The Formation of Literary Canons in History of Turkish Literature

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Abstract

The term 'canon' is derived from the Greek word 'kanon', which refers to a law, criterion, or rule. It implies a criterion for determining what is true or authentic. In the context of literature, the concept of canon is associated with works that serve as examples or criteria for subsequent literary works, and that can become classical masterpieces. The canonization of art typically occurs in two ways. The first occurs through the natural process of people appreciating certain works, leading them to become classics. The second occurs in a 'guided (goal oriented)' manner in which certain authorities, such as political parties, governments, or ideologies, shape the canon to serve their interests. It is observed that many countries use literature and art as cultural tools to promote the national identity and ideology to individuals and society, viewing them as a means of cultural control. The inception of contemporary Turkish literature can be traced back to the 'Tanzimat Edict' of 1839, which sought to revitalize various areas, including literature, during the final years of the Ottoman Empire. With the conclusion of the First World War, the Ottoman Empire came to an end and the Turkish Republic was established. During the war years spanning 1911 to 1923, national sentiments and ideas became prominent themes in Turkish literature. Upon the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, national sentiments and specific ideas continued to exert their influence on the country's literature due to the prevalent awareness of Turkish identity that many felt needed to be instilled in society. The works produced by authors for this purpose are considered as part of the national literature. The newly established state aimed to adopt contemporary norms and, in this context, introduced reforms in every sphere of Turkish life. Literature was utilized as a tool to encourage public acceptance of these reforms, and the literature produced for this purpose was referred to as 'revolution literature'. When examining the history of Modern Turkish Literature, one can observe literary works that fit within the framework of a 'national literature canon' or 'revolution canon'. These works aim to present new values, ideas, and understandings to society by devaluing or criticizing old ones. This process of guided transformation is also known as 'dirigisme'. Throughout history in Turkey, various groups (Kemalists, Marxists, nationalists, Islamists) have created 'guided literature' to teach or persuade others to adopt their ideologies. Poets and writers who were constrained by the political regimes, ideologies, and dominant powers of their time often reacted through an 'anti-canon' or 'dissent canon' strategy, resisting the official canon that political powers sought to establish. As a result, literature and art placed increasing importance on irony in language and expression. Utopias were also explored in 'dissent canonical texts' as a means of escaping from the unhappy present world.

Keywords: Literature, Art, Canon, Dirigism, Guidance

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Introduction

Despite the various ways in which canons are formed in literature, their impact on creating a culture and civilization is undeniable. Canons serve as 'basic texts' that preserve tradition and provide a link between the past and present within the framework of infallible criteria and authorities. Canonical texts preserve social identity because they embody the characteristics, values, and accepted norms of a nation and society. In fact, some canonical texts can attain universal significance beyond their national context and become recognized as works of universal canon (Jusdanis, 1998, p. 94).

Undoubtedly, every poet and writer aspire to establish a literary canon that transcends the boundaries of their society and nation, and achieves universal success through public recognition and readers' appreciation. This dream entails the creation of a body of work that is highly regarded and widely acknowledged in the field of literature. Canonical texts serve not only as a defining authority for writers and poets, but also as models to be emulated and targets to be achieved. Therefore, the canon represents both the desire of the artist to be included in it and the aspiration to challenge and transform it. As the poet Hilmi Yavuz articulated, there is a desire among poets to change the canon from within and to seize its castle.

In the same way that sons are subjugated by their fathers, poets experience anxiety as they exist in the shadow of a "dominant" poet who preceded them. Any deliberate restructuring of a previous poem within a poem itself can be interpreted as an attempt to overcome this 'anxiety of influence'*. The poet, who finds themselves in an Oedipal struggle with the preceding poem, attempts to reclaim control over their creative power by rewriting it in a manner that engages with and reconfigures it to mitigate its potential harm. In this context, it could be argued that every poem can be viewed as a reimagining of preexisting poems, marked by a certain degree of misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Moreover,

poems can be read as a conscious effort to resist the hegemony of dominant literary traditions, thereby creating space for the poet's own imaginative and original expression (Yavuz, 2012, p.44).

Despite their efforts to overthrow and break free from the canon before them, it is impossible for any poet or writer to isolate their work from tradition. This is because an individual's subconscious and knowledge are shaped from a very early age by the culture and society they grow up in. The words, images and ideas that a writer or poet expresses are inevitably influenced by the traditions and canons that have been woven over time. As a result, the writer and poet cannot entirely free themselves from the prior driving force of the canon, which continues to exert its influence over their work (Eliot, 1983, p. 21).

As the foundational and defining text within a literary tradition, the canon imposes limitations on artists in every field, making it a subject of interest for political powers and authorities. The desire to retain this power of influence has led to the appropriation of literature as important components of the ideological apparatus of states, exerting a permanent influence on the masses. Many ideologies, powers, political parties, and societies have established their own media organs to create their own literary canons, and have instrumentalized and guided art in various ways for specific purposes. Some artists have willingly participated in the process of canonization, while others have been coerced or motivated by personal gain. However, there are authors and poets who have refused to allow literature to serve anything other than itself, preserving its inherent nature and values. In response to the pressure exerted by power structures, these artists have wielded the power of literature to create an anti-canon, which has garnered public and reader appreciation. Irony, humor, satire, black humor, caricature, utopia, and dystopia in art and literature are examples of areas where writers and poets have sought refuge from the pressure of

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* The conception belongs to Bloom Harold in the field of literature.

dominant power structures. Such narratives can be viewed as products of anti-canonization.

Literature and Political Power

Literature doesn't only reflect the elements of society such as history, culture, values, beliefs, and ideas, but also serve to preserve them. Although the material of a literary work is based on the realities of the outside world, it is brought into existence in the imagination of the artist who creates it. As a result, a literary work does not claim to represent reality in the same way as a historical document. In contrast, literary works reveal much more than just the concrete evidence of history. In fact, a work of literature is not detached from the artist who created it, the era, geography, culture, and the past. It serves as a mirror reflecting society and a 'flight recorder' of social memory. Many truths that have eluded the pages of history become more visible and enduring in the realms of literature, often manifesting in aesthetically pleasing forms of images.

Literature and art possess a 'permanent power of the word' and are dynamic forces that can transform society while also integrating with the culture, values, ideas, beliefs, and norms of the society in which they emerge. Due to their power and influence, literature and art are among the mechanisms that may be used by those who seek to control communities and satisfy the desires of various ideological and political groups, particularly those in positions of dominance. When discussing the ideological apparatus of the state, Althusser characterizes literature and art as 'cultural apparatuses' (Althusser, 2015, p. 51).

Undoubtedly, artistic works have an immense impact on the human psyche. Art, through its capacities to declare, showcase, persuade, and consequently endorse or support, is the most potent tool employed by those pursuing power. This stems from the fact that power can solely manifest itself by being acknowledged and obtaining a devoted following. Regarding this matter, art can be considered as the most effective tool that fulfils the functions of self-promotion and persuasion, both of which are essential for establishing and asserting power (Karaca, 2004, p. 197).

When considering the relationship between literature and political power, there are two distinct approaches to be discussed. The first approach involves writers taking a stance of opposition by means of rebellion, resistance and the utilization of their emancipatory power against various forms of domination, defending their own existence, essence, and nature as a shield against the dominant ideology and ruling power. The second approach, on the contrary, is characterized by an obedient understanding that is subject to the influence of power, submitting to the ideology of the ruling power and directing its trajectory in line with their desires (Çağan, 2004, p. 78). Furthermore, there was also a subjugated attitude that lacked the resilience to withstand the pressure exerted by political power but also did not wish to benefit from the ruling power, thereby finding itself caught in between these two positions. To establish their own power and ideologies for the long term, to gain more supporters and to influence the masses, political powers seek to wield the 'power of the word' and sometimes resort to practices that cannot be considered legitimate in order to exert significant pressure on writers (Özdemir, 2013, p. 435).

Canon in Literature

The term 'canon' has multiple semantic meanings, but in its general sense, it refers to a measure, rule, or law. In the Jewish and Christian traditions, the canon is equivalent to scriptures. The canon is significant in its capacity to include and exclude, serving as an authority that demarcates boundaries, establishes rules and criteria, and determines its own classification in every sense (Başçı, 2008, p. 46). In the realm of literature/art, the term 'canon' refers to the artists and their works that are regarded as significant, valuable, sublime, and fundamental based on their qualities (Atakay, 2004, pp. 70-77). "Works that are deemed suitable for canonization or have already been canonized serve as exemplary representations that delineate aesthetic and artistic boundaries, as well as convey various truths and

certainties to future generations. Such works constitute an infallible model that establishes aesthetic and intellectual values (Anar, 2012, pp. 1-13)."

The concept of canon should be properly defined by taking into account works of high artistic and literary quality that have transcended the limitations of their own time and have earned the admiration of future generations. Anything that falls outside the boundaries of the canon during its formation is excluded and not accepted. In every period, there exist classic works that are highly appreciated by the public. While such classic works deserve to be preserved, only a select few can be established as a 'criterion' or a 'basic text', i.e., canon, based on their inherent value (Anar, 2012, p. 19).

As such, the canon is closely linked to the concepts of tradition and authority. In fact, this relationship is rooted in religion. The process of forming the canon can be traced back to the act of adding the holy texts recognized by the church as original and the new names whose sainthood was accepted by the church (authority) to the list. The impact of this action on literature was reflected in the works and authors who were sanctified by certain authorities and whose boundaries were drawn such that they could only be included in the canon with their permission and approval (Parla, 2004, p. 51).

In the field of music, the term 'canon' typically denotes a musical technique where an entire melody is performed without modification, but at various time intervals, simultaneously. In this instance, the ambiguity surrounding the term "canon" resurfaces, prompting the question of whether it refers to the repetition of the same, as is the case in music, or if it entails an expansion of pre-existing lists by identifying and incorporating similar elements, as is often the case with religious canons. In any case, the term carries underlying tensions between conservatism and change (Parla, 2004, p. 51).

One could argue that the literary canon can be seen as comprising the basic texts that have earned a place in school curricula, as they embody

unifying values and arguments that are monumentalized between the past and the present, and which should be passed down to future generations (Jusdanis, 1998, p. 82). There are three main authorities that play an active role in determining the literary canon. The first of these is comprised of teachers, academics, writers, journalists, and press organs. The second authority is the canon formed as a result of a political party, ideology, state, or a regime's desire to impose its ideology arguments on society. Finally, there are canons that form over time through the choices, preferences, and appreciations of the public, readers, and society as a whole (Belge, 2004, 54-59). Although the processes involved in the formation of canons in literature and art are categorized by genre, it is noteworthy that the term 'canon in literature' often connotes a specific practice employed by authoritarian regimes to promote certain authors and works to establish their dominance and increase their influence and power over the general public in a given country. Repetitive printing and the attribution of masterpieces to certain works is a means of categorizing them as fundamental texts. Canonical structures are highly regarded in the establishment of a new ideology and hegemony. Zhdanov in Russia, Hitler in Germany, Mussolini in Italy, and Mao in China are examples of individuals who dominated the fields of literature and art, resulting in the creation of canonical works associated with their respective regimes (Çıkla, 2008, p. 9).

Canons of National Literature and Revolution Literature

When scrutinizing the historical processes of nation-state formations, it becomes apparent that the establishment of literary canons is an unavoidable outcome. In essence, the formation of a nation-state requires a fundamental social transformation, wherein literature and art play a crucial role in the project of organizing communities. These communities, which are initially identified by their narrow local identities, are brought together under the broader umbrella of an upper-group identity that

is based on a shared sense of national consciousness (Tekelioglu, 2003, p. 66).

The concepts of 'national literature' and 'revolutionary literature' are significant topics within the fields of literature and literary history. In the process of constructing a nation-state, literature and art were utilized as tools to awaken society to a sense of national consciousness and to bring about reforms aimed at creating a new society. Through the use of literature and art, the aim was to not only bring about a revolution in the country, but also in the mental and spiritual realms of individuals comprising society. While the initial efforts towards societal reform in Turkey began during the Tanzimat era, the movement gained intellectual momentum and became more visible during the Second Constitutional period.*

During this period, the process of canonization was largely influenced by the second authority, including politics, political parties, ideologies, and the state. The emergence of 'nationalist literature' gained significant momentum, particularly under the influence of the political power of the "Party of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki)*. The close relationship between influential literary journals such as Türk Yurdu (Turkish homeland) and Genç Kalemler (young writers) and the Party of Union and Progress played a pivotal role in the formation of the 'national literary canon'. The works of poets and writers such as Ali Canip Method, Ziya Gökalp, Ömer Seyfettin, Mehmet Emin Yurdakul, Ahmet Hikmet Müftüoğlu, and Aka Gündüz played a significant role in reviving a sense of national consciousness within Turkish society and contributed to the formation of the national literary canon during this period. The canonization process was heavily influenced by literary and intellectual journals, which wielded significant power and

influence during this era. "In 1918, the Yeni Mecmua (New Journal) decided to publish a Canakkale Special Issue*. The poets and writers who contributed to this special issue in support of national literature were Enis Behiç, Ahmet Hikmet, Ziya Gökalp, Raif Necdet, Abdurrahman Şeref, Celal Nuri, Samipaşazâde Sezai, Mehmet Emin, Halil Edhem, Ahmet Emin Yalman, Halit Fahri, Kazım Nami, Hakkı Tarık, Rauf Yekta, Ali Canip, Hakkı Süha, Midhat Cemal, Fahri Celalettin, Ali Ekrem, Zekeriya Sertel, Hüseyin Rahmi, and Ruşen Eşref (Belge, 2012, p. 672)." Yusuf Ziya Ortaç was one of the authors who supported the National Literature Canon campaign of Enver and Talat Pasha*. In explaining his own stance on the matter, Yusuf Ziya told Tahir Alangu the following:

According to Yusuf Ziya Ortaç, Celal Sahir approached him and informed him that Enver Pasha was seeking works from authors to encourage military warfare. Yusuf Ziya then prepared a book called "From Raid to Raid," which contained approximately 20 epic poems, and submitted it to Enver Pasha. Talat Pasha subsequently invited Yusuf Ziya to his office and expressed his gratitude for being the first author to accept the invitation. Yusuf Ziya was then presented with 250 gold coins as compensation for his contribution to the campaign. Later, Celal Sahir gave him an additional 200 gold coins for the sale of his book, bringing the total compensation to 450 gold coins. Although Yusuf Ziya did not participate in the Çanakkale delegation, he had nevertheless contributed to the "War Literature" campaign (Alangu, 1968, p. 364).

Although the first instances of canonization in Turkey were observed during the Tanzimat period, the most significant and revolutionary products were generated through conscious deliberations during the

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* The Tanzimat Edict, which is generally referred to as the Ottoman reform in western languages, was proclaimed in 1839 and aimed at social and political reforms to be realized in the country. In the second constitutional period the Ottoman Empire implemented a parliamentary system. During this process, the first world war took place and the Ottoman Empire began to collapse.

* The Union and Progress Party was oppositional party in the last period of the Ottoman Empire. They defended the idea of a nation state and freedom.
* Çanakkale was one of the most important fronts of Atatürk and his soldiers who fought for freedom in the first world war.
* Enver and Talat Pasha were the rulers who were effective in the administration in the last period of the Ottoman Empire, especially during the war period.

founding years of the Republic*, in the pursuit of a singular culture rather than a multicultural understanding. To establish a Western and modern perspective, shared resources were removed and exchanged in a manner akin to bartering. Ziya Gökalp, one of the intellectual founders of the nation-state ideology, argued that the sole prerequisite for the creation of a national culture is the acceptance of Turkish ethnic identity. In his writings, Gökalp emphasized the need to depart from Ottoman literature, including its achievements, and instead turn towards folk literature and Western sources.

The creation of a new civilization requires the establishment of new canons. Therefore, creating a canon can be considered as a step towards creating a civilization (Başçı, 2008, p. 64). Prominent historian and thinker of the period Mehmet Fuad Köprülü provides an explanation regarding the establishment of the new literature, stating that it should possess the following characteristics:

This new literature will be of a 'modern' and 'vital' nature in order to take its main inspirations from the 'national culture', the 'spirit of the people', and in this way, it will be able to show the 'originality and peculiarity' of the Turkish spirit. We need such a literature that it can give hope and activity to the most dejected and sick souls with its divine tunes; let individuals dissolve in social ideals; let him embody the beautiful qualities of Turkish character with the heroes he will create; Let it create a rebellious youth against the drugs of the old ways of life and the oppressive domination of foreign cultures. The Turkish Revolution expects such a movement in the field of literature and art, and only such a movement will complete the revolution (Köprülü, 1992, p. 134).

Despite Köprülü's emphasis on the importance of returning to the spirit and culture of the people, the gap between the general population and the intellectual elite persisted in the country until the 1950s and 60s. Even intellectuals who devoted themselves to studying and analysing folk culture often did so with the intention of highlighting the perceived ignorance of the people, rather than celebrating their cultural traditions. On the other hand, these intellectuals argued that the republic, as a political system, was the only viable solution for rescuing the people from the grip of an ignorant and outdated culture. To truly understand the motivation behind certain writers' pursuit of a literature grounded in folk culture after 1960, one must recognize the profound disparity between the general public and the intellectual elite. As a result, the desire and effort to attain a sense of 'civilization' has consistently been a preoccupation of the cultural and societal elite (Mardin, 2012, p. 145).

Revolutions were initiated with the intention of attaining the level of modern civilizations and eradicating the populace's 'stale culture and ignorance'. In pursuit of this goal, numerous poets, writers, and thinkers were incentivized and rewarded. Consequently, the first instances of 'revolutionary literature' emerged. In the initial years of the Republic, founded by Atatürk in 1923, not only were writers encouraged to produce works that aligned with the new regime and its principles, but journalists and magazine writers were also requested to produce articles that were supportive of the revolution. Those who supported the new regime and its reforms through their literary works were subsequently rewarded and promoted in a variety of ways during the subsequent periods (Tunalı, 2009, p. 837). The notion of 'revolutionary literature' was particularly emphasized during the 1930s. In essence, this term referred to a literary genre that aimed to support the various revolutions that were taking place in the country at that time. Thus, the content of 'revolutionary literature' was explicitly intended to serve the revolutionary ideals of the nation (Çıkla, 2004, p. 435).

During Atatürk's era, there was a concerted effort to preserve national values and protect them against foreign cultural influences. The primary objective of writers during this period was to distance themselves from the Ottoman period and to instead

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* The modern Turkish republican state was established in 1923 by its leader Atatürk.

emphasize Turkishness and folk culture from the pre-Islamic era. Poetry and theatrical works of the period, such as those produced by the poet groups known as the 'Beş Hececiler' (five-syllable poets) and the 'Yedi Meşaleciler' (seven-torch poets), emphasized the natural beauty of the land, the people, and the Anatolian region. These works also praised the pre-Islamic Turkish khans, while simultaneously extolling the leadership of Atatürk, the founder of the new state, as superior to all other Turkish leaders and khans. (Eriş, 2004, p. 100).

According to the ideological structure of the new Turkish state, the way to keep up with an exemplary civilization (Western civilization) passes through a Turkishness project separated from the Ottoman heritage. Thus, the 'self-identity', that is, Turkishness, which is claimed to have existed before but later lost due to 'external influences' like Islam, will be regained. The approach to the Orkhon Inscriptions or the Ergenekon Epic, which is of great importance in the textbooks, is an important proof of this seek. In this context, works that are in conflict with the Ottoman Empire and Islam, which is claimed to have transformed Turkishness, and works that praise the secularism of the new state, the functioning of the social order, and the political structure in general always preserve their feature of being a 'canon' (Baki, 2010, p. 15).

The efforts to awaken national consciousness and promote the nation-state through articles and other forms of media resulted in the diminishing emphasis on Ottoman and Islamic civilizations. Instead, the focus shifted to the historical roots of Turkishness, which was seen as crucial in developing a sense of national identity. The poet Yahya Kemal, who expressed his support for the country's independence struggle and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk through his writings, consistently emphasized the critical role played by Atatürk in the life-and-death struggle of the nation (Ayvazoğlu, 2007, p. 22). Yahya Kemal, who served as a member of parliament for three terms, expressed his discomfort with the changes made to Ottoman and Islamic civilization, the old alphabet, traditional music, and religion during the establishment of the nation-state and the implementation of the new regime. Yahya Kemal, who based his poetry on these values and concepts, refrained from publishing his poems during this period for fear of being seen as taking a stance against the revolutionary ideals of the time. This situation is significant in demonstrating how the 'revolutionary canon', which was being established, exerted pressure on poets and writers. Researcher Murat Belge describes the dominant canon portrait of the period with these words: "When we examine the two 'Kemals' mentioned in the poem, we can see that Behçet Kemal has embraced the role of the poet of the new regime. Yahya Kemal, who remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire with all his emotions, is not the type of person that would be favored by the regime. Therefore, all official channels and opportunities are utilized for Behçet Kemal" (Belge, 2004, p. 58). Despite the pressure and marginalization he faced during the early years of the Republic due to his loyalty to Ottoman and Islamic values, Yahya Kemal's poetry and literary contributions were later recognized and celebrated by writers, academics, and intellectuals. He became a highly respected figure in Turkish literature and was later regarded as a symbol of the country's cultural heritage (Gökhan, 2009, p. 317).

Guided (goal-oriented) Literature and Dirigism

The conflict between those who prioritize aesthetics and seek pure beauty in art and literature, and those who view art as a tool for attaining power, has existed for as long as human history and remains unchanged in societies worldwide. However, both perspectives share an enduring concern: anxiety over form. Irrespective of the intended purpose of a literary work, it should possess literary qualities and fulfils certain aesthetic expectations. Endeavours such as setting a goal, persuading, convincing, or proving a point render a work 'guided/ goal-oriented (purposeful)' and relegate it to a position of serving something other than itself. Nonetheless, a work can only be considered a 'literary work' if it possesses 'literary value.' Therefore, the notions of 'being

guided/goal-oriented/directed' and 'literary value' are two distinct concepts (Aytaç, 1990, p. 47).

The critical factor that transforms an object into a 'tool' is the meaning assigned to it, particularly the 'intention' behind its use. However, if the intention of the author is combined with that of the dominant ideology, it results in the manipulation and exploitation of literature. The ultimate objective of this combination is to align with the 'reader's intention.' Works created in accordance with the demands of power, political parties, ideologies, and state mechanisms, which represent the second category among canonization types, can also be classified as 'guided/goal-oriented literature.'

Over time, every significant political group in Turkish history (such as the Nationalists, Marxists, Kemalists, and Islamists) has developed its own literary canon. Each ideological faction has promoted the reading of works authored by individuals who share their beliefs, and publishing houses that endorse the ideology have frequently released these works (Çıkla, 2008, p. 12). Some writers produce works driven by their belief in a cause or ideology, independent of any dominant power. These works are classified as 'guided/goal-oriented literature'. Nevertheless, these works can also be referred to as 'voluntary literature', given that the authors have no expectations or interests from those in power. However, there exist 'guided/goal-oriented literature' pieces that are written solely with the aim of achieving fame and monetary gain, without the influence of any political power, authority, or even intellectual consensus. This is a circumstance that has been present in the history of literature since the tradition of Ottoman literature.

Dirigism, typically refers to a 'guided/goal-oriented approach.' While a work of art may belong to the past, it can be transformed through directed adaptations and modifications to align with new beliefs and ideologies. In essence, dirigism causes a work of art to lose its original function and instead serve as a 'tool' for a specific objective. This technique is often employed with political and ideological motives. Examples of dirigism include converting the Hagia Sophia into a mosque, transforming the Cordoba Mosque into a church, and setting folk songs to Western-style music melodies. Dirigism is frequently observed in literature since literature and art are powerful and vital 'tools' for influencing and transforming societal attitudes, beliefs, and mentalities, starting from the individual. The evaluation of guided works within the realm of literature and art is a contentious topic. Art can only fulfill its fundamental liberating mission when it serves no purpose other than itself. In guided works, the author's intention for writing the work often supersedes aesthetic considerations. In fact, when a work of art is made guided, it is forced to become something other than itself, which fundamentally alters its nature.

Many of the literary works written in the early years of the Republic were created with the 'custom-made, guiding attitudes' of the new ideas that were being introduced, and these works were incorporated into the school curricula by accepting them as the 'classics' and 'indispensables' of Turkish literature. The novel 'Çalıkuşu' (Wren) by Reşat Nuri Güntekin portrays Feride as a highly educated, Westernized, idealistic, and self-sacrificing education volunteer. The author idealizes Feride as a character who sets an example for Turkish women and thousands of prospective teachers who would receive modern education at 'The Village Institutes'* Her qualities make her an idealized character in terms of embodying the values and ideals of the new Republic. It is true that in the first editions of the novel 'Çalıkuşu (Wren)', Reşat Nuri Güntekin portrayed Feride as wearing a headscarf, and even stated that the headscarf suited her. However, in later editions published during the post-Republican era, this description was removed. It is believed that this change was made to align with the new Republican ideals of modernity and westernization, which were aimed at distancing Turkey from its Ottoman past and

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* Village Institutes were opened in many parts of the country in 1940 in order to train teachers in Turkey. Village Institutes, inspired by the American educational philosopher John Dewey, aimed to both train new teachers and educate the community by integrating local life and school.

adopting a more secular and westernized identity (Özalp, 1999/1999b, p. 29-36).

Reşat Nuri, a prominent author whose novel is on the path to becoming a classic, implemented changes that supported the government and reforms through dirigism. Alongside Reşat Nuri, writers such as Halide Edip and Yakup Kadri also utilized their writing to contribute to the same objective. The reality of the efforts towards 'guided literature' or the 'instrumentalization of literature', which were deemed significant during that time, is evidenced by the fact that numerous writers who were prominent figures in Turkish literature until the 1950s also held positions as bureaucrats and parliamentarians in the political sphere. In the late 1930s, the modernization of traditional Turkish folk theatre was initiated by 'the Republican People's Party'* and the 'People's Houses'*. This led to efforts to adapt Karagöz folk plays*, which involve shadow puppetry, into themes and discourses that would be suitable for the demands of modern times. Through these efforts, the current number of Karagöz plays has increased from twelve to over thirty. One of the characters in these plays was the 'village teacher' who graduated from 'the Village Institutes' (Çıkla, 2007, p. 61-67). Similar approaches were applied to many folk literature products, including Keloğlan tales.* In fact, dirigist efforts had an impact on other areas of art as well. The prevailing acceptance and intention of 'guided literature' extended beyond the realm of literature and spread to painting, music, and film. Novels that are considered 'classics' were adapted into movies, and many films depicting Turkish history before Islam were produced.

The matter of canon and dirigism in literature, also known as 'guided literature', is an undeniable reality. This is not only a phenomenon and transformation experienced in Turkish literature, but a situation that can be observed throughout the

histories of world literature. As an example, following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, canonical texts in Russian literature focused on issues such as problems facing the village and working classes, the glorification of labor, economic inequality, women's participation in production, and the liberation of the Soviet regime. If we examine the literary histories of countries such as England, Spain, Germany, and Japan, we can observe that the process of canonization has shaped their literary life. The main reason for this is undoubtedly the authorities and dominant ideologies who aim to preserve their own power and existence by utilizing the power and permanence of art and literature.

Reaction to Impact: Anti-Canon

There are also writers who refuse to be part of the canon that is being created by political power. These writers not only distance themselves from the benefits that come with aligning with the dominant authority, but they also often experience deprivation and obstacles. Nevertheless, the consciousness these writers demonstrated in preserving the essential nature and essence of art and literary value in their works elevated them in the eyes of their readers. Despite the pressure from the authorities, these writers continued their struggle to express themselves freely in their art, and as they produced more competent works day by day, they gained the appreciation of academics and journalists. Consequently, an opposing canon, also known as the anti-canon, began to emerge against the dominant power.

Nazım Hikmet, a popular poet among socialists in Turkish society, and Necip Fazıl, an important poet among conservatives, were excluded from the canon that the government was trying to establish. However, they became part of the anti-canon because they were admired and exalted within

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* It is the first official political party of Turkey, founded by Atatürk on September 9, 1923.
* People's Houses was a non-governmental organization established with the support of the state in order to explain the values, ideologies and principles of the newly established Republic of Turkey in 1930.

* Based on imitation and conversation, Hacivat and Karagöz is a traditional Ottoman shadow play performed by reflecting two-dimensional depictions on the screen. Hacivat and Karagöz are the main protagonists in this shadow folk play.
* Keloğlan is a villager and bald fairy tale hero who lives with his elderly mother and stands out with his honesty, purity and courage in the narratives.

their own ideological group, despite being excluded from the official canon. Although Necip Fazıl won the art competition organized by the Republican People's Party in 1947, he was not awarded the prize he deserved. These and other similar obstacles had the opposite effect, and caused these artists to hold a special place in the conscience and hearts of the people. As a result, the works that were produced under commission or guidance could not generate the appreciation that the authorities expected from them in the public eye. On the other hand, the works written freely by the authors were more popular and were read in greater numbers. For instance, Reşat Nuri's novel Yeşil Gece (Green Night) had the lowest printing and reading rate among the author's other works (such as Çalıkuşu - Wren, Dudaktan Kalbe – From Lips to the Heart, Kavak Yelleri – Poplar Winds, Yaprak Dökümü - Defoliation), despite being a work that was produced under the guidance of the state. Undoubtedly, one of the most significant reasons for this is that the author had more freedom to write his other works (Çıkla, 2008, p. 11).

Prominent poets and writers of Turkish literature such as Şinasi, Namık Kemal, Ziya Paşa, Tevfik Fikret, Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, Mehmet Rauf, and Mehmet Akif Ersoy faced various treatments such as exile, censorship, and isolation due to their oppositional attitudes to the ideology of the current authority. This situation has caused these writers to create their own canons in the eyes of the public, academics, writers, and critics. In a sense, the absolute power and dominant ideology indirectly created their own opposite, their 'opposite canon' (Çıkla, 2007a, p. 49).

In an article discussing the relationship between literature and power during the Ottoman period, Dursun Ali Tökel, a researcher of Ottoman literature, argues that literature has always triumphed over dominant power and that art is like a child nurtured by dissent. Tökel argues that a work that is guided cannot be considered a true work of art. This is because guidance is incompatible with the essence of art and what it represents (Tökel, 2009, p.7-8). Artists who evolve with their opposing dissenting stances and create anti-canonical works over time can make their protest attitudes more visible through various genres and content in their artistic productions. Humor, dark humor, and caricature are among the creative expressions of this opposing attitude. The existence of numerous forms of humor and caricature in a society indicates that there are many established canons that the dominant power seeks to maintain popularity. Akbaba (Vulture) magazine, which was published for a considerable period by Orhan Seyfi Orhon and Yusuf Ziya Ortaç during the early years of the Turkish Republic, was a magazine that was filled with caricatures and humor, with the aim of subverting all established canons created by the dominant power. In fact, upon examining the conditions and events of the period, it is noteworthy that the magazine was named 'Vulture'.

Alternative Methods of Escaping the Canon: Irony, Utopia, and Dystopia

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's novel, "The Time Regulation Institute," is a literary work that challenges the canon of the Turkish Republic. The title itself suggests that the novel is filled with irony, which is a means of criticising established norms and conventions. The process of westernization led to the increasing significance of form and appearance in both individual and social life, which consequently resulted in the triumph of form over meaning. For Tanpınar, who inhabited a world that was defined by its own unique set of meanings, the triumph of form over meaning represented a desperate situation, which he could only express through the use of irony. Similarly, many poets and writers who witnessed the death of meaning also resorted to the use of irony to explain this issue and express their discontent with the prevailing cultural and social values.

Individuals who are dissatisfied with the present world often take one of two approaches: seeking solace in either the past or the future. Poets and writers who found themselves constrained by the prevailing regime, ideology, and dominant power of their time often adopted an 'opposite canon' strategy in response to the official canon promoted by political authorities. Utopias, which offer an alternative vision

for society and a break from the present, are often included in such 'anti-canon texts'.

Thomas More, who is best known for his work 'Utopia', used the concept of an ideal society as a way of escaping the anti-democratic attitudes of his kingdom during his time. By imagining a world that was markedly different from his present reality, More was able to offer a critical commentary on the prevailing norms and values of his time. Dystopian narratives often employ irony as a means of criticizing the dominant power and the established canon. George Orwell's novel 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' is a classic example of a dystopian work that uses irony to highlight the dangers of an oppressive regime that cannot be challenged or changed. The novel includes a critique of the authorities, while also highlighting the use of dirigisme as a means of maintaining power. The concept of dirigisme is ironically portrayed throughout the novel. The character of 'Big Brother' is presented as an omnipotent and undeniable force, whose words and gaze hold sway over all spaces and times. Big Brother is depicted as a being with the ability to perceive the future and prophesy forthcoming events. Another character in the novel is a humble librarian, whose sole responsibility is to record events that Big Brother predicted would occur in the future but have not materialized. The librarian accomplishes this task by scouring the pages of newspapers and magazines, and amending their contents accordingly. The librarian's role bears a striking resemblance to that of the artists who served the government's 'guided literature' campaign. Like the librarian, these artists were constantly striving to demonstrate the power, predictions, and legitimacy of the prevailing political authority through their works.

Conclusion

Literary canons are dynamic entities that serve to uphold the traditions and cultural heritage of society. They comprise literary works that are widely recognized and valued by the public, and are deemed to be essential or foundational texts. Poets and writers aspire to be included in the canon and to surpass it, since canons represent the pinnacle of achievement in literature and the arts, and are regarded as masterpieces. Canonical works of art are a reflection of a society's identity in its most elemental form. They serve to perpetuate the values of the society in the collective memory, ensuring their continuity over time. The formation of a canon is, therefore, integral to the development of civilization. However, the power of literature and art, which derive their authority from the persuasive force of language and the enduring impact of narrative, has often led to attempts by various authorities throughout history to exert control over them. Throughout history, literature and art have been utilized by various ideological groups and structures, particularly the state and government, in order to legitimize and promote the dominant ideology of society. This has often involved instrumentalizing literature and art, rendering them 'guided' or 'purposeful' in service of a particular agenda. A survey of the history of numerous countries reveals that political powers have frequently employed literature and art as a cultural apparatus to effect social transformation in accordance with the state's ideological vision. The creation of a 'national literature canon' during the formation of nation-states is often viewed as the most effective means of cultivating a sense of national identity and awareness among the public.

The development of a 'national literary canon' during and following the 'War of Independence' was crucial in terms of guiding the search for freedom of a nation struggling to survive, and in fostering a sense of Turkish national identity. The term "revolutionary literature canon" refers to a body of literary works that were carefully curated with the aim of promoting acceptance of the republic and the revolutions that accompanied it. This canon is considered to fall within the category of 'guided literature' since it prioritizes literature and art that serve specific purposes. A wide range of ideological and political groups, including those classified as socialist, nationalist, conservative, liberal, and republican, have produced their own 'guided literary works' that have received support from authors within each respective group in Turkey. Writers and poets

were often included in the category of 'purposeful/guided literature' in Turkey. This inclusion sometimes occurred under pressure from those in power, sometimes with the expectation of personal benefit, and sometimes as voluntary supporters of certain ideas.

The term 'dirigism', meaning 'guided' in its essence, refers to the process of making existing works of art serve a new ideology by implementing various changes to them. This is one of the methods commonly used in the process of canonization. There were poets and writers who exhibited great sensitivity towards preserving the essence and nature of art, and were opposed to the idea of art serving any other purpose beyond itself. Despite facing potential consequences, these writers continued to produce original literary works while insisting on remaining true to themselves. Their unwavering stance against dominant power, coupled with the high level of literary competence they exhibited, earned them a place in the anti-canon (opposite canon) by endearing them to the public and readers alike.

In literature and art, canonization can occur through three different means. The first is through the appreciation and recognition of academics, journalists, writers, and other intellectuals. The second is through the influence of the state, power structures, political parties, or ideological groups. The third method is through the formation of canons based on the recognition and appreciation of the public and readership. Writers who sought to evade the pressures imposed by those in power, attempted to express themselves by creating works in various genres of art and literature. Upon examination of works in genres such as irony, dark humor, caricature, and satire, it becomes evident that they are predominantly produced during periods in which political power seeks to consolidate its authority and exert increased pressure. Literary works that fall within the genres of utopia and dystopia can also be regarded as expressions of the writers who feel discomfited in the current world and seek solace in their narratives by envisioning alternative realities and escaping from the present. From this perspective, works belonging to these genres can be analysed as anti-canon texts, challenging the dominant literary canon of their time.

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