only focused on their own literature and they are eager to compare the products in the national borders. For instance the national literary studies showed as a comparative study of "Bâkî and Taslıcalı Yahyâ's Gazelles" or "Baki and Nedim's Gazelles," "On Comparative Literature Science, Two Satirites: Har-nâme and Sihâm-ı Kazâ," "Yûnus Emre, Kul Ahmed, Niyâzî-i Mısrî, Ibrahim Hakkı from Erzoroum," "Mevlana and Yunus Emre." "Tevfik Fikret and Mehmet Akif," "Yahya Kemal and Ahmet Haşim," "Sezai Karakoç and İlhan Berk" and "Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar and Orhan Pamuk" and so on are the articles perceived comparative literature as a study of a single national literature. These approaches and applications overlapped with Croce's thoughts defining comparative literature with the words "it is neither a subject nor a separate discipline" show 'comparative literature' as a subdivision or a sub-discipline of Turkish literature or a national literature. However, to take

advantage of the methods of comparative literature scholarship is something different, to degrade ‘the studies of comparative literature’ to ‘the studies of a single nation’s literary products’ is a different thing, and these distinctions should not be ignored. The fact that comparative literature is not a study of products of a single national literature should be remembered. Comparative literature is focused on international literary relations, that is, it takes attentions to impacts and influences, analogies or similarities and differences among literatures of at least two nations, shortly it as an international field is interested in the relations among literatures.

Turkish comparativism faced its face to single national studies, which develops around ‘Wellek school’ and ‘Aytaç’s manner’, moves away from the real meaning and function of the concept of comparative literature and goes towards the study of ‘national literature’ comparing literary products of Turkish national literature by itself. Not only with this, and it is in some tendencies to classify these sorts of studies and some bibliographical lists of national literary studies as comparative literary scholarship or studies of Turkish comparative literature as well, so-called a study of expanding the field of comparative literature. Firstly, we need to ask the following questions: If these studies are comparative literature, what is national literature?, what is literary theory?, what is literary criticism?, or what is research of literature? Who is interested in the development or decline of a nation’s literature or the adventure / history of a national literature, which methods or techniques are used?, what are the differences between national literature and comparative literature? Shortly if we do not know how to call the studies of literature/s yet, we need to seriously consider learning what the history of literature, literary criticism, national literature or comparative literature is.

In this context, we have to keep in our minds the fact that the study of its own products of a nation is a research of literature, not comparative literature. To give an example, to study Shakespeare and Ben Jonson as English playwrights is a research of English literature, it gives us some information about progress of English literature, but to study Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, or one of them with one or more of the world literature, for instance with Molière of French literature, or Goethe of German literature or Abdülhak Hamit Tarhan of Turkish literature, to discuss issues as “what Shakespeare or Jonson is to the English, Molière is to the French, Goethe is to German or Tarhan is to Turkish, what parallels, effects, inspirations or differences and similarities between them are” will be a study of comparative literature.

A single literature cannot catch the same success alone. It develops in relation to another literature or literatures and reaches its real success. In this context comparative literature is on the scene in order to fill in the gaps. For this reason, comparative literature is not a

comparison to each others of its own literary products of a nation; but a study of literatures of other nations beyond the borders. It should be interpreted as a study of international literatures, cultures, languages, and the studies created for the sake of comparative literature must also be maintained in this respect.

What makes Virginia Woolf so special to English, or Marchel Proust to French, Jorge Luis Borges to Argentinian, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar to Turkish readers? For the answer of this question we need to know the other's literature, in a way, world literature as well as our own literature to determine what the importance, value, place of a writer in a national literature is. It is necessary to deal with the literary personages and works of that writer in a broad framework in the light of comparative literature. Certainly a scholar can compare and contrast some writers of a country, for instance Cenap Şahabettin, Ahmet Haşim, Yahya Kemal, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı from symbolist poets of Turkish literature to each other by using the comparative method, such a study mostly concerns Turkish reader about the literary values, negative and positive sides, influences, contributions, similarities and differences of the writers, progressive of Turkish literature, Turkish symbolists as a literary research, literary criticism. The reader learns their pioneers, plus and minus of their national literature. Does this kind of study interest the English, French, German, Spanish, Russian reader? Not completely, because it is a national study. Nobody is interested in it except learners, researches or admirers of Turkish Language and Literature. What a pity, some studies covering national literature as in this example are presented as comparative literature by some researchers. In this respect what to know the concepts of national literature and comparative literature will keep us away from these kinds of mistakes. However if these Turkish symbolists were studied in a comparison in terms of their influences and reactions, or originalities and to French symbolists such as Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Verlaine, Valéry, Rimbaud; of course, this kind of study would be a study of comparative literature because it could also draw the attention of French readers like Turkish readers, even if not the entire world, it will be easier to attract the interest of world literature lovers. To explain the contribution of such a study to both Turkish literature and French literature, even world literature with a more concrete example below, I am sure that the nature and definition of comparative literature will be got a better understanding. The questions like "what makes Tanpınar 'Tanpınar,' whether or not he influenced by symbolism of Baudelaire or Mallarmée, by British modernists like Woolf or Joyce, by French Philosopher like Bergson, psychological realism of Australian philosopher like Freud, by ideas of Russian realists like Dostoyevsky or Tolstoy, by classics of Western music like Vagner, Beethoven, Schopenhauer as well as masters of Turkish classical music like Dede Efendi, Itri, Hafız, or by his teacher Yahya Kemal's art, even whether or not he made impacts on his contemporaries at home or

behind the boundaries etc.,” will contribute us to know a Turkish national writer closely and better his position in the world literature. This means that through comparative literature, a great readership around the world will have the chance to recognize a writer that made great contributions for not only Turkish literature but also world literature. Fortunately, the number of the researchers who introduce Turkish literature to the literature lovers through comparative literary studies is not minor either.

For last twenty years Comparative Literature in Turkey has been given to the students as a literary course in MA and PhD programs as well as chairs of Comparative Literature in the BA. Particularly the scholars who teach comparative literature in the departments of Comparative Literature, Turkish Literature, English Literature, French Literature, German Literature, Russian Literature etc., introduce both the world literature to Turkish students and readers, and inform literature lovers about the state of Turkish literature in the world literary by their academic studies in the context of comparative literature and cultural studies.

The departments of Comparative Literature in the Turkish universities was firstly established in İstanbul Bilgi University in 1996, then Osmangazi University in 2000, Koç University in 2008, and the other universities like Selçuk (2009) and Dokuz Eylül (2011) have followed these. In addition, in philology departments as Turkish, English, French and German literature of many universities such as Atatürk, Çağ, Ege, Hacettepe, Haliç, İstanbul, Marmara, Mersin, Yeditepe comparative literature courses have been given to the students as undergraduate and postgraduate or doctorate courses since 1990s. Certainly when we academically compare to French, British, German or American universities, Turkish universities met comparative literature very late, however this discipline has become a fascinating field study for Turkish comparative researches and philologists for about thirty years.

To conclusion, today the Turkish school of comparative literature focuses on interactions between literatures, languages, cultures from various nations or areas of the world. As the scholars of the philology departments with at least one foreign language have chances to read, understand and examine the texts in foreign languages can make more accurate comparative literature studies according to those who study with the translated texts. On the other hand, the comparatists can closely follow changes, innovations or developments in literatures in any part of the world without translation.

The other scholars knowing only native language have to use the works translated from the foreign languages as the sources in their studies. The well-translated texts provide huge contributions in order to know the other better and to compare the other’s literary values to the native one. But we cannot say this for the texts translated in an incorrect, sketchy or superficial

way. Whereas the translations of French writers' works like Hugo, Voltaire, Baudelaire, Valéry Flaubert, Balzac, Zola had enormous influences upon the Reformation movement were translated into not only Turkish but also many languages because of their high literary value. Subsequently the forerunners of the other nations like Shakespeare, Dickens, Schiller, Goethe, Joyce, Woolf, Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck, Huxley, Borges were also translated into Turkish, even today they are being retranslated correctly or incorrectly again again.

Many Turkish readers, writers and scholars deal with their translations. The thousands of classic, popular or new works every year are translated and published in Turkish publish houses. Though these kinds of publications open the doors of the world literature to Turkish comparative literature and national literature, Translators should have the great knowledge, understanding and perception of both source and target languages, literatures, histories and cultures, otherwise while the comparatists studying comparative literature tries to break the boundaries among nations and find and evaluate similarities, differences, analogies or parallels between literary texts she or he will not show accurate approaches and bring correct interpretations on the literary products, literary values or culture of the other. Consequently Turkish comparatists as in all over the world are face to face to translation problems as well. In addition to this, another significant problem as I mention before is the thought of study as comparative literature the works of a single national literature without looking behind the walls.

It will be necessary to have a good comparative literary knowledge, trusted translation agencies, knowledge of a foreign language, the knowledge of the other to overcome these sorts of crises of comparative literature, And more important than all it will be crucial to know the definition, nature, scope, theories and methods of comparative literature and its application. Otherwise Turkish school of comparative literature will remain in a vicious circle, and comparative literature as a separate discipline from national literature will not be able to complete its existence, it will stay under ashes of national literature.

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