

# “UCHINCHI RENESSANS POYDEVORINI QO‘YISHDA FILOLOGIK TADQIQOTLARNING NAZARIY VA AMALIY AHAMIYATI” mavzusidagi xalqaro ilmiy-nazariy konferensiya materiallari to‘plami

## PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE FIELD OF LITERATURE TEACHING IN TURKEY AND THEIR SOLUTIONS - THE EXAMPLE OF CHINESE LITERATURE TEACHING

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***Abstract:** Research on the field of Sinology in Turkey was initiated primarily by translating and examining classical sources in the field of Chinese Literature from disciplines such as philosophy, history and literature, and with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1971, teaching the Contemporary Chinese language was included in the curriculum. However, at the time we are talking about, research in the field of Chinese Literature teaching did not develop at an ideal pace as in the field of Contemporary Chinese teaching, and with the launch of China's Opening Policy, Modern Chinese Literature Teaching and Modern Chinese Literature Teaching of this period began to be studied. Research on Chinese Literature has begun to gain visibly importance. In this short research, we will try to make an evaluation and analysis on the methods followed and the course of development in the field of educational activities related to Classical and Modern Chinese Literature since the beginning of Sinology research in Turkey in 1935, and the problems arising in this field and the solutions to these problems. We will try.*

***Key words:** Sinology in Turkey, Classical Chinese Literature, Modern Chinese Literature, Literature Teaching, Chinese Studies.*

### ENTRANCE

After the Republic of Turkey was established in 1923, the policies to be followed in the cultural field soon began to be determined, and Atatürk's initiative was initiated by Ankara University, which was the first established during the republican period, to research Turkish history and culture, especially in the periods before Islam, from Chinese sources, with Turkish Sinologists using scientific methods. With this, the Sinology department was established. As in Turkey, research and teaching activities in the field of Sinology in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union consisted entirely of the translation and evaluation of Chinese classics written in the fields of philosophy, history and literature. However, although efforts have been made to conduct Classical Sinology research within a certain system and method in the European countries mentioned above since the first quarter of the 19th century, research in the field of Sinology in Turkey has not been able to develop at the desired pace. Among the most important reasons for this negative situation are the fact that there is almost no trained manpower in the field of Sinology, the geographical distance between Turkey and China, the fact that a diplomatic relationship has not yet been established between the two countries, and more importantly, the young Republic of Turkey's cultural deficiency in Sinology and China. Fields such as Contemporary China Studies are not

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among their priority targets. Undoubtedly, this period of indifference did not last long and the German Sinologist Prof. , who served Turkish Sinology for 11 years. Dr. Thanks to the great contributions of Wolfram Eberhard (1909-1989), Sinological Research began to attract significant attention since the early 70s of the 20th century.

## I. PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHMENT OF SINOLOGY RESEARCH IN TURKEY

Between 1937 and 1948, with the personal efforts of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, German Sinologist Prof. was invited to work in the Sinology department established within the Faculty of Languages, History and Geography of Ankara University. Dr. While working in the department we mentioned, Wolfram Eberhard tried to make efforts to the extent of his means for the development of research in the field of Classical Chinese Literature. During his 11 years in the Department of Sinology, Eberhard wrote articles and books on important topics such as the tradition of essay writing in Classical Chinese Literature, classical Chinese storytelling and "The Place of the Chinese Novel in Chinese Life" . <sup>1</sup>Prof. had to carry out long-term studies in the field of Central Asian Turkish History, which was among the founding purposes of the Sinology department. Since Eberhard did not have the luxury of devoting all his academic time to Classical Chinese Literature during the years in question, Ethnology of China during the Han (221 BC-AD 206) and Tang (618-807) periods. Since he also conducted research in fields such as Northern Neighbors of China and Classical Chinese Philosophy, he did not have the opportunity to write many long-term works that could form a school of Classical and Modern Chinese literature, as in countries such as France and Germany.

As can be understood from what we have stated above, the purpose of establishing the Sinology department in Turkey is to firstly translate Turkish history and culture into Turkish and through scientific means, based on primary sources such as Official Chinese Annals, Chronological Works, Encyclopedic Works, Travelogues and Special History Books. Evaluating is neither analyzing. In his book Introduction to Sinology, published in 1946, Eberhard said , "Sinology should be a scientific science in Turkey", <sup>2</sup>which is of great importance in terms of Turkish History and Culture. When considered in this context, Chinese sources written in various periods are of great importance in terms of illuminating not only the Turks of Turkey, but also the history and culture of the distinguished Uzbeks. As a matter of fact, it is possible to find important records about the geography and culture of Uzbekistan in

<sup>1</sup>Wolfram Eberhard, "The Place of the Chinese Novel in Chinese Life", **Ankara University Journal of the Faculty of Languages, History and Geography** , Volume 3, Issue 02, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>Wolfram Eberhard, **Introduction to Sinology** , Pinhan Printing House, Ankara 1946.



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Chinese sources from the Han and especially the Tang Dynasty. On this occasion, in our opinion, it would be very appropriate to reinterpret and evaluate the history and culture of both brotherly peoples by collaborating with Uzbek and Turkish historians and systematically scanning Chinese sources.

## **II. CLASSICAL CHINESE LITERATURE TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN TURKEY**

While researching in the field of Classical Chinese Literature has been carried out since 1935, an effort has been made to give importance, as much as possible, to the translation and interpretation of not only classic works in the field of literature, but also works written in the field of philosophy into Turkish. First of all, it should be noted that, during both the Han (221 BC-AD 206) and Tang (618-907) dynasties, works on philosophy were also considered literary works in the Ancient Chinese Literature world. was being done. Because the classical Chinese thinkers who intended to write works in the field of philosophy during the Hun and Gokturk periods had to have the necessary knowledge and skills in the field of literature knowledge and writing literary works, as well as the knowledge they needed in the field of philosophy.

1901-1993 ), another German Turcologist and Sinologist, and Wolfram Eberhard (1909-1989), who worked in the Sinology department between 1935-1937. Because we do not have enough information to give an idea to those who are interested, unfortunately, these two valuable German scientists have not left us any information about which education system they followed in the field of teaching Chinese literature. Prof. When Eberhard entered the official archives of the Faculty of Languages, History and Geography to do research on the records kept about him during his years in Turkey , Prof. Eberhard's realization that his personal file was lost is a very unfortunate and sad situation for the Turkish Sinology and Chinese Literature community.

## **III. CONTEMPORARY CHINESE LITERATURE TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN TURKEY**

Since 1935, when Sinology Research began in Turkey, research on Chinese Literature has focused on issues related to Classical Chinese Literature, some of these researches have focused on Classical Chinese poetry, and the other part has focused on literary genres of Chinese literature such as essays, stories and novels. As a literary genre, it is devoted to philosophical works. Prof. While Eberhard is writing works on Classical Chinese literature, instead of dealing with any literary work in a long-term study or translating any work into Turkish, he aims to introduce Classical

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literature to the world of Sinology in his articles and to provide concise information to researchers and students interested in this field. and aims to provide solid information. For example, his article titled "The Place of the Novel in Ancient Chinese Society" is very valuable in this regard. Prof. Eberhard's first doctoral student, Prof. Muhaddere Nabi Özerdim, in his associate professor thesis MS IV.-V. By dealing with the Poems of the Turks who Established a Dynasty in the North of China in the 19th century <sup>3</sup>, he has produced a work that cannot be easily completed in his field. Unfortunately, this work, which was not published as a book, sheds light on the aspect of Sinology science that serves the Ancient Turkish culture; It is of great value for Turkish Sinology.

As we have stated before, from the establishment of the Sinology department in Turkey until 1971, when diplomatic relations were established between Turkey and China, emphasis was placed on research on Classical Chinese historiography and Classical Chinese philosophy along with Classical literature. In order to ensure that they become familiar with Contemporary Chinese, courses on Contemporary Chinese have begun to be included in the curriculum, but almost no study of works on contemporary Chinese literature has been included. With the beginning of the Opening Policy in China and the establishment of Confucius Institutes in Turkey, the number of students studying at undergraduate and graduate levels increased, and the establishment of Chinese Language and Literature departments at Erciyes, Istanbul University and Hacı Bayram Veli University, as well as the Sinology department established at Ankara University. Together, the syllabus of these departments includes translation into Turkish of the works of China's leading contemporary writers, such as Mo Yan, Hua Yu, and Lao She, who are Nobel Prize winners in Contemporary Chinese Literature and Contemporary Chinese Poetry, and who wrote works in the field of Contemporary Chinese Literature. By attaching importance to literary activities, many novels of these writers have been translated into Turkish.

Although, as we stated above, many novels of Contemporary Chinese writers have been translated into Turkish in Turkey, it is difficult to say that long-term research works on Contemporary Chinese novels are given importance. In this context, the author of these lines <sup>4</sup>tried to make his modest contributions to Turkish Sinology in the field of Contemporary Chinese literature by writing his work titled "The Past and Present of Chinese Village Literature" in 2018. Apart from this work

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<sup>3</sup>Muhaddere Nabi Özerdim, "MS IV-V. "Poems of the Turks Who Established a Dynasty in the North of China in the 19th Centuries"

**Ankara University Faculty of Languages, History and Geography Journal** , Volume 13, Issue 3, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>Eyüp Sarıtaş, **Past and Present of Chinese Village Literature** , Demavend Publishing House, Istanbul, 2018.



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we mentioned, of course, there are works written as doctoral theses on Classical and Contemporary Chinese Literature in Turkey, but unfortunately, these theses did not have the opportunity to reach a wide audience because they were not published as books. Therefore, Turkish Sinology needs in-depth and detailed research on Contemporary Chinese Literature.

## **LV. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN TEACHING CLASSICAL AND MODERN CHINESE LITERATURE IN TURKEY**

In the Chinese Literature education carried out until the 80s of the last century, with the beginning of Sinology Research in Turkey, emphasis was given to subjects related to Classical Chinese Literature, but these studies were far from being detailed and systematic studies, and were more of a promotional nature. It appeared in article format. The main problems encountered in both Classical Chinese Literature Education and Modern Chinese Literature education in Turkey are as follows:

a) From the 30s to the 80s of the last century, academics who taught Classical Chinese Literature within the scope of Sinology in our country did not encounter many problems in understanding Classical Chinese literature texts related to this field, since they received Classical Chinese education. Because during this period, education in the field of Sinology was aimed at helping students read and understand classical texts. Therefore, academicians and students working in this field were very weak in terms of speaking and practicing Chinese.

b) Especially during the period when the emphasis was on Classical Chinese Literature education, research on Chinese Literature was more of a promotional nature, and instead of dealing with long-term works about the literary classics that constituted Classical Chinese Literature, emphasis was placed on research in the form of articles introducing Classical Chinese Literature.

c) Until the 60s of the last century, no interest was shown in translating Chinese classics into Turkish, and Turkey's first Sinologist, Prof. Dr. Muhaddere Nabi Özerdim's work titled Lun Yü, about Confucius, was translated into Turkish from its Classical Chinese original in 1963. As the opportunities to go to China increased and young academics gave more importance to Modern Chinese Literature research, they translated important Chinese classics such as Zhuang Zi and Dao De Jing to the Turks. When we look at the issue from this perspective, we see that research and translation activities, especially on Chinese classics, are at the ideal stage.

d) Since the 40s of the last century, the Ministry of National Education initiated a major project to translate world classics into our language, and the Confucianist

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classic called "Lun Yü" (Conversations), which we mentioned above, was translated into Turkish. During this period, although great importance was given to the translation of English, German, Russian and Greek classics, especially French literary works, into Turkish within the scope of this project, only Lun Yü regarding Classical Chinese Literature was translated, and therefore there were large gaps in this field. Since the early years of the 21st century, not only the Ministry of National Education, but also the owners of publishing houses in Ankara and Istanbul have encouraged the translation of works on modern Chinese literature, and thus, many works on Modern Chinese literature have been systematically translated into Turkish. started to be given as much importance as possible.

e) Although he has translated Chinese classics, especially modern Chinese literature such as Mo Yan, Lao She and Hua Yu, the lack of in-depth research on the works of these authors has led to major deficiencies in this field in Turkey. For example, although Mo Yan's major works have been translated into Turkish, no detailed research work has yet been written on his literary style and the stylistic features of his works and how his novels are interpreted in China and Western countries.

## V. SOLUTION SUGGESTIONS

Undoubtedly, one of the most important elements in philology education is literature education. In this respect, systematics and methodology should never be neglected in Chinese Literature education. Although the history of Sinology Research in Turkey started 88 years ago, many problems are encountered in our country in terms of content, structure and chronology.

A. One of the most important of these problems is that the classic works of educational activities in the field of Chinese Literature should be translated into Turkish, taking into account the years in which they were written, and immediately afterwards, research should be started with the literary classics we mentioned here.

B. In Classical Sinology Research, since the classical works were written in Classical Chinese, it is necessary for those who want to translate these classical works and conduct research on them to receive training in Classical Chinese.

C. As can be expected, today's young researchers who want to do research on Sinology and Contemporary Chinese Literature do not show much interest in this field due to the serious difficulties encountered in teaching Classical Chinese, instead they show more interest in contemporary and modern Chinese literature. Although many contemporary Chinese literature novels have been translated in Turkey to date, the translation activities we are talking about here are not within a certain system, but



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are shaped according to the preferences of young Sinologists or publishing house owners who will publish the novels to be translated. Since such a system creates significant gaps, leading works in the field of Contemporary Chinese Literature and literature teaching should be translated within a certain system.

D. While giving Chinese Literature education courses to students, instead of introducing the works of classical and modern Chinese literature in outline, students should be given more structured and concise information in the context of the development process of Chinese Literature and literary theory .

E. Although many novels, especially about modern Chinese literature, have been translated into Turkish and continue to be translated in our country, almost no academic research has been conducted on the literary views of the authors who wrote these works and the literary styles they followed. For example, the novels of Mo Yan and Yu Hua have only been translated into Turkish, and no study has been conducted on the results of the research that brings up and examines the views of these two well-known writers on literature and the opinions of other Chinese writers about them.

F. In order to produce more useful research products in the field of Chinese Literature, Turkish Sinologists should not be content with personally translating Chinese novels into Turkish, but should come together to discuss the development process of Classical or Contemporary Chinese literature, a critical approach to Classical Chinese literary products, or modern Chinese storytelling or They should carry out long-term scientific research projects that can fill important gaps in their field, such as the development process of the novel.

## CONCLUSION

Since the initiation of China's Opening Policy, interest in Modern Chinese studies has increased noticeably in Turkey, and as a result, over 1000 students and young researchers have begun to study at various universities in China. A significant portion of these students turned their attention to modern Chinese literature, and when they returned to Turkey, they participated in academic life by opening courses in China in the Sinology and Chinese Language and Literature departments and the Schools of Foreign Languages of various universities. Although the students and young researchers we mentioned here have reached a sufficient level in terms of Chinese language proficiency, they have not reached a quality that can contribute to Chinese literature education in our country because the theses they wrote have mainly chosen topics related to Turkey. Academicians who have been working in the field of Chinese Language and Literature for many years have not produced research results

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that are not connected to each other and that complement each other. Today, in the field of Chinese Literature education in Turkey, they produce the desired research products by following systematic, structural and scientific methods that contribute to the field. They have not been able to reveal it yet. In order to solve the problems encountered in the field of Chinese Literature in Turkey, first of all, the development processes of Chinese literature, Classical and Contemporary Chinese Literature, for undergraduate and graduate students studying in this field and for researchers working on other disciplines interested in Chinese Literature. There is an urgent need for long-term research on Chinese Literature to be carried out monographically and collaboratively in areas such as poetry, novels and modern Chinese drama, which also appeals to the field of literature. Although valuable doctoral theses have been written about Chinese Literature in Turkey, unfortunately, after these doctoral theses are accepted, they cannot reach the large masses of researchers who are interested in Chinese Literature because they are not published as books. In order to prevent this, a requirement for accepted doctoral theses to be published as books should be imposed, as is the case in Germany and some other Western countries. Therefore, when the doctoral theses written on Chinese Literature are published as books, it will be clear which China expert has done research on which Chinese literary work or on which topics, thus it will be possible to present research works that complement each other.

Chinese Literature in Turkey, as mentioned above, it should be sufficient to only translate and study the works of classical or modern Chinese literature, what methods should be followed in the education of Chinese Literature, and what methods should be followed in the field of poetry, novels, memoirs and Writing explanatory research works of important philosophical works, which are also considered literary classics, is also very important for Chinese literature education.

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