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The Significance of Author-Translators in Turkey in the Emergence of Modern Turkish Literature²

Abstract: *The emergence of modern Turkish literature dates back to the translation activities initiated by the Ottoman intellectuals during the Reformation period in the 19th century. With the westernization efforts of the Ottoman State, the literary polysystem entered into a new phase and translation efforts gained a momentum by means of the authors of that period, among which, Ahmet Midhat Efendi deserves a special attention. Later, with the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, translation activities turned into a much more organized and planned manner, and author-translators again became instrumental in initiating new genres, styles and modes of expressions through translations in the Turkish literary polysystem. Nurullah Ataç was one of the most influential figures in that sense. Both Ahmet Midhat Efendi, in the 19th century and Nurullah Ataç in the 20th century advocated the use of pure and simple translation in an effort to domesticate the translations of Western sources and although they belonged to different time periods, Ahmet Midhat Efendi and Nurullah Ataç believed in the importance and capacity of translations towards enriching a national literature.*

Key words: *author-translators, Turkish literature, literary polysystem, enrichment of national literatures, the emergence of the Turkish novel*

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