

**“We Must Ourselves Write About Ourselves”:
The Trans-Communal Rise of the Novel in the Late Ottoman Empire**

by

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Εις μνήμην
Μιχάλη Λασιθιωτάκη
(1955-2012)

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Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Figures	viii
Abstract	ix
Introduction	1
1. Conceptualizing Transnational Literary Exchanges	6
2. Naming and Classifying: Taxonomies of Global Literature	17
3. From Deleuze to Bourdieu: Literature vs. Literary Field	25
4. The Novel in Narrow Literary Fields	31
5. Learning from Istanbul: The Novel in Trans-Communal Literary Fields	33
Chapter 1. Trans-Aegean Trajectories: Locating the Emergence of the Modern Greek Novel	47
1. Explaining the Rise of the Novel: Ian Watt's Legacy	48
2. Rediscovering a Corpus: The Novel in Post-Revolutionary Greece	53
3. Rethinking the Rise of the Modern Greek Novel: Toward a Trans-Aegean Model	60
4. Representing Aegean Crossings	73
Chapter 2. Translating the Novel: The Wandering Jew in Istanbul	77
1. Nineteenth-century Reading Practices: A Context for Translation Trends	83
2. Translation as Critical Reading: <i>The Wandering Jew</i> and the Greek-Ottoman Praxis of Translation	124
Chapter 3. Armenian Ivanhoes, Greek Rob Roys: Historical Fiction and the Nationalization of the Novel	164
1. Beyond Walter Scott: The Historical Novel in Romantic Europe	165
2. Historical Fiction in Greece and Armenia	177

Chapter 4. The Novel as Commodity: Virginie and Her Ottoman Sisters	204
1. The Novel as Object: Virginie's Visit to Eliza's Boudoir	210
2. The Novel from Book to Chapbook: Alexandre Ben-Guiat's <i>Pablo y Virginia</i> (1905)	225
3. Toward the End of the (Western) Novel: Zafirakis Hypandevmenos' <i>Zenobia</i> (1872)	235
Conclusion	251
Bibliography	257

List of Figures

Fig. 1	<i>Novels translated into Greek and published in the Ottoman Empire</i>	90
Fig. 2	<i>Comparative table of the first translations of important French novels into Greek, Armenian, Ottoman-Turkish (in the Arabic, Armenian, and Greek scripts), and Ladino</i>	99
Fig. 3a	<i>Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (1)</i>	131
Fig. 3b	<i>Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (2)</i>	132
Fig. 4a	<i>Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (3)</i>	142
Fig. 4b	<i>Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (4)</i>	143
Fig. 5a	<i>Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (5)</i>	146
Fig. 5b	<i>Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (6)</i>	147
Fig. 6a	<i>Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (7)</i>	148
Fig. 6b	<i>Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (8)</i>	149
Fig. 7	<i>"The Death of Virginie"</i>	214
Fig. 8	<i>"Shipwreck off the coast of the Isle of France"</i>	215
Fig. 9	<i>"Histoire de Paul et Virginie"</i>	216
Fig. 10	<i>Unidentified lithograph</i>	217
Fig. 11	<i>"Paul's Death"</i>	218

Abstract

Studying texts written in some of the main literary idioms of the late Ottoman Empire (primarily Greek and Armenian, as well as Ottoman-Turkish and Ladino) and examining cultural practices carried out by the corresponding ethno-linguistic groups, this dissertation surveys, across community boundaries, the development of a culture of the novel in Istanbul and Izmir during the long nineteenth century.

Placing a special emphasis on the appropriation by Ottoman literati of cultural tropes elaborated in Western Europe, this project studies both the spread of the foreign novel in the Ottoman Empire and the rise of domestic fiction within a trans-communal framework. Highlighting the ways in which the hegemony of Western European fiction was at once affirmed and challenged in the Empire, the project lays the ground for a renewed understanding of the rise of the novel outside of the West.

The introduction of this work offers a survey of the various models that have been proposed, in comparative literary studies, to account for the unequal nature of exchanges across the global literary field. Additionally, it proposes to reformulate the concept of "minor literature" by shifting the focus to notions of amplitude and constriction, and by introducing the notion of narrow literary field as an alternative model to account for the structure of unequal exchanges that permeate the global literary realm.

In an effort to analyze the conditions that allowed for the development of a culture of the novel in the broader Ottoman space, a preliminary chapter provides an overview of the ways in which the emergence of the modern novel has been contextualized and explained, with a particular focus on recent scholarship that has focused on the inherently transnational character of the literary exchanges that permitted the so-called rise of the novel. Using the example of nineteenth-century Greek-Ottoman novelists, this chapter investigates the relationship between the novel and its textual and cultural contexts, as well as the transnational dimension of the genre's development. Transposing the paradigm of the "literary Channel" that has been proposed to account for the circulation of novels between France and Britain in the eighteenth century, this chapter argues that the modern Greek novel can be conceptualized as a product of the movements of texts and authors across the interstitial space of the Aegean.

Each of the subsequent core chapters focuses on the diffusion of a particular sub-genre of Western European prose fiction in the late Ottoman Empire with an emphasis on the productive and innovative responses that it generated in the main literary communities of the Empire. First, a chapter examines the extremely broad diffusion in the late Ottoman Empire of the so-called *romans de mystères* inspired by the work of French novelist Eugène Sue. In parallel, it reads the creative translation of these works into the literary idioms of Empire as a site of experimentation for domestic novel writing. Second, another chapter is interested in the domestication of the novel and, through an analysis of historical novels written in Armenian and Greek, it shows how these communities performed a re-nationalization of historical fiction based on a complete reformulation of the genre's conventions as they were codified in Western Europe, primarily in the works of Sir Walter Scott. Finally, the last chapter follows the rich textual and material fortune of Bernardin de Saint Pierre's sentimental novel *Paul et Virginie* in Greek, Armenian,

and Ladino texts, as a way to conceptualize mechanisms of commodification at play in the creative reception of the Western European novel in the late Ottoman Empire.

Introduction

We must ourselves write about ourselves. We must make known our sayings and our doings, and then you will be enabled to judge for yourselves who are right and who are wrong.

Stephanos Xenos, *The Devil in Turkey, or Scenes in Constantinople*, 1851

"Can we get books here?" asks Bjartur, the central character of *Independent People* (*Sjálfstaett fólk*, 1934-35), Halldór Laxness' powerful evocation of the brutal life of country people in the desolate interior of Iceland. The rugged shepherd has left his hut in the wilderness, and has travelled to the nearest town to procure the supplies that will allow his family to survive the harsh winter. Accompanying him on this trip is his teenage daughter Asta Sollilja and Bjartur decides, before leaving town, to stop by the bookseller's shop and buy some books that might amuse and instruct the young girl. For Bjartur, who recites Old Norse poetry as he herds his sheep, there is only one type of books worth reading: editions of the old sagas of his people, the epic prose narratives that recount the heroic deeds of the first settlers of the island he so passionately loves. Among all the different sagas, one in particular has his preference, but the bookseller's answer to his inquiring about the book comes as both a surprise and a disappointment: "Pray God for guidance, man. It's thirty-odd years since I sold the last copy of Orvar-Odds Saga. The country stands on an entirely different cultural footing nowadays. I can recommend the story of *King Solomon's Mines* there." Countering Bjartur's angry reaction to the

idea that a foreign adventure novel could constitute appropriate reading material for a young girl, the bookseller continues:

(...) the country happens to have reached a stage in its development when it wants to keep abreast of the times, and we booksellers have to take that into account. Surely you, Miss Sola, will agree that one must adapt oneself to the times? Come here, love, and take a look at my up-to-date books. Here we have a world-famous novel about a man who was murdered in a cart (...). And here I can show you a book that's practically and absolutely the height of fashion nowadays; just look at it, little miss, don't you think we'd like to read it¹?

The young girl, unlike Bjartur, is instantly convinced, and father and daughter soon leave the shop, not with an old saga, but with another type of book, an "up-to-date" one, the novelty that is the novel.

This brief episode in Laxness' novel encapsulates the moment in which new books suddenly appear in small, isolated literary fields situated away from the more dominant ones, where texts that are "absolutely the height of fashion" incidentally originate most of the time. In doing so, the new books frequently dislodge older books, that is any preexisting domestic fictional regime. As exemplified by what happens after this exchange at the bookseller's shop, the emergence of new modes of fiction is not without its perils: immediately after their visit to the bookseller and their purchase of a foreign novel, Bjartur and Asta Sollilja spend their last night in town at an inn where the young girl is raped during the night, an event whose immediate

¹Laxness 1995 [1934-35]: 200-201.

and long-term consequences will ultimately lead to the ruin of the entire family's livelihood, and to the end of their existence in the wilderness. By textually connecting the purchase of foreign fiction with the violent loss of innocence signaled by rape, Laxness' work symbolically emphasizes the brutality of the changes brought forth by the advent of novel culture in a marginal cultural environment.

Set far away from Laxness' Iceland, but in the exact region on which the present study focuses, another work of twentieth-century fiction, published a little over a decade before *Independent People*, also includes an episode presenting this uneasy first encounter with the novel. Like Bjartur the sheperd, Naim Efendim, the main character of Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's 1922 novel *Mansion for rent (Kiralık Konak)* sees the world in which he grow up rapidly die around him, in the years that immediately follow the Young Turks Revolution of 1908. Much like Laxness in his own novel, Karaosmanoğlu pits his aging male protagonist -a retired high-ranking official of the Sultan's Court and, as such, the personification of a bygone order of things- against a young female agent of change: modernity incarnate. At the beginning of *Mansion for rent*, the sophisticated and courtly Naim Efendi accidentally comes across a book owned by his son-in-law, a book unlike any he has seen before:

For quite some time, he turned it over and over in his fingers; he then put on his glasses, first he examined the cover for a long while, read the author's name, the title of the book, the date of printing; every sign he saw on that cover, every word he read, including the name of the author, seemed strange to him. He opened the volume with great curiosity, but it was impossible to read it! As if he were like a child who just started to learn how to read, Naim Efendi was spelling each word syllable by syllable. With great effort, he

would either get to the end of a sentence, or not be able to finish it all; or, when he succeeded, he was unable to fully grasp the meaning of what he had just read. For the book in question was one of the novels of the New Literature (*Edebiyat-ı Cedide*). But Naim Efendi had never read a single novel in his entire life. However, what he was unable to understand in that book was neither its formal structure, nor the intentions of its author: it was simply the meaning of the words, which seemed ambiguous to him, it was simply the feeling of strangeness (*yabancılık*), of foreignness (*gariplik*), which he found in the form of the sentences².

Undoubtedly, this passage in Karaosmanoğlu is primarily about language and, more specifically, the gradual changes in the written language created, even long before the state-mandated adoption of a new script, new forms of illiteracy for those who, like Naim Efendi, had grown reading and writing another literary standard –at a time when, paradoxically, society a whole was becoming more literate than ever before. But what this short scene in *Mansion for rent* also

² "Epeyce bir müddet parmaklarının arasında evirdi çevirdi; sonra gözlüklerini taktı, önce uzun uzun kabı muayene etti, muharririn admı, kitabın serlevhasını, basım tarihini okudu; bu kapta her gördüğü işaret, her okuduğu yazı, muharririn ismi de dahi olmak üzere, ona acayip geliyordu; büyük bir teccüsle cildin içini açtı, fakat okumak ne mümkün! Naim Efendi âdeta yeni kıraat dersine başlamış bir çocuk gibi kelimeleri heceliyor, bir cümleyi bin zahmetle sonuna kadar ya tamamlıyor, ya tamamlamıyor, veya tamamladıktan sonra da okuduğu şeyin mânasını iyice kavrayamıyordu. Vakıa bu, Edebiyat-ı Cedide külliyyatından bir romandı. Naim Efendi ise bütün ömründe hiç roman okumamıştı. Bununla beraber, onun bu kitapta anlayamadığı şey, ne eserin terkihi mahiyeti, ne muharririn maksat ve gayesi idi, doğrudan doğruya kelimelerin mânâsıdır ki ona müphem geliyor, doğrudan doğruya cümlelerin teşkilindedir ki bir yabancılık, bir gariplik buluyordu." (Karaosmanoğlu 2012 [1922]: 12-13.) Unless otherwise noted, all translations from Turkish, Greek, Armenian and Ladino are mine. When an English translation is available in print (for instance in the case of the works analyzed in Chapter 3), I do not provide the original passage in footnotes.

suggests is the subtle violence at play in the replacement of old books by new books³ and, in particular, in the sudden appearance of the novel in a cultural landscape from which it was previously largely absent. The passage foregrounds here the materiality of the novel as an object with which the first encounter is of a tactile nature. In the hands of Naim Efendi, the novel is a foreign body, which must be handled with the utmost care⁴. Once opened, the novel never becomes a text for Naim Efendi and remains illegible, irretrievably foreign. But who is the true foreigner here, the real *garip*: the book, or perhaps its reader? Unable to read this strange book, which comes to unsettle the old world known to him, Naim Efendi almost becomes a stranger, an intruder in his own home. The novel here is the agent of a form of un-belonging.

In this study, I look at a situation similar to the ones evoked in Laxness' *Independent People* and in Karaosmanoğlu's *Mansion for rent*. In the last century before the demise of the Ottoman Empire, a local culture of the novel started to emerge under the influence of a massive influx of fiction imported from abroad, bringing with it a major upheaval of the domestic cultural and literary landscape. In doing so, this work contributes to recent discussions around the nature and scale of transnational literary exchanges during the long nineteenth century. Drawing on scholarship that has emphasized the inherently unequal nature of these exchanges on a world scale, it seeks to show how their intensity was affected by the spread of the modern novel, which came to reshape the structure of the global literary realm. Focusing, as a case study of

³ In this passage, Karaosmanoğlu implicitly points to the fact that the novel, as a new form of book, truly comes to replace *the Book*. When he compares his character to a "a child who just started to learn how to read," the author uses the expression *kıraat dersi* which, in modern Turkish, simply means "reading lesson." The Arabic term *kıraat*, however, historically designates the act of reciting the Kuran aloud.

⁴ This "corporeal" nature of the novel is emphasized in the lines that immediately precede the passage quoted here by a description of the book's dust jacket -its costume, so to speak- which comes itself after a long description of the changes in Naim Efendi's own garment, from the *istanbulin* (stambouline) of his youth to the French-inspired *redingot* (frock) that he is compelled to wear in his old age.

transnational literary exchanges around the genre of the novel, on the situation of the main literatures of the late Ottoman Empire (Ottoman-Turkish, Greek, Armenian, and Ladino), I trace the impact of the emergence of a culture of the novel in spaces that I define as narrow literary fields, building upon concepts developed notably by Pierre Bourdieu.

This introduction offers an overview of the various models that have been proposed, in comparative literary studies, to account for the unequal nature of exchanges across the global literary field. Additionally, it suggests that some of the terminology and concepts commonly used to classify literary fields may need to be reformulated. Lastly, it discusses the representativity of my specific case study and presents the key articulations of the overall work.

1. Conceptualizing Transnational Literary Exchanges

When considering the global spread and consolidation of a modern culture of the novel during the nineteenth century, it seems possible to identify a distinctive feature, present across a vast range of spaces where the genre appeared slightly belatedly. During the period, the specificity of these spaces was largely the result of the strong tension between, on the one hand, the pressure to establish a local tradition of the novel writing within a domestic market increasingly conceived as national and, on the other, the necessity to rely on imported means in order to achieve this very same goal. This dynamic was present, in the long nineteenth century, not only in small or isolated literary scenes, but also in somewhat larger ones, located relatively close to the main literary centers of the time. For example, in her study of mid-nineteenth-century Spanish popular novels, Elisa Marti-Lopez describes

the apparent paradox at the base of the processes of cultural production and consumption in mid-nineteenth-century Europe, that is, the simultaneous emergence of two, seemingly contradictory phenomena: the dependence of literary markets on the importation of French and English cultural paradigms and a notion of art, specifically literature, as being closely linked to national identity⁵.

When the modern novel migrated from the spaces where it had been originally elaborated and where some of its most salient conventions had gradually been stabilized, its adoption by new markets resulted in profound mutations that saw preexistent traditions of prose fiction (in cases where there existed such traditions) being interrupted by a massive influx of imported works. Therefore, the irruption of the genre in those spaces frequently came to alter ongoing processes that had started to increase the interdependence of the national and the literary.

The example of Greece is, in that sense, particularly telling. In the first decades that followed the creation of an independent Greek state in 1830, the young nation sought to delineate both its precise geographic boundaries and the contours of its cultural identity, leading to the gradual transformation of a formerly diasporic and multi-centric literary market into a more homogeneous and national one. Yet, in parallel, the emerging national literary space became increasingly exposed to outside influence, through a growing influx of foreign works into the domestic market for fiction. At first glance, the proportion of translated literature among books published in Greek appears to have been limited, at least in the first half of the nineteenth century: in absolute numbers, translated literary works accounted for less than 10% of the total

⁵ Martí-López 2002: 9.

number of entries in the Greek national bibliography⁶. However, if instead of looking at all translated literary works indiscriminately, we focus on translated novels and shift the focus to the five decades between 1830 and 1880 -a period often seen as the first stage in the history of modern Greek prose fiction- the domination of imported fiction appears in all its clarity. During the period, about 130 original novels were published in Greek, mostly in Athens, Istanbul, and Izmir, as well as in a few other centers of the Greek Diaspora⁷. During the same period, about 600 foreign novels appeared in translation on the Greek market⁸. Therefore, the ratio between original and translated novels averaged one to four throughout the period⁹. In parallel, the number of modern Greek novels translated into foreign languages during the nineteenth century remained extremely low –if not almost nil.

In that they tend to make visible the absence of reciprocity that characterizes exchanges across the global literary world, statistics like these are a challenge to a conception of the global

⁶ I calculate this figure by comparing the number of entries in the Kasines bibliography of translations with the total number of entries in the Hellenic national bibliography for the nineteenth century.

⁷ See Denisi 1990.

⁸ Kasines 2006.

⁹ I calculate this ratio by surveying all the entries in the Kasines bibliography between 1834 and 1880. The number is a close estimate (with the actual located somewhere between 590 and 610) due to the fact that there existed, for much of the century, competing terms in the Greek language to translate the word “novel”. For instance, *diegema* (διήγημα) and *mythistoria* or *mythistorema* (μυθιστορία/μυθιστόρημα), which today mean “short story” and “novel” respectively, were often still used interchangeably in the nineteenth century. I tend to use a (somewhat arbitrary) 80-page limit to distinguish short stories from novels. I therefore do not consider as novels short works like Pushkin’s “Queen of Spades,” even when the Greek translation bears the mention “novel” under the title. On the other hand, I count as novels a handful of texts under eighty pages in their Greek translation, such as Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, when they are generally accepted as novels in their original language and have obviously been abridged by the Greek translator or publisher. I do not include novels specifically written for children, fictionalized biographies of foreign historical figures, as well the numerous reprints of novels previously published. Including these many reprints or even second and sometimes third translations of especially popular works such as those of Alexandre Dumas or Eugène Sue would raise the total number to well beyond a thousand items for the period, therefore creating a ratio of original novel versus translated novel even more disadvantageous for the former.

literary realm as a pacified space, sheltered from the brutality and the imbalances of the political realm. Shifting the focus from the texts themselves to the conditions of their global circulation has often constituted one of the ways devised by comparative literary studies in order to counter this notion. A brief survey of the models proposed, since the nineteenth century, to conceptualize literary globalization is helpful for understanding how transnational exchanges between literatures gradually came to be understood as inherently unequal.

For much of their history, comparative literary studies remained primarily interested in emphasizing the existence of a certain harmony among nations and their literatures. Despite important differences between their respective approaches, almost all of the early proponents of what would later become known as Comparative Literature seem to have promoted, explicitly or not, similar notions of universal literary harmony. Herder, although he celebrated the variability of literary creation¹⁰, nevertheless emphasized the possibility of a convergence of all poetic traditions:

Does not the spirit of poetry, through all the oscillations and eccentricities in which it has so far bestirred itself among nations and times, increasingly strive to abandon all false ornament, all rudeness of sensation, and to look for the center of all human endeavor, namely the true, whole, moral nature of humanity, the philosophy of life¹¹?

For him, the "spirit of poetry," manifold in its expressions yet equally distributed among nations, creates an ideal space of pastoral peacefulness: "Even in ages of the greatest crudity of taste, we may hold fast to the great rule of nature: *tendimus in Arcadiam, tendimus!* Our path lead toward

¹⁰ "Poetry is a Proteus among the peoples; it changes form according to their temperament, the climate, even according to their accent." (Herder [1797]: 4)

¹¹ Herder [1797]: 8.

the land of innocence, truth and morality¹²."

Around the same time, Germaine de Staël's cosmopolitan humanism called for the advent of a unified European cultural landscape, liberated from every kind of artistic chauvinism. Her famous conception of literary works as being conditioned by the climate prevailing in the location of their elaboration acknowledged, like Herder, the extent of variability in the literary realm¹³. However, her recourse to a meteorological analogy and the contrast she posited between the warm Homeric current of the South and the cold Ossianic stream of the North created an image of atmospheric equilibrium that reinforced the idealization and dematerialization of the literary realm.

This idealized notion of an intrinsically democratic and egalitarian structure of the global world of letters was to be implicitly critiqued only a few years after de Stael during one of the foundational moments of Comparative Literature: the conversations of Goethe with Eckermann, later to be transcribed by the latter, in which the seminal concept of *Weltliteratur* was first introduced. At first glance, it appears that the *Welt* in the term coined by Goethe is a largely pacified world where, under the symbolic aegis of classical Greek culture, a network of harmonious literary interactions developed among nations¹⁴. However, as pointed out by David Damrosch who refers here to Barbara Herrnstein Smith's *Contingencies of Value*, Goethe's notion was not devoid of a dimension of "imperial self-projection" which casts doubts on the actual inclusiveness of his purported cosmopolitanism¹⁵. In parallel, and perhaps more importantly, Goethe's idea of *Weltliteratur* revealed his own anxieties as the participant in a literature still lacking the support of an accomplished national structure and therefore at a

¹² Herder [1797]: *ibid.*

¹³ Staël 1860 [1799]: 165.

¹⁴ Goethe and Eckermann [1827]: *passim*.

¹⁵ Damrosch 2003: 8.

disadvantage with others. In other words, his effort to globalize, at least in theory, the literary field constituted an attempt to overcome the political precariousness of German culture in the early nineteenth century. As noted by Damrosch, "Goethe has an uneasy sense that German culture is provincial, lacking a great history, lacking political unity. He can't afford to grant "national literature" too much meaning, since he doesn't even live *in* a proper nation at all¹⁶.

Goethe notwithstanding, as it became institutionalized later in the nineteenth century, the discipline of Comparative Literature retained close ties with a form of philology often characterized by "triumphant cosmopolitanism"¹⁷. The type of positivist scholarship it produced seldom managed –if it ever tried- to contradict this idealistic image of poetic universalism. As a result, the unequal exchanges that structured the literary world remained largely outside the scope of the discipline, thus creating the deceptive yet lasting impression that, in the peaceful realm of letters, the only signs of tensions were felt along the diachronic axis, in the struggle between the Ancients and the Moderns. In fact, because it often tended to emphasize the recurrence of certain common poetic features through space and, mostly, through time, the field often marginalized literary traditions located outside of the dominant cultural spheres. As Emily Apter notes, "[t]he principle of *adequatio*, based on values of equivalence, commonality, and aesthetic measure, has led to the professional triage of literary fields, with comparisons favored among language groups with a shared philological heritage¹⁸."

Comparative Literature came into being as a discipline at a time of increased cultural and economic competition among the most powerful nations of Western Europe. Throughout the nineteenth century and part of the twentieth, its implicit nationalist subtext managed to coexist

¹⁶ Damrosch 2003: 8.

¹⁷ Damrosch 2003: 9.

¹⁸ Apter 2006: 55.

with the cosmopolitan aspirations of many of its proponents. As a result, the discipline often omitted to recognize the imbalances of the global literary exchanges as an object of study while its agenda remained often markedly ethnocentric. As Peter Brooks notes, evoking pre-war trends in the field, far from looking at literature from a truly global perspective, comparatists often limited their scope to an exploration of the international "influence" or "reception" of their own national literature abroad¹⁹.

However, although the belief in a harmonious commerce among national literatures remained strong in the field, there existed in parallel an implicit fear, acknowledged by some early comparatists, that comparative literary studies somewhat failed to account for the situations of literatures situated outside of the dominant cultural spheres of the West. In particular, a greater consciousness of the tensions at play in the increasingly globalized literary market became manifest first in scholarship originating in marginal or semi- marginal regions of Europe. In an 1899 essay entitled "Weltliteratur", Danish literary critic Georg Brandes was one of the first scholars to truly problematize Goethe's idealistic concept by underlining notions of struggle and competition between "large" and "small" European national literatures:

It is incontestable that writers of different countries and languages occupy enormously different positions where their chances of obtaining worldwide fame, or even a moderate degree of recognition, are concerned. The most favorably situated are the French writers, although the French language occupies only a fifth rank in terms of extension. When a writer has succeeded in France, he is known throughout the world. English and Germans, who can count on an immense public if they are successful, take

¹⁹ Brooks 1995: 97.

second place. It is only writers from these three nations who can hope to be read in the original by the most educated people of all nations. Italian and Spanish writers are far less fortunate, though they may be read by a significant number of readers outside their native lands. Such is not the case of Russian writers, although the Russian population with its millions compensates for this. But whoever writes in Finnish, Hungarian, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, Greek or the like is obviously poorly placed in the universal struggle for fame. In this competition he lacks the major weapon, a language – which is, for a writer, almost everything²⁰.

In recent years, Brandes's considerations have found an echo in a new type of literary comparatism which has emphasized the unequal structures of the literary realm. These approaches define the literary realm spatially, as a space possessing its own geography, which oftentimes mirrors the political, economic and cultural imbalances of the globalized world, yet remains largely autonomous. Adopting a theoretical framework largely based on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Pascale Casanova's study entitled *The World Republic of Letters* describes the imbalances of international literary exchanges at great length. In addition, Casanova warns that neglecting to account for the material implications of the global circulation of literature leads to an obfuscation of the literary realm itself:

This immense realm, a hundred times surveyed yet always ignored, has remained invisible because it rests on a fiction accepted by all who take part in the game: the fable of an enchanted world, a kingdom of pure creation, the best of all possible worlds

²⁰ Brandes [1899]: 63.

where universality reigns through liberty and equality. It is this fiction, proclaimed throughout the world, that has obscured its real nature until the present day. In thrall to the notion of literature as something pure, free, and universal, the contestants of literary space refuse to acknowledge the actual functioning of its peculiar economy, the “unequal trade” (to quote Braudel once more) that takes place within it²¹.

However, because it presupposes the existence of a strong center around which gravitate peripheral actors, and because Casanova, perhaps too readily, locates this center in Paris, her conception of the globalized literary realm has been vulnerable to accusation of Eurocentrism²². Additionally, Casanova’s adoption of a form of literary evolutionism has been described as a failure to question the supposed universality of notions such as modernity or the avant-garde²³. Finally, it has been pointed out that Casanova’s approach, because it is largely based on Western examples from the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, is of little relevance to debates around the mutations of the literary sphere in the post-colonial and post-Soviet world²⁴

Some of Casanova's critics have sought to contrast her work with the scholarship of Franco Moretti which shares some of her theoretical orientations²⁵. Moretti’s work, which borrows elements from the sociological theory of world-systems developed by Immanuel Wallerstein, creates a cartography of the unequal exchanges in the global literary sphere that relies primarily on notions such as "core" and "periphery" without ever questioning their validity:

²¹ Casanova 2004: 12.

²² See, for instance, Agnani 2006: 330.

²³ Agnani 2006: 331.

²⁴ Ganguly 2008: 8.

²⁵ Ganguly 2008: 14-15.

I will borrow this hypothesis from the world-system school of economic history, for which international capitalism is a system that is simultaneously *one*, and *unequal*: with a core, and a periphery (and a semi-periphery) that are bound together in a relationship of growing inequality. One, and unequal: *one* literature (*Weltliteratur*, singular, as in Goethe and Marx), or, perhaps, better, one world literary system (of inter-related literatures); but a system which is different from what Goethe and Marx had hoped for, because it's profoundly unequal²⁶.

In spite of the shortcomings of approaches to world literature like those of Casanova and Moretti which place an emphasis on the evolution of literary forms over time and tend, therefore, to rely heavily on a Western conception of modernity, one is compelled to verify their validity when examining, as it is the case here, the uneven dissemination of a genre like the modern novel in the nineteenth century. Originally far less global than poetry, the modern novel functioned as a powerful marker of the imbalances inherent to the world literary system because the advent of the genre was accompanied by the rise of a new relationship between fiction and its audiences. This new relationship was predicated upon new modes of consumption made available by large-scale economic and social mutations, such as the development of capitalist society. The global spread of the modern novel thus brings to light more than any other genre the structure of unequal exchanges in the international circulation of literature and reinforced existing mechanisms of cultural hegemony, as much as it created new ones. The emergence of the genre in spaces situated away from the locus of its crystallization as a narrative regime often took place while these spaces were embroiled in the edification of their respective national projects. It

²⁶ Moretti 2000: 55-56.

therefore created, as emphasized earlier, a disjunction between local needs and imported means. In addition to the difficulties of writing and publishing original prose fiction in a market dominated by the influx of imported works, authors had to deal simultaneously with a political climate that required literature to express at once the *unity* and the *uniqueness* of the national group to which they belonged.

What is therefore at stake here is the challenge -or, rather, the set of challenges- brought forth by the migration of the modern novel, during the nineteenth century, from spaces where it was largely perceived as an indigenous genre to spaces where it was, at first, exclusively conceived as foreign. But how can we best describe the second category of these "spaces"? What term is the most appropriate to define them? The place of origin of the modern novel, although it has been the object of many debates over time, can be, relatively easily, located in a few literatures of Western Europe (mostly Spain, England, and France) where the main conventions of the genre were first stabilized at the beginning of the modern era. The literatures, like the ones examined in this work, where the genre emerged later seem, on the contrary, to resist such an easy labeling. Until this point, I have -consciously and as a matter of caution- refrained from doing precisely that, categorizing those spaces and naming them. The reason for my caution lies in the imprecision and problematic nature of most -if not all- of the terms that have been used over time to qualify these spaces and their corresponding literatures. Could this resistance to categorization be in fact a defining characteristic of the literatures that, during the nineteenth century, imported the modern novel from Western Europe?

2. Naming and Classifying: Taxonomies of Global Literature

The type of comparative scholarship like the one surveyed earlier, which emphasizes the inherently unequal nature of international literary exchanges is, by and large, premised upon a division of national (and, sometimes, sub-national) literatures in two categories. On the one hand, a first group of literatures which -always in a determined period and never throughout their history- benefit from a favorable positioning within the global literary market which allows them to export their products at greater ease than the literatures which, on the other hand, tend to import massively the products of the first group and, as a result, become culturally dependent upon it.

Yet the same scholarship has often struggled with the terms to employ in order to define this second group. A relatively early -and quite telling- example of this uncertainty around the correct terminology to use comes from polysystem theory, an important subfield of translation studies first proposed and developed by Itamar Even-Zohar in the 1970s. In an article dealing with the question of international literary exchanges through translation, Even-Zohar evokes the conditions necessary for translated literature to assume a central position in a given polysystem are in place²⁷. In his view, such a phenomenon occurs in literatures that he describes successively as "young", "peripheral", and "weak", systematically placing those adjectives between quotation marks, as if to emphasize his own skepticism with regard to these qualifiers. These three adjectives correspond to some of the axes of differentiation (age, location, and power -to which we also need to add the notion of size) that have been regularly used to define the second category of literatures that I evoked earlier -usually without the relative caution of Even-Zohar.

²⁷ Even-Zohar [1978] 1990: 47.

Yet, I would like to argue, each and every one of these notions appears to be problematic in its own way and, ultimately, fails to express, in all of their complexity, the various situations of the literatures belonging to the second group identified earlier.

The idea of a division of the world literary system between "old" and "young" literatures does appear to have, to an extent, some validity. Indeed, because individual literatures are, to a great degree, predicated upon the existence of corresponding literary idioms whose emergence, evolution, and standardization is by no means uniform or linear, the historical presence and individual chronology of a literature is always a singular one. However, precisely because literatures do not evolve in a linear fashion, relations of seniority between them do not necessarily overlap with the directions of global literary exchanges. It is perfectly plausible -and even, in fact, quite verifiable, if one considers for instance of the global diffusion of American literature in the twentieth century- to think of "older" literatures becoming dependent upon "younger" ones.

The use of terms such as "central" and "peripheral" to describe literatures corresponds to a categorization reflecting the physical and/or symbolic positioning of each literature in a global cultural geography. It is perhaps the most commonly-used axis of differentiation and is particularly central to theories of world literature like that of Moretti, who derives much of his framework from the type of world-system approaches pioneered by Immanuel Wallerstein²⁸ and offers a model to think about world literature organized around the complementary notions of core and periphery²⁹. Casanova largely shares this belief in a world literary space organized around an opposition between center and periphery. In *The World Republic of Letters*, she frequently turns to metaphors borrowed from (Western) geography and cartography, notably

²⁸ On Wallerstein's relevance to literary studies, see Palumbo-Liu, Tanoukhi, and Robbins 2011.

²⁹ Arac 2002: 38.

describing Paris as the "Greenwich Meridian" forming the basis for the establishment of literary latitudes and longitudes³⁰. Yet, as Casanova herself acknowledges by calling it "fictitious", the location of the "prime meridian" is perfectly arbitrary – as are, ultimately, the notions of "center" and "periphery."

It would be, of course, quite naive to dismiss this model entirely. Indeed, the discourse of modern Western geography -to a large extent a product of nineteenth-century European economic, military, and cultural expansionism- has been powerful enough to have a quantifiable impact upon both the "real" world and the literary realm. However, uncritically adopting this discourse and its core concepts as tools for literary analysis can lead to the reinforcement, in critical discourses, of existing hegemonic power structures and makes such approaches particularly vulnerable to accusations of Eurocentrism. Therefore, *objectively* describing literatures as either "central" or "peripheral" (or, for that matter, "marginal") seems ultimately impossible -regardless of whether the latter term might in fact often be used by some agents within these literatures as a term for self-definition.

Another way to classify literature relies on notions of "power" and "strength." The adjective "weak" used -with caution and no real endorsement- by Even-Zohar can easily be disqualified. Indeed, because the term evokes, among other semantic fields, the vocabulary of physiology, using it to describe a literature runs the risk of implicitly portraying certain literatures as feeble -if not diseased- organisms, a particularly unfortunate metaphor since the terms of this alleged weakness are impossible to determine with precision and, once again, objectivity. However, the notion of power and its use as an axis of differentiation between literatures deserves some attention. In particular, could the tools offered by the field of

³⁰ See Casanova 2004.

postcolonial studies ultimately provide a framework that would allow for a taxonomy of literatures? After all, the global organization of the modern and contemporary literary world often echoes the structures of exchanges among nations that came into being through the various processes of colonization and de-colonization that took place over the last two centuries. In addition, the fields of postcolonial and empire studies have paid particular attention to the very structures of political hegemony (in the Gramscian sense) at play in the relations between the colonizers and the colonized. At first glance, it therefore appears particularly well-equipped to formulate a critical discourse overcoming the shortcomings of approaches adopting notions such as "center" and "periphery" too readily. However, post-colonial studies have often failed to account for instances where expressions of cultural imperialism do not –or not entirely- overlap with the contours of the subordination of certain groups to Western colonial hegemony. In Francophone studies, for instance, postcolonial approaches have been largely tailored to the study of literature in France's former colonies. As a result, they have somewhat failed to account fully account for the particular situation of literatures produced in regions adjacent to metropolitan France but located outside of its borders (such as the Francophone literatures of Belgium or Switzerland) or in former settlement colonies (such as Quebec). Similarly, mainstream postcolonial studies rarely choose as an object of study the literatures of some smaller nations -in Europe and beyond- that, while they were never formally colonized, nevertheless experienced the cultural hegemony of larger countries.

Size appears to be the most common criterion used to differentiate national (and sub-national) literatures in conceptualizations of the global literary realm. However, neither of the two adjectives most frequently associated with the idea of literary size and scale ("small" and "minor", sometimes used interchangeably) appears to be entirely satisfactory. The concept of

"minor literature," a theoretical formulation that first appeared in the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari³¹, has since then acquired an important currency. Yet the critical fortune of the concept has perhaps led to a certain obfuscation of its original context of enunciation and a reappraisal of its actual applicability is needed.

It is, I believe, particularly important to highlight that Deleuze and Guattari's exploration of what they call "minor literatures" was motivated by their engagement with a very specific - and, in a sense, very idiosyncratic- situation, that of Franz Kafka. As a whole, their study constituted an attempt at answering a question very explicitly stated in the opening sentence of the work: how to enter the work of Kafka³². In the third chapter of the work (aptly titled "Qu'est-ce qu'une littérature mineure?"), the two authors immediately clarify that, in their view, "a minor literature is not the literature of a minor language but, rather, the literature that a minority group produces within a major language³³." In the rest of the chapter, Deleuze and Guattari define what they mean by "minor literature" and identify three characteristics common, according to them, in all examples within this category: the deterritorialization of language ("la déterritorialisation de la langue"), the direct connection between the individual and the political ("le branchement de l'individu sur l'immédiat politique") and the collective nature of the act of enunciation ("l'agencement collectif de l'énonciation"). While their arguments appear particularly well-fitted to their study of Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari's definition of "minor literature" is, in fact, an extremely narrow one and the fact that wide range of situations entirely different from that of Kafka remain completely outside of their scope has sometimes escaped later scholarship that adopted their framework somewhat uncritically.

³¹ Deleuze and Guattari 1975.

³² Deleuze and Guattari 1975: 7.

³³ Deleuze and Guattari 1975: 29.

First and foremost, the concise and *a contrario* definition that they give of "minor literatures" ("not the literature of a minor language") should automatically lead to the following question: what is, then, the literature produced in a "minor language"? And, by extension, how exactly do we define "minority" when it comes to language? Second, the very term "minor" appears problematic in this definition because, in French as in English, it can denote not only smaller size, but also younger age, or even the absence of maturity –an element which, as shown earlier, is seldom useful to the taxonomy of literatures. Another element renders the use of the expression "minor literature" overly imprecise and should perhaps preclude its uncritical inclusion into the critical lexicon, beyond the case of Kafka: the use of the "adjective" minor is unstable in its genealogy, as well as in Deleuze and Guattari's text itself -where it is sometimes used in the vicinity of competing terms such as "marginal" without, however, any language explaining what the nuance in meaning might be. In particular, Casanova has shown that the attempt of Deleuze and Guattari to enter the world of Kafka through a concept they present as partially borrowed from his own writing might, in fact, constitute an extrapolation, itself based on a misreading. Indeed, the notion of the "minor" applied to literature, is not, in and of itself, present in the work of Kafka. The term, a translation of the more straightforward "klein", was used in one of the first French translations of Kafka's diary³⁴ (by literary scholar Marthe Robert), which was the one known to Deleuze and Guattari -who did not seem to have read the work in the original German- and was later exposed by other translators as being particularly imprecise³⁵.

Can we –or should we- therefore prefer the term "small literature" to that of "minor literature"? The term has indeed been used to evoke the situation of literatures written in geographically constricted spaces and in languages characterized by a limited number of native

³⁴ Kafka 1954: 183.

³⁵ Casanova 2004: 287.

speakers³⁶. After all, the adjective "small" is commonly used in geography or political science to talk about countries such as, for instance, Estonia or Uruguay and it would seem only logical to apply the same term to their respective literatures. Indeed, it is probably verifiable that Estonia has fewer authors producing fewer books than neighboring Russia, and that the same is true of Uruguay with respect to neighboring Argentina. Yet, it also appears that both of these examples are not "small" in the exact same way. "Small" Estonian literature is primarily written in a language with relatively few native speakers; is it therefore "smaller" than "small" Uruguayan literature which primarily uses a language spoken and read by a much greater number of people and can therefore be exported to a much larger market?

Therefore, far from solving the issues that arise from the ambiguity of the term "minor", the adjective "small", applied to literatures, seems equally, if not more problematic in that it can apply to widely dissimilar situations. The issues that arise from the use of the term "small" applied to literatures appear with great clarity in Casanova, where the expression is used repeatedly. Well-aware that the term is vague and might fail to account for major differences in the respective situation of "small literatures", Casanova feels the need to devise a somewhat more sophisticated model. However, in doing so, she operates a barely perceptible though crucial shift, opting to focus on the "smallness" of languages in order further divide literatures into four sub-categories, based on what she calls the "degree of literariness" of their language –a notion inherited from the tradition established notably by Russian formalism³⁷. In a first category, she places "languages who are oral or whose script is unsettled," thus implying that the "size" of a language –and of the corresponding literature- might be affected by changes in its social and cultural uses. In doing so she fails to account for the fact that orality can perfectly survive in

³⁶ See, for instance, Glesener 2012.

³⁷ Casanova 2004: 256.

parallel with written culture, and that the script(s) used by a language might be multiple, change over time, and never, in fact, become "settled." To the second category described by Casanova belong "languages of recent creation (or recreation)" and the examples given include Catalan, Korean, Gaelic, and Hebrew. According to Casanova, who never substantiates this somewhat puzzling claim, these languages have "few literary works" and "no tradition of exchange with other countries"³⁸. Moving on to "languages of ancient culture and traditions associated, in the modern era, with small countries", Casanova lists Dutch, Danish, Greek, and Persian, apparently unaware that some "recent" languages she includes in the second category are, in fact, attested earlier than her first two examples for the third category, and that both Greek and Persian were present in more than one "small" country in the modern era. Finally, she places Arabic, Chinese, and Hindi in a fourth category of "small languages", which she defines as possessing "a great internal literary tradition" but remaining nevertheless "little known." Here Casanova seems to gloss over the coexistence of various standards for at least the first two languages, while she refrains from defining with precision what she means by "internal literary tradition"³⁹.

Beyond its overly schematic character and some factual errors, the precariousness of Casanova's categorization is flagrant on two accounts. On the one hand, her shift from a discussion to literary size to that of linguistic size is highly problematic as it seems to define both as interchangeable –while examples abound of literatures using more than one language, some of which might be "large" and some other "small" according to Casanova's own categorization. Furthermore, by using the term "language" very broadly, this model seems to conflate linguistic code with literary idiom. In fact, as some parts of the present study will show, it is entirely possible for a literature to be written in a "small" language while, at the same time, using a

³⁸ Casanova 2004: *ibid.*

³⁹ Casanova 2004: *ibid.*

repertoire of literary motifs, and an esthetic lexicon largely calqued on that of a "large" language. In addition, by using the adjective "small" to describe a culturally-produced phenomenon like literature, Casanova seems –to some extent involuntarily- to highlight semantically a supposed superiority of "large" literatures over "small" ones. In fact, as some of her critics have pointed out, her use of the term "small", far from being neutral, is never entirely devoid of an idea of valuation and is often articulated with terms denoting an absence of means ("impoverished", "destitute"), thus introducing an economic vocabulary that might reinforce the impression of ethnocentrism that some have identified in her work⁴⁰. Therefore, because of the difficulty to entirely disassociate quantitative considerations from qualitative judgements, the possibility of a broad, coherent, and systematic use of the term "small" applied to literatures appears compromised.

3. From Deleuze to Bourdieu: Literature vs. Literary Field

Since such terms as "small", "young", "weak", or "peripheral" all appear to be –each in their own specific way- inoperative, what type of framework is left to account fully for the complexity of the exchanges among unequals that characterize global literary commerce? Could it be that, when we compare the merit and shortcomings of the various adjectives that are alternatively used to describe the *other* literatures, the ones that belong to the second group defined earlier, we might be asking the wrong question? Could it be that the issue is not so much of deciding *which* qualifier is the appropriate, but *what* needs to be qualified? Could it be that, when we use expressions such as "small literature", "minor literature", or "peripheral literature", the

⁴⁰ Ganguly 2008: 11.

problem lies not only in the first part of the expression, in the adjective, but also, perhaps more importantly, in the noun that follows?

I would like to argue that, in debates over the global taxonomy of literatures, the very notion of "literature" is problematic -not only in that it is extremely imprecise, but also because a hypothetical universal stability of the concept through space and time cannot be posited. Instead of *literature*, I suggest that, in the context of debates around international literary exchanges, the term *literary field* (borrowed from the work of Pierre Bourdieu⁴¹) be used, with or without an adjective, depending on the precise object of inquiry at stake. Bourdieu uses the notion of field as a heuristic tool allowing for the identification of various spheres of social, economic, and cultural activities⁴². Applied to the case of literature, the notion denotes the space delineated by the interactions of a variety of agents such as authors, publishers, critics, and audiences. The literary field creates not only its own set of laws, but also its own economy, where symbolic capital is exchanged. It is therefore characterized by a certain degree of autonomy⁴³ with regard to the overall social space, yet reflects part of its organization. The evolution of the literary field is, according to Bourdieu, the results of struggles within it, between actors whose interest rests upon the protection of a specific set of norms, of a certain *doxa*, and others who invest their energy

⁴¹ The concept of literary field (*champ littéraire*) was developed over more than two decades in the work of Pierre Bourdieu (notably in Bourdieu 1966, 1971, 1984, 1985, 1991, as well as 2013, published posthumously), culminating with the publication of a book-length study of the formation of the French literary field in the nineteenth century (Bourdieu 1992). For an overview of some of the scholarship that has attempted to further develop –and sometimes amend– Bourdieu's concept, see Jurt 1992, Sapiro 2003, and Amilitou 2014 (note 41, p.39; note 65, p.48). For an up-to-date overview of the reception of the concept in literary studies and the humanities and social sciences at large, see Sapiro 2015.

⁴² See Sapiro 2005.

⁴³ Some scholars have remarked that the autonomy of the field, central to Bourdieu's approach, might in fact depend to a large degree upon conditions that tend to vary from country to country. See for instance Boschetti 2010.

into attempts at subverting it⁴⁴. The relevance, to debates around global literary exchanges, of the notion of literary field –used instead of "literature"- lies in the fact that its definition is truly a circumscription, a voluntary limitation of the scope of inquiry to quantifiable phenomena. Whereas "literature" is too broad and imprecise a notion, the literary field is measurable. Because its study calls for the mobilization of quantifiable data, it can be used more profitably as a category to understand global literary exchanges and reintroduce considerations of size or scale in a more objective fashion, with a lower risk of introducing implicit hierarchies of values between literatures. I see this this distinction between literature and literary field as a crucial one in order to avoid legitimating, by reaffirming them in language, the hegemonic structures, both real and symbolic, that comparative work in the study of culture should, on the contrary, strive to expose as deeply problematic. To summarize, one cannot, I believe, append terms such as "minor" (or "major"), "small" (or "large"), "peripheral" (or "central"), "dominated" (or "dominant") to the word "literature." A notion as elusive as literature can only *be* one of these things if we consider size or geography as objective givens, not predicated upon a set of highly subjective perspectives. The concept of literary field, on the other hand, has the merit of clarifying the stakes by delineating a space where the abstract and highly imprecise notion of literature is subjected to a mechanism of circumscription which allows it be to apprehended not only in discursive, but also in material and social terms⁴⁵. Therefore, using examples provided by the present work, it would, I believe, be misleading to say that nineteenth-century Greek,

⁴⁴ See Bourdieu 1992.

⁴⁵ By extension, this distinction between literature and literary field in discussions around global exchanges complicates the use of an expression such as "world literature" as it highlights its imprecision. Using instead the notion of "world literary field" – denoting a supra-national literary field coming into being through the interactions of smaller regional and national fields- would make the concept earn in precision what it it would lose in concision.

Armenian or Ottoman-Turkish *literature* was, ontologically, small, peripheral or dominated. One can, however, affirm that, in the nineteenth century, the Greek, Armenian and Turkish *literary fields* –as well as the trans-communal field that comprised all three- were, with relation to other fields, relatively narrower, more marginal, and more reliant upon imports.

I propose that, when attempting to classify the various literary fields in order to emphasize the unequal nature of the relationship between them, we use the term of *narrow field* –instead of small field- in order to be able to consider characteristics not limited to size but including phenomena related to the amplitude, the dilatation, or the contraction of literary fields, as well as the degree of their openness to foreign imports. It is my hypothesis that, in spite of the diversity of all their particular situations, narrowest literary fields have in common three defining characteristics, respectively related to space, time, and capital. First, narrow fields can be defined in terms of the high degree of constriction of the symbolic space delineated by the interactions of their various agents, as well as in terms of their location with relation to the trajectories of exchanges within the global literary field. Narrow literary fields tend to be primarily located at the receiving end of these trajectories. It must be stressed, however, that their space is primarily a symbolic one, which does not always entirely overlap with geographic space or political boundaries. In other words, while some narrow fields *may* indeed be located in small and/or isolated national or sub-national entities, an absolute correlation between the narrowness of a literary field and the size or location of the corresponding geographical and political space –in cases where such a correspondence does exist- cannot be assumed. Second, narrow literary fields are characterized by a temporality that is not –or not entirely- coeval with the temporality instituted, on a global level, by the combined forces of a few wider fields. In that sense, narrow literary fields can be defined as mostly non-synchronic with regards to other fields, although the

gap between their respective temporalities can fluctuate over time. It is important to stress here that the notion of field applied to literature is more helpful to synchronic rather than diachronic investigations. In fact, the narrowness of a field can only be assessed *for a given period*, since its specific temporality and position within the larger field are likely to evolve in the *longue durée*, as are the overall temporality of the global field and the general direction of exchanges between individual fields. Finally, narrow literary fields are defined by the particularities of the circulation of capital –both symbolic and real- within them. Various elements define this capital which, in the case of narrow fields, tends to be produced and exchanged in smaller amounts than it is the case in wider fields. The capital present in narrow literary fields can be presumed to be composed of a combination of the following sub-types of capital: human capital (for instance, the number of agents, often related -but not always- to the overall number of potential authors and to the size of their potential audiences), historical capital (for example, the degree of prestige attained, outside of the field, by the written standard most commonly used within it), and morphological capital (that is, for instance, the existing repertoire of forms and motifs accrued over time in the field and available for use).

As stated earlier, the degree of constriction of a literary field is always amenable to variations and fields can become wider or narrower over time. For example, the American literary field became significantly wider than it ever had been during the twentieth century, while the formerly wide and prescriptive Spanish field can be said to have become increasingly narrower after the seventeenth century. Additionally, narrow literary fields can sometimes possess their own satellite fields, whose degree of constriction is even greater, such as in the case the Cypriot-Greek and Cypriot-Turkish fields, dependent respectively of the Greek and Turkish literary fields, themselves relatively narrow. Some very narrow fields can even evolve in the

satellite of two (or more) slightly wider but nevertheless quite narrow fields: it is the case, for instance, of the extremely narrow Faroese literary field, subordinated to both of the narrow Danish and Icelandic literary fields, for reasons partially related to political oversight and linguistic proximity.

However, it is important to emphasize that, although language *may* affect the narrowness or openness of a specific field, the correlation between its degree of constriction of and, for instance, the overall number of primary and secondary speakers of its main idiom cannot be presumed to be always strong. The reasons for the absence of automatic correlation between the language and the width of a field are multiple. Some narrow fields, for instance, use more than one literary language. In other cases, narrow literary fields primarily use a language invested with important global currency but they are separated from the wider fields using that same language as a result of geographic or political boundaries. Such is the case, for instance, of some literary fields in the Americas which use Spanish, Portuguese, or French as their main idiom, or of liminal fields like those of Austria, Belgium or Switzerland which do not possess their own exclusive idiom and primarily use languages associated with other, wider fields. In sum, narrow literary fields *can* be affected by a certain number of extra-literary environmental factors such as language, geography, or politics. However, because, like any other cultural field in the Bourdieusian sense, they exhibit a certain degree of autonomy, the impact of intra-literary phenomena -of the law of the field, as it were- is usually greater. My hypothesis is that the rise of the novel in the global literary field is one of those phenomena which durably affected the degree of constriction of individual fields and, that, in the long nineteenth century, the tectonic force of the wide-scale spread of the genre became a powerful marker of the narrowness of some literary fields and even *engineered* some of them as narrow.

4. The Novel in Narrow Literary Fields

Compared to other genres such as poetry or drama -which rely on distinct modes of composition and consumption, the novel became, during the nineteenth century, one of the signifiers of the intensification of the hegemony of some wide literary fields, the ones where the constitutive characteristics of the genre first crystallized and where it was, originally, the most produced and consumed. Far from constituting a universal narrative regime, the modern novel was, on the contrary, a very site- and time-specific cultural technology when it reached its more mature form during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The eventually large diffusion of the genre beyond the fields where it had originally arisen cannot obscure the fact that, in a variety of narrower fields, it worked at first as a disruptive force that generated untried modes of writing and consuming fiction. In parallel, the advent of novel culture in those fields was often accompanied by deep cultural transformations, such as the progressive exhaustion of orality and the increased secularization of the literary field. Even in fields with existent or interrupted tradition of prose fiction, the irruption of the novel in the eighteenth or nineteenth century did not lead to the simple resumption of these suspended traditions but to the emergence of a radically new narrative regime.

In order to understand these phenomena, an exploration of the effect of the modern novel when it enters narrow literary fields is necessary. In particular, the eminently disruptive and hegemonic nature of the genre as a cultural product must be acknowledged. The discussion of the emergence of a culture of the novel in narrow literary fields has been, so far, largely premised on the study of a limited number of original works, often in order to construct a narrative underlining the initial scarcity of novels outside of wide literary fields. I would like to argue that

this constitutes a misleading approach to the situation of narrow literary fields in the nineteenth century and that special attention must be given to the question of translation. When discussing the spread of the novel in the nineteenth century, I believe that it is important not only to look at original works, but to also include the often very numerous translations of novels produced in wider fields which frequently came to saturate the limited market for fiction in narrow literary fields, participating in the consolidation of audiences and in the development of new authorial postures and practices.

In fact, the notion of "novel" seems, in narrow literary fields, to have extended beyond the realm of pure textuality. I believe that the term must be understood as both a noun (denoting a specific narrative regime) and as an adjective (in the sense of "innovative" or even "experimental"). In narrow literary fields, the rise of the novel-as-noun, of the novel-as-text, was often coterminous with the development of the novel-as-adjective, of the novel-as-novelty. In other words, the emergence of the genre was accompanied by the advent of a complex network of new cultural practices including, among others, new economic models such as the formation of a publishing industry, and new types of relations between agents within the field.

In sum, the inherent hybridity of the novel as it develops in narrow literary fields must be emphasized through an examination of what the term "novel" entails when studied in such contexts. This hybridity can be conceived as a strategic response of narrow fields to the hegemony of a genre established in wider fields. The model that arises constitutes an alternative to traditional narratives of reception that overemphasize the dependence of narrow fields upon modes of writing codified outside them. It makes it possible to trace the emergence of processes of resistance in the confines of the global literary field. The present study attempts to show that the paradox evoked by Marti-Lopez –the tension at play, in narrow fields, between their reliance

upon models imported from wider fields, and their interest in a nationalization of culture- did not always constitute an inescapable conundrum. It was, at the same time, transcended by early proponents of the novel in narrow literary fields who saw this tension as a creative force rather than as a hindrance for the development of an indigenous tradition of novel-writing. Therefore, the present work neither traces the submission of narrow literary fields to wider ones, nor emphasizes their heroic resistance against cultural hegemony. It simply tells one story, among others, that illustrates the creative tenacity of narrow literary fields when confronted with the emergence of the novel in their midst. The story in question takes place in Constantinople.

5. Learning from Istanbul: The Novel in Trans-Communal Literary Fields

In the nineteenth century, Istanbul concurrently served as a major literary center for three main ethno-linguistic communities, as well as for a few smaller ones. In the still relatively contained space of a city that would reach one million inhabitants only on the eve of WWI, literature was written, published, consumed, performed, and translated in multiple languages, mainly Ottoman-Turkish, Greek, Armenian, and Ladino (Judeo-Spanish).

Turkish was the native language of most –yet not all- of the Muslim population, which accounted for roughly half of the city’s inhabitants throughout the nineteenth century, and, because it was used as a *lingua franca*, was widely spoken or at least understood by the minorities, while Greek and Armenian were also used to a certain degree outside of their respective communities. While it retained the use of the Ottoman script and remained profoundly marked by the influence of Arabic and Persian until after the collapse of the Empire in the 20th century, the Turkish administrative and literary standard had begun to evolve already at the time

of the Tanzimat reforms. As for the literature written in Ottoman-Turkish, although the direct influence of the West started to be felt slightly later than in Greek and Armenian literatures, Western genres and motifs were gradually incorporated in the repertoire of literary forms. The slight asynchronicity that characterized the contacts of Ottoman-Turkish literature with Western cultural products, in comparison with the other major components of the larger late Ottoman system, can be seen as the mark of a curious paradox. The political organization of the Empire theoretically invested the main language of the Muslim majority with all the characteristics of cultural dominance, relegating minority languages to the status of idioms of the subdued, even at a time, like the nineteenth century, where the inclusiveness of the political and social structures was being renegotiated. Yet, while the overall power structures that conditioned the exchanges between the different communities remained largely constant until the demise of the Empire, the new political currency acquired by the notion of Westernization led to an intriguing shift of the power structures in the cultural realm. As soon as the degree of cultural proximity with the West started to be construed as the meter of political progressiveness, the otherwise dominant Ottoman-Turkish entity found itself in a paradoxical situation of minority, due to a complex set of reasons that included the fact that it could not rely, like the Greek or the Armenian elites, on a particularly dense network of diasporic outposts in some of the largest urban centers of Western Europe and the fact that an important part of its previous diplomatic and cultural contacts with the West had been, by necessity as much as by force of habit, largely mediated by representatives of those minority groups who had acted as interpreters and facilitators.

The Greeks and the Armenians, by far the two largest minorities, accounted for the other half (or a little less) of the total population of the city. Constantinople undoubtedly constituted *the* cultural capital of the Western Armenians who, much like the Eastern Armenians living in

the Russian sphere of influence, started to develop in the nineteenth century a modern literary standard closer to spoken dialects than to the classical language used until then in liturgy and in most written texts. The ongoing conflict between the Ottoman and the Russian Empire accentuated the cultural differences between the two portions of the Armenian world and, due to this partition, Armenian literary life developed largely independently, in Istanbul and in the most important centers of the Armenian Diaspora (in particular Venice) on the one hand, and in various cities of the Caucasus region such as Tbilisi and, later, Baku on the other, although contact between the two literary scenes never quite ceased to exist.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, before the establishment of an independent Greek state, the Greek cultural landscape still retained many of the characteristics it had acquired in the early stages of the Ottoman domination and remained, to a large extent, conditioned by the dissemination of scholarly and literary activities in the various intellectual centers of the Greek Diaspora in western and central Europe. As a result, before 1830, literary activities were much more limited in large urban centers, such as Constantinople, with an important Greek population than in the strongholds of the intellectual diaspora such as Venice, Vienna, Paris, Bucharest or Budapest.

A major shift occurred immediately after the War of Independence when Athens, whose importance and size had severely dwindled since the time of its apogee in classical Antiquity, was suddenly promoted to the status of national capital after the Greek War of Independence and started to develop new cultural and literary institutions. Istanbul, the seat of Byzantine imperial power, also benefited, in part, from the re-centering of the Greek intellectual life and its migration from the western and central European diasporic centers to the metropolises of the Eastern Mediterranean. However, the importance of Athens, which became more and more acute

throughout the century, only allowed it to occupy a peripheral – yet by no means insignificant- space in the Hellenic cultural world.

The coexistence, in a single urban space, of various linguistic groups each possessing its own literary tradition is not, in itself, what made the situation of nineteenth-century Constantinople so remarkable. After all, even without considering such instances in the globalized world of today, the globalizing nineteenth century alone provides quite a few examples of Babelian metropolises, be they national or simply regional capitals: one can think, for instance, of London and Paris, of course, of New York, increasingly so, as well as of Amsterdam, Prague, Trieste, L'viv, and others.

The specificity of Istanbul lay, I believe, in the scale and nature of the main literatures in this state of co-presence. It is, in this particular context, rather difficult to entirely isolate Ottoman-Greek, Ottoman-Armenian, and Ottoman-Turkish literature from the contexts that shaped the use of each of the three corresponding languages in nineteenth-century Istanbul. As we saw, all three languages, regardless of the political status of the community from which they emanate, were marked by a certain degree of precariousness in their use as a literary idiom and by the fragility of their fledgling cultural and literary institutions. In the case of the two largest minorities, the use of both Armenian and Greek as literary idioms in Istanbul was affected by the fact that the city was but one of two poles in a literary field that was not entirely comprised within the limits of a defined national space but was, on the contrary, characterized by the existence of –and even organized around- a strong geographic divide, the Russian-Ottoman border and the Aegean Sea respectively. Furthermore, this "bipolarity", as it were, between Western and Eastern Armenians, between Athens and Istanbul, was in a sense reduplicated in the language struggle at play within both languages at the time and in the situation of diglossia in

presence -in different yet sometimes strikingly similar terms- in the Armenian and Greek communities that saw the status of the classical and/or liturgical standard challenged by the rise of the vernaculars as literary idioms. Ottoman-Turkish was, of course, increasingly faced with a language question of its own that would culminate, in the 1920s, with the language reforms of the early republican period that would make a now national language lose its hyphenated nature, as (relatively successful) attempts to control its hybridity would take place in the name of linguistic purity. What made, however, the status of Ottoman-Turkish as a literary idiom paradoxically precarious was that the language which served at once as that of the dominant group, of the imperial power, and as the urban *lingua franca* had seen –and, to a certain extent, continued to see for part of the nineteenth century- its access to the very texts and cultural products of the West whose absorption had come to be construed as a necessity rendered easier by the intervening agency of the minorities, members of which had been employed as translators and interpreters almost from the beginning of the Ottoman rule on the city.

The fact that all three languages (Ottoman-Turkish, Greek, and Armenian) not only faced internal tensions but were caught in a situation where the power structures and the political hierarchies in place did not fully correspond to a clear numeric and cultural domination of one group over the others, as well as other elements forming the uncertain ethno-linguistic terrain of Istanbul in the late Ottoman period, profoundly shaped the evolution of the three corresponding literary fields. The polyglossic and trans-communal landscape that they composed was therefore bound to differ radically from the one present, during the same period, in other contexts. The coexistence of several literary communities in the Ottoman capital during the nineteenth century has therefore little to do with what is at play in worlds metropolises where literature was at times (or still is) produced and consumed in various languages. In those capitals (be they political

capitals, cultural capitals, or both), "guest" literary idioms manage, always in a position of minority in the local context, to coexist with the "host" language (and the corresponding literature) of the numeric majority, which benefits from its situation of regional or global dominance and is almost always sanctioned –*de jure* or *de facto*- as the official local standard. The "host" is often brought to the multicultural capital by economic rather than strictly cultural factors, either by global migratory movements (which, coincidentally, are often the results, direct or indirect, of the economic forces concentrated in those very same metropolises) or because the economic dominance of the global capitals allows them to develop and sustain mechanisms and institutions that ensure cultural preeminence more effectively than in more peripheral locales. The presence of the "host" is therefore either invited and celebrated by the "guest" -which welcomes what it often labels as diversity as a sign of the supposed cultural universalism it strives to construct and project and whose fiction accounts for this very influx of foreign elements- or simply tolerated, and sometimes largely ignored.

Nothing of the sort was at play in nineteenth-century Istanbul where the balance of political, economic, and cultural powers was at the same time clearer yet more sophisticated. In the late Ottoman Empire, the exercise of political power by the ruling group was, in a sense, much more absolute as it did not rest, for most of the period, on the same mechanisms of political representation and participation found in other contemporary imperial polities and with which the so-called *millet* system did not truly overlap⁴⁶. In parallel, however, the irruption in the

⁴⁶ In this work, I avoid as much as possible to refer to the problematic concept of "*millet* system," as it appears largely unhelpful to fully account for the complexity of the trans-communal literary exchanges in the late Ottoman Empire. As Murat Cankara point outs in a recent article that also provides an up-to-date of the debates that have led to the current problematization of this very concept by Ottomanist, "[t]he question of cultural contact among Ottoman *millets* has either been neglected on the grounds that the Ottoman *millets* lived in 'compartments' and were isolated from each other, or through clichés intended to show how 'happily the *millets* lived together.'"

Ottoman capital of a new kind of cultural capital brought forth by the climate of Westernization in presence created a new set of complex and often ambiguous hierarchies between communities. In other words, the political dominance, expressed in the administrative idiom, did not entirely overlap with the cultural dominance of the same language used as literary idiom. On the contrary, all three of the main literatures of nineteenth-century Constantinople seemed to exhibit the characteristics of narrow literary fields. Their "human capital" (the number of potential authors and readers) was relatively small at a time and in a location where the access to book culture remained a privilege of the few. They were situated in a paradoxical space, the semi-colonized Empire, at once the seat of imperial power but also placed at the receiving end of various imperialistic endeavors and strategies emanating from the Western powers. They evolved in the context of an increasingly trans-national cultural emulation, which was giving new emphasis to the notion of (perceived) cultural belatedness and to its corollary, the necessity of a constant renewal of the literary repertoire.

Specifically, the narrowness of the three main literary fields of nineteenth-century Istanbul was reflected in the key part translation was called to play, in all of them, during the nineteenth century. In the Ottoman-Turkish case, the translation of Western texts (literary or otherwise) became a crucial part of a general effort to transform the state apparatus and society as a whole. The first important step to develop translation activities was the founding by the Sublime Porte of a "Translation Chamber" (*tercüme odası*) in the 1830s, which functioned as a school training Turkish translators. Along with a series of incentives and government-

(Cankara 2015: 1) The author continues by arguing that "the national cultural boundaries drawn by post-Ottoman nation as well as an understanding of interconfessional relations through what has come to be called the '*millet* system' blur the current understandings of national contact among the Ottoman *millets*." Cankara goes on to show, through an analysis of Armeno-Turkish literature, that, in traditional scholarship, "cultural encounter is reduced to textual encounter and language and/or script barriers are overrated."

commissioned translation projects, the nascent Ottoman-Turkish press played an equally important role in giving the very notion of translation new currency in the second half of the century. In the minorities, translation activities were often assumed by various individuals (literati, educators, publishers, etc.) and, even more frequently, initiated by a host of learned societies, either independent or affiliated with schools or churches, that flourished in the city during the nineteenth century and functioned thanks to the support of the local economic elite or of wealthy donors in the Greek and Armenian diasporas.

What was translated in nineteenth-century Istanbul? What type of foreign texts were adopted to develop the repertoire of Ottoman-Turkish, Greek and, Armenian literatures? It is in the very nature of these translated texts—in terms of both the original language of their composition and of the genre to which they belonged- that the narrowness of Istanbul's various literary fields was most acutely felt. A comparative study of the bibliography of translated literature in all three literatures yields, with minor differences, strikingly similar results and gives a common image of homogeneity in terms of both provenance and genre, that of the increasing domination of the novel over other genres and of the almost absolute hegemony of French over the other European literary traditions. As this work will show, the trend was particularly clear in the Greek case -although, if the total number of foreign literary texts translated was smaller in both Armenian and Ottoman-Turkish, the percentage of French texts remained roughly the same. Of the three hundred or so translated novels published in Constantinople during the nineteenth century, about 95% were originally written in French. In fact, in late-nineteenth-century Constantinople, translating a foreign literary work almost always meant translating a *novel*, and translating a novel almost always meant translating a *French* novel. The very few non-French authors (Shakespeare, Byron, Schiller among the most recognizable names) with a durable

presence on the local market for foreign translations were almost never novelists; Walter Scott, immensely popular all over Europe, was barely translated in the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth-century while Alexandre Dumas, whose own work had, of course, been largely enabled by Scott's example and success, was, by far, the single most translated author in all three communities. The appeal of French fiction was such during the nineteenth century that some of the works by non-French novelists published in the Ottoman Empire even seem to have been translated because of their similarity to French models: one of a handful of British novels translated during the period, Reynold's *Mysteries of London*, is little more than a calque of the successful formula of urban mysteries first inaugurated in the early 1840s by French author Eugène Sue. Interestingly, that novel was only one of three works with the same title, along with two other similar series of London mysteries translated in Constantinople, all three originally written in French.

A certain backlash against the dominance of French literature in translation starts to crystallize in the 1870s and 1880s and denunciations of what is presented as its corrupting influence can be found in the Greek and Armenian press of the city. This kind of criticism, however, entirely failed to reshape the late-Ottoman translation market and, for at least a few more decades after 1880, the landscape remained not only largely unchanged but even more marked than before by a concentration of the translators' activity and of the readers' interest upon the same type of works as before: between 1880 and the end of the century, the vast majority –and, in the Greek case, almost every single one– of the works of foreign literature translated and published in Constantinople was a contemporary French novel. The notion of the contemporaneity of the translated literature is here particularly important. In fact, there existed, from the mid-century onwards, a growing trend toward simultaneity in translation activities that

highlighted how attuned they were to the developments, trends and fashions taking place at the very same time in the large literary capitals of the West. If, in a first stage, Greek and Armenian translators of foreign literature, as well as the first wave of Ottoman-Turkish translators had almost exclusively focused on European authors of the early- and mid-eighteenth century or, in a few instances, on major figures of the early European Romanticism, in a second stage taking place first in Greek and slightly later in Armenian and Ottoman-Turkish, translators suddenly turned to living authors, thus abruptly reducing the gap between the time of the composition of foreign novels and the time of their translation in the Ottoman Empire. While, originally, that gap was usually of over a century and, at best, of at least a generation, very contemporary works started to appear in the second half of the century, sometimes translated only a few months, or even weeks, after their original publication. The period saw the apogee of the fame in the Ottoman capital of French novelists all more or less linked to popular literature, broadly defined, such as Eugène Sue, Alexandre Dumas, Jules Verne, Alexis Ponson du Terrail and others, since then largely forgotten, such as Jules Mary, Emile Richebourg or Xavier de Montepin. This particular element underlines the almost complete absence of overlap between the works that, in the source literature, were invested with high cultural capital and the very different works that the target literatures deemed worthy of being translated. In other words, it highlights how, once put to the test of global diffusion, the canon of the nineteenth-century French novel was submitted to a series of profound distortions.

It would be easy to only see in this situation – the saturation of a narrow literary field with works imported from wider ones- a symptom of the passivity of the narrow literary fields when confronted to the spread of the modern novel. Yet, by seeking, as this study proposes to do, to underline that the advent of novel culture in a given field is never limited to the passive

importation of a new narrative regime, but includes the emergence of a wide range of new cultural practices, it is possible to shed light on various processes of creative reception that allow narrow fields to retain some of their autonomy in the age of the novel.

Before proceeding to a brief overview of the parts that form this study, it appears crucial to make one important clarification. This work does not, in any way, ambition to provide a comprehensive narrative on the rise of novel culture in all the literary fields of the late Ottoman period. For many decades, scholarship on the literatures of the late Ottoman period remained largely monolingual in its scope. In these types of approaches, the progressive inclusion of the novel into the late-Ottoman repertoire of literary forms, as well as the consolidation of a community of readers for the genre, were almost exclusively studied, within the fields of Ottoman-Turkish studies, Modern Greek studies, Armenian studies, and Sepharadic studies, in isolation from the broader, trans-communal contexts in which they occurred. In recent years, however, a growing body of scholarly work has emerged, giving new legitimacy to cross-cultural approaches that emphasize the interconnected literary histories of the late Ottoman period, in an effort to challenge entrenched national categories and provide a more complex image of the cultural and literary landscape of the Empire during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. This type of scholarship provided a much-needed cartography of the multilayered and multifocal cultural landscape of the late Ottoman Empire, opening the way for future inquiries that will fully bring to light rich and complex the literary interactions among Ottoman subjects that often cut across and complicated traditional communal boundaries⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ Over the last few decades the pioneering work of J. Strauss, as well as, more recently, of L. Mignon, has opened the way for truly trans-communal inquiries into the late Ottoman cultural

The objective of this study, which builds upon these recent endeavours yet mobilizes methodological tools specific to the field of comparative literature, is to take advantage of the singular situation of nineteenth-century Istanbul –where several literary fields coexisted in one shared geographic space- to shed light on the impact of the novel upon narrow literary fields in the nineteenth century, and to emphasize their capacity to respond creatively to the irruption of a new narrative regime by adapting it to their specific cultural environment. In doing so, this work suggests that the study of nineteenth-century Istanbul, a space by marked by an uncommonly dense traffic in languages, scripts, texts, and books, has much to contribute to contemporary conversations on the globalization of literature by providing an alternative paradigm to the ones that have been used to account for transnational literary exchanges.

In this respect, the present study makes no claim at being exhaustive. The works analyzed in each of the core chapters were chosen for their representativity and their capacity to illustrate the broader contours of the emergence of novel culture in the late Ottoman Empire.

Additionally, rather than adopting a strict chronological structure, the following pages are organized around three main *moments of encounters* with the foreign novel within the Greek, Armenian, and Ottoman-Turkish literary fields during the nineteenth century. The term *moment* is used to emphasize that international literary exchanges tend to create their own temporality

landscape (see notably Strauss 1992; 1994; 1995a; 1995b; 1997a; 1997b; 1999a; 1999b; 2002a; 2002b; 2003a; 2003b; 2011; Mignon 2011; 2014). Published in 2014, a Turkish-language collective volume edited by Mehmet Fatih Uslu and Fatih Altuğ (Uslu and Altuğ 2014) is groundbreaking in its attempt to bring together scholarship on the various constitutive elements of the late Ottoman literary mosaic. The fields of Karamanlidika studies as a whole is greatly entitled, for uncountable advancements over the past three decades, to the work of E. Balta (see, among others, Balta 1987; 1996; 2003; 2009; 2010; 2013; Balta and Kappler 2008; Balta and Ölmez 2011; 2014), while M. Cankara has, over the last few years, begun an important reappraisal of the corresponding Armeno-Turkish field (see Cankara 2014; 2015). Finally, although its perspective is primarily that of history, the work of Vangelis Kechriotis offered new and crucial ways to think about the Ottoman model of coexistence that continue to inform any inquiry into the cultures of the Empire (see notably Kechriotis 2005; 2013; 2015).

and that the affinities created between literary fields are punctuated, yet not strictly defined by the event of specific publications. By using the term *encounter*, this study seeks to highlight the complexity of global literary exchanges rather than their linearity and the fact that it pays a particular attention to mechanisms of creative reception within narrow literary fields.

Each of the core chapters focuses on one such moment of encounter and studies the dialogue taking place between, on the one hand, a specific genre of novel codified in wider fields and, on the other, the productive and innovative responses that this type of fiction generated in the three main literary fields of the late Ottoman Empire. Each of these three moments results in the development of a new type of relationship with the novel. Because the three fields did not experience the emergence of novel culture and the development of the various sub-genres of fiction in a uniform way, the core chapters do not attempt to include examples chosen from all three fields, yet a comparative perspective remains the objective throughout the work.

Chapter two examines the extremely broad diffusion in the late Ottoman Empire of the so-called *romans de mystères* inspired by the work of French novelist Eugène Sue. In parallel, it reads the creative translation of these works into the literary idioms of Empire as a site of experimentation for domestic novel writing. Chapter three is interested in the domestication of the novel and, through an analysis of historical novels written in Armenian and Greek, it shows how these communities performed a re-nationalization of historical fiction based on a complete reformulation of the genre's conventions as they were codified in Western Europe, primarily in the works of Sir Walter Scott. Finally, chapter four follows the rich textual and material fortune of Bernardin de Saint Pierre's sentimental novel *Paul et Virginie* in Greek, Armenian, and Ladino texts, as a way to conceptualize mechanisms of commodification at play in the creative reception of the Western European novel in the late Ottoman Empire.

First, however, it appears important to reflect upon the notions of "rise" and "spread" of the novel, in articulation with the key concept introduced in this introduction -that of the narrow literary field. The following preliminary chapter focuses therefore on the very first stages of the emergence of novel culture, providing an overview of the ways in which this phenomenon has been contextualized and explained, with a particular focus on recent scholarship that has focused on the inherently transnational character of the literary exchanges that permitted it. Using the example of nineteenth-century Greek-Ottoman novelists, this first chapter investigates the relationship between the novel and its textual and cultural contexts, as well as the transnational dimension of the genre's development. Transposing the paradigm of the "literary Channel" that has been proposed to account for the circulation of novels between France and Britain in the eighteenth century, this chapter argues that the modern Greek novel can be conceptualized as a product of the movements of texts and authors across the interstitial space of the Aegean, as underscored by the mobility of the early practitioners of the genre between Greece and the Ottoman Empire.

Chapter 1

Trans-Aegean Trajectories: Locating the Emergence of the Modern Greek Novel

Before looking at the spread of the novel in the various literary fields of the late Ottoman Empire and analyzing how the genre was creatively adopted by Greeks, Armenians, and Ottoman-Turks as a result of their exposure to certain specific types of prose fiction imported from Western Europe, it is necessary to consider the conditions that permitted the development of a culture of the novel. The following pages provide a brief overview of the ways in which the emergence of the modern novel has been conceptualized and explained. A particular emphasis is placed on scholarship that, through a focus on the inherently transnational character of literary exchanges, has revisited notions such as the “rise” of the novel, which had originally been formulated within purely national frameworks.

In a second section, this chapter turns to Greek examples to investigate the applicability, in the context of narrow literary fields, of theoretical approaches highlighting, on the one hand, the relationship between the novel and its textual and cultural contexts, and, on the other, the transnational dimension of the genre’s development. In particular, the paradigm of the “literary Channel” that has been proposed to account for the circulation of novels between France and Britain in the eighteenth century is used here to situate the emergence of the modern Greek novel in the nineteenth century. I argue that, even though its initial appearance formally took place in the newly independent Greek Kingdom in the 1830s, the modern Greek novel can be

conceptualized as a product of the movements of texts and authors across the interstitial space of the Aegean, as underscored by the mobility of the early practitioners of the genre between Greece and the Ottoman Empire. In addition, this chapter shows how this idea of mobility across the maritime space of the Aegean was often thematized in early Greek novels of the 1830s and 1840s and how this motif of geographic hesitation between the western and eastern shores of the Aegean basin became constitutive of the state of in-betweenness that characterized the emergence of novel culture in the Greek world.

1. Explaining the Rise of the Novel: Ian Watt's Legacy

In the West, attempts at creating a narrative able to situate, in both time and space, the emergence of the novel, seem to be almost as old as the genre itself. Starting as early as the seventeenth century, the evolution of the modern novel as a genre and as a cultural product was accompanied by the parallel elaboration of critical discourses that sought to assess its merits, question its relevance, or survey its development. To this day, the question of the origin(s) of novel-writing remains an often contentious topic. In recent decades, the vitality of these debates was attested by a profusion of collaborative projects that attempted to establish contacts across disciplinary boundaries. Inviting scholars of various national fields to share their research in an effort to reformulate the ever-evolving cartography of the European novel, recent scholarship has tried either to place the novel in a more global context, or to focus on the rise of the genre on a supra-national scale¹.

¹ See for instance Moretti 1998 and 2006, as well as Mander 2007.

With his seminal study *The Rise of the Novel* (1957), Ian Watt undoubtedly functioned as the preeminent interlocutor for all the subsequent scholarship that has attempted, since the publication of his work, to reflect upon the emergence of novel culture, not only in the field of English-language literature, but on a global level too. Broadly summarizing, Watt's major contribution lay in his constant emphasis on three elements that, according to him, could explain what he called the "rise of the novel": modernity, individualism, and realism². Locating modernity in eighteenth-century England, Watt posited that, in the increasingly secularized and capitalist British society of the early 1700s, the inherent individualism of an emergent literate and leisured middle and upper-middle class accounted for the appearance and eventual success of an entirely new mode of producing and consuming fiction, thereby giving birth to the modern novel. At the same time, Watt argued, the desire, fueled by the development of empiricism, to find in fiction an accurate image of one's immediate surroundings resulted in the unwaveringly realist orientation of the genre³.

Watt's main arguments about the emergence of the novel were partly premised on assumptions already established in the first part of the twentieth century. As often maligned as they have been praised, they allowed for the development of an extremely large body of criticism that came to expand, nuance, complement, or undermine the most salient points of his theory of the evolution of the novel since the eighteenth century. Instead of identifying eighteenth-century England as the only place of origin of the modern novel, later scholarship aimed at correcting the strict teleology and Anglo-centric biases of Watt's rise-of-the-novel narrative. It strove to contextualize the emergence of modern prose fiction by insisting on the relationship of the novel with ideology on the one hand, and with material culture on the other. Performing a shift away

² See Watt 2001[1957]: *passim*.

³ See Watt 2001[1957]: *passim*.

from earlier, purely text-based approaches to the nascent genre of the novel, scholars writing after Watt found inspiration in the work of Foucault on notions such as discourse and power, a trend that often led to a radical reexamination of the political implications of the “rise of the novel” narrative proposed by Watt. Lennard Davis, for instance, while he remained convinced that the novel is a product of Western modernity entirely distinct from earlier regimes of fiction such as romance, subverted Watt’s paradigm entirely. Davis contended that the novel constitutes a type of discourse, which, instead of simply refracting eighteenth-century English capitalism, produces and subsequently reinforces that ideology. The notion of discourse, described as the expression of an act of power, allowed Davis to extend the scope of his inquiry beyond the corpus of early British novels to include their rich paratext(s). Along with the novels themselves, these other texts prepared the ground for the emergence of a culture of the novel. According to Davis, they formed "the ensemble of written texts that constitute the novel" and included "parliamentary statutes, newspapers, advertisements, printer’s records, handbills, letters, and so on⁴."

Transcending the formalism of studies limited to pure textuality, J. Paul Hunter attempted to look, from the vantage point of cultural historicism, at what he defined as the novel’s "pre-texts." In doing so, Hunter partially echoed Davis’ insistence on ideology and discourse, choosing to turn his attention to "the materials that readers read before there were novels to read⁵." Similarly, Clifford Siskin, in a study of the phenomenon he called “novelism”, highlighted the importance of a "discourse of and about novels." Siskin understood this new type of discourse as linked to the emergence of the idea of nation, and to the professionalization of the

⁴ Davis 1983: 7.

⁵ Hunter 1990: xiv

literary field -a process accomplished, according to him, toward the end rather than in the first half of the eighteenth century⁶.

In parallel, other approaches sought to escape the strictly British focus that had characterized some of the most widely influential scholarship of the previous decades. This new type of scholarship attempted to position the genre on axes of comparison, both diachronic and synchronic. Drawing on Bakhtin and aiming to offer the kind of totalizing project found in the work of Erich Auerbach, Margaret Doody championed the idea of a much earlier birth of the novel than the one posited by Watt and his followers. In order to challenge the notion that the novel's rise is to be located in (British) modernity, Doody traveled back to the prose fiction of late Greco-Roman Antiquity and defined the genre as a product of a pluricentric culture and its development as a continuum spanning centuries⁷.

Working spatially rather than chronologically, other scholars have, more recently, focused on the rise of the novel outside of Britain rather than on the endurance of the genre through time. This type of scholarship has often made an extensive use of the notion of transnationality in its investigation of the development of prose fiction. While Franco Moretti adopts a macroscopic approach to account for the rise of the novel on a continent-wide scale⁸, a volume edited by Margaret Cohen and Carolyn Dever focuses on one transnational space within Europe to challenge the strictly British framework of Watt's model⁹. Studying "the processes of literary and cultural exchange that occurred across the English Channel¹⁰" from the late seventeenth century to the Napoleonic Wars, the authors argue that "the modern novel did not

⁶ Siskin 1999: *passim*.

⁷ Doody 1996.

⁸ Moretti 1998.

⁹ Cohen and Dever 2012.

¹⁰ Cohen and Dever 2012: 2.

develop along two separate, nationally distinct trajectories; it developed through intersections and interactions among texts, readers, writers, and publishing and critical institutions that linked together Britain and France¹¹." Using the notion of "zone," in a sense akin to the concept proposed by Emily Apter¹², Cohen and Dever envision the narrow maritime space between Great Britain and France as "a liminal formation at the confluence of independent formations [which] both belongs to these formations and constitutes a distinct whole of its own¹³." They emphasize that, inasmuch as they participate in shaping a literary field in the Bourdieusian sense, these trans-channel interactions delineate a space that both participates in the global production and distribution of power, and simultaneously generates its own autonomous regime of power. In this model, the novel takes shape as a result of the internationalized intellectual climate of the pre-Revolutionary Europe and the authors make clear that they are "concerned, notably, with a transnational culture that was in no way post-national but rather predated the modern nation-state and took shape in tandem with its emergence¹⁴."

Arguably, the notion of a literary Channel described by Cohen and Dever is imperfect in the sense that it fails to do justice entirely to the pluricentric nature of the modern novel in the first centuries of its development. While the concept undoubtedly expands the scope of Watt's model, it is largely inefficient at integrating other traditions –and notably the Spanish one– into its paradigm¹⁵. As we shall see, the Greek case attests to both the lasting influence of the early Spanish novel well into the nineteenth century and to the fact that its creative reception in some narrow literary fields was mediated by French translations. Therefore, the model of the "trans-

¹¹ Cohen and Dever 2012: 2.

¹² Apter 2005.

¹³ Cohen and Dever 2012: 2.

¹⁴ Cohen and Dever 2012: 11.

¹⁵ Resina 2006.

Channel" zone proposed by Cohen and Dever needs to be somewhat reformulated to account for some other spaces of transnational circulation of the novel that existed in parallel with it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, the notion of a "literary Channel" remains in itself a very useful conceptual tool. Locating the emergence of the genre in interstitial spaces between national entities, it emphasizes the role played by the genre and its circulation in shaping transnational literary fields during the long nineteenth century. In the present case, transposing this model from the Channel to a different maritime space of the European continent –the Aegean- allows for the formulation of an alternative account of the rise of the modern novel in the Greek world, thereby creating a framework within which the emergence of a culture of the novel in the late Ottoman Empire can be examined.

2. Rediscovering a Corpus: The Novel in Post-Revolutionary Greece

In the early 1990s, in an opinion piece published in the Greek daily press, one commentator noted that, in his view, "nineteenth-century Greek prose was much more interesting than what we want to believe. Rather, to put it strongly and provocatively as the circumstances require, it was *much more interesting* than twentieth-century prose¹⁶." Such a defense of nineteenth-century Greek prose -and the provocative claim that it was, in fact, superior to that of later periods- could not be more at odds with the opinion that prevailed in Neohellenic literary historiography for most of the twentieth century. In various Western European traditions, nineteenth-century prose fiction gradually became one of the most canonized literary genres,

¹⁶ "Η ελληνική πεζογραφία του 19^{ου} αιώνα ήταν πολύ πιο σημαντική απ'όσο θέλουμε να πιστεύουμε. Ή μάλλον, για να το πούμε με όλη τη δυνατή σκληρότητα και προκλητικότητα: ήταν πολύ σημαντικότερη από την πεζογραφία του 20^{ου} αιώνα." (Kurtovic 1990).

thanks to the fact that portions of its corpus were often integrated into both academic curricula and popular culture -for instance through film and stage adaptations. In Greece, however, nineteenth-century prose fiction remained misread and misunderstood for entire decades. As few, if any, of the early Greek novels were reprinted before the end of the twentieth century, an entire corpus of texts fell into nearly complete oblivion, in particular the novels published between the establishment of the Greek Kingdom in 1830 and 1880, a date traditionally considered as the end of the Romantic period in Greek letters.

The first modern Greek novels were never integrated into the national literary canon and, therefore, never constituted what Doris Sommer has called, in a very different context, “foundational fictions. ” In her study of nineteenth-century Latin American fiction, Sommer shows how the patriotic themes of first novels published after the wars of independence of the 1820s served as powerful tools of national consolidation. As Sommer points out, those texts are for the most part still widely taught in schools in their respective countries of origin and form part of a sort of civic education through literature that emphasizes at once the unity of the nation and the importance of the traditional social structures¹⁷. In Greece, however, a country that became independent at the same time as most of Latin America and where literature also became a powerful tool for nation-building, the novel of the early post-revolutionary era was never assigned a similar function.

The traditional periodization of Modern Greek literary historiography might account, to a certain extent, for the lack of visibility of the early novel. Characterized by a pronounced heterogeneity in terms of their geographic and social backgrounds, as well as of their literary aspirations, the Greek novelists of the Romantic period were never seen as forming a cohesive,

¹⁷ Sommer 1991: *passim*.

distinct group among Greek authors of the nineteenth century. By contrast, the place of most of the subsequent salient figures of Greek letters was partly secured by their association, whether voluntary or not, with the largely self-proclaimed literary “generations” of 1880 and 1930. Authors active shortly before those watershed moments of Modern Greek literary history were thus relegated to a form of literary pre-history, perceived as mostly irrelevant and disconnected from later developments in prose fiction. The very recourse to a concept such as that of generation, an imprecise and methodologically questionable construct which nevertheless held long sway in Greek literary historiography, played a part in the failure of the early novel to become part of the national canon.

More globally, it seems that the critical reception of the early Greek novel was plagued, almost from the start, by a certain incapacity –and even, in some cases, by a clear unwillingness– of successive waves of scholars, not only to refrain from projecting various biases upon their reading of examples of Romantic prose fiction, but to actually read those texts at all. As it appears, the absence of visibility of the first modern Greek novels dates back to the very moment of their composition and publication. On the one hand, early Greek authors who sought to consolidate their status as innovators often used the paratext of their works to reiterate the claim that there existed no tradition of novel writing in Greece predating their own involvement with the genre. The "Author's Preface" of Stephanos Xenos' *Devil in Turkey*¹⁸ constitutes a particularly good example of this trope. Apparently oblivious to the fact that over fifteen Greek novels had been published over the two previous decades, Xenos states that “even in the present day, notwithstanding the establishment of schools, we have made very little progress in literature; we ought, therefore, at first to be furnished with novels which will excite curiosity and

¹⁸ Xenos 1851.

an inclination to read¹⁹." A similar –if slightly more nuanced- claim could, in fact, still be made three decades later, as evidenced by the language used in a French-language survey of Modern Greek literature penned by Alexandros Rizos Rangaves -who paradoxically happened to be among the most dedicated practitioners of prose fiction in nineteenth-century Greece: “The novel which today comes first in almost all contemporary literatures is the least developed genre in Greece. Attempts at writing original novels are few and far between, yet not entirely absent from Greek letters²⁰.”

In parallel, the notion that the production of novels had been sparse during the Romantic period became firmly entrenched in Greek literary historiography and scholars often lamented the purported absence of domestic prose fiction in the immediate post-independence era²¹. Far from countering these early claims, twentieth-century critics, including those who attempted in good faith to provide a comprehensive survey of the genre, further minimized the importance of the Romantic novel in Greece. Once again, it appears that the lack of reprints constituted an obstacle for a comprehensive appraisal of the prose production of the Romantic period. The poetry written in Greece during the same era had an altogether dissimilar fate. As it came to be recognized as an expression of the national ethos, it was the object of a form of hyper-canonization –at least of its most prominent figures. This phenomenon eventually proved detrimental to the overall visibility of the early novel. For decades, accounts of the development of prose fiction in surveys of Modern Greek literature were systematically much shorter than the corresponding chapters on poetry, usually with only a handful of novelists mentioned. This trend led to a somewhat artificial emphasis on isolated figures and on certain subgenres such as the

¹⁹ Xenos 1851: vi.

²⁰ Rangabé 1877, quoted in Denisi 1990: 51.

²¹ Denisi 1990: *ibid.*

historical novel which, in turn, tended to over-simplify and distort the image of the corpus of early prose fiction. Furthermore, in a few cases where some early Greek novels were indeed read by scholars, a mixture of linguistic, esthetic, and political reasons functioned to the detriment of any serious critical analysis. The impact of the language dispute in Greece and the ideological implications of the use of one written standard over the other might also have played a part in the non-inclusion of the early novel in the national canon as it evolved in the first decades of the twentieth century. The fact that, starting in the late nineteenth century, most of the prominent and durably influential figures in Greek intellectual circles adopted demoticism and largely rejected the use of *katharevousa* in literature can explain, to a certain extent, the lack of interest for the early novels, all written in a more or less archaic idiom.

Esthetic reasons were perhaps even more crucial in conditioning the largely negative reception of the early novel. Although Greek literary criticism sometimes used the term too readily, realism came to be used as a potent marker of literary value in twentieth-century studies of modern Greek prose. This fetishizing of realism led certain scholars to dismiss the prose fiction of the Romantic period on account of its allegedly exclusive interest in the past, interpreted as a failure to accurately represent the realities of nineteenth-century Greece²². The idea that early novels were “alienated” works, thematically disconnected from the preoccupations of the time of their publication was often fueled by an underlying nationalist conception of literature.

A major shift in the critical reception of the early Greek novel took place in the late 1980s. The decade was marked by a renewed interest in the genre as a whole, as well as by a complete reorientation of the scholarship, which now sought to reassess the long-held

²² Denisi 1990.

assumptions that had been dominant until then. As the language dispute was permanently settled after the return of Greece to durable democracy in the mid-1970s, younger scholars were able to adopt more flexible positions on the use of the two competing Modern Greek written standards, as well as a greater distance from previously dominant esthetic and methodological orientations. This new scholarship provided a more accurate image of the prose fiction written in Greece between 1830 and 1880 by showing how previous generations, because they had remained on the surface of the texts in question, had perpetuated incorrect notions on the nature of the early novel in Greece. In particular, scholars demonstrated that, contrary to the perception that had become prominent in earlier literary historiography, the idea that the first Greek novelists had been exclusively interested in the past was little more than a myth as the vast majority of their early works had, in fact, contemporary settings²³. It was also during that time that the first accurate bibliography of the Greek novel for the period 1830-1880 was compiled²⁴, thereby mapping an entire textual territory until then almost uncharted and paving the way for subsequent scholarship on a wide range of fictional works that emerged from obscurity. Finally, in parallel with academic scholarship, new book series devoted to publishing reprints and critical editions of nineteenth-century prose works also appeared in the late 1980s. This editorial trend played a decisive role in providing access to some long-forgotten texts, most of which had never been reprinted since their original publication.

Both before and after this rediscovery of the early Greek novel, a certain number of scholars sought to highlight the diachronic nature of Greek fiction, which they often presented as a corollary of the relatively low degree of morphological and lexical variation of the Greek language through time. In that respect, they seemed to align themselves with the model offered

²³ See Denisi 1994; Vayenas 1994; Voutoures 1995.

²⁴ Denisi 1990.

by Margaret Doody and others who insisted on the diachronic character of the novel as a genre²⁵. In such an approach, the notion of linguistic continuity was conceived as powerful enough to warrant a unifying history of the Greek novel from the “origins” to the present day. The linguistic and thematic homogeneity of the texts included in the century-spanning canon that these studies created was perceived as strong enough to relegate to a blurry background the singularity of the various historical, political, social, or economical contexts in which those same texts appeared. The task of this type of scholarship was therefore to identify a commonality of practice and to track the recurrence of fictional *topoi* in the Greek-language narratives of the early Christian era (by Xenophon of Ephesus, Longus, Chariton of Aphrodisias, Achilles Tatius, and Heliodorus of Ernesa), in the Byzantine revival of the ancient romance (by Eustathios Makrembolites and other authors), and in the novel of the post-independence period²⁶.

Undeniably, similar motifs can be found in these three groups of texts; certain episodes - or even the overall structure- of some early novels written in the 1830s and 1840s show the resurgence, in the Romantic period, of narrative devices found in the novels of late Antiquity²⁷. However, they testify as much to the ease with which nineteenth-century Greek novelists appropriated the broader Western European fictional repertoire, as to their specific familiarity with their predecessors of the Hellenistic period. There existed indeed, in Greek circles of the first decades of the nineteenth century, a clear consciousness of this pre-history of the genre. In addition, there is no doubt that the project of a revival of the Hellenistic and Byzantine romance served the ideological purposes of Greek intellectuals who were keen to affirm the Hellenic roots of popular genre associated with the West. However, because of an exaggerated emphasis on the

²⁵ See section 1 of this chapter

²⁶ See for instance Beaton 1988 and Tonnet 1998.

²⁷ Tonnet 1994; Roilos 2003.

diachronic character of the genre in Greek letters and on the connections between the ancient and the modern Greek novel, scholars have sometimes neglected the ramifications, outside of the realm of textuality, of the novel as cultural phenomenon, as commodity, and as product. In other words, an approach that exclusively envisions the beginning of novel-writing in post-independence Greece as the mere reawakening of a dormant tradition can only be performed through a formalist analysis, and by isolating the first novels published in the 1830s from their immediate cultural context—a context which was profoundly distinct from the ones that prevailed, as far as we know²⁸, in the first or in the twelfth century.

3. Rethinking the Rise of the Modern Greek Novel: Toward a Trans-Aegean Model

The cultural and social forces that started to coalesce in the first decades of the nineteenth century marked a new beginning in the history of Greek fiction more than they signified the persistence, under a modern guise, of a centuries-old fictional tradition. The Greek novel written from the 1830s onwards was the product of deep politico-economical mutations that appeared simultaneously on both shores of the Aegean. The emergence of the modern Greek novel was contemporary with, on the one hand, the establishment of an independent Greek nation-state and, on the other, with the consolidation of literate and economically powerful –if politically subdued- social groups in the evolving environment of the late Ottoman Empire. In the context of nineteenth-century Greek letters, the English term “novel” is thus to be used as both a noun and an adjective, denoting a type of *text*, as well as a *novelty*. As a text pertaining to a specific

²⁸ A consensus has yet to be reached among classicists regarding the exact nature of the ancient novel’s readership. As Margaret Doody points out, contradictory hypotheses have been formulated on the gender, the social status, or even the number of readers of novels in Greco-Roman Antiquity (Doody 1997: 24).

fictional regime, the novel, whether translated or original, became available to readers largely unfamiliar with the genre and its conventions. As a product, the novel inaugurated new modes of consumption for an expanded group of consumers. Along with its novelty, the early novel in Greece was further dissociated from the few ancient examples of lengthy prose narrative written in Greek through the constant emphasis of its early proponents on its foreign character, as exemplified, among other similar instances, by Panayiotis Soutsos' introduction to his *Leandros* where the author lists the names of the Western novelists in the shadow of whom he wishes to inscribe his own work:

“The greatest writers, poets, and philosophers have composed works of fiction: Rousseau in France, Walter Scott in England, Goethe in Germany, Foscolo in Italy and Cooper in free America (...). In reborn Greece, we first dare to give *Leandros* to the public²⁹”

This type of mention aimed at consolidating the image of the first Greek novelists as the ambassadors of Western letters in Greece and no mention was usually made of any previous Greek works that could have been presented as forming a national pre-history of prose fiction. The Greek novel of the Romantic period was therefore not only new with regards to examples of Greek narratives from a distant past but also largely disconnected from the few attempts at writing prose fiction in Greek recorded in the late eighteenth century. These few examples – Rigas Feraios's *School of Delicate Lovers* (Σχολεῖον τῶν Ντελικάτων Εραστῶν, 1790) or the

²⁹ "Οι μεγαλύτεροι [sic] συγγραφείς, ποιηταί και φιλόσοφοι συνέγραψαν μυθιστορικά πονήματα: ο Ρουσσώς εις την Γαλλίαν, ο Βαλτερσκώτος εις την Αγγλίαν, ο Γκέτης εις την Γερμανίαν, ο Φόσκολος εις την Ιταλίαν και ο Κουπέρης εις την ελευθέραν Αμερικὴν (...) Εἰς την αναγεννωμένην Ελλάδα τολμῶμεν ἡμεῖς πρῶτοι να δώσωμεν εις το κοινόν τον Λέανδρον." (Soutsos 1996 [1834]: 75).

anonymous *Consequences of Love* (Ερωτος Αποτελέσματα, 1792) - were not formally novels in the commonly accepted sense of the term, but rather shorter narratives, idiosyncratic in terms of their structure, and whose effect remained confined to a relatively small and localized audience. While undoubtedly crucial works in the history of Neohellenic literature, they constituted a corpus in their own right more than being real predecessors to the Greek novel of the Romantic period.

Incidentally, the presence of translated novels in the years that immediately preceded the publication of the first original modern Greek novels was significantly less widespread than in the decades that followed it³⁰. Between 1800 and 1830, fewer than twenty foreign novels were published in Greek translation, a number of which were written for young readers³¹. Among them, the most salient examples, such as Fénelon's *Télémaque*, Barthélémy's *Anacharsis*, and Wieland's *Agathon*, were all probably translated not so much as novels *per se* but mostly for their ancient Greek settings. In addition to those few examples, chosen for their subject as well as for their didactic content, only a few of the works that were popular on a European scale at the time (Bernardin de Saint Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* or Chateaubriand's *Atala*) appeared in Greece in the three decades before independence. It thus appears that the original Greek prose novels that started to be published in the 1830s did not truly have to compete, as it would be the case

³⁰ For a more detailed survey of novel translation in the Greek world during the nineteenth century, see chapter 2 of the present work.

³¹ The translated novels are (place and date of translation in parentheses): *Carite and Polydorus* by Jean-Jacques Barthélémy (Budapest, 1801) ; *The Adventures of Telemachus* by François Fénelon (Budapest, 1801) ; *The Wise Tricks of Bertoldo* by Giulio Cesare Croce (Venice, 1803) ; *Atala* by François-René de Chateaubriand (Venice, 1805) ; *Agathon* by Christoph Martin Wieland (Vienna, 1814) ; *Rasselas* by Samuel Johnson (Corfu, 1817) ; *The Voyage of Young Anacharsis in Greece* by Jean-Jacques Barthélémy (Vienna, 1819) ; *The Young Robinson* by Joachim Heinrich Campe (Vienna, 1819) ; *Zadig* by Voltaire (Paris, 1819) ; *The Discovery of America* by Joachim Heinrich Campe (Vienna, 1820) ; *Paul and Virginia* by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (Paris, 1824) ; *The History of the Abderites* by Christoph Martin Wieland (Vienna, 1827) ; *Anna Ross* by Grace Kennedy (Malta, 1829). See relevant entries Kasines 2006.

later in the century, with imported novels on a market saturated by translations of foreign texts. In fact, a look at translation trends between 1800 and 1830 shows that, with the notable presence in the bibliography of translations of works by Metastasio or Madame Leprince de Beaumont, theater and children's literature were the preferred genres. As for the few novels translated, the fact that they were published in Greek during those years is by no means an indication that there already existed a well-established readership for the genre among the Greek public. The translation of, for instance, a German novel in Vienna or of Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* in the Ionian Islands under British rule was rather the sign of the familiarity of Greek literati living in the European centers of the Diaspora or under foreign rule with the literature of the locally dominant group or colonial power. Virtually all the foreign novels translated into Greek in the three decades before independence were published in the West (Venice, Paris, Vienna, Budapest). While there existed, in those western and central European cities where novels were translated, large colonies of Greek merchants with an often intense cultural life, they were nevertheless located far away from the bulk of the global Greek-speaking population. In order for a new regime of fiction such as the modern novel to appear, new types of audiences first needed to consolidate gradually under the favorable conditions for cultural development provided by the establishment of an independent state.

Interestingly, there existed in Greek letters a discourse on the novel that predated the publication of the first novels themselves by a few decades and took the form of novelistic "pre-texts" as much as it marked the rise of a Greek version of the phenomenon of "novelism", thus confirming the findings on the emergence of the British novel of both Hunter and Siskin³². At first almost entirely limited to the Greek intellectual circles that had the closest ties with the

³² See section 1 of this chapter

West, the debates around the novel that started to crystallize in the 1760s were dominated by lexical considerations on the most effective way to render the French term “roman” in Greek³³ and by utilitarian considerations on the moral part played by the genre, perceived as being able to entertain readers as much as it could reform society. In one of the most seminal “pre-texts” of the Modern Greek novel, Adamantios Koraes’ preface to his edition of Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica* (1804), informed by his reading of Pierre-Daniel Huet’s famous treatise on the novel (*Lettre-traité sur l’origine des romans*, 1669), a case was made for the instauration of a national school of the novel modeled after an example of prose fiction from Greek antiquity. At the beginning of the nineteenth-century, the Greek novel was a concept in need of a name and Koraes coined, in his preface, the term *mythistoria* which proved significantly more enduring than the various terms already in circulation and remains in use today, in a slightly different form (*mythistorema*):

“I name *mythistoria* that type of books that the French call *roman* and the Italians call *romanzo*. These *mythistories* are found in the language of the Greeks, Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*, Longus’ *Daphnis and Chloe* and a few others, while in the younger languages of Europe they are so numerous that it is worthless for one to name even a few of them³⁴,”

Beyond its author's contribution to the genre’s terminology, Koraes’ preface effectively created an expectation for the return of the Greek novel, thirty years before the first modern

³³ The different options included using the Italian term “romanzo” or attempting to coin a necessarily approximative Greek equivalent such as “plasmaticon historema”, used by Eugenios Voulgares in 1768.

³⁴ “Μυθιστορίαν ονομάζω εκείνο των συγγραμμάτων το είδος, το οποίον οι Γάλλοι καλούσιν roman, και οι Ιταλοί romanzo. Τοιαύται μυθιστορία ευρίσκονται εις την γλώσσαν των Ελλήνων, τα *Αιθιοπικά* του Ηλιοδώρου, τα *Ποιμενικά* του Λόγγου και άλλαι τινές ολίγαι, εις δε τας νεωτέρας της Ευρώπης γλώσσας τοσαύται τον αριθμόν, ώστε να είναι μάταιον το να μνημονεύση τις και το ελάχιστον αυτών μέρος.” The quote appears in a footnote to Koraes’ translation of Cesare Beccaria’s *Dei delitti e delle pene* published in Paris in 1802. Quoted in Sachines 1992: 18.

novels started to appear. The French and the Italians, Koraes seemed to be saying, may have both words to describe the genre and numerous works pertaining to it -so many “that it is worthless for one to name even a few”- but the Greeks have seniority over them and the Greek novel already existed, embedded “in the language of the Greeks”, awaiting to be awakened from slumber. The fact that Koraes’ programmatic treatise on the novel developed out of an interest for the Hellenistic pre-history of the Western novel is of course significant but, as one of the modern Greek novel’s “pre-texts”, his introduction had a rather limited effect on the actual texts that started to be published two decades later. Koraes’ call was, indeed, partially echoed a few decades later in a handful of works that followed, to some extent, the lesson of the ancient romance. His preface to Heliodorus' work created the pervasive and enduring idea of a continuity, at once necessary and unavoidable, between the ancient models and the yet-unborn modern Greek novel. This notion, as formative as it was to the rise of “novelism” in Greek letters, had however only limited textual results.

In spite of the existence of a discourse on the novel, the emergence of the genre on the Greek literary scene was relatively abrupt: the first two novels (*Leandros* and *The Exile of 1831*, respectively authored by brothers Panayiotes and Alexandros Soutsos) appeared in 1834 and 1835, while a third one (*The Polypathes* by Gregorios Paleologos) was announced in 1834 but published in 1839, the same year as a fourth work (*The Orphan of Chios* by Iakovos Pitzipios). All four novels were published within the narrow borders of the small Greek Kingdom. *Leandros* was printed in Nafplio, which served as the ephemeral first capital of the autonomous and subsequently independent Greek state between 1829 and 1834. *The Exile of 1831* and *The Polypathes* appeared in Athens, while *The Orphan of Chios* came out of Ermoupolis, on the island of Syros. Moreover, the plot as well as the setting of both *Leandros* and *The Exile of 1831*

underlined the connection of those works with the Helladic space. An epistolary novel reminiscent of Ugo Foscolo's *Last Letters of Giacomo Ortis*, *Leandros* staged the highly symbolic return of its protagonist, born in Istanbul, to a country restored to its former glory at the price of a national uprising and the letters exchanged by the main characters are full of descriptions of the landscape around Athens. By the same token, Alexandros Soutsos' novel, *The Exile of 1831*, was narrowly focused on the internal political turmoil that followed the establishment of the independent Greek state.

After the capital was transferred from Nafplio to Athens in 1834 and the new Greek state gradually acquired the cultural institutions necessary for the development of a national literature, the conjugated efforts of the Soutsos brothers and their attempt at domesticating the foreign genre of the novel could have paved the way for the consolidation of a Helladic school of prose fiction centered around Athens and its immediate surroundings. However, such an expected development failed to materialize for at least two decades and the center of gravity of Greek novel-writing, while it did not entirely shift to the urban centers of Ottoman Empire either, seemed to remain suspended for some time in the liminal zone between the western and eastern sides of the Aegean. Very symptomatically, neither Panayiotis Soutsos, nor his brother Alexandros durably returned to the novel after their initial attempt³⁵, an element that underlined the overall precariousness of the genre of the novel in Greek letters for much of the period and the fact that the durable professionalization of the field only happened belatedly.

³⁵ In fact, Panayiotis Soutsos did write a second novel, but only much later, in 1864. This relatively insignificant second work, *Charitine or The Beauty of the Christian Religion*, testified to his turn toward social and religious conservatism. As for his brother Alexandros, his long-term involvement in the political opposition to the regime of King Otto, which led to several years of imprisonment, probably accounts for his loss of interest in the genre of the novel.

In spite of the wide differences that existed between their respective novelistic projects, the next two authors that attempted to write original novels in Greek, Gregorios Paleologos and Iakovos Pitzipios, were united by common links with the Ottoman Empire—a characteristic they also shared with the Soutsos brothers, born in Istanbul. Both Paleologos and Pitzipios were recent transfers to Greece when they started to write their novels. Even more importantly, they both crossed the Aegean back and forth at various times in their life, thus inscribing their activity as novelists in a trans-Aegean literary space that they helped create.

In a sense, the fact that all four of the first authors of novels in Greece had roots in the Greek community of the eastern side of the Aegean comes as no surprise: after all, the cosmopolitan Phanariot circles, of which the Soutsos brothers were prominent members, were the most likely to be the first to turn to the markedly western genre that the novel represented, due to their greater exposure and familiarity with the culture of Europe. The significant feature of the early Greek novel was therefore not so much the roots of its early exponents, as much as their ultimate "uprooting" away from the Greek Kingdom, after having started their activities as novelists there. It is rather puzzling that, among this first group of four novelists, the two that remained in Greece (Panayiotos and Alexandros Soutsos) did not follow up with a second novel—at least not until much later in the case of Panayiotos Soutsos—while the two others (Paleologos and Pitzipios) who did write a second novel either left Greece altogether in the years following the publication of their first novel or permanently adopted the nomadism of trans-Aegean crossings. Of much importance for the subsequent fate of the Greek novel is therefore the fact that the first generation of domestic novelists either abandoned the practice of novel-writing or physically moved out outside of the borders of the Greek state. In the Greek case, the two closely interrelated projects of, on the one hand, gathering the *ethnos* in one single, autonomous political

entity and, on the other, developing a prose tradition able to express both the unity and singularity of the nation, did not entirely overlap the way they did in other literary fields. The interdependence between the nation-state and the modern novel, two powerful categories that reached a new maturity in post-Napoleonic Europe seemed to constitute, in Greece, a considerably more vexed matter than in many countries which gained political autonomy during the same period.

While the fact is that the modern Greek novel indeed emerged *exactly* when the nation-state was established, a closer look at the genre's development immediately *after* its introduction in Greece seems to indicate that the precise relation between the two phenomena went probably beyond a pure question of cause and effect. There is something particularly puzzling in the fact that a genre as crucial to nation-building as the novel of the Romantic era was, in Greek letters, initiated by individuals who, instead of durably participating in the national literary project, ultimately abandoned the nation-state where they had started their activity as novelists. In order to account for this paradox, it might be relevant to link the emergence of novel-writing in Greece not so much to the establishment of the independent Greek state as to some of the political developments that punctuated the 1830s and 1840s. The birth of the Modern Greek novel can be read, I argue, not only in articulation with the (partial) success of the national project, the creation of an independent Greek state, but with one of the more complex extensions of that same endeavor which, as it is the case for virtually every nation-building process, relied equally on inclusion and on exclusion. I suggest that the rise of the novel in Greece was directly affected by a debate that plagued the Greek political landscape throughout the 1830s and peaked in 1844: the controversy over the limits of citizenship and the opposition between the so-called *autochthons* and *heterochthons*.

In the first decade after the Greek independence, while the clash between local factions that had marred the liberation struggle progressively subsided, the danger of internal strife among Greeks seemed to be temporarily halted by the growing opposition of important segments of the local elite to the Bavarian officials who had taken over much of the state apparatus after the accession to the Greek throne of the teenage king Otto. After the events of September 1843 and the adoption of a constitution which came to mitigate the autocratic character of King Otto's regime, the animosity of the former leading figures of the War of Independence with roots in the Peloponnese, Central Greece or the islands of the Western Aegean turned against citizens born outside the narrow borders of the newly-established Greek state and perceived as constituting a form of elite. Hailing mostly from the large urban centers of the Ottoman Empire (and therefore incorrectly assimilated as a whole with the Phanariots), a large number of those foreign-born citizens had settled in Greece immediately before, during or shortly after the end of the war. The right of the *heterochthons* to enjoy the full benefits of Greek citizenship started to be contested and the third article of the 1844 Constitution contained language that effectively banned them from occupying official state positions. In fact, the policy was short lived and there existed several provisions that waived the requirement of continuous presence on Greek soil since 1827 for various professions including members of the armed forces and educators³⁶. The damage was however done and, feeling unwelcome in the Greek Kingdom, a relatively large number of Greek citizens born outside of Greece started to look at the Ottoman Empire with renewed hopes for professional, economic, and personal achievement, at a time when promises of a significant upgrade of the status of minorities were beginning to be heard on the other side of the Aegean. The effect of the exclusionary policies of the early 1840s on the first generation of Greek

³⁶ For a detailed account of the policies, see Papageorgiou 2004: 416-419.

novelists cannot be overstated. While the Soutsos brothers, directly affected by the new law, opted to stay in Greece, other figures returned to Istanbul permanently, thus brutally altering the development of the young domestic school of the novel. In a sense, this primacy held by the *jus soli* over the *jus sanguinis* extended beyond the realm of citizenship and durably affected the process of the novel's acclimation in the Greek literary field. Symbolically, through the administrative exclusion of its earliest proponents on account of their "heterochthonous" origin, the genre was temporarily prevented from growing roots in the Greek literary soil.

The case of Iakovos Pitzipios, author of *The Orphan of Chios* is, in that respect, one of the most telling. Born to a well-to-do family on the island of Chios in 1802 or 1803, Pitzipios' youth was marked by contacts with both the intellectual circles of the West and those of the Greek diaspora. A student in Paris from 1820 to 1824, active in Odessa between 1824 and 1830, Pitzipios became involved in the Greek struggle for independence. After a brief time spent in Greece in 1830, Pitzipios returned to Russia after the assassination of the first Governor of Greece, Ioannes Kapodistrias, before securing a position as professor of French and Greek at the Gymnasium of Ermoupolis in 1838. Pitzipios stayed on the island of Syros until 1841 and published his first novel there, although it appears that he did not consider his relocating to Greece to be permanent³⁷. Directly affected by the citizenship law of 1844, Pitzipios left Greece a few years later and settled in Istanbul where he took part in the committee in charge of overseeing the application of the imperial reforms in the European provinces of the Empire. Pitzipios' treatise on the Eastern Question, published in English in 1860, provides an additional explanation for his move away from Greece and gives a clear indication of which of the two sides of the Aegean he considered his true home:

³⁷ Tziouvas 1995: 12.

The reforms begun by Mahmoud II, and inaugurated by the proclamation of the Tanzimat of Gulhané caused me to entertain the hope that my country might eventually be restored by the only practicable means –her own native elements- and in 1847 I resumed my nationality³⁸.

Several elements of Pitzipios' life until his death in Istanbul in 1869, under rather mysterious circumstances, highlight the trans-Aegean orientation of his professional activity. Starting in 1844, the author turned to journalism and began publishing a short-lived magazine, *The Beacon of the Mediterrean* (*Ο Φανός της Μεσογείου*). The title was printed in Athens but seems to have been entirely written from Istanbul where Pitzipios had already relocated. His second attempt at publishing a magazine was even more closely linked to the liminal space between Greece and the Ottoman Empire: the *Repository of Useful and Pleasant Knowledge* (*Αποθήκη ωφελίμων και τερπνών γνώσεων*), where his second novel, *The Ape Xouth*, was published, came out of Ermoupolis, close to the geographic center of the Aegean. The inscription of Pitzipios' personal trajectory in the interstitial space between Greece and the Ottoman Empire was reduplicated in the ways he interacted with the West. From the 1850s until the end of his life, while he made repeated use of his Greek identity to claim an insider's knowledge of the Eastern Question, the author used, on the cover of his publications aimed at foreign audiences, the title of *prince* before his name (a rather inaccurate rendering of Ottoman title of *bey* that the imperial authorities had allowed him to bear), thus shaping his persona as a Greek-Ottoman hybrid, a product of his involvement with both sides of the Aegean.

³⁸ Quoted in Tziovas 1995: *ibid*.

While information about Gregorios Paleologos' life in the late 1830s is slightly more sparse than in the case of Pitzipios, this other major member of the first generation of Greek novelists similarly left Greece - where he had settled before independence and had made a career as an agronomist- in the early 1840s, published his second and last novel (*The Painter*, 1842) in Istanbul and died there in 1844. While more personal reasons might also have played a part in the sense of estrangement of some early Greek novelists from the Greek state and may have precipitated their migration away from Greece in the 1840s, the climate of limited prospects for Greeks born abroad had an impact beyond first-generation novelists and affected younger authors. In that respect, the departure for Europe in 1848 of the young Stephanos Xenos, born in Izmir in 1821 and raised in Greece, is more than symptomatic: when he settled in London, Xenos carried with him the manuscript of his first novel, *The Devil in Turkey*, which would be first published in English translation in 1851, thus highlighting the interruption of the development of the modern Greek novel brought forth by the geographical displacement of its early practitioners. Xenos' largest editorial achievement, the publication of the periodical *British Star* (*Βρεταννικός Αστήρ*), which he wrote almost single-handedly from his London (self-imposed) exile, was reminiscent of Pitzipios' similar journalistic endeavor. While the *British Star* devoted most of its space to a coverage of the Helladic and specifically Athenian political scene, it appeared that it was almost exclusively read in the Ottoman Empire and was therefore symbolically anchored between the two sides of the Aegean.

4. Representing Aegean Crossings

The personal trajectories of these early Greek novelists and their hesitation between the Greek Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire would be purely anecdotal if this situation of cross-border migration was not constitutive of the transnational rise of the novel as a whole. As Joan DeJean emphasizes in a study centered on figures of exilic and/or wandering novelists in the Franco-British eighteenth century, “no genre has had a history more closely bound up with nomadic conditions of production than the modern novel³⁹.” In the Greek case, this trans-Aegean "zone" was equally born out of the physical crossing of the Aegean by the first novelists and of the thematization of the same movement in their texts. Instead of exclusively focusing on Athens as a setting for their works or of durably anchoring their plots in the realities of the large urban centers of the Ottoman Empire, the first Greek novelists turned the action of traveling around and across the Aegean basin into their topic of choice. Paleologos' *Polypathes*, a work which drew on the Spanish picaresque tradition –through the mediation of French literature- constituted for instance a tale of formative wandering around the Mediterranean. In the novel, the adventures of the young hero, a Greek cousin of Lesage's Gil Blas, take him from his native Istanbul to Western Europe via the Danubian Principalities and Russia on a journey marked not only by all the conventional plot twists expected from the novelistic depiction of seafaring (pirates, shipwrecks, etc.) but also by the metaphorical crossing of ethnic and religious divides (with the hero changing status, faith, and attire on multiple occasions).

Pitziopios provides, once again, the most telling example: in *The Orphan of Chios* (as well as in *The Ape Xouth*, set between Athens, Smyrna, and Egypt), the respective trajectories of the

³⁹ DeJean, Joan 2002: 38-39.

characters of this oftentimes naïve romance trace the contours of a space comprised between a western and an eastern pole (the Italian city of Livorno and Izmir, respectively) but whose center of gravity is situated on two islands (Lesbos and Limnos) very centrally located in the Aegean and where most of the plot unfolds. The trans-Aegean territory thus constructed textually is, for the characters, a space of seemingly unrestrained movement, a paradox given that the novel also thematizes ethnic strife among groups populating the perimeter of the Aegean region. The following passage from *The Orphan of Chios* highlights the mobility of the characters within the trans-Aegean zone (at least before the Greek Revolution):

Before the Greek Revolution, the Ottoman government had not yet felt the need to implement the habit of the civilized Nations regarding those traveling from one place to another: the use of passports was then entirely unknown in Turkey. Hence, no passport was necessary for Ottoman subjects arriving from the other foreign powers and they were able to circulate freely across the Ottoman territory⁴⁰.

In addition to being unrestrained in their movement due to the inexistence of passports, the characters of the early Greek novel also seem unfettered by linguistic barriers and their interactions with the many ethnic groups of the eastern Mediterranean space seem to never require translation.

⁴⁰ [Π]ρο της Ελληνικής επανάστασεως, η Τουρκική διοίκηση δεν είχε παρατηρήσει ποτέ την ανάγκην της συνηθείας των πεπολιτισμένων Εθνών, ως προς τους μεταβαίνοντας από τινά τρόπον εις άλλον. Η χρήση των διαβατηρίων ήτο διόλου άγνωστος εις αυτήν. Οθεν ουδ' εις τους τόπους των άλλων ξένων δυνάμεων δεν απαιτούντο διαβατήρια από τους εκείθεν ερχομένους Τουρκικούς υπηκόους. Καθ' όλην δε την επικράτειαν της Τουρκίας ηδύναντο να υπαγοέρχονται ελευθέρως." (Pitzipios 1995 [1839]: 250).

There lies the major difference between the “literary Channel” model of novelistic transnationalism and the specific functioning of the trans-Aegean zone. The paradigm studied by Cohen and Dever relied heavily on translation and on the literary commerce (presumably conducted on equal terms) of two linguistically and culturally distinct entities (France and Britain). On the contrary, the trans-Aegean territory constructed by both the early Greek novelists and their texts remained a linguistically and culturally closed space -one that neither depended upon, or fostered exchanges with other ethnic and cultural groups. The trans-Aegean space of the early Greek novels functioned as a symbolic extension of a national space considered as too narrow; it delineated an entirely Greek imagined territory to the east of the Greek Kingdom where Greek authors, publications, and fictional characters could circulate with remarkable ease. Paleologos’ successive allegiance to both sides of the Aegean sea and Pitzipios’ deftness in negotiating his hybrid Greek-Ottoman identity are mirrored in both the location of their editorial activities and the importance of the motif of Mediterranean circumnavigation in their novels.

In some respect, the inscription of the key texts of the early modern Greek novel in this symbolic trans-Aegean space is not entirely unrelated to another major ideological project that, in the 1840s, started to crystallize in Greek political discourses, partially in an effort to overcome the difference between *autochthons* and *heterochthons*⁴¹. Starting in the 1840s, the "Great Idea" (*Megali Idea*) aimed at extending the limits of the diminutive Greek state well beyond its eastern maritime limit. In that irredentist project, the Aegean separating the young Greek Kingdom from

⁴¹ While the project of an independent free state large enough to accommodate all or most of the Greek population dated back to at least the pre-revolutionary years, the term "Great Idea" (*Megali Idea*) was first used by Prime Minister Ioannes Kolettis in January of 1844 in a parliamentary debate over citizenship and became a *de facto* official policy of the Greek state around the same time.

the Empire of its former rulers would cease to be a space of fracture between different portions of Hellenism.

The modern Greek novel emerged during the brief period between the establishment of the independent Greek state in 1830 and the moment, in the mid-1840s, when the hopes of further territorial expansion started to be officially sanctioned by government policies. During that interval, the first wave of Greek novelists, all born on foreign soil, both wrote their first works and saw their status as Greek citizens challenged and some of them left the Greek state altogether. At the same time, the plot of their novels created an idealized image of unfettered trans-Aegean mobility not entirely unrelated to the one that state nationalism would soon try to turn into a reality.

Expanding upon the introduction and using the Greek world as a case study, the present chapter aimed to set a theoretical framework that, in light of the scholarship on the rise of novel culture in Western Europe, help situate the emergence of prose fiction on the southeastern edge of the continent in the first half of the nineteenth century. More directly grounded in the Ottoman context, the next three chapters primarily focus on the second half of the century and successively explore three modes of engagement (translation, nationalization, and commodification) with the Western European novel that accompanied its trans-communal emergence in the late Ottoman Empire.

Chapter 2

Translating the Novel: The Wandering Jew in Istanbul

For the contemporary scholar familiar with what some still call the Western canon, investigating the translation of Western European novels in the late Ottoman period is a somewhat disconcerting experience. If it were possible to visit a library collecting all the novels translated from French, English, or German into Greek, Armenian, Ladino, or Ottoman-Turkish (in the Arabo-Persian, Greek, or Armenian scripts) during the second half of the nineteenth century, there is no doubt that, while perusing its contents, one would recognize many familiar works. Yet, one would also be compelled to notice some puzzling absences, as well as the massive presence of obscure, long-forgotten works enjoying there a peculiar prominence, entirely disproportionous to the position they occupy in modern literary historiography. If we imagine that the volumes of this hypothetical library of Ottoman translations were placed on its bookshelves by order of publication, the visitor would then be left with the nagging impression that, when Ottoman literati endeavored to translate Western European novels into the main literary languages of the Empire, they did so at random, with a clear lack of coherence and without any organizing principle.

In his 1949 *History of Nineteenth-Century Turkish Literature*, poet, novelist, and literary critic Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar spoke precisely to this impression of randomness in late Ottoman translation trends –as well as to the need to map these out in detail- when he wrote that "[...] all

the gains in favor of the great interest that existed for foreign languages and literatures were to a large extent accidental (*tesadüfî*), in the absence of any serious help from the official educational institutions. Therefore, nothing can be as instructive as a complete list⁴² of the translations completed during the first period [of the Tanzimat era⁴³.]" According to Tanpınar, this "fortuitous" character of translation trends was therefore due to the fact that the initial responses to the great appetite that existed, in the late Ottoman Empire, for foreign literature were primarily the result of private initiatives rather than the product of a concerted, systematic effort⁴⁴ –of something akin to, for instance, the Translation Bureau in Republican Turkey⁴⁵.

For a mid-twentieth-century *esthète* like Tanpınar, the corpus of nineteenth-century Turkish translations was therefore an incomplete one and the lack of "institutions of planning"⁴⁶ able to canalize and organize translation activities resulted in the victory of popular taste over considerations of pure literary merit:

The best evidence of the fortuitousness that we mentioned earlier is the fact that, among these first translations, very few were of the type of novels that we would consider truly

⁴² For an attempt at creating such a list, compiling not only translation into Arabic-scripted Ottoman-Turkish but also works published in the *karamanli* and Armeno-Turkish alphabets, as well as in Greek, Armenian, and Ladino, see appendix.

⁴³ "[...] ecnebî dil ve edebiyatlarına karşı büyük alâkaya, resmî öğretim müesseselerinin hiç bir ciddî yardımı dokunmaması yüzünden bütün kazançlar âdetâ tesadüfidir. Bu itibarla bu ilk devirde yapılan tercümelerin tam bir listesi kadar öğretici bir şey olamaz." (Tanpınar 1956: 263)

⁴⁴ When evoking what he saw as the lack of institutional support for translation in the late Ottoman Empire, Tanpınar was of course well aware of the activities of the *Tercüme Odası*, the "Translation Chamber" established by the Porte in 1832 and which mostly sponsored the translation of scientific, political, and legal works from Western Europe. Although literary texts were also selected, the translation of novels was indeed never an objective for this state-run organization.

⁴⁵ On the Translation Bureau, see, among others, Konuk 2010: 71-75; Tahir Gürçağlar 2008: 67-73; Tahir Gürçağlar 2015: 127-130.

⁴⁶ Tahir Gürçağlar 2008: 73.

major works today. As a matter of fact, neither Cervantes, nor Balzac, nor Stendhal, nor Dickens were translated (*nakledilmemişlerdir*) into Turkish during that period (...) This state of affairs was the natural consequence of the absence of educational or cultural institutions able to regulate our intellectual and literary relations with the West.

Therefore, young people entering the life of letters started by publishing what would help them learn French -for most of them would learn French or improve their skills through translation- and would then translate (*naklediyordu*) the work that would be read the most by the public (*halkın en çok okuyacağı eseri*⁴⁷).

Interestingly, the trope so characteristically present in Tanpınar, which consists in approaching the corpus of nineteenth-century translations through the prism of its lacunae and in listing "missing" canonical authors -a sort of ghost canon of the Great Untranslated- finds an echo in the work of scholars interested in nineteenth-century reading practices in Western Europe. Book historian Martin Lyons indicates for instance that "[a] history of nineteenth-century French literary culture based on authors such as Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, and Zola would be of little use to a social historian (...) Thus, a more representative selection of novelists reads in France

⁴⁷ "Bu ilk tercümelemler arasında, roman nevinin bugün hakikaten büyük tanıdığımız nümunelerinin pek az bulunması da yukarıda bahsettiğimiz tesadüflüğün en iyi delilidir. Filhakika ne Cervantes, ne Balzac, ne Stendhal, ne Dickens bu devirde Türkçeye nakledilmemişlerdir [...] Bu keyfiyet yukarıda bahsettiğimiz, garpla fikir ve edebiyat münasebetlerimizi tanzım edecek öğretim ve kültür kurullarının yokluğunun tabii neticesidir. Böylece, yazı hayatına giren gençler Fransızca öğrenmelerine yardım eden kitabı -çünkü çoğu tercüme yoluyla Fransızca'yı öğreniyor, yahut ilerletiyordu- neşretmekle işe başlıyor ve ondan sonra da halkın en çok okuyacağı eseri naklediyordu." (Tanpınar 1956: 264)

during the nineteenth century would include Walter Scott, Pigault-Lebrun, Sue, Dumas, Erckmann-Chatrian, and Jules Verne⁴⁸."

Indeed, one of the most powerful –and deleterious- effects of the various processes of literary canonization rests in their capacity to create the fiction of their own permanence and endurance through time. Even after cultural and literary studies have long cast doubt on the validity of the very concept of canon, even after the mechanisms of canon formation have long been the object of intense critical scrutiny, the idea retains enough of its pernicious force to assert, in many different ways, both its stability in the future and its immutability in the past. It is only through a persistent and detailed inquiry into the evolution of reading (and translating) practices within a given literary system that processes of canon formation can be exposed as what they are, a series of eminently performative acts, contingent upon the fluctuations of, among other factors, taste and ideology.

In that respect, an examination of the very large corpus of nineteenth-century Greek-Ottoman translations of French novels provides a telling example of the sharp contrast that exists between modern expectations of what such a corpus could have -or should have- included and the reality of translation choices, editorial practices, and reading habits in the Greek literary landscape of the late Ottoman Empire. While one might expect that highly canonical French prose writers of the nineteenth century would have enjoyed a particularly rich reception on the Greek-Ottoman literary scene, a look at bibliographies and catalogues⁴⁹ of Greek translations of foreign literature during the period indicates, on the contrary, that it was a profoundly different

⁴⁸ "Pour l'historien de la société, une histoire de la culture littéraire française du XIX^e siècle qui serait fondée sur des écrivains tels que Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert et Zola serait de peu d'utilité. [...] Ainsi, une sélection plus représentative des romanciers français du XIX^e siècle comprendrait Walter Scott, Pigault-Lebrun, Sue, Dumas, Erckmann-Chatrian et Jules Verne." (Lyons 1987: 77).

⁴⁹ Kasines 2006.

roster of French novelists that was imported, translated, and consumed by Greeks living in the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth-century. The diffusion of the French novel and its acclimation to the cultural environment of the late Ottoman Empire through translation and adaptation resulted therefore in the formation of a sort of parallel canon of the French novel, one that overlapped only very partially with the canon as it solidified at its source.

The following pages focus on the initial moment of encounter between the Western novel and the literatures of the late Ottoman Empire, one that took place primarily through translation. While subsequent chapters deal with the importation and productive reception of the historical novel and of the sentimental novel, the present one is centered on another subgenre, the so-called urban mysteries (*romans de mystères*), a particular subset of popular literature in the nineteenth-century. Specifically, this chapter aims at conceptualizing the praxis of literary translation in the late Ottoman context. Focusing on the diffusion of the works of the initiator of the urban mysteries, French novelist Eugène Sue, in the late Ottoman Empire and, more specifically, on their circulation in the Greek-Ottoman literary community, I argue that the translation of so-called popular novels, by Sue and his followers and imitators, was a necessary stage in the elaboration of domestic practices of both novel writing and novel consumption. The translation of these works by Greek-Ottoman literati formed the matrix of future developments in Greek prose and constituted the locus for stylistic and thematic experimentations that would later find their way into original works.

Combining a quantitative approach using statistical data with more focused methods of literary analysis such as close reading, the present chapter treats translated texts as works in their own right, as worthy of consideration as original creations. Consisting in a macroscopic analysis of nineteenth-century Greek-Ottoman translation trends, the first section of this chapter situates

these trends in the broader context of nineteenth-century reading practices in Western Europe, with a focus on the French case. By underlining the articulation of translation trends and reading practices, I seek to overturn the narratives that frame certain aspects of literary translation in the so-called periphery, and in particular the prominence of works of popular fiction among the corpus of translated texts, as the mark of a supposed belatedness and as the sign of a disconnect with respect to the cultural practices of the so-called center. In doing so, I show that, on the contrary, a study of translation trends in the late Ottoman period underscores how Greek-Ottomans, as well as the other communities of the Empire, took an active and direct part in various mutations of the literary field happening transnationally during the second half of the nineteenth century. In parallel, I highlight the many points of convergence of the translation activities of the main components of the late Ottoman ethno-linguistic mosaic to emphasize the trans-communal character of translation as a cultural practice in this particular context.

A second part uses close readings of select passages from two Greek-Ottoman translations of Eugène Sue's *Le Juif errant* (*The Wandering Jew*) as a case study to examine the most salient features of the praxis of literary translation as it developed in the last decades of the Empire. By comparing the original French novel with its Greek-Ottoman versions, I underscore the many cases in which translators took liberties with respect to the source material. In doing so, I approach literary translation in the late Ottoman Empire as a form of critical reading and I attempt to restore part of the agency of translators active in the so-called periphery by bringing to light the instances where their engagement with cultural products emanating from Western Europe led them to distance themselves significantly from the original text and reinterpret its meaning creatively.

1. Nineteenth-century reading practices: a context for translation trends

In the second half of the nineteenth century, in a context where the cultural domination of not only French literature, but more specifically of the French novel, was extremely strong, the Greek-Ottoman reading public acquired, through the mediation of a variety of agents such as translators and publishers, a particularly intense appetite for authors who, with few exceptions, have since fallen into obscurity both in their native market and in the spaces that once massively imported them. Instead of Chateaubriand⁵⁰, Balzac⁵¹, Hugo⁵², Stendhal, Flaubert or Zola⁵³, Greek-Ottomans mostly translated and consumed the works of Alexandre Dumas⁵⁴, Jules

⁵⁰ Although his fame and influence was great throughout the Hellenic world in the nineteenth-century, only two of Chateaubriand's works -*Atala*, and *The Martyrs*- were translated into Greek in the Ottoman Empire. For all Greek-Ottoman translations of Western novels, see entries in Kasines 2006, as well as the appendix of the present work.

⁵¹ Balzac was barely translated into Greek until the beginning of the twentieth century and only one volume of his work circulated in the Ottoman Empire. I have not been able to see the volume in question, titled *Σκηναί επί της Πολιτικής Ζωής* (*Scenes from Political Life*) and published in Izmir in 1873. At 32 pages, it obviously cannot be a full translation of the entire subsection of the *Human Comedy* which bears that title. It consists either in a summary or, more likely, in a translation of only one of the works in that series, perhaps of "Un épisode sous la Terreur," a short piece of historical fiction.

⁵² Excluding translations of Hugo's poetry and theatre, as well as two reprints of translations of *Les Misérables* and *Notre-Dame de Paris* originally published in Vienna and Athens respectively, the only prose works by Hugo translated into Greek in the Ottoman Empire were *Han d'Islande* (*Han of Iceland*, 1823) and *Quatre-Vingt-Treize* (*Ninety-Three*, 1874), both published in Istanbul: Hugo. *Χαν ο Ισλανδός*. Istanbul: 1859. Translated by A. Fatoures; Hugo. *Εννενήκοντα Τρία*. Istanbul: 1874. Translated by D. Plethonides.

⁵³ Stendhal and Flaubert remained, perhaps unsurprisingly, entirely untranslated in Greek during the nineteenth century, both in the Ottoman Empire and in the Greek Kingdom. As for Zola, the fact that the publication of *Nana* in Greek translation was widely commented upon and extremely controversial in Greece has perhaps obscured the fact that only three of his other novels from the *Rougon-Macquart* cycle (*L'Assommoir*, *La Terre* and *La Débâcle*) appeared in Greece in his lifetime, all in Athens. The only work by Zola published in Greek in the Ottoman Empire was a translation of a much earlier novel, *Les Mystères de Marseille*, whose Greek translation was published in 1885.

⁵⁴ For a survey of Dumas' Greek translations, see chapter 3.

Verne⁵⁵, Eugène Sue (among the names still familiar to French readers), as well as those of Xavier de Montépin, Emile Richebourg, Jules Mary, Pierre-Alexis Ponson du Terrail, or Paul Féval⁵⁶ (all more or less forgotten today). The prominence of these authors on the Greek-Ottoman literary scene was not only due to the number of their novels translated into Greek but was also a question of sheer volume: the propensity of French authors of popular fiction to produce enormously long works -often with the help of one or more ghost writers, as it is well-documented in the case of Alexandre Dumas- resulted in the publication of multi-volume novels in translation, often numbering one thousand pages or more in total, even when translators proceeded to extensive cuts, as I will show in the second part of this chapter. The extreme prolixity of these translated works often presented a sharp contrast with the relative brevity of original Greek-language novels published during the same period in the Ottoman Empire, which very rarely extended over more than a few hundred pages at the most.

These elements underline that, in the tension that existed, during the nineteenth century between a traditional canon based on esthetic merit only and a popular, market-based counter-canon, the Greek-Ottoman public massively opted for the latter, thus highlighting the absolute contingency -and, in a sense, the untranslatability- of the various mechanisms which, in western

⁵⁵ Translations of novels by Jules Verne (1828-1905) started to appear in Greek, at first only in Constantinople and Smyrna, less than a decade after the start of the publication of the *Voyages Extraordinaires* series. Until 1880, almost all the Greek translations of Verne were published outside of the Greek Kingdom, while after the mid-1880s, the publication of new Greek translations of his works entirely stopped in the Ottoman Empire. Overall, a little over a third of the novels in the *Voyages extraordinaires* series appeared in Greek during the nineteenth century, with roughly half of that number first published in the Ottoman Empire, starting with *De la Terre à la Lune (From the Earth to the Moon)* in 1871 and continuing with twelve other novels published in Istanbul or Smyrna. The translation of Verne's novels into other languages of the Ottoman Empire also started in the 1870s, for instance into Ottoman Turkish with *Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingt jours (Around the World in Eighty Days)* in 1875. For a complete list of Verne's translations into Ottoman-Turkish see Uyanık 2013: 45-46.

⁵⁶ For an overview of Greek-Ottoman translations by these last six authors of popular fiction, see below.

Europe, worked to ascribe value to literary products. In order to understand better this discrepancy between, on the one hand, our contemporary notion of what constituted the canon of the western novel in the nineteenth century and, on the other, the reality of Greek-Ottoman translation trends, it is necessary to situate the practice of literary translation in the Greek-Ottoman community in relation with translation trends in the Greek world at large from the beginning of the nineteenth century, on the eve of the establishment of an independent Greek state, until the second half of the century, the period on which this chapter focuses. In addition, a survey of translation activities in the other communities of the Ottoman Empire during the same period provides an opportunity to examine the Greek case within a broader comparative framework.

a) Greek translation trends in the late Ottoman Empire: an overview

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, prior to the Greek War of Independence, the Hellenic cultural landscape still retained many of the characteristics that it had acquired in the early stages of the period of Ottoman rule and remained, to a large extent, marked by the dissemination of scholarly and literary activities among the various intellectual centers of the Greek Diaspora in western and central Europe. As a result, before the establishment of the independent Greek Kingdom in the early 1830s, translating activities were much more limited in the large urban centers of the Ottoman Empire where an important Greek population resided than in the strongholds of the intellectual diaspora such as Venice, Vienna, Paris, Bucharest or Budapest. The first work of foreign literature published in the Ottoman capital -Metastasio's *Ruggiero*, which appeared in 1807 - was followed by only a few short works, all of a religious

nature, in the late 1810s, while no translated work appeared in Izmir until the mid-1830s. In numeric terms, during the first third of the century, Istanbul came after not only Vienna or Paris, but also smaller intellectual centers such Corfu and Malta (where intense translating and publishing activities initiated by Protestant missionaries were taking place) and the very limited number of translations published there represent less than 5% of the output of Venice, still the absolute leader in terms of Greek translations during the same period⁵⁷.

A major re-centering occurred shortly after the War of Independence when Athens was raised to the status of capital of the recently established Greek state and started to acquire new cultural and literary institutions at the same time as new types of audiences began to appear. From the 1830s onward, the new capital largely dominated the market for translated foreign literature with nearly half of the total number of publications⁵⁸. Istanbul and Izmir, with their large Greek population, also benefited from the re-centering of the Greek intellectual life and its migration from the western and central European diasporic centers to the metropolises of the Eastern Mediterranean. The importance of Athens, which became more and more acute throughout the rest of the century, only allowed them to occupy a somewhat secondary space in the translation market -yet by no means an insignificant one. From the 1840s until the end of the nineteenth century, their common share of the total number of translations fluctuated between 10

⁵⁷ Between 1801 and 1834, 79 translations appeared in Venice, 41 in Vienna, 29 in Malta, 13 in Paris, 8 in Bucharest, 8 in Corfu, 6 in Budapest and only 4 in Constantinople, the same number than in Moscow and Trieste (Kasines 2006: 14).

⁵⁸ About 45% of the total number of translations published between 1835 and 1900 appeared in Athens; on the other hand, Istanbul and Izmir combined accounted for about 25% (Kasines 2006: 16).

and 20%, with a peak in the 1880s when about one in four translations was published in Istanbul or Izmir⁵⁹.

Unsurprisingly, given the importance of theater –both as a cultural product and as an ideological tool- before and immediately after the Greek national uprising, the few translations of foreign literature published in Istanbul before the 1840s were almost all plays of the European repertoire of the seventeenth, eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries: along with the aforementioned translation of Metastasio’s *Ruggiero* in 1807, works by Schiller, Molière, and Alfieri (which appeared in 1843⁶⁰, 1847⁶¹ and 1848⁶² respectively) constituted, at first, the bulk of the Ottoman capital’s output in term of literary translation. The 1840s, a decade marked in Greek politics by intense agitation and deep ideological transformations, brought a major shift in the world of letters, especially felt in the major reorientation of translation activities. Until the 1830s, Greek translators of foreign novels had almost exclusively focused on works of French, British, German and Italian authors of the early- and mid-eighteenth century (such as Fénelon⁶³, Lesage⁶⁴ or Defoe⁶⁵) or, in a few instances, on major figures of the European Romanticism (such as Goethe⁶⁶ or Germaine de Staël⁶⁷). In the following decade, translators suddenly turned to living authors, thus abruptly reducing the gap between the time of the composition of the original works and the time of their translation into Greek. While, until the 1830s, that gap was usually

⁵⁹ I would like to stress here that all the figures mentioned in this chapter only reflect translations published in book form and do not include those published in installments in newspapers, journals and magazines.

⁶⁰ Schiller. *Ραδιουργία και Έρωτας* [*Kabale und Liebe*]. Istanbul: 1843.

⁶¹ Molière. *Αι Πανουργίες του Σκαπίνου* [*Les Fourberies de Scapin*]. Istanbul: 1847.

⁶² Alfieri. *Αντιγόνη* [*Antigone*]. Istanbul: 1848

⁶³ Fénelon. *Τύχαι Τηλεμάχου Υιού του Οδυσσέως* [*Les Aventures de Télémaque*]. Budapest: 1801.

⁶⁴ Lesage. *Ιστορία του Ζιλβλά Σαντιλάν* [*Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane*]. Bucarest: 1836.

⁶⁵ Defoe. *Τα Τεράστια Συμβάντα του Ροβινσώνας Κρούσου* [*Robinson Crusoe*]. Athens: 1840.

⁶⁶ Goethe. *Ιφιγένεια η εν Ταύροις* [*Iphigenie auf Tauris*]. Jena: 1818.

⁶⁷ Germaine de Staël. *Κορίννα ή Τα Ιταλικά* [*Corinne, ou L'Italie*]. Athens: 1835.

over a century and, in rare cases, at least a generation, works of contemporary prose fiction started to be translated into Greek, sometimes only a few months after their original publication beginning in 1845. Greek literary historian Panayiotis Moullas has defined 1845 as a watershed moment in the history of Modern Greek letters and, in particular, as a crucial milestone for the diffusion of the novel in the Hellenic world⁶⁸. In the course of that single year, five important novels were translated into Greek: Alexandre Dumas's *Count of Monte Cristo*⁶⁹, Prosper Mérimée's *Colomba*⁷⁰, George Sand's *Lélia*⁷¹, as well as two novels by Eugène Sue, *The Mysteries of Paris*⁷² and *The Wandering Jew*⁷³. Beyond the fact that all five of these novels were translated from French, their other important common denominator was the fact that they all had been originally published in France within the previous decade or so: the oldest work, Sand's *Lélia*, was published in 1833⁷⁴, Mérimée's *Colomba* had appeared in 1840, while the three longest works by Dumas and Sue had all been serialized between 1842 and 1845. Thus, for the first time, Greek translators were turning their attention to living foreign authors and they chose to translate some of their most recent works. Greek-Ottoman translators, particularly those active in Izmir, made a major contribution to this important shift: of the five aforementioned translated novels, only one –Mérimée's *Colomba*, by far the shortest of all- was published in the Greek Kingdom. By the end of the century, over three hundred foreign novels would appear in translation in Istanbul or Izmir, a significantly smaller figure than that of the foreign novels

⁶⁸ Moullas 2007: 85.

⁶⁹ Dumas. *Ο κόμης του Μοντεχρίστου* [*The Count of Monte Cristo*]. Istanbul: 1845. Translated by I. Patroklos.

⁷⁰ Mérimée. *Κολόμβη* [*Colomba*]. Athens: 1845. Anonymous translation.

⁷¹ Sand. *Λαιλία* [*Lélia*]. Izmir: 1845. Translated by D.S.

⁷² Sue. *Παρισίων Απόκρυφα* [*The Mysteries of Paris*]. Izmir: 1845. Translated by I. Skylisses.

⁷³ Sue. *Ο περιπλανώμενος Ιουδαίος* [*The Wandering Jew*]. Izmir: 1845-47. Translated by Georgios D. Rodokanakes.

⁷⁴ It is more than likely that the Greek translation of 1845 was based on a revised version of the novel, published in France in 1839.

translated in Athens during the same period, yet important enough to amount to about 10% of the total number of works, of any genre, translated into Greek between 1801 and 1900⁷⁵ (fig. 1).

The relative independence of the smaller, yet dynamic, Greek translating market in the Ottoman Empire is underscored by another number: throughout the nineteenth century more than four translations of a foreign novel out of five published in Istanbul were first translations, as opposed to reprints of works first translated in Athens or elsewhere (fig.1). The dependence upon other translating centers was slightly more marked in Izmir, especially in the last decades of the century when the number of first translations considerably shrank. Yet, overall, more than two thirds of the foreign novels published in the second largest center of Greek settlement in the Ottoman Empire were first translations and not reprints. The smaller number of foreign novels translated in Izmir –a little over one hundred- cannot hide the fact that, in the pivotal 1840s, the city, which appeared very late on the Greek translating landscape, had been at the forefront of the shift to contemporary fiction.

⁷⁵ In Kasines 2006, I find 312 translations of foreign novels published in Istanbul and Izmir during the nineteenth century, counting multi-volume publications only once. The figure of 10% is obtained by comparing this number with the total number of translated works published in Greek between 1801 and 1900. See Kasines 2006: 10.

Fig. 1

Novels translated into Greek and published in the Ottoman Empire.

In each cell, the first figure corresponds to books published in Istanbul, the second to books published in Izmir.

Decade	Number of novels	Number of first translations/% of total	French	Italian	German	English	Other
1841-50	3/15	3/14 100%/93%	3/12	0/1	0/1	0/1	0/0
1851-60	9/9	9/7 100%/78%	7/9	1/0	0/0	1/0	0/0
1861-70	22/5	16/1 73%/20%	21/4	1/0	0/0	0/1	0/0
1871-80	36/29	31/12 86%/41%	32/27	0/0	1/0	2/2	1/0
1881-90	91/47	78/28 86%/60%	87/44	1/0	0/0	2/3	1/0
1891-1900	25/19	20/17 80%/89%	22/17	1/0	0/0	2/0	0/0
Total	186/124	157/79 84%/64%	172/113 93%/91%	4/0 2%/0%	1/1 0.5%/0.5	7/7 4%/6%	2/0 1%/0

Source: Relevant entries in Kasines 2006.

It is important to note that this move toward the translation of contemporary foreign fiction was not specific to the Greek case but similarly affected all of the main literatures of the Ottoman Empire to some degree during the second half of the nineteenth century. In Armenian letters, a similar shift took place starting in the 1860s and although it happened somewhat more gradually than on the Greek-Ottoman market, the evolution of translation practices was no less perceptible. Before the 1860s, all of the French novels translated into Armenian had been works originally published between the late seventeenth century and the early nineteenth century, between one hundred and fifty and fifty years before their first Armenian translation: Fénelon's *Télémaque*⁷⁶ (1699), Voltaire's *Zadig*⁷⁷ (1747) and *Micromegas*⁷⁸ (1752), or Chateaubriand's *Atala*⁷⁹ (1801). Things started to change relatively abruptly in 1863 –as they had in 1845 in the Greek case– when three French novels all originally published after 1829 –two of them by authors still alive in the 1860s– were translated into Armenian. Quite tellingly, two out of three were works that had also been translated during the Greek shift of 1845: Mérimée's *Colomba*⁸⁰ (1840) and Sue's *Mysteries of Paris*⁸¹ (1842-43). Two other important works in the first group of contemporary

⁷⁶ Fénelon. *Arkatsk' Telemak'ay* [*Telemachus's Adventures*]. Venice: 1826. This first Armenian translation of *Télémaque* by S. Chakhchakhian, published by the Mekhitarist congregation in Venice, was followed by at least two other translations during the nineteenth century, one by Edvard Hürmüz in 1850, also published in Venice, and a third one published in 1859 in Paris by A. Kalfaian (Ambroise Calfa). For all (Western) Armenian translations of foreign novels, see entries in Etmekjian 1964: 273-282.

⁷⁷ Voltaire. *Zadig*. Istanbul: 1854. Translation by Matteos Mamurean, published in the periodical *Masis*

⁷⁸ Voltaire. *Micromegas*. Istanbul: 1856. Translation by Matteos Mamurean, published in the periodical *Masis*.

⁷⁹ Chateaubriand. *Atala*. Istanbul: 1858. Translation by K. Chaprasdian, published in the periodical *Masis*.

⁸⁰ Mérimée. *Colomba*. Venice: 1863. Translated by K. Jelalian and published by the Mekhitarists.

⁸¹ Sue. *Gaghtnik' Barizi* [*The Mysteries of Paris*]. Izmir: 1863. Translated by Matteos Mamurean.

French novels translated into Greek in the milestone year of 1845 (Dumas's *Monte Cristo* in 1866⁸³ and Sue's *Wandering Jew* in 1867⁸⁴) circulated in Armenian translation slightly later in the 1860s. During the same decade, Hugo's *Les Misérables*⁸⁵ (published in French in 1862) also circulated in Armenian translation, the first time a foreign novel was translated into Armenian less than a decade after its original publication. The interval between the time of the original publication in French and the time of the first translation into Armenian would continue to decrease steadily from the mid-1870s onward, starting with the novels of Jules Verne –such as, for instance, *Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingt jours* (*Around the World in Eighty Days*), published in French in 1873 and in Armenian in 1875⁸⁶, or *Matthias Sandorf*, published in French in 1885 and translated the same year into Armenian⁸⁷. By the end of the century, the vast majority of novels translated into Armenian and published in the Ottoman Empire had been published less than a decade earlier in the original.

In the case of Arabic-scripted Ottoman-Turkish, the early 1870s were the moment when translators decidedly turned to foreign contemporary fiction and concentrated their effort on works imported from France. Dumas' *Count of Monte Cristo* (1844-46) appeared in Ottoman-Turkish translation in 1872⁸⁸ and Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days* was translated in 1875⁸⁹, only

⁸² The third translation published in 1863 was of Victor Hugo's short novel *The Last Day of a Condemned Man* (1829).

⁸³ Dumas. *Koms Mont'ē-K'rist'o* [*The Count of Monte Cristo*]. Izmir: 1866. Translated by D.H. Dedeian.

⁸⁴ Sue. *T'ap'arakan Hreay* [*The Wandering Jew*]. Istanbul: 1867. Translated by Karapet Utudjean, published in installments in the periodical *Masis* and subsequently in book form.

⁸⁵ Hugo. *T'shuarner* [*Les Misérables*]. Izmir: 1868-69. Translated by Krikor Chilinkirean.

⁸⁶ Verne. *Ashkharhi shurje 80 orum* [*Around the World in Eighty Days*]. Izmir: 1875. Translated by Matteos Mamurean.

⁸⁷ Verne. *Mat'ias Santorf*. Istanbul: 1885. Translated by Karapet Utudjean.

⁸⁸ Dumas. *Monte Kristo*. Istanbul: 1872. Translated by the Armenian Teodor Kasap. For all Ottoman-Turkish translations of foreign novels, see entries in Erkul 2012.

two years after its original publication in France, as it had been the case for the Armenian translation of the same novel. The Ottoman-Turkish case was, however, somewhat idiosyncratic in that literary translation *tout court* –or at least the translation of foreign novels- had only begun about a decade earlier in the late 1850s and early 1860s. As a result, the (extremely abridged) translation of Hugo's *Les Misérables* by Münif Paşa⁹⁰ (published in 1862, the same year as the source text) appeared only three years after the very first book-length translation of a foreign novel into Ottoman Turkish, Fénelon's *Télémaque*, translated in 1859 by Yusuf Kamil Paşa⁹² and *before* the first translations of eighteenth century novels such as Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*⁹⁴ (1719), Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*⁹⁵ Rousseau's *Emile*⁹⁶ (1762) As a result, the shift toward contemporary fiction was much less dramatic than in the Greek or Armenian cases, as both novels from the eighteenth century and contemporary works by living authors were all translated around the same time, although the balance ultimately shifted in favor of the second group in the

⁸⁹ Verne. *Seksen Günde Devr-i Alem [Around the World in Eighty Days]*. Istanbul: 1875.

Anonymous translation. See note 15.

⁹⁰ Hugo. *Mağdurin Hikayesi [Les Misérables]*. Istanbul: 1862.

⁹¹ The history of the early reception of Hugo's monumental novel in the Ottoman Empire is quite fascinating and would deserve a study on its own. The first two volumes of the original French novel were published in April 1862. By the end of the same year, a Greek translation (by I. Skylisses) had already appeared in Izmir and Münif Paşa had published his abridged version in Ottoman-Turkish, in Istanbul. Less than a year later, a second Ottoman-Turkish version, composed this time in the Armeno-Turkish script, had been published by Krikor Chilinkirean (or Çilingiryan). Five years later, in 1868 the same Chilinkirean would publish the first Armenian version of the novel, which was retranslated into Ottoman-Turkish (in the Arabic script) by Şemseddin Sami (also know by his Albanian name of Sami Frashëri), the author of one of the earliest original novels in Ottoman-Turkish, *Ta'aşşûk-ı Tal'at ve Fitnât (The Love Between Tal'at and Fitnât, 1872)*.

⁹² Fénelon. *Tercüme-i Telemak [Telemachus' Adventures; literal translation of the title: Translation of Télémaque]*. Istanbul: 1859.

⁹³ Interestingly, as mentioned above, Fénelon's work was also the first foreign novel translated into Armenian, in 1850.

⁹⁴ Defoe. *Hikaye-i Robenson*. Istanbul: 1862. Translated by Ahmet Lütfi Efendi.

⁹⁵ Swift. *Güliver Nam Müellifin Seyahatnamesi*. Istanbul: 1872. Translated by Mahmut Nedim Efendi.

⁹⁶ Rousseau. *Emil*. Istanbul: 1870. Translated by Ziya Paşa.

1880s and most new translations published in the last two decades of the nineteenth century were of contemporary novels.

As was the case for original fiction⁹⁷, Armeno-Turkish⁹⁸ translations of foreign novels started to be published before translations into Arabic-scripted Ottoman-Turkish. Consequently, the turn toward contemporary fiction was perhaps more noticeable in this particular corpus than in the rest of Ottoman-Turkish translations. The first foreign novels to be translated in the early 1850s were Lesage's *Le Diable boiteux*⁹⁹ (*The lame Devil*, 1707) and a work of juvenile fiction translated from German, Christoph von Schmid's *Genovefa*¹⁰⁰ (1810). Eighteenth-century novels –for instance Voltaire's *Micromégas*¹⁰¹ (1752) or Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*¹⁰² (1719)- would occasionally continue to be translated into Armenian-scripted Ottoman-Turkish until the late 1870s, sometimes before their first translation into Arabic-scripted Ottoman-Turkish. However, these older titles would rapidly give way to more recent -and even very contemporary- novels starting in the late 1850s already, with the Armeno-Turkish translation of Sue's *Mysteries of Paris*¹⁰³ (1842-43) in 1858, and continuing from the 1860s and 1870s onward with works by,

⁹⁷ Vartan Paşa (Hovsep Vartanean)'s Armeno-Turkish novel *Akabi Hikâyesi* (*The Story of Akabi*) was published in 1851, more than two decades before Şemseddin Sami's *Ta'aşşûk-ı Tal'at ve Fitnât* (*The Love Between Tal'at and Fitnât*, 1872), long thought to be the first Turkish novel.

⁹⁸ Publications labelled as "Armeno-Turkish" were books composed in the Ottoman-Turkish language but printed using the Armenian alphabet.

⁹⁹ Lesage. *Topal Şeytan* [*Le Diable boiteux*]. Istanbul: 1853. Translated by Hovsep Vartanean (the author of *Akabi Hikâyesi*). For all Armeno-Turkish translations of foreign novels, see entries in Stepanyan 2005.

¹⁰⁰ Schmid. *Yenoveva*. Istanbul: 1855. Anonymous translation.

¹⁰¹ Voltaire. *Mikromega*. Istanbul: 1869. Translated by C. Aramean.

¹⁰² Defoe. *Robenson Hikaye-i* [*History of Robinson*]. Istanbul: 1879. Translated by Hripsime Topalean (one of the first women translators in the Ottoman Empire).

¹⁰³ Sue. *Paris'in Sırları* [*Les Mystères de Paris*]. Istanbul: 1858. Translation attributed to Garabed Panosean.

among many others, Montépin (*Les Filles de plâtres* [*The Plaster Girls*¹⁰⁴], 1855) and Verne (*Les Aventures du Capitaine Hatteras* [*The Adventures of Captain Hatteras*¹⁰⁵], 1866).

By far the smallest with less than 20 publications before 1900, the corpus of *karamanlidika*¹⁰⁶ translations of foreign novels nevertheless presented strikingly similar patterns. Although two novels (Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*¹⁰⁷ and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*¹⁰⁸) had been published in Greek-scripted Ottoman-Turkish in the early 1850s, the bulk of the *karamanlidika* translation activities was to take place in the last two decades of the century, which saw, on average, the publication of one new translated per year until the mid-1890s. This second phase of *karamanlidika* translations of foreign novels started with Dumas' *Count of Monte Cristo*¹⁰⁹ (1844-46) and included authors and works also translated in other languages of the Ottoman Empire during the same period. All of these translations were of French texts originally published after 1840 –with the exception of Fénelon's *Télémaque*, published somewhat late in *karamanlidika*¹¹⁰– and included novels by a small roster of authors, primarily Eugène Sue (with

¹⁰⁴ Montépin. *Tucdan Kızları* [*The Plaster Girls*]. Istanbul: 1863. Translated by Garabed Panosean.

¹⁰⁵ Verne. *Kaptan Hateras'ın Sergüzeşti* [*The Adventures of Captain Hatteras*]. Istanbul: 1877. Translated by Hovhannes Gugasean.

¹⁰⁶ Publications labelled as "*karamanlidika*" were books composed in the Ottoman-Turkish language but printed using the Greek alphabet.

¹⁰⁷ Heliodorus of Emesa. *Θεαγένης βε Χαρίκλεια* [*Theagenes and Chariclea*; also know as *Ta Aethiopica*]. Istanbul: 1851. Translated by Ioannis Lazarides. For all Armeno-Turkish translations of foreign novels, see entries in the *karamanlidika* bibliographies (Sallaville and Dalleggio 1958 and 1974, additions in Balta 1987), as well as the appendix of the present work.

¹⁰⁸ Defoe. *Ρομπινσόν Κρούσοϋ χικιαγεσί* [*Story of Robinson Crusoe*]. Istanbul: 1853. Translated by Dimitraki Hadjiefraim.

¹⁰⁹ Dumas. *Μοντέ Χρίστο* [*The Count of Monte Cristo*]. Istanbul: 1882. Anonymous translation, perhaps by Evangelinos Misaelides or one of his associates.

¹¹⁰ Fénelon. *Σεργκιουζεστ-ι Τελεμάκ* [*The Adventures of Telemachus*]. Istanbul: 1887. Translated by Pavlos Misaelides.

three works, including one possible pseudepigraph¹¹¹, but not, strangely, *The Mysteries of Paris* or *The Wandering Jew*), and Xavier de Montépin (with six translations, a third of all *karamanlidika* translations of foreign novels¹¹²).

Finally, the case of Ladino translations of foreign novels¹¹³ was somewhat idiosyncratic in that the corpus, relatively small until the early twentieth century, included a few works not translated into other languages of the Ottoman Empire and chosen for their Jewish themes¹¹⁴¹⁵. In addition, it would be exaggerated to speak of a translational shift toward contemporary fiction in the Sephardic case in that pre-nineteenth-century fiction had not been translated at all into Ladino when the first translations of novels started to appear in the mid-1870s¹¹⁶. However, when a few translators primarily based in Istanbul started to import foreign novels on a more

¹¹¹ The work titled *Πρενσέζ Ατζόλ* (*Princess Anjol*) does not correspond to any of Sue's novels, to whom it is nevertheless attributed on the cover page of the *karamanlidika* edition.

Sue (attributed to). *Πρενσέζ Ατζόλ*. Istanbul: 1892.

¹¹² See list in appendix.

¹¹³ To this day, there exists no exhaustive bibliography of Ladino book publications, be they original works or translations. In order to establish a tentative list of the Ladino translations of foreign novels, I have consulted the online catalogues of the five largest collections of Ladino materials (Hebrew National Library, Yeshiva University Library, Harvard University Library, Library of Congress, Stanford University Library)

¹¹⁴ For instance, a translation (apparently based on a Hebrew translation) of *Hispania und Jerusalem* (1848) by German rabbi Ludwig Philippson, a work of historical fiction dealing with Iberian Jews in the Middle Ages. See Philippson. *Espania y Yerushalaim; o Ibn Ezra y Julda la ija de Rabi Yehudah Halevi. Romano istoriko. [Hispania and Jerusalem, or Ibn Ezra and Julda, daughter of Rabbi Yehudah Halevi. Historical romance]*. Istanbul: 1887. Translated by David Fresko.

¹¹⁵ The trend would continue in the 1900 with the translation into Ladino of specifically Zionist works, such as Theodor Herzl's utopian novel *Altneuland* (*The Old New Land*, 1902). See Herzl. *Vieja-nueva tierra [Old-New Land]*. Plovdiv, Bulgaria: 1908.

¹¹⁶ It appears that, once the Ladino market for translated fiction became more consolidated, Sephardic translators attempted to translate a few earlier novels, from the eighteenth century or the early nineteenth century. See for instance Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *Pol y Virjini [Paul et Virginie]* Istanbul: 1901. Anonymous translation, perhaps by Benjamin Re'fael Ben Yosef (Rodrigue 1990). On this and one other Ladino version of *Paul et Virginie*, see chapter 4. See also Goethe. *Verter, romanso muy renomado [Die Leiden des jungen Werthers; literal translation of the title: Verter, very famous novel]*. Thessaloniki: 1906. Translated by David Bezes (Besso catalogue, n.205).

regular basis in the 1880s, the works they selected where, as it was the case for the other communities, almost exclusively modern and contemporary French novels and, as for *karamanlidika* translations, the most popular authors until the end of the century were Eugène Sue (with two novels translated¹¹⁷, this time only *The Mysteries of Paris* and *The Wandering Jew*) and Xavier de Montépin (with three translations). Further attesting to the integration of Sephardic translation activities into the broader, trans-communal Ottoman context, some of these translated novels were printed, in the *rashi* script¹¹⁸, using Greek¹¹⁹- or Armenian-owned¹²⁰ presses.

Despite the fact that the translation of foreign novels did not start at the exact same time in all of the literary communities of the late Ottoman Empire, translation trends in each of them did eventually become aligned and the focus on contemporary fiction, mostly imported from France, was general by the 1880s. Thus, a novel like Xavier de Montépin's *Simone et Marie*, published in France in 1883, had circulated in Istanbul in no fewer than six different translations (Greek, Armenian, Armeno-Turkish, Ottoman-Turkish, *karamanlidika*, and Ladino¹²¹) by 1890 (fig. 2). It is therefore possible to say that, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the

¹¹⁷ *The Mysteries of Paris* was (probably) the first novel translated into Ladino and published in book form. Sue. *Mistère Paris, ke kere dizir las enkuvierturas de Paris* [*The Mysteries of Paris*; literal translation of the title: "Mistère Paris," that is *The Secrets of Paris*]. Thessaloniki (?): 1876. Translated by Eliau Moshe ben Nahmias and David Yosef Saporta. The novel was retranslated later: Sue. *Los misterios de Paris*. Istanbul: 1891. Translated by David Fresko. See also Sue. *El erante* [*The Wandering Jew*; literal translation of the title *The Wanderer*]. Istanbul: 1896. Translated by Victor Levy.

¹¹⁸ The so-called *rashi* script was the modified version of the Hebrew alphabet used in print by Sephardic Jews before the generalized adoption of the Roman script in the 1920s for the printing of Ladino texts.

¹¹⁹ See for instance Montépin. *Las muchachas de bronza* [*Les Filles de bronze*]. Istanbul: 1894. Translated by Victor Lévy and printed by the Numismatides press.

¹²⁰ See for instance Belot, Adolphe. *Tres mansevos a gravatas blankas* [*Les Cravates blanches*]. Istanbul: 1895. Translated by David Ben Shelomoh and printed by the press of Garabed Biberean.

¹²¹ For the details of each of these translations, see relevant lists in the appendix.

various groups that composed the fragmented late Ottoman literary landscape were at least united as to the practice of literary translation and formed together a sort of trans-communal translational community, particularly invested in the importation of contemporary fiction from Western Europe.

b) The advent of the contemporary

Interestingly, this turn to contemporary fiction, so clearly perceptible in all of the various Ottoman literary communities in the second half of the nineteenth century, was not limited to that particular space but, on the contrary, mirrored similar mutations in the editorial fields of other locales, in particular in Western Europe. An analysis of nineteenth-century French best seller lists indicates for instance a progressive –and increasingly massive- turn of the reading public toward works of contemporary fiction, at the expense of older, more canonical works which had dominated the market in the first half of the century¹²². Such a trend should not, of

¹²² See, for instance, the tables compiled by Martin Lyons (Lyons 1987: 76-104), which cross-reference data from the national French bibliography (*Bibliographie de la France*) with nineteenth-century printers' reports in the French National Archives. As emphasized by Lyons himself (79-80), both of these sources are only partially reliable: the *Bibliographie de la France* ceased to provide exact figures for print runs after 1813, whereas printers' report often indicated expected, rather than actual sales figures. However, while the exact figures are therefore subject to the necessary caution, the general picture emerging from these tables remains largely valid.

Fig. 2

Comparative table of the first translations of important French novels into Greek, Armenian, Ottoman-Turkish (in the Arabic, Armenian, and Greek scripts), and Ladino.

Novel	French	Greek	Armenian	Ottoman-Turkish	Armeno-Turkish	Karamanli	Ladino
Sue, <i>Les Mystères de Paris</i>	1842-43	1845	1863	1889	1858	Not translated	1876
Dumas, <i>Le Comte de Monte Cristo</i>	1844-46	1845	1866	1872	1882	1882	Not translated
Hugo, <i>Les Misérables</i>	1862	1862	1868	1862	1863	Not translated	Not translated
Montépin, <i>Simone et Marie</i>	1883	1883	1884	1889	1885	1890	1889
Montépin, <i>La Porteuse de pain</i>	1884	1886	Not translated	1889	1886	1885	1895
First translation of Jules Verne	N/A	1871 (<i>De la Terre à la Lune</i>)	1875 (<i>Tour du monde</i>)	1875 (<i>Tour du monde</i>)	1877 (<i>Hatteras</i>)	No translation	1890 (<i>Michel Strogoff</i>)

course, be interpreted to mean that contemporary literature –and, in particular, the contemporary novel- was not being read in France prior to this publishing shift. Indeed, the fact that print runs were lower for new titles than they were for reprints of older texts is not in the least an indication that the former struggled to capture the attention of the reading public entirely. What it suggests, however, is that, in the first decades of the nineteenth century, the French book market was still a relatively slow-moving one, in which mass consumption was almost exclusively centered on time-tried works that enjoyed, through multiple reprints, a particularly long "shelf life." As a brief survey of the best-selling books up to the 1850s indicates, this particular articulation of the market, which prevailed in the first quarter of the century, was in sharp contrast with the new reality that would emerge in later decades, when contemporary literature –or at least a portion thereof- would gradually turn into a mass-produced commodity.

Until 1825, the works that dominated the French best-seller lists were almost exclusively composed by authors who died before the French Revolution (Molière, Racine, La Fontaine, Perrault, Fénelon, Rousseau, Voltaire) or shortly thereafter but, in any case, before 1800 (Florian, Barthélémy). Among the twenty best-selling authors of the first decade of the Bourbon Restoration (1814-1825), only two (Sophie Cottin and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre) died after 1800 (in 1807 and 1814 respectively) and their presence at the top of the best seller lists was due to works that they had published in the 1780s and 1790s and that were still popular in the first decades of the following century. In parallel, popular authors of the seventeenth century (Molière, Racine, La Fontaine, Perrault) remained, over a century after their death, very largely present on the publishing market in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, selling more copies than any living author -and more even than many equally canonical names of the French

seventeenth-century¹²³. In terms of genre, before the mid-1820s, the novel was not entirely absent from best seller lists but, with the exception of Sophie Cottin's *Claire d'Albe* (1798) and Bernardin de Saint Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* (1788), the best-selling examples of the genre were all at least a century old: Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605-15), Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Lesage's *Gil Blas* (1715-35), Fénelon's *Adventures of Telemachus* (1699). Overall, the French book market remained, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, largely shaped by a conception of reading as a morally beneficial and edifying activity, rather than as a leisurely one. Until the mid-1820s, the vast majority of the best-selling texts were works that, in one way or another, purported to teach something (be it Catholic values, the geography of the classical Western world, or some more general moral message) to their predominantly young readers: between 1811 and 1825, works like Fleury's *Catéchisme historique* (at least 117 000 copies), Massillon's *Petit Carême* (64 000), Fénelon's *Telemachus* (110 000), Barthélémy's *Anacharsis* (40 000), Perrault's *Fairy Tales* (52 000) and, above all, La Fontaine's *Fables* (178 000) dominated the top of the best-seller lists¹²⁴.

French book sale trends started to evolve in the 1820s and these mutations were most acutely felt in the second half of the decade. For the first time since the beginning of the nineteenth-century (and quite possibly, in fact, for much longer than that, although print runs are more difficult to calculate for earlier periods), the best-selling author of the period was a living person. In spite of his opposition to –and subsequent persecution by– the Bourbon regime, poet Pierre-Jean de Béranger sold up to 160 000 copies of his collected *Chansons* between 1826 and 1830, surpassing Fénelon's *Telemachus* and La Fontaine's *Fables* whose print runs and number

¹²³ Lyons: 76-85; table 1, 2, and 3.

¹²⁴ Lyons: 76-85; table 1, 2, and 3.

of editions nevertheless remained steady¹²⁵. Of more direct relevance here is the fact that, in the span of the same five-year period, one of the very few other living authors selling more than 10 000 copies in France was a novelist, Sir Walter Scott, whose four most successful titles in France (*Ivanhoe*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, and *The Abbot*) were printed in about 20 000 copies each –a very impressive number for contemporary literature, at a time when Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* still sold an average of 10 000 copies per year¹²⁶.

In the half-decade that immediately followed the 1830 July Revolution, two other novels penned by living authors, this time both Frenchmen, were successful enough to be included on the best seller lists for the years 1831 to 1835. With respectively eight and five editions, each selling up to 14 000 copies¹²⁷, Victor Hugo with his *Notre Dame de Paris* (1831), as well as Paul de Kock with his *Le Cocu* (*The Cuckold*, 1831) were the first French novelists to achieve such commercial success in their lifetime –and at a relatively young age (both were below the age of forty in 1831). Yet, although the sales for both novels were unprecedented for the genre and the period, *Notre Dame de Paris* and *Le Cocu* still sold a significantly lower number of copies in the five years after their original publication than several novels of the eighteenth century which continued to be printed in impressively large numbers in the 1830s: Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* had, for instance, fewer editions than *Notre Dame de Paris* between 1831 and 1835, yet sold more than twice as many copies as Hugo's novel; during the same period, Bernardin de

¹²⁵ Lyons: 86; table 4.

¹²⁶ Lyons: 86; table 4. For an analytical table of Scott's French print runs until 1851, see also Lyons: 132-34; table 10. Translated into French as early as 1816, Scott's sales were, at first, relatively modest and the initial print runs did not exceed 1000 copies, the standard figure for first editions of novels during the early Restoration (Lyons: 128). After 1826, however, fueled by the demand of the increasingly popular *cabinets de lecture* (reading rooms), some of Scott's novels (both newly-translated and reprinted titles) would be printed in 2000, 4000, 6000 and even 9000 copies each. Since the bulk of these copies were sold to *cabinets de lecture*, each of them was potentially read by dozens of readers.

¹²⁷ Lyons: 87; table 5.

Saint Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* had the same number of editions as *Notre Dame de Paris* (8) but the average print run for these was more than twice that of Hugo's work¹²⁸.

The commercial success of a novel like *Notre Dame de Paris* indicated a certain convergence between the taste of the general reading public and recent reorientations of the intellectual and literary field (such as the advent of a new generation of Romantic authors in France). However, although the unprecedented sales of such a work paved the way for the subsequent rise of the popular novel as a mass-consumed commodity, only at the beginning of the next decade would such a shift truly occur. First serialized in the *Journal des débats* between June 1842 and October 1843 and published in book form shortly thereafter, Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* (*The Mysteries of Paris*) carved a new space for contemporary fiction in the French literary field of the nineteenth century. If the overnight, smashing success of the work has acquired somewhat of a mythical dimension and the images of thousands of avid readers anxiously awaiting to find out what fate –or the author- had in store for the novel's colorful and relatable characters have been somewhat romanticized in the historiography of nineteenth-century French prose, a close look at sales numbers for both *Les Mystères de Paris* and Sue's subsequent novel *Le Juif errant* (*The Wandering Jew*, 1844-45) confirms the extent to which the publication of these works constituted an important shift in the French book market.

Until the 1851 coup d'état, which brought an end to the Second Republic and forced the staunchly Republican Sue into exile, the combined sales of his most successful novels in book form (in addition to the aforementioned *Mystères de Paris* and *Juif errant*, one could cite *Les Sept Péchés capitaux*, as well as *Les Mystères du peuple*) possibly reached 150 000 copies, not counting the many unauthorized editions printed in Belgium and illegally imported into the

¹²⁸ Lyons: *ibid.*

French market¹²⁹. Along with those of Alexandre Dumas, whose novels *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* (*The Count of Monte Cristo*, 1844) and *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (*The Three Musketeers*, 1844) also played a crucial part in the massive commercial success of popular prose fiction from the early 1840s onward, Eugène Sue's novels inaugurated a new phase in the editorial history of the genre in France and signaled the new place acquired by contemporary creation in a literary market where novels increasingly functioned as lucrative commodities.

This survey of French publishing trends in the first half of the nineteenth century –and, in particular, of the increasing commercial success of popular novels from the early 1840s onward– serves to highlight a parallel phenomenon at play in Greek translation trends during the same period. In other words, the Greek *translational shift* of the mid-1840s mirrors the French *editorial shift* that began with the success of Walter Scott in the 1820s, continued with that of Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* in the early 1830s, and culminated with the massive sales of novels by Sue and Dumas starting in the early 1840s. In both cases, a specific area of the cultural sphere at large (the book market as a whole in the case of France, the market for translated literature in the case of the Greek-speaking world) experienced a rapid mutation that led to the influx, on a massive scale, of works pertaining to a specific type of literature (contemporary prose fiction, both original and translated). There is no doubt that, in both cases, such a shift was ultimately the result of deep social, economic, and cultural changes beyond the literary field itself; yet, it is important to note that this relatively abrupt reorientation of the publishing industry was precipitated by the unprecedented success of a select few works –original in the French case, translated in the Greek one– which happened to be largely the same ones (primarily Eugène Sue and Alexandre Dumas) in both contexts.

¹²⁹ Lyons: 91-93; tables 6 and 7.

As highlighted earlier in this chapter, the mid-1840s (and, specifically, the year 1845) has been identified as a pivotal moment in the history of the modern Greek book market in that it witnessed the almost simultaneous publication, in Greek translation, of a number of contemporary French novels –notably of Dumas' *Count of Monte Cristo* and of Sue's *Mysteries of Paris*- whose publication in book form in the original French had taken place no more than a year or two earlier, in sharp contrast with previous translation efforts, largely focused on much earlier works of European fiction. After the 1840s, while pre-1845 translations of works from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries continued to be reprinted occasionally in the Greek world¹³⁰, the overall dominant patterns in the field of translated literature were that of an increasing domination of contemporary novels and, as a corollary, that of a gradual reduction of the chronological gap between original publication and Greek translation.

The French editorial shift should not, however, be compared to the Greek translational shift of the same period without some caution. In particular, it is important to point out that, if the two shifts happened in parallel and did present some striking similarities, we are, in fact, in the presence of two very distinct phenomena, beyond the simple fact that the one primarily included original works while the other one was exclusively related to translation. On the one hand, the French editorial shift was largely *quantitative*: between 1835 and 1845 approximately, a specific genre (the contemporary *popular* novel) became a mass-produced and mass-consumed commodity. In the Greek case, the translational shift is above all *qualitative*: a specific genre (the contemporary *foreign* novel), previously almost entirely absent from the market for translated literature, suddenly entered the market in question and participated in its expansion.

¹³⁰ See for instance, in 1885, a new translation of Sophie Cottin's *Malvina* (1801), already translated twice, in the 1840s and 1860s. (Cottin. *H Μαλβίνα*. Athens: 1885. Anonymous translation) or a retranslation of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul and Virginie* in 1893 (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *Παύλος και Βιργινία*. Athens: 1893. Translated by A.G. Skalides).

Furthermore, the Greek translational shift is to be understood as distinct from the French editorial shift precisely because it cannot (or at least not easily) be apprehended quantitatively. It is, of course, quite likely that, had the first Greek translations of Dumas' *Count of Monte-Cristo* or Sue's *Mysteries of Paris* gone entirely unnoticed, the overall influx of French popular literature into the Greek market might have been slower and more limited than it turned out to be in the second half of the century. Yet, it is impossible to extrapolate, from the sheer number of novels translated into Greek, the number of their readers. In fact, while it is, to some extent, possible to determine the size of the French readership of a specific author or novel, in the Greek case the absence of any data regarding print runs in nineteenth-century bibliographies and the probably irretrievable loss of any printer's records for the period makes a similar endeavor a particularly difficult, if not entirely unattainable task. In other words, while the quasi-hegemonic presence of translated Western novels in the Greek-Ottoman book market of the second half of the century can be aptly described as a "mass phenomenon" in the sense that a very large number of these works were in circulation during the period, one ought to be careful not to extend this characterization automatically from books to readers and assume that these translations were consumed by the masses. While, in the French case, it possible to document the demographic expansion of the reading public throughout the period, it might very well be that, when we talk about the Greek-Ottoman readership of translated literature in the nineteenth century, we are in fact dealing with a relatively small audience accounting for only a fraction of the Greek-Ottoman urban population, which indeed consumed a significantly larger number of translated novels around in the late nineteenth century than it did a few decades earlier but did not necessarily dramatically increase in size itself.

Yet, despite this necessary caveat, one can retain from the comparison of the mutations of the French publishing field with the reorientation of Greek translation trends after 1845 the important notion of a parallel *opening* of both markets to new types of fiction, which gradually became invested with a new form of currency. Overall, what a comparative analysis of both the French and the Greek literary fields indicates is that, in both contexts, a new conception of literature seems to have emerged during the same period, in distinct yet parallel ways. As evidenced by best seller lists, the French literary market under the Bourbon Restoration and the July Monarchy remained, from the perspective of book history – rather than from that of literary history and esthetics- still largely conditioned by a generalized cultural affinity with authors and texts of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In other words, the production, sale, and consumption of books remained aligned with a form of national literary canon that included works whose cultural capital accrued over time. However, starting in the 1830s and early 1840s, the parallel emergence, notably through the rapid expansion of the press, of a mediatic culture more massive than ever before allowed new types of books to be produced and consumed on a very large scale. These "new books", among which the popular novel occupied a particularly prominent position, did not entirely replace the "old books" which had until then been by far the most widely printed: as Martin Lyons points out, La Fontaine (and not, for instance, Jules Verne or Eugène Sue) was by far the most widely read author in France throughout the nineteenth century¹³¹. Yet the works whose success marked what I have called the *editorial shift* of the 1830s and 1840s, the novels of Eugène Sue, Alexandre Dumas, and of their numerous imitators, did signal an important change in that they did not enter the book market thanks to their cultural capital –which was close to nil, as evidenced by the famously harsh characterization of Sainte-

¹³¹ Lyons: 96

Beuve, the leading literary critic of the time, who coined the term *littérature industrielle* to define this type of production¹³². On the contrary, these novels generated a more strictly economic form of capital for their authors and publishers alike.

The question of the economic capital of the new types of texts that entered the market through translation and precipitated what I have defined as the *translational shift* is also, to an extent, relevant to a discussion of Greek publishing trends. After all, the prevalence on the Greek market of translated novels, primarily imported from France, after 1845 is a clear indicator that, regardless of the actual size of their readership, the printing and sale of foreign prose must have been a profitable venture, to a much larger degree than the publication of domestic fiction. As evidenced by the fact that a fairly small number of translators in Istanbul and Izmir was responsible for a quite large translational output –in terms of both the number of translated titles and their often extraordinarily large word count, since many of the imported novels were long, multi-volume works - it appears plausible that these individuals must have secured enough income from their work as translators to be able to devote an important part of their time to it. In addition, it must be noted that the rise of literary translation as a cultural practice took place in a socio-economic context that witnessed the rise of a Greek mercantile bourgeoisie in the larger urban centers of the Ottoman Empire and that this class, whose economic status was in the process of being consolidated, is likely to have constituted the bulk of the readership of imported novels.

Yet, a particular attention to scale is crucial when comparing French and Greek publishing trends and discussing the role played by economic capital in both contexts. While it is clear that the creation and circulation of economic capital cannot be completely disentangled

¹³² Sainte-Beuve: 1839.

from an analysis of the Greek translational shift of the 1840s, the scale of the Greek book market (both locally in the Ottoman Empire and globally in the Greek Kingdom and across the Diaspora) remained decidedly smaller than its French counterpart, even proportionally to the population. As a consequence, regardless of the amount of economic capital generated by the circulation of prose fiction, the fledgling Greek publishing sphere never reached the truly industrial level of production of its French counterpart during the same period. Another important element distinguished the two markets and must be taken into account when comparing the French editorial shift and the contemporaneous Greek translational shift. Unlike the French literary field, the Greek one could be defined, in terms of its position within the dense network of nineteenth-century transnational literary exchanges, as a so-called dominated field which imported foreign texts to an infinitely higher degree than it exported its domestic production abroad and where translation of works from so-called dominant literatures was thus called play a particularly important cultural role. A special attention to this particular feature is crucial to understanding the nature of the Greek translational shift of the 1840s and appreciating the radicalism of the redefinition of the literary that it facilitated. Up until the mid-1840s, translation of foreign literature into Greek was largely conceived as a way to make available in Greek works usually published in the original language of their composition several decades –if not entire centuries- prior and recognized as highly canonical in the West. Consciously or not, this effort played into a general movement aimed at bringing the fledgling nation closer to the culture of Western European polities assumed to be the repository of literary taste. What changed after 1845, the year contemporary Western prose fiction started to be translated en masse into Greek, was that the vast majority of imported works were not, as was previously the case, texts by authors of a more or less distant past selected for translation due to a prestige accrued over

time and exclusively based on their literary or at least moral merit. In the second half of the nineteenth century, texts imported from the West into the Greek literary field were primarily works penned by living authors not chosen for their (largely non-existent) canonicity but solely due to their often very recent commercial success. We see in that evolution of translation trends how the shift of the 1840s revealed a transformation of the type of materials that were perceived, in the Greek market, as deserving translation. By extension, such a change underlined evolving notions of what constituted foreign literature from the Greek perspective: "literariness" (and, therefore, "translatability") was, after 1845, a characteristic not only bestowed upon texts of the past but also, if not more, a trait elaborated in the present moment and discernible in works that acquired in parallel the status of commodities.

The 1845 Greek translational shift was thus both a temporal and an esthetic one. The overall turn to contemporary fiction and the progressive reduction of the gap between original publication and Greek translation signaled a dramatic acceleration of the literary exchanges between Western Europe and the Greek-speaking world. Looking at these exchanges from the vantage point of literary translation (and in particular from that of prose fiction), I argue, going against the grain of accounts that emphasize the presumed belatedness of the Greek literary field vis-a-vis Western modernity, that *rapidity*, such as the one with which the novel reached the Greek world after its original publication, was in fact a defining characteristic of the literary commerce of the Greek-speaking world with Western Europe. While there existed of course exceptions to this pattern, the fact that, in the second half of the century, certain foreign novels were translated into Greek very shortly after –or even, in a few particularly striking cases, *before*

their original publication in book form¹³³ - is, I believe, indicative of how the notion that the so-called periphery "caught up" with the literature produced in the so-called center only slowly and belatedly deserves to be recontextualized and significantly amended.

In addition to this question of temporality, the Greek translational shift must also be analyzed in an effort to bring to light the evolving notion of cultural capital that it inaugurated. Indeed, this sudden turn to contemporary fiction after 1845 highlights the fact that, in the Greek literary field, this type of currency started to be conferred upon very contemporary works, thereby turning them into products worthy of translation. In an even more radical fashion, it also constituted a new form of critical engagement with canonicity as defined in the West where these works originated since the texts that would be so massively translated into Greek in the second half of the century could precisely make no claim at such canonical importance in their original environment.

In sum, there are two, partially overlapping ways to make sense of the parallels that existed between the French editorial shift and the contemporaneous Greek translational shift,

¹³³ Such was the case of, for instance, Xavier de Montépin's *La Porteuse de pain* (*The Bread Seller*, 1884), one of the great bestsellers of the late nineteenth century, translated very rapidly in a variety of Ottoman languages (fig. 2): the first volume of the Greek translation was published in 1894, while the French book edition of the novel, originally published in installments, only came out the year after. Interestingly, the novel had also pre-circulated in the Greek press (in the newspaper *Konstantinopolis*) that same year: it is therefore very likely that the installments were translated into Greek and published in Istanbul no more than a few months, or even weeks, after their original publication in the French press. (Greek translation: Montépin. *Η αρτοπώλις*. Istanbul: 1884-85. Anonymous translation). Although it concerns Athens and not Istanbul, the case of the translation of Zola's *Nana* (1879-80) also speaks volumes about the rapidity with which Western European novels were translated into Greek in the late nineteenth century. The original publication of the novel in installments started on October 16th, 1879 in the French newspaper *Le Voltaire*. The first installment of the Greek translation (by Ioannis Kambouroglou, who initially remained anonymous) was published in the newspaper *Rampagas* less than a month later, on November 8th. The publication of the novel created such an uproar in Greece that the serialization was interrupted after only eleven installments, on December 6th, exactly two months before the serial publication of the novel concluded in France.

despite the important differences highlighted above. On the one hand, a comparison of the publishing trends in France and in the Greek-speaking world in the first half of the nineteenth century can serve to underscore how prodigiously attuned the latter gradually became to literary trends –both the success of certain works or genres and overall rearticulations of the publishing field such as the growing success of contemporary fiction- as they developed in the former. In parallel, a comparison focusing on the defining characteristics shared by both shifts in spite of their differences -in particular the fact that they happened almost simultaneously and both enacted a turn toward contemporary works, original or translated- is useful for countering, to an extent, the narratives that emphasize the supposed literary belatedness of the so-called periphery, perceived as a passive receptacle of a literary modernity defined at the so-called center.

c) The rise of the popular

As the comparison of nineteenth-century French publishing trends with Greek translation trends during the same period has shown, both literary markets were characterized not only by the increasing popularity of contemporary literature, but also by the advent of "popular literature," a term which requires some explanation. In France and in French and Francophone Studies at large, the issue of defining popular literature has been an almost constant concern since the field became a topic of inquiry for literary criticism in the 1960s and 1970s, as evidenced by the variety of the competing terms (*litterature industrielle*, *littérature de masse*, the now-outdated *paralittérature*, etc.) that have been proposed over time to label it¹³⁴. In the context of this work, I use the notion of "popular literature" –or that of "popular novel"- to define

¹³⁴ For an overview of these debates in French Studies, see Compère 2012: 13-17.

nineteenth-century literary works that were both produced and consumed on a massive scale. In that respect, the popular novel was a product born out of the "media era" of French literature, inaugurated by the rapid development of the daily press that took place, on an unprecedented scale, in the 1830s¹³⁵. To use the terminology employed by Pierre Bourdieu in his seminal work *Les Règles de l'art*, the construction of "popular literature" as a distinct category was premised upon the gradual organization of the French literary sphere along an axis separating two distinct fields, a "small" one primarily invested in the production of esthetically valuable works (*champ de production restreinte*), and a "large" one (*champ de grande production*), mostly interested in literature as a commercial product¹³⁶. Therefore, the idea of popular literature is not, in itself, a generic marker but serves to identify works pertaining to a particular literary "domain"¹³⁷. As for the so-called urban mysteries (*romans de mystères*), they constituted one of the many different genres belonging to this realm.

Before analyzing the reasons that might have led to this rise of popular fiction on both the French and Greek-Ottoman literary market, it is useful to survey briefly the most salient figures in the field and provide an outline of their Greek reception in the Ottoman Empire. Although it would be incorrect to describe him as the sole inventor of the popular novel, a category that emerged gradually and organically integrated existing features of Western European novel-writing into new social and geographic settings, the importance of Eugène Sue's work in redefining the field and participating in its expansion in the mid-nineteenth century cannot be overstated. With 131 book-length translations (including reprints) between 1845 and 1900,

¹³⁵ On the concept of "media era" (*ère médiatique*), see Thérenty and Vaillant 2001.

¹³⁶ Bourdieu 1992.

¹³⁷ Compère 2011: 11.

Eugène Sue (1804-1857¹³⁸) was the second most popular foreign author in the Greek world during the nineteenth-century after Alexandre Dumas and almost one out of every twenty translated books published during the period, regardless of genre, was one of his novels¹³⁹. As mentioned earlier, Sue's massive presence in Greek in the Ottoman Empire started with the translation of his two most famous works, *The Mysteries of Paris* and *The Wandering Jew*, both in 1845-46 and both in Smyrna, translated by I. Skylisses and G. Rodokanakes respectively. These first two Greek translations were reprinted on several occasions until the end of the century and were followed, in the Ottoman Empire, by the translation of several other of Sue's novels, including the entire series of novels titled *Les Sept Péchés capitaux*¹⁴⁰ (*The Seven Deadly Sins*, 1847-1852), as well as some isolated *romans de mœurs* such as *Mathilde: Mémoires d'une jeune fille*¹⁴¹ (*Mathilde: A Young Girl's Memoirs*, 1841) and a few of his early works of maritime fiction such as *Atar-Gull*¹⁴² (1831).

Although his work has since then fallen into an almost absolute obscurity, Xavier de Montépin (1829-1902) was one of the most popular authors of French popular literature in the late nineteenth century. His fame was particularly great in the Ottoman Empire, as evidenced by the fact that some of his most famous novels were translated into virtually every Ottoman

¹³⁸ For an overview of Sue's life, see Galvan 2004.

¹³⁹ Kasines 2006: 19

¹⁴⁰ The first Greek translations did not follow the order of the original French publication and started with the fourth novel, *La Luxure: Madeleine (Lust: Madeleine, 1848)*: Sue. *Η Λαγνεία, ή Μαγδαληνή*. Izmir: 1848. Translated by I. Skylisses. This first Greek edition of the series concluded with *L'Envie: Frédérik Bastien (Greed: Frédérik Bastien, 1848)*, originally the second novel in the series: Sue. *Ο Φθόνος*. Izmir: 1853. Translated by I. Skylisses. The entire series would be reprinted at least twice in the Ottoman Empire, in 1870-72 and 1889-90. For all Greek translations of foreign novels, see entries in Kasines 2006, as well as the appendix of the present work.

¹⁴¹ Sue. *Μαθίλδη. Αμπομνημονεύματα νεάνιδος υπάνδρου*. Izmir: 1846. Translated by I. Skylisses.

¹⁴² Sue. *Αταρ Γκιούλ, ή Ο Άπιστος Δούλος*. Izmir: 1860. Anonymous translation.

language in the 1880s and 1890s¹⁴³ (fig.2). Montépin came third, after Dumas and Sue, in terms of the number of Greek translations published during the nineteenth century¹⁴⁴. Most of these were published in the Ottoman Empire rather than in Greece, starting with *La Baladine*¹⁴⁵ (*The Female Comedian*, 1851), soon to be followed by over thirty translations of Montépin's melodramatic novels.

Equally forgotten today, but extremely popular in the late nineteenth century, Emile Richebourg (1833-1898) and Jules Mary (1851-1922) belonged to the same category of highly melodramatic fiction represented by Montépin. Richebourg's works achieved considerable success under the Third Republic, when they were serialized in the conservative daily *Le Petit Journal*, the newspaper with the largest readership in France until the First World War. His novels were very quickly translated into Greek, first in Athens in the late 1870s, but after that primarily in the Ottoman Empire, starting with a translation of his most famous novel, *L'Enfant du faubourg*¹⁴⁶ (*The Child of the Faubourg*, 1876) followed by numerous others in Istanbul and Izmir, often reprinted in Cairo and Alexandria, until the beginning of the twentieth century. The innumerable novels published by Jules Mary in the French popular press between the late 1870s and early 1920s granted him the title of *roi des feuilletonistes* (king of serial writers). Mary's exploitative treatment of the topic of urban poverty, a form of bastardized naturalism, made him immensely popular both in France and abroad, including in the Ottoman Empire where the first translations of his work started to appear in the early 1880s, with *La Faute du Docteur*

¹⁴³ Montépin's extraordinary success in translation seems to have been, to some extent, specific to the Ottoman Empire –or at least to south and southeastern Europe: I have found very few records of English or German translations of his novels published in book form in the nineteenth century.

¹⁴⁴ See Kasines 2006: 19.

¹⁴⁵ Montépin. *Η Αθηγγανίς* [*The Female Comedian*; literal translation of the title: *The Gypsy Woman*]. Istanbul: 1868. Translated by N. Destunianos.

¹⁴⁶ Richebourg. *Το Παιδί του Προαστείου*. Istanbul: 1881. Translated by I.A. Vretos.

*Madelor*¹⁴⁷ (*Doctor Madelor's Mistake*, 1878) and continued well into the twentieth century with over thirty volumes. Full of improbable plot twists and outrageous cliffhangers, the popular crime novels of Pierre-Alexis Ponson du Terrail (1829-1871) started to be translated into Greek in the mid-1860s with the novel *Les Gandins*¹⁴⁸ (*The Dandies*, 1860). But it is with the long series¹⁴⁹ of novels dedicated to his recurring hero Rocambole, a criminal turned masked avenger, that the author became a household name both in France and in the Ottoman Empire. The success of his novels in Greek translation was such that, in the second half of the nineteenth century, no fewer than four editions (and at least three different translations) of the Rocambole cycle were published in Istanbul (starting in 1869)¹⁵⁰, Izmir (starting in 1887¹⁵¹), and Athens (with a first version starting in 1868¹⁵² and a second one starting in 1883¹⁵³).

Finally, with more than twenty Greek translations, the novels of Paul Féval (1816-1887) belonged to two distinct categories of popular fiction. A first group included imitations or unauthorized sequels of works by Eugène Sue: *Les Mystères de Londres* (*The Mysteries of London*, 1844, published the same year as George W.M. Reynolds' similarly-titled English-language novel) or *La Fille du Juif errant* (*The Daughter of the Wandering Jew*, 1863). A second

¹⁴⁷ Mary. *Το Λάθος του Ιατρού Μαδελόρ*. Izmir: 1883. Translated by N. Voyatzes.

¹⁴⁸ Ponson du Terrail. *Οι Γανδίνι, ή Κοινωνίας Απόκρυφα*. Istanbul: 1865-66. Translated by I. Kourteles.

¹⁴⁹ The Rocambole cycle was entirely published in installments from October 1857 to July 1870 and can be divided in seven series, each composed of several novels.

¹⁵⁰ The first Greek translation published in Istanbul skipped the first two novels of the first series titled *Les Drames de Paris* and began with the third one, *Les Exploits de Rocambole* (*The Achievements of Rocambole*): Ponson du Terrail. *Οι Άθλοι του Ροκαμβόλ*. Istanbul: 1869. Translated by D. Velles.

¹⁵¹ Ponson du Terrail. *Δράματα Παρισίων* [*The Dramas of Paris*]. Athens: 1868. Reprint of the 1868 translation by Pardalakes and Skalides (see note 116).

¹⁵² Ponson du Terrail. *Δράματα Παρισίων* [*The Dramas of Paris*]. Athens: 1868. Translated by K. Pardalakes and A. Skalides.

¹⁵³ Ponson du Terrail. *Δράματα Παρισίων* [*The Dramas of Paris*]. Athens: 1883. Translated by S. Gounares.

group was composed of numerous swashbuckling historical novels modelled on Alexandre Dumas. Greek translations of his novels published in the Ottoman Empire included several examples from both categories¹⁵⁴.

It is worth noting that this intense movement of translation of French popular fiction into Greek had a direct effect on the development of the domestic novel and the work of Eugène Sue –in particular *The Mysteries of Paris* - was rapidly imitated in by Greek novelists, as was the case throughout Europe and beyond during the same period¹⁵⁵. Less than ten years after the translation of *The Mysteries of Paris*, a first Greek adaptation titled *Αθηνών απόκρυφα* (*The Mysteries of Athens*) was published in installments¹⁵⁶. This first Greek adaptation of Sue was soon followed by similar novels also set in Athens¹⁵⁷ or in Istanbul¹⁵⁸, as well as on the islands of Syros¹⁵⁹ and Zakynthos¹⁶⁰, or in Egypt¹⁶¹¹⁶².

¹⁵⁴ For instance, for the first category: Féval. *Λονδίνου Απόκρυφα* [*The Mysteries of London*]. Izmir: 1859. Translated by N. Kontopoulos. For the second category: Féval. *Ο Ιππότης του Κεραμούρ* [*The Knight of Keramour*]. Istanbul: 1875. Translated by A.R. Rangaves. For a complete list, see the appendix of this work.

¹⁵⁵ On the global "mysterymania" that followed the publication of Sue's novel, see notably Palmer Chevasco 2003, which focuses on the British reception of the work. On this topic, see also the online proceedings of a series of conferences organized by the Médias19 platform: Thérenty 2013; Katsanos, Thérenty, and Waahlberg 2015; Kalifa and Thérenty 2015. The platform also maintains a database referencing a very large number of nineteenth-century "urban mysteries" (<http://mysteres.medias19.org>, accessed 6/1/2016).

¹⁵⁶ Amlitou 2013 (for this, and all the other Greek urban mysteries mentioned here).

¹⁵⁷ At least two other novels: Alvanopoulos, Dimitris. *Απόκρυφα Αθηνών ή Τα μυστηριώδη εγκλήματα κακούργων τινών* [*The Mysteries of Athens, or The Mysterious Crimes of Certain Ruffians*]. Athens: 1888; Anonymous. *Τα Απόκρυφα των Αθηνών και αι περιπέτειαι του Άγγλου περιηγητού Τζωνν Τζάκετ* [*The Mysteries of Athens and the Adventures of the English traveller John Jacket*]. Athens: 1890.

¹⁵⁸ At least four different novels: Ioannides, Petros. *Η Επτάλοφος ή Ήθη και Έθιμα Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* [*The City of Seven Hills, or Customs of Constantinople*]. Istanbul: 1855 (Republished in Athens in 1866 as: *Απόκρυφα Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* [*The Mysteries of Constantinople*]); Samartzides, Christophoros. *Απόκρυφα Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* [*The Mysteries of Constantinople*]. Istanbul: 1868-69; Goussopoulos, Konstantinos. *Τα Δράματα της Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* [*The Dramas of Constantinople*]. Istanbul: 1888; Kyriakides, Epaminondas. *Πέραν απόκρυφα* [*The Mysteries of Pera*]. Istanbul: 1890.

For the purposes of this chapter, one feature of popular literature is of particular relevance in helping to elucidate the reason of its increasing popularity in France as well as in the Greek world during the nineteenth century: its capacity to create forms of popular identification. Although the claim made by some that the French popular novel of the nineteenth century was a genre "written by the people for the people"¹⁶³ seems exaggerated, it is certain that the emergence of this particular category of fiction set in motion new and complex mechanisms of identification for its diverse audiences. One of the defining characteristics of the French popular novel of the nineteenth century was that, more than any other regime of fiction before it, it was populated by characters belonging at once to the lowest and highest strata of society –and to virtually any echelon in between. At a time when multiple political and social ruptures allowed for the consolidation of new social groups (an economically dominant bourgeoisie, an increasingly literate working class, etc.), the particular interest of the popular novel in staging the coexistence and frequent intermingling of characters from various social backgrounds gave, in unprecedented ways, the various components of a socially diverse reading public the opportunity to look at one another, often with a mixture of repulsion and fascination.

However, nothing seems to indicate that, when these works of popular literature started to migrate from Western Europe to the Greek-speaking world in the 1840s and became integrated through translation into the Greek literary field, the overall structure of their social use as it had

¹⁵⁹ Lymeriou, Demosthenes. *Απόκρυφα Σύρου* [*Mysteries of Syros*]. Ermoupolis: 1866.

¹⁶⁰ [Zervos, Sokrates]. *Έν ζακύνθιον απόκρυφον* [*A Mystery in Zakynthos*]. Zakynthos: 1875.

¹⁶¹ Zervos, Ioannis. *Απόκρυφα της Αιγύπτου* [*The Mysteries of Egypt*]. Athens: 1894.

¹⁶² Long neglected by Greek literary historiography, this corpus of Greek urban mysteries has in recent years received the well-deserved attention of a few scholars, primarily in Greece and in France. See notably: Voutouris 1995; Denisi 1997; Gotsi 1997; Tonnet 1997; Tonnet 2002; Tsapanidou 2012; Amilitou 2013; Gotsi 2014; Katsanos 2015a; Katsanos 2015b.

¹⁶³ See for instance Christopher Prendergast's reading of Sue's *Mysteries of Paris* as a collectively-produced work (Prendergast 2003).

crystallized at the source remained intact. In France and elsewhere in Western Europe, part of the original appeal of the popular novel lay in the fact that it mobilized mechanisms of social identification while articulating at the same time a discourse of multi-directional othering. It is precisely the nature of this double movement of identification and distantiation that would become radically altered once put to the test of translation far away from the place of the novels' original composition. In the original French context, the middle-class readers of the popular novel –and in particular of the "urban mysteries"- could find an echo of their political and moral anxieties in the often rather conservative ideology that permeates these works. At the same time, the exoticizing gaze that these same texts cast upon both the lower and upper classes served as a gratifying confirmation of their audience's intermediary social status. For all their artificiality, the topographies in which urban mysteries unfolded largely overlapped, at least in name, with the ones that the large Parisian segment of their French audience inhabited. At the same, for the subgenre's many readers in the provinces, the spaces that served as a backdrop for the novels' often convoluted plots belonged, due to their relative geographic proximity, to the realm of the familiar.

On the contrary, for the first Greek readers of French urban mysteries, such points of reference were to a large extent inoperative. In other words, the class-based exoticism that was a defining characteristic of the subgenre in its original context of composition partially survived the translation process but was subsumed by a more generalized form of exoticism *tout court*. For Greek readers, the appeal of the foreign in these types of novels was not limited, as for the French audience, to characters and situations located at opposite extremes of the social ladder but, on the contrary, foreignness seeped through the texts and encompassed locales, customs, and entire articulations of the social fabric depicted in the novels. Therefore, it became the task of

translators to negotiate this added layer of distance between texts and readers, one that went beyond the mere suspension of disbelief that the implausible plots so characteristic of urban mysteries demanded.

In parallel, another key notion, closely related to that of identification, is helpful for understanding the massive rise of popular fiction in the second half of the nineteenth century throughout both Western and non-Western spaces: that of enfranchisement. The success of Eugène Sue's works in France from the early 1840s onward permitted, to an extent, the socio-cultural enfranchisement of new categories of readers, through their participation in what could be defined as a mediatic event (the original publication of the *Mysteries of Paris* in installments) involving participants pertaining to different social strata. In the Greek-Ottoman case, as for the rest of the communities of the Empire, the class dimension of this enfranchisement is, however, much more difficult to demonstrate and the very idea of imported novels being massively embraced, in the mid-nineteenth century, by a (largely hypothetical) Ottoman proletarian audience appears, at best, dubious. In addition, in the specific case of Sue's works, the slightly distinct type of enfranchisement generated by the network of reader-response engagements¹⁶⁴ that accompanied the original publication of his novels in installments was not available to readers in the Ottoman Empire since the first translations of the texts in question were directly

¹⁶⁴ Some of the many letters sent to Sue by readers of various social backgrounds (including some barely literate workers) during the original serialization of *The Mysteries of Paris* have been preserved and this correspondence, in which audience members often tried to convince the author to take the plot in a particular direction of their liking, has received considerable attention from literary scholars and cultural sociologists alike in recent decades (see Prendergast 2003). For an edition of a selection of these letters, see Galvan 1998. The letters published by Galvan belong to an archive donated to the municipality of Paris in the early twentieth century by the grandson of Sue's private secretary and only amount to a very small fraction of Sue's correspondence with his readers. The file in question does include a few letters sent by readers living outside of France –and, in one case, as far as Puerto Rico (see Galvan 2004: 28-31). Any reader's letter that might have been sent from the Ottoman Empire has unfortunately not survived.

published in book form and as complete works. Yet the notion of enfranchisement is not entirely irrelevant to a discussion of the reception of Western popular prose fiction in the Ottoman context, although the terms of this phenomenon must inevitably be revised and the discussion transposed from a socio-cultural framework to a more symbolic one. I would argue that, in the case of the translations of these works in the minority communities of the Empire, it is possible to hypothesize that the popularity of the subgenre of the urban mysteries was partially due to the fact that, for Greek, Armenian, or Jewish readers, these texts often allowed for an allegorical reading that turned the engagement of minority audiences with them into a means to test ideas of collective self-definition that amounted to a form of symbolic enfranchisement. I argue that this phenomenon was a distinctly Ottoman one.

There exists one possible way to give some credence to this hypothesis, that of a connection between minority status and readership of urban mysteries, as well as to the idea of a specificity of the Ottoman reception of the subgenre. Since, unlike its Armenian or Sephardic Jewish counterparts, the Greek reading public was divided between a newly-founded nation-state where Greek was the official and majority language and a neighboring Empire where Greeks constituted a religious and linguistic minority, it is possible, by comparing the respective fortune of popular prose fiction in both spaces, to underline the specificities of the Greek-Ottoman reception of urban mysteries in the nineteenth century in order to highlight certain social and cultural uses of the subgenre that presumably were not mobilized to the same degree in the Helladic context.

Of the three hundred or so translated novels published in Istanbul and Izmir during the nineteenth century, about 92% were originally written in French (fig. 1). In fact, in the nineteenth-century Greek-Ottoman literary field, translating a novel almost always meant

translating a *French* novel, and translating a French novel almost always meant translating a work of popular literature. The very few non-French authors (Shakespeare, Byron, or Schiller being among the most recognizable names) with a durable presence on the Greek market for translated literature were almost never novelists. The appeal of French popular fiction was such during the nineteenth century that some of the works by non-French novelists published in the Ottoman Empire even seem to have been translated into Greek because of their similarity with French models: one of only a handful of British novels translated during the period, Reynold's *Mysteries of London*¹⁶⁵ (1844), was little more than a calque of the successful formula of urban mysteries first inaugurated by Eugène Sue and, although both novels had been published almost simultaneously in the original, was translated into Greek almost two decades after Paul Féval's similarly titled novel. This relative absence in the Ottoman Empire of Greek translations of more highbrow French novels -such as, for instance, those of Victor Hugo, almost all translated in Athens only- was an indication of the difference between Greek-Ottoman and Helladic preferences in terms of foreign fiction.

The reasons for this particular affinity of the Greek-Ottoman reading public –to a greater degree than the Athenian one- for the urban mysteries *à la* Eugène Sue and for French popular fiction in general were undoubtedly complex and probably both economic and cultural. On the one hand, the venture of Greek-Ottoman publishers, which had particularly close ties with the merchant class of both Istanbul and Izmir, into the translation of foreign works of fiction was first and foremost a mercantile one, an easy and cheap way to generate revenue, especially at a time when the idea that such a thing as translation rights or a remuneration of the translated foreign authors was, although not unthought-of, in fact almost impossible to enforce. Thus,

¹⁶⁵ Reynolds. *Τα Δράματα του Λονδίνου*. Izmir: 1878-79. Translated by E.S.

translators and publishers probably largely conformed to the taste of the readers, a taste they had themselves helped develop in the first place. Aside from these material reasons, the Greek-Ottoman taste for translations of urban mysteries might also be explained by the presence of a type of cultural engagement on the part of readers that was, I suggest, largely specific to this particular geographic context. In fact, there existed, in the original novels themselves, elements that made them especially popular among Greek readers in Constantinople and Smyrna.

To begin with, the almost exclusively urban settings of these novels probably resonated more in the large centers of the Empire than it did in the considerably smaller Athens or elsewhere in Greece. In itself, however, the setting of the urban mysteries –or even its exotic character for non-French audiences- cannot explain their appeal to Greek-Ottoman readers: the fact that the original urban mysteries also had a very large number of provincial readers in France seems to indicate that this particular feature was probably not, in itself, the most determining factor. Of more relevance was the way in which these novels textually organized the urban space that they described. As Franco Moretti has pointed out, many nineteenth-century Western novels effectively turned the constantly evolving and therefore disorienting landscape of the modernizing metropolis into a legible space¹⁶⁶. In his analysis of *The Mysteries of Paris*, Moretti compares the depiction of the French capital by Sue to a "gigantic jigsaw puzzle" invisibly structured by the intersection of medians linking "four cardinal points"¹⁶⁷ which correspond to locations where crucial episodes of the plot unfold. In addition to this organization of the urban space on a horizontal plane, urban mysteries also depicted the city as traversed by a vertical axis implied by a narration that constantly moved between various socio-geographic strata ranging from the dark underworld –which it often locates literally under the surface of the

¹⁶⁶ Moretti 2000: 90.

¹⁶⁷ Moretti 2000: 116

city- and the abodes of the rich. For Greek-Ottoman readers of popular French fiction, this legibility of the urban space, structured around horizontal and vertical axes, must have resonated with their particular position as a community, within the complex social fabric of the late Ottoman Empire which, to a large extent, continued to affect urban life even after the Tanzimat reforms. On the one hand, the *millet* system theoretically placed Greek-Ottomans in a situation of equality with other minority communities in the Empire, thus creating, symbolically, a form of horizontal axis uniting non-Muslim groups. At the same time, Greek-Ottomans experienced the effects of the vertical hierarchies that organize the relations between the Muslim majority and the non-Muslim minorities – a distribution of power that existed in parallel with social hierarchies within each community.

2. Translation as Critical Reading: *The Wandering Jew* and the Greek-Ottoman praxis of translation

Moving from the contexts in which the translation of foreign novels in the Greek-Ottoman community was inscribed on to the text of these translations themselves, the present section offers, as a case study allowing for the identification of some of the dominant features of the Greek-Ottoman praxis of literary translation, a comparative close reading of a seminal work of nineteenth-century French popular fiction and of its Greek translations in the Ottoman Empire.

Although no less successful than *The Mysteries of Paris* at the time of its publication and throughout the nineteenth century, Eugène Sue's subsequent novel *Le Juif errant* (*The Wandering Jew*, 1844-45) has received significantly less critical attention. In particular, recent scholarship on the global circulation of the "urban mysteries" has tended to focus primarily on

French and foreign works whose title includes, in one form or another, the word "mystery" at the expense of other novels presenting similar thematic and formal characteristics but bearing unrelated titles. In fact, nothing really distinguishes *The Wandering Jew* from *The Mysteries of Paris* in terms of settings, characters, and narrative features and thus the novel should undoubtedly be included in the corpus of nineteenth-century "urban mysteries." To some extent, the work even constitutes a relative improvement upon Sue's earlier novel, published in 1842-43. The settings are somewhat more varied, and the characters more complex, in *The Wandering Jew* than in *The Mysteries of Paris*. In parallel, Sue's strongly paternalistic gaze upon the lower classes, although still very much present in the second novel, has given way to more progressive views, evidencing the gradual radicalization of the author's political agenda and announcing the socialist ideas for which later compositions (for instance *Les Mystères du peuple*, 1848-1857) would serve as vehicles. Finally, although the novel itself is longer than *The Mysteries of Paris*, the overall structure appears tighter and more artfully organized, showing that Sue had acquired a better command of the particular format of the serialized novel.

The work reimagines the old figure of the Wandering Jew –a myth frequently reinterpreted in other works of the European Romantic age¹⁶⁸ - although, in Sue's novel, the titular character appears only very briefly, in two short scenes that constitute a sort of frame narrative largely disconnected from the core of the text. Set in the early 1830s, the novel follows the trajectories of the eight unknowing heirs to the immense fortune of the Marquis of Rennepont, a Protestant aristocratic descendant of the Wandering Jew persecuted by the Society of Jesus during the seventeenth century. The heirs include the two impoverished daughters of a former soldier in Napoleon's army, a starving Parisian artist, a "liberated" young woman of high

¹⁶⁸ For an overview of this tradition, see Knecht 1977.

birth, a factory owner converted to the utopian socialist doctrine of Charles Fourier, a French missionary to the Rocky Mountains, as well as an Indian prince travelling to Paris to escape death at the hands of a sect of Hindu assassins. These characters are all expected to congregate in an abandoned house in Paris on February 13, 1832 to claim their part of the Rennepont inheritance, an occurrence that the Jesuits and their multiple accomplices try to prevent in order to seize the fortune of the Wandering Jew's descendants. In the final –and longest- part of the novel, a cholera epidemic spreads in Paris as the Jesuits manage to cause the death of most of the Rennepont heirs but ultimately lose the treasure, destroyed in a fire.

For the purposes of an analysis of Greek translation practices in the late Ottoman Empire, Sue's novel presents the invaluable advantage of having been translated twice into Greek –once in 1845-47 and once in 1861¹⁶⁹ - in the second half of the nineteenth century, which allows for the comparison of Greek translation techniques in the first wave of the 1840s and in a later period. The present section examines the two Greek translations of one of the sixteen parts (themselves divided into shorter chapters) that compose *The Wandering Jew*¹⁷⁰. Although many of the features that I highlight in the following pages could be found in virtually any of the work's numerous chapters, the unit analyzed here has the advantage of presenting a remarkably dense cluster of formal and thematic characteristics specific to Sue's work but also representative of broader trends in mid nineteenth-century French popular fiction.

Titled "La Reine Bacchanale" ("the Bacchanal Queen") in the French original (respectively translated as "Η Βακχεία Βασίλισσα" and the synonymous "Η Βασίλισσα Βάκχη")

¹⁶⁹ Sue. *Ο Περιπλανώμεμος Ιουδαίος*. Athens: 1861. Translated by N. Dragoumes. It is unclear whether a third edition, published in Izmir in 1875-76 and which does not mention the name of the translator, is a different translation or simply a reprint of one of the first two versions: Sue. *Ο Περιπλανώμεμος Ιουδαίος*. Izmir: 1875-76.

¹⁷⁰ Sue, Eugène. *Le Juif errant*. Paris: Robert Laffont, 1983 [1845.]

in the 1846 and 1861 Greek translations), the ninth part of *The Wandering Jew* takes places about halfway through the novel, at a point where most of its characters have been successively introduced to the reader and shortly before the crucial eleventh part where the various narrative threads converge during the meeting of the Wandering Jew's heirs for the opening of the Rennepont will. The unit's four chapters focus on a colorful depiction of the rowdy public celebrations taking place before the beginning of Lent. A number of supporting characters that cross the path of the novel's main protagonists at various points later in the novel appear there for the first time, in particular Céphyse, the titular Bacchanal Queen, a courtesan who presides over the Parisian bohemian circles, her lover Jacques, known by the nickname of Couche-Tout-Nu ("Sleeps-Naked"), one of the unknowing heirs to the Rennepont fortune, as well as her broader *cénacle*, composed of various figures of ill-repute. Largely devoid of any major plot development, the unit primarily consists of lengthy dialogues interspersed with relatively short physical descriptions of the characters. Together, both dialogues and descriptions constitute a sort of succinct anthropology of the Parisian *bohème* and, more specifically, of the part of this community that overlaps with the underworld and in particular with the world of prostitution. Placed in between two units ("Le Confesseur" and "Le Couvent"), which take place entirely in the austere spaces occupied by the Jesuits, "La Reine Bacchanal" serves as a gleeful interlude that reinforces, in stark contrast with the chapters that precede and follow it, Sue's unequivocal critique of the Society of Jesus' religious rigorism. In addition, the unit serves the author's moral and political agenda by opposing the free-spirited courtesan Céphyse to her sister La Mayeux, an unattractive and meritorious factory worker introduced earlier in the plot. The Manichean contrast between these two characters and between the means that each of them has chosen as a way out of poverty provides Sue with an opportunity to discuss, in a lengthy address to the

reader on which the unit ends, the question of the sexual and capitalist exploitation of destitute women.

Judging from the number of liberties taken by the successive Greek-Ottoman translators of the novel in their rendering of this specific part of *The Wandering Jew*, it appears that both the subject matter and the formal structure of "La Reine Bacchanal" constituted a set of challenges that called for the mobilization of the translation strategies mentioned earlier. The first of these challenges that Greek-Ottoman translators needed to overcome was the multilayered foreignness, which characterized the unit in question. After all, with its specific structure, cultural practices, and geography, the Bohemian environment in which the scenes of "La Reine Bacchanal" unfolded was described –and celebrated as such– by Sue as a specifically *Parisian* reality, which admittedly lacked an exact equivalent, or at least did not exist as a cultural construct in the urban centers of the Ottoman Empire in the 1840s. One element in particular proved to be particularly difficult for Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators to render with precision: the widespread use of slang in the dialogues that form the core of "La Reine Bacchanal." In keeping with the French Romantics' fascination with *argot*, Sue takes an evident pleasure in displaying his knowledge of the colorful jargon of the underworld in long exchanges between characters in Céphyse's circle. In the French context of the time, however, *argot* was more than a simple vernacular or an informal register of speech. It was a sociolect whose literary use, in Sue as well as in Balzac, Hugo, and others, was largely urban, if not predominantly Parisian, and almost always connoted criminality and was, in Hugo's famous formulation, "the Word turned conscript" (*le Verbe devenu forçat*). Furthermore, since at least François Villon's poetic use of the esoteric *jargon des coquillards* in fifteenth-century poetry, French literature had largely presented *argot* as an eminently cryptic register, a means of obfuscation that served to conceal illicit activities to

outsiders. This dimension of the Parisian underworld slang had been reactivated in the late 1820s by the prominence it assumed in the semi-fictionalized memoirs of Eugène François Vidocq, an ex-criminal turned chief of police, a work that served as a powerful reference for virtually all the mid nineteenth-century French literary practitioners of *argot*. Indeed, in Sue's novels, the honest and deserving poor, like for instance, La Mayeux in *The Wandering Jew*, never use *argot* and nothing distinguishes, in terms of register, their speech from that of middle-class or even aristocratic characters. This particular position of *argot* in nineteenth-century French literature complicated its transposition in the Greek context where the language debates that would become increasingly heated in the second half of the century were premised upon the opposition between a linguistically conservative literary standard and a demotic whose use in prose, and in particular in the novel, remained problematic, not least because of the absence of a commonly-accepted standard. For Greek-Ottoman translators of urban mysteries, the prominent presence of slang in these texts presented a double difficulty. On the one hand, the cryptic nature of *argot* demanded decoding before any attempt at translation could take place. In addition, there existed no simple solution to the question of the transposition of a foreign sociolect with no written –and even more so, no *literary*- equivalent in the Greek diglossic system.

Beyond the foreignness of the unit's setting and the ample use of *argot*, other elements, present in "La Reine Bacchanal" as in several other parts of *The Wandering Jew*, complicated the work of Greek-Ottoman translators: the strong erotic connotations of certain passages, as well as the insertion by Sue of long digressions, often marked by a certain political radicalism, where he discussed specific social ills and hinted at possible solutions. At once linguistic and cultural, these challenges called for various forms of negotiation and required the elaboration of a range of textual strategies on the part of Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators. These strategies can be

divided into two categories: one comprising the different translation techniques deployed to attain linguistic equivalency, and one encompassing various types of direct textual intervention performed by translators and including both the removal or condensing of certain passages of the source text. Analyzed in articulation with the aforementioned challenges that Sue's novel presented to its translators, these strategies highlight the specificities of the Greek reception of the French urban mysteries and can help isolate the most salient elements of a specifically Greek-Ottoman translational praxis.

a) *Translating la Bohème: topography and argot*

Before becoming acquainted with the characters that form part of Céphyse's Bohemian entourage, Sue's readers are introduced to the geographic environment in which the Carnival scenes in "La Reine Bacchanal" unfold. As evidenced by the following chart (fig. 3a and 3b), the description of the spaces, although relatively brief, led Greek-Ottoman translators of the novel to adopt various approaches in their effort to provide forms of linguistic equivalency that would effectively make the unfamiliar Parisian landscape legible to their Greek audience. In their treatment of toponyms and landmarks, the two successive translators of *The Wandering Jew* resorted to opposite solutions. While, for instance, the 1861 translation chose to signal the foreignness of the Place du Châtelet mentioned in the original not only by keeping the French name but by isolating it from the rest of the text through the use of the Latin script, the 1845-47 translation of the same passage, published fifteen years earlier, proceeded by approximation and, returning to the etymology of the word "châtelet" ("small castle" or "small fort"), rendered, somewhat awkwardly, the toponym as πυργοειδή[ς] πλατεί[α] ("tower-shaped square"), thus

Fig. 3a *Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (1)*

French original	1846 Greek translation	1861 Greek translation
<p>[...] une scène bruyante et animée se passait sur la place du Châtelet, en face d'une maison dont le premier étage et le rez-de-chaussée étaient alors occupés par les vastes salons d'un traiteur à l'enseigne du <i>Veau-qui-tette</i>. [...]</p> <p>Une assez grande quantité de masques grotesquement et pauvrement accoutrés sortaient des bals de cabarets situés dans le quartier de l'Hôtel-de-Ville, et traversaient, en chantant la place du Châtelet; mais en voyant accourir sur le quai une seconde troupe de gens déguisés, les premiers masques s'arrêterent pour attendre les nouveaux [...]</p> <p>Les nouveaux masques [...] appartenaient à cette classe turbulente et gaie qui fréquente habituellement la Chaumière, le Prado, le Colisée et autres réunions dansantes plus ou moins échevelées, composées généralement d'étudiants, de demoiselles de boutique, de commis marchands, de grisettes, etc.¹⁷¹</p>	<p>[...] σκηνή ζωηρά και θορυβώδης παρίστατο εις την Πυργοειδή πλατείαν εις μίαν οικίαν της οποίας το κατάγειον και η πρώτη οροφή ενοικιάζοντο τότε από ένα Ξενοδόχον όστις είχεν επωνομάσειν το Ξενοδοχείον του ο <i>Θηλάζων Μόσχος</i>. [...]</p> <p>Μέγας αριθμός προσωπιδοφορούντων ενδεδυμένων πενιχρώς και γελοίως εξήρχοντο από τους χορούς των Ξενοδοχείων κειμένων κατά την συνοικίαν του Δημαρχείου, και διέβαινον άδοντες την Πυργοειδή πλατείαν. Άλλ'η συνοδεία αυτή ιδούσα άλλην τινα συνοδείαν προσωπιδοφόρων ερχόμενην από το άλλο της πλατείας μέρος, εστάθη [...]</p> <p>δια να περιμείνη την νεοερχόμενην [...]</p> <p>Οι νέοι προσωπιδοφόροι ήσαν πολλά καλήτερα ενδεδυμένοι από τους άλλους και ανήκον εις την ταραχώδη και χαρήν εκείνην τάξιν ήτις συνήθως συχνάζει εις την Καλύβην, το Πράδο, την Κολύπειαν και άλλα μέρη εις τα οποία δίδονται συνήθως δημόσιοι χοροί, και συγκειμένην από σπουδαστάς, εμπορικούς υπαλλήλους, τεχνίτριας και υποκρίτριας</p>	<p>[...] θόρυβος και κραυγαί ηκούοντο εις την πλατείαν του Châtelet, κατέναντι οικίας της οποίας το πρώτον και το πρόσγειον πάτωμα εχρησίμευον αντί ξενοδοχείου. [...]</p> <p>Μέγας αριθμός προσωπιδοφόρων, αλλοκότως και πενιχρώς ενδεδυμένων, εξήρχοντο από τους χορούς των καπηλείων, των παρακειμένων εις το Δημαρχείον, και διήρχοντο τραγωδούντες δια της πλατείας. Ιδόντες δε άλλους προσωπιδοφόρους ερχομένους, εστάθησαν [...]</p> <p>και επερίμενον τους νέους[...] Οι νέοι προσωπιδοφόροι ήσαν κάλλιον ενδεδυμένοι και ανήκον δε εις την θορυβώδη και εύθυμον τάξιν εκείνων, οίτινες συχνάζουσιν εις την Chaumière, το Prado, το Colisée και άλλα μέρη μάλλον ή ήττον φαιδρά, την τάξιν, λέγομεν, των μαθητών, των εμπορευομένων γυναικών, των εμπορικών υπαλλήλων, κτλ¹⁷².</p>

¹⁷¹ Sue 1983: 354¹⁷² Sue 1861: 5 (vol.4)

Fig. 3b *Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (2)*

French original	1846 Greek translation	1861 Greek translation
<p>[...] <i>a noisy and animated scene was taking place on the Place du Châtelet, across from a building whose first and ground floors then housed the large dining rooms of a public-house called the Suckling Calf. [...] A relatively large number of maskers wearing grotesque and shabby clothes was coming out of the cabarets balls located in the vicinity of the Hôtel-de-Ville and were crossing the Place du Châtelet singing; however, when they saw a second group of people in costumes run toward the embankment, the first group of maskers stopped to wait for the newcomers [...] The incoming maskers were far better dressed than the others: they belonged to that gay and turbulent class which habitually frequents the Chaumière, the Prado, the Colisée and other more or less riotous dancing places, generally patronized by students, shop-girls, clerks, grisettes, etc.</i></p>	<p>[...] <i>an animated and noisy scene was taking place on the Tower-Shaped Square, in a house whose ground and first floors were then rented by a tavern-owner who had named his tavern the Suckling Calf. [...]. A large number of maskers wearing shabby and grotesque clothes was coming out of the tavern balls located in the vicinity of City Hall and were crossing the Tower-Shaped Square singing; but this group, seeing another group of maskers coming from the other side of the square, stood [...] in order to wait for the incoming group. [...] The incoming maskers were far better dressed than the others: they belonged to that gay and turbulent class which habitually frequents the Chaumière, the Prado, the Colisée and dancing places, generally patronized by students, clerks, female workers, and actresses.</i></p>	<p>[...] <i>noise and shouts were to be heard on the Châtelet square, across from a house whose first and ground floors were used as a tavern. [...] A large number of maskers wearing strange and shabby clothes was coming out of the coffee-shop balls located in the vicinity of City Hall and were crossing the square singing. Seeing other maskers coming, they stood and waited for the newcomers [...] The incoming maskers were far better dressed than the others: they belonged to that gay and turbulent class which habitually frequents the Chaumière, the Prado, the Colisée and other more or less riotous dancing places, generally patronized by students, women of the trade, clerks, etc.</i></p>

erasing the localized specificity of the space. The same pattern was at play in the translation of the names of less prominent Parisian public spaces, namely the drinking and dancing establishments frequented by the *bohème*. Further down in the introductory description, Sue mentions "la Chaumière, le Prado, le Colisée." The list was left intact and typographically marked as foreign in the 1861 version while that of 1845-47 complicated the identification of these spaces by combining three distinct solutions: literal translation (Chaumière/Καλύβη, both meaning "hut" or "cabin"), transcription (Prado/Πράδο) and, more creatively, the coinage of a semi-homophonous term (Κολύπεια) used in lieu of the standard Greek equivalent of the word "Colisée" ("Colosseum," normally translated as Κολοσσαίο). The problematic rendering of place names and geographic markers was in fact not limited to these specific Parisian locations but extended to entire categories of urban spaces for which the translators were not able to find a precise Greek equivalent or had to resort to approximation. Thus, the first version translated both *traiteur* (used by Sue in the sense of "restaurant") and *cabaret* as ξενοδοχείον (a general term which, in nineteenth-century Greek, can refer to any establishment offering room and/or board), while the second translation distinguished between the two and translated *traiteur* as ξενοδοχείον and *cabaret* as καπηλείον (an archaic term for tavern). Beyond spaces, the relative untranslatability of the Parisian landscape was also apparent in the frequent recourse to approximation in the Greek translations: the word *landau* (a type of carriage similar to a horse and buggy) was, for instance, explained as ασκεπέζ όχημα ("uncovered vehicle") and ανοικτή αμάξη ("open carriage") in 1844-47 and 1861 respectively.

Of particular interest, in that it reveals the difficulties faced by Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators to convey certain concepts specific to the Parisian setting of his novels, is the treatment of the term *grisette*, a word that plays a central part in "La Reine Bacchanal." The term

is particularly emblematic of the vocabulary of the Parisian *bohème* and brings to mind the titular character of Alfred de Musset's "Mademoiselle Mimi Pinson, profil de grisette," a short story published in 1845, the same year as *The Wandering Jew*, and that greatly participated in popularizing this type of character in literature. Originally used for a sort of coarse, grey fabric and, by extension, for the young women of poor condition who wore it, the word *grisette* acquired a very particular meaning in the nineteenth century and a range of rich connotations that made it largely untranslatable into other languages. In the taxonomy of female sexual promiscuity in nineteenth-century France, a *grisette* was a young female worker – usually employed as a seamstress or similar profession- known to frequent popular drinking establishments and who resorted to prostitution only occasionally, as a means to supplement her more legitimate income. In that regard, the *grisette* was, as a Parisian type, clearly distinct from both the *lorette*, a professional prostitute usually working without a procuror, and the courtesan or "kept woman"¹⁷³. These subtle nuances being unavailable in the target language, the two successive translators strove to find equivalent terms in Greek, and the solutions they respectively proposed turned out to be diametrically opposed. The 1846 translation substituted an occupation for another and rendered *grisette(s)* by *υποκρίτριαι* ("actresses"), thus downplaying the sexual connotations of the French term and limiting them to a relatively weak innuendo. On the contrary, the 1861 translator opted for absolute clarity of meaning and translated the word by

¹⁷³ See for instance the definitions given by nineteenth-century French lexicographer Emile Littré for *grisette* and *lorette*, respectively. A *grisette* is a "young girl who has an occupation – seamstress, embroiderer, etc.- and lets young men court her easily" ("*jeune fille qui a un état, couturière, brodeuse, etc. et qui se laisse facilement courtirer par les jeunes gens*") while *lorettes* are defined as "certain women of pleasure between the *grisette* and the kept woman who do not have an occupation like the former and are not attached to a man like the latter" ("*certaines femmes de plaisir, qui tiennent le milieu entre la grisette et la femme entretenue, n'ayant pas un état comme la grisette, et n'étant pas attachées à un homme comme la femme entretenue.*")

εμπορευμένα γυναικες ("women for sale"), thereby asserting as fact what the term *grisette* only suggested as a possibility.

In other instances, relatively obscure French words pertaining to a popular register were evidently misunderstood by the translator: to name one example, the 1846 translation confused the term *gorgette*¹⁷⁴ (literally "small throat," used by one character to characterize small wine glasses) with *gorgets* (a synonym of *rabot*, "plane," a tool used in woodworking¹⁷⁵.) Indeed, the simple comprehension of the popular Parisian speech presented one of the most immediate challenges for Greek-Ottoman translators of Sue and *argot* proved to be a sometimes impenetrable feature of the source text, in that its translation required a familiarity with entirely non-standard, marginal semantic and morphologic forms that the translators largely lacked. To complicate things, the translation of French *argot* into Greek called at least in theory, for the use of registers which, in the target language, were either unavailable or insufficiently codified in written form. In fact, in the unit in question as well as in the work at large, the passages in *argot* in the French original remained largely untranslated and, except for only a handful of instances in the 1861 version, neither of the translators attempted to elaborate a Greek equivalent to the jargon used by the characters of the novel. Oftentimes, specific slang terms present either in the dialogues or in descriptions were evidently unknown to the translators who mistranslated them entirely: for instance, the very idiomatic expression *être en bisbille* ("to be at loggerheads with someone") became *ομοιάζει* ("resembles") in the 1861 Greek translation; *un pas chicard* (literally, "an elegant dance move," from the adjective *chic*, amplified by the popular suffix *-ard*)

¹⁷⁴ Sue 1983: 368.

¹⁷⁵ Interestingly, the 1861 version not only understood the term correctly but, translating it as *ποτηράκια του ρακιού* ("small glasses used to drink *raki*"), maintained the sense of a popular register present in the original (by using the demotic diminutive suffix *-ακι*) and domesticated it by replacing wine with a specifically Ottoman drink.

was translated, in an entirely nonsensical sentence, by δικογραφία, a legal term meaning "legal file." Other terms, such as *gobichonneur* or *chaffriolant*, particularly rare and largely used by Sue for their phonetic power of evocation, disappeared entirely in translation¹⁷⁶. By and large, the presence of *argot* often triggered the recourse to the second group of translation techniques employed by Greek-Ottoman translators: the direct manipulation of the original text by the translator which, in most cases, implied the removal of entire parts of the text, in particular of erotic or political passages.

It is safe to say that, as a whole, literary translation in the late Ottoman Empire was not governed in the least by any notion of exhaustivity or of faithfulness to the original. In fact, the most striking conclusion that can be drawn from the careful comparison of imported works of fiction with their first Greek, Armenian, or Ottoman-Turkish versions, is that partial translation seems to have functioned as the dominant model. As evidenced by the two successive Greek-Ottoman translations of Sue's *Wandering Jew*, as well as by numerous other examples, the phenomenon remained constant throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. In both the Greek translation of 1845-47 (as we saw, one of the first translations of a contemporary novel into Greek) and in that of 1861 (published at the peak of the popularity of French popular novels in the Ottoman Empire), entire passages of the original text were removed from almost every single chapter of the work. In the case of the unit ("La Reine Bacchanal") analyzed here for its exemplarity, the Greek translation was shorter than the French original by about half in the first

¹⁷⁶ According to nineteenth-century lexicographers such as Littré, the term *chaffriolant* ("appetizing"), used by Sue in various parts of the novel, seems to have belonged to a form of "invented" argot used in fictional, rather than real utterances of popular speech. The term, a portmanteau word combining the verb *affrioler* ("to entice") with the word *chat* ("cat") in a nod to the animal's supposed gluttony, appears to have been coined by Balzac in his novel *César Birotteau* (1837). It is thus possible that its use by Sue constituted a playful intertextual allusion which was entirely lost on his Greek-Ottoman translators.

version and by over a third in the second one. This drastic shortening of the original French text was not only visible at the level of individual sentences –where the removal of various elements such as, for instance, subordinate clauses or items in lists was particularly widespread- but also included whole paragraphs and even longer blocks of texts forming entire episodes in the narration.

Two such scenes in the first and the fourth chapters of the unit respectively titled "La Mascarade" and "Le Réveil-Matin" were particularly affected and were only present in radically abridged form in both Greek-Ottoman translations. After the expository paragraphs which describe the rowdy masquerade taking place on the eve of Mardi Gras, Sue moves on to transcribe a lengthy dialogue between some of the yet-unidentified maskers belonging to the two groups of revelers that meet on the Place du Châtelet and await the imminent arrival of Céphyse, the "Bacchanal Queen" who reigns over the Parisian *bohème*. Humorous in tone and saturated with *argot*, these exchanges between characters that are formally introduced to the reader only subsequently focus on the figure of Céphyse and, making ample use of sexual innuendos, evoke her signature dance (facetiously called *la Tulipe orangeuse*, the "Stormy Tulip") –which, as the original French readers could easily surmise, seems to consist in a particularly revealing take on the *cancan*. Another such dialogue, similar in length and tone to the first one, takes up most of the third chapter of the unit. At the end of the same carnival scene, the Bacchanal Queen and her court sit for a *réveille-matin*, an early-morning meal served to merrymakers after a night of celebration. Here again, Sue devotes a relatively large number of pages, almost exclusively composed of uninterrupted dialogue, to the drunken banter of the maskers who offer successive toasts to one another and recount some of the circumstances that have led them to live a life of debauchery. Except for the brief foreshadowing, in the form of a joke, of the cholera epidemic

which will decimate the novel's cast in the final volumes, neither of these two dialogue scenes – which, taken together, account for almost half of the unit's total length- have any significant narrative purpose other than introducing a few minor characters to the plot. Rather, what is at stake for Sue is the display of his ability to evoke a particular Parisian subculture, thus reinforcing his position as this omniscient guide to the various strata that constitute the fabric of the city. The only real function of these lengthy dialogues lies in their capacity to satisfy the appetite of a primarily middle-class French readership for slightly risqué depictions of an underworld at once inscribed in a familiar topography and othered by a form of social and linguistic exoticization. In that respect, the use of *argot* serves, in the original text, the double purpose of partially concealing cultural practices –in particular those involving or implying sexual promiscuity- while alluding to them through the use of highly suggestive popular register whose tongue-in-cheek evocativeness establishes a form of connivance between author and reader. Due to the impossibility of achieving complete cultural and linguistic adequacy, this particular relationship could not be entirely maintained in translation and, unsurprisingly, both scenes –as well as other similar ones elsewhere in the novel- were almost entirely missing in the two Greek-Ottoman translations of *The Wandering Jew* examined here.

In addition to *argot*-filled dialogues, extensive character descriptions were another way used by Sue to convey the particular texture of the Parisian underworld to his readers. In "La Reine Bacchanal," more than half of the first chapter (titled "La Mascarade") is devoted to a series of meticulous portraits of a few maskers belonging to Céphyse's inner circle. Emphasizing both their physical attributes and various details of their respective costumes, the passage in question depicts each of the characters as the embodiment of a particular type within the larger environment of the Parisian *bohème* (the starving author, the *bon vivant*, the *grisette*, the

courtesan), each short vignette functioning as a form of condensed *physiologie*. As he frequently does elsewhere in *The Wandering Jew*, as well as in many of his other works, Sue mobilizes in this series of descriptions a rather dense network of references to the mainstream mid-nineteenth-century visual culture of Western Europe. Describing one of the characters, Sue writes for instance that "[he] would have offered a magnificent object of study to Callot or Gavarni, that eminent artist who brings together the biting talent and the marvelous fantasy of the illustrious caricaturist with the grace, the poetry, and the depth of Hogarth¹⁷⁷." In doing so, Sue not only make an ironic nod at a well-known contemporary artist (Gavarni) who also happens to be the illustrator of the first book edition of *The Wandering Jew*; he also taps a into larger tradition of book illustration and engraving which, although it originated in the seventeenth century (Jacques Callot) and extended into the eighteenth century (William Hogarth), remained an important component, through continuous recycling, of a popular and material culture that was particularly familiar to his original French audience. The fact that the artists Sue chose to list in the passage in question -where the notion of "type" plays a particularly important role- not only belonged to the realm of visual arts in general but were, as etcher and printmaker (Callot), pictorial satirist (Hogarth), and illustrator (Gavarni), all specifically connected to a mechanically reproducible visual culture, could even be read as a self-referential commentary on the eminently derivative and stereotypical depiction of the Parisian *bohème* in "La Reine Bacchanal." As is to be expected, these references could not have the same echo with Sue's readers in the Ottoman Empire, published in a context where the circulation of such elements of Western European visual culture was undoubtedly more limited. Therefore, both translations of *The Wandering Jew*

¹⁷⁷ "[il] eût offert un magnifique sujet d'étude à Callot ou à Gavarni, cet éminent artiste qui joint à la verve mordante et à la merveilleuse fantaisie de l'illustre caricaturiste la grâce, la poésie et la profondeur de Hogarth." (Sue 1983: 358).

subjected the passage in question to a radical process of abridging- in particular the first one (1845-47) where the character descriptions survived only as short fragments –echoing, in a sense, the disappearance of the Gavarni illustrations which neither of the Greek-Ottoman editions include. In this version, the first character (Nini-Moulin, the starving artist) disappeared altogether, while the second one (Couche-tout-nu, the "*type parfait du Parisien*" was barely alluded to. The description of the two remaining characters in the quartet (Rose-Pompon, a *grisette*, and Céphyse, the Bacchanal Queen herself) was maintained in both translations, although with important cuts that point out to another, in a sense more important challenge for Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators: the question of how to negotiate the work's overt or implicit eroticism through translation.

b) Translating the erotic

The four character descriptions in "La Reine Bacchanal" are representative of the place occupied by erotic suggestion in *The Wandering Jew*. Specifically, the juxtaposition of figures belonging to the same social group but to different genders highlights the ways in which, in Sue's work, the erotic is almost exclusively expressed through depictions of the female body. In keeping with the obsession of the nineteenth-century French novel with the pseudo-science of physiognomy, the evocation of the first two characters in the sequence (Nini-Moulin and Couche-tout-nu, both male) moves from their facial characteristics to the moral traits to which they supposedly correspond and only mentions the rest of the body or the costume in passing. On the contrary, the description of two following figures (Rose-Pompon and Céphyse) lingers on their dress, with a particular emphasis on what it reveals or can suggest of the actual body: in the

case of the *grisette* Rose-Pompon (fig. 4a and 4b), the author directs the gaze of the reader from her "tight" jacket to her "revealing" pantaloons, pausing on her "narrow" vest, which only serves to emphasize a "charming figure" and to suggest, by alluding to a daring dance routine, a sexualized body in motion. The two successive Greek-Ottoman translators opted for slightly different approaches in their treatment of the passage. While both rendered the name of the character by way of phonetic approximation, thereby obfuscating the meaning of the *grisette's* *nom de guerre* (literally, "Pink-Tassel," although *rose pompon* was also, according to nineteenth-century dictionaries, the term used for any small-sized rose), the description itself was much more condensed in the first translation than in the second one. The 1844-47 version only mentioned Rose-Pompon's face and her costume, neither of which it depicted in detail, and the text immediately moved on to the next character (Céphyse) whose description was also radically shortened. In the 1861 version, the vertical trajectory of the reader's gaze was maintained but stopped at the waist, just short of describing the *grisette's* revealing pantaloons, while the mention of the *cancan* (called here *Tulipe orageuse*) present in the original text was replaced by the rather general archaic term ὀρχησις ("dancing"), borrowed from the lexicon of ancient Greek theatre.

Based on the evidence from this specific scene, it would be tempting to conclude that, when they proceeded to this type of cuts, the main objective of the Greek-Ottoman translators was to censor such passages and, by draping a veil of modesty on the original French, to attenuate the novel's erotic character, in conformity with the standards of morality and modesty that were those of a supposedly much more conservative audience than Sue's French readers. In addition, the fact that, in passages such as the one mentioned above which consisted of detailed descriptions of a highly eroticized female, the 1861 translation was slightly more detailed and

Fig. 4a *Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (3)*

French original	1846 Greek translation	1861 Greek translation
<p>Rose-Pompon, ex-frangeuse de dix-sept ans, avait la plus gentille et la plus drôle de petite mine que l'on pût voir; elle était coquettement vêtue d'un costume de débardeur; sa perruque poudrée à blanc, sur laquelle était crânement posé de côté un bonnet de police orange et vert galonnée d'argent, rendait encore plus vif l'éclat de ses grands yeux noirs et l'incarnat de ses joues potelées; elle portait au coup une cravate orange comme sa ceinture flottante; sa veste juste, ainsi que son étroit gilet en velours vert clair, garni de tresses d'argent, mettaient dans toute sa valeur une taille charmante dont la souplesse devait se prêter merveilleusement aux évolutions du pas de la <i>Tulipe orangeuse</i>. Enfin, son large pantalon, de même étoffe et de même couleur que la veste, était suffisamment indiscret¹⁷⁸</p>	<p>Η Ροσπόμβη, δεκαεπταετής την ηλικίαν, και έχουσα ωραιότατον και μικρόν πρόσωπον, ήτον λαμπρώς ενδεδυμένη κατά το έθιμον των υποκριτριών¹⁷⁹.</p>	<p>Η Ροσπόμβη, πρώην κροσσοποιός, δεκαεπτά ετών, είχε το ήθος κομψότατον. Εφόρει ένδυμα εργάτου. Η δε λευκώς κεκονιασμένη φενάκη της, εφ'ής έκειτο εγκαρσίως πίλος υψηλός πρασινοκίτρινος, με ταινίας αργυράς, ανεδείκνυεν έτι ζωηροτέρα την λάμψη των μαύρων της οφθαλμών, και το ερύθημα των παχυλών παρειών της. Έφερε δε περί τον λαιμόν μανδήλιον χρυσωπόν, όμοιον με την μακράν ζώνην της. Το στενός ένδυμα και εσωκάρδιόν της κατεδείκνυον το ωραίον σώμα της, το οποίον, δια την ελαφρότητα και ευστροφίαν του, θα διέπρεπε περί την όρχησιν¹⁸⁰.</p>

¹⁷⁸ Sue 1983: 359

¹⁷⁹ Sue 1846: 14 (vol. 4)

¹⁸⁰ Sue 1861: 10 (vol. 4)

Fig. 4b *Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (4)*

French original	1846 Greek translation	1861 Greek translation
<p><i>Rose-Pompon, a seventeen-year-old fringe-maker, had the prettiest and funniest little face that you could see. She was coquettishly dressed in a docker costume; her powdered wig, over one side of which she had smartly put an orange and green police cap laced with silver, increased the effect of her bright black eyes, and of her round, carnation cheeks; around her neck, she wore a tie as orange as her sash; her tight jacket, as well as her narrow vest of light green velvet adorned with silver braids, emphasized her charming figure whose pliancy must have been wonderfully appropriate for the Tulipe orange routine. Finally, her loose pantaloons, of the same stuff and same color as the jacket, revealed enough of her body.</i></p>	<p><i>Rose-Pompon, age seventeen and having a most beautiful and small face, was brilliantly dressed according to the fashion of actresses. [Rest of paragraph missing]</i></p>	<p><i>Rose-Pompon, former fringe-maker, seventeen years old, had a very elegant air. She was wearing worker's clothes. Her powdered wig, on the side of which stood a tall, green and yellow hat with silver bands, increased the brilliance of her black eyes and the redness of her chubby cheeks. Around her neck, she wore a golden kerchief, similar to her sash. Her narrow costume and her corset emphasized her beautiful body which, due to its pliancy and versatility, must have been remarked during dances. [Rest of paragraph missing]</i></p>

revealing than the one published more than a decade earlier could be construed to underline a gradual expansion of what could be explicitly represented in translated fiction. However, a look at other similar passages in *The Wandering Jew* belies this assumption and demonstrates that the textual differences between the original and the Greek-Ottoman translations and, in particular, the extensive cuts in erotic passages were not –or at least not exclusively- the result of an act of censorship on the part of the translators. Rather, the rendering of these erotic scenes was the product of a continuing process of negotiation on their part, one that took into account factors extending beyond mere subject matter and also involving formal considerations. Interestingly, the reduction of the novel's eroticism was not consistently the outcome of this process of negotiation through translation.

The treatment, in the Greek-Ottoman translations, of a particular recurring motif in the novel highlights this trend. In three chapter-long scenes, respectively taking place in the sixth, thirteenth and fifteenth unit of *The Wandering Jew*, Sue allows his readers to gaze upon the body of the novel's main female character, Adrienne de Cardoville, caught in an intimate moment and partially nude. A chapter entitled "La Toilette d'Adrienne" ("Adrienne's Toilette") starts by introducing the character, whose "cult of grace, elegance, and physical beauty" makes her the "most complete, most ideal personification of sensuality"¹⁸¹ before describing her, over several pages and with an impressive wealth of detail, washing and dressing herself with the help of a maid in the private pavilion where she lives on the estate of her aunt, an accomplice of the evil Jesuits. Set in the same space, a latter chapter, simply entitled "Le Réveil" ("The Awakening"), offers an equally long and detailed description of Adrienne's body as she awakes from slumber, while a third chapter ("Le Secret") catches the young woman reclining on a sofa, lost in an erotic

¹⁸¹ Sue 1983: 225.

rêverie. The recurrence of this type of intimate scene is consistent with the discourse elaborated in the type of popular prose fiction developed by Sue, one that frames the novel as a means to access spaces otherwise hidden from sight, be they the underworld of the criminals or the domestic privacy of the aristocrats. At first glance, a comparison of the original French text with the two Greek-Ottoman translations of the passages in question seems to corroborate the (superficial) impression of, on the one hand, an initial censoring of the novel's erotic scenes in the first version and, on the other, an increased, yet still limited tolerance for this type of content in the second. Indeed, the *toilette* scene where Adrienne is first introduced to the reader was entirely missing in the 1845-47 Greek-Ottoman translation (fig. 5a and 5b). As for the second version of 1861, it removed most of the description of Adrienne's nude body and only mentioned the naked arms of the maid combing her hair. Yet, the two translations of another of these three scenes exhibited a complete reversal of this pattern, the 1861 version rendering the original French text in a much more conservative fashion than that of 1845-47.

The beginning of the chapter entitled "Le Secret" finds Adrienne alone in her study, surrounded by books and various decorative objects and lost in her thoughts. Her eyes wander to a bronze bas-relief representing a young "Bacchus of India,¹⁸²" wearing a lionskin who, as the reader can easily guess, reminds her of her love interest Djalma, a young Indian prince who has traveled to Paris to claim his share of the Rennepont inheritance. Eventually, moved by an "ineffable attraction¹⁸³," the young woman gives in to temptation and touches the sculpture. The paragraph that follows suggests, in relatively transparent language, a moment of auto-erotic stimulation culminating in ecstasy (fig. 6a and 6b). The 1845-47 translation remained extremely close to the French original and never sought to distance itself from the eroticism of the passage.

¹⁸² Sue 1983: 724

¹⁸³ Sue 1983: *idem*

Fig. 5a *Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (5)*

French original	1846 Greek translation	1861 Greek translation
<p>Nous l'avons dit, Adrienne était rousse, mais rousse ainsi que le sont plusieurs des admirables portraits de femmes de Titien ou de Léonard de Vinci... C'est dire que l'or fluide n'offre pas de reflets plus chatoyants, plus lumineux que sa masse de cheveux naturellement ondés, doux et fins comme de la soie, et si longs, si longs... qu'ils touchaient par terre lorsqu'elle était debout, et qu'elle pouvait s'en envelopper comme la Vénus aphrodite. À ce moment surtout ils étaient ravissants à voir. Georgette, les bras nus, debout derrière sa maîtresse, avait réuni à grand'peine dans une de ses petites mains blanches cette splendide chevelure dont le soleil doublait encore l'ardent éclat... Lorsque la jolie camériste plongea le peigne d'ivoire au milieu des flots ondoyants et dorés de cet énorme écheveau de soie, on eût dit que mille étincelles en jaillissaient ; la lumière et le soleil jetaient des reflets non moins vermeils sur les grappes de nombreux et légers tire-bouchons qui, bien écartés du front, tombaient le long des joues d'Adrienne, et dans leur souplesse élastique caressaient la naissance de son sein de neige dont ils suivaient l'ondulation charmante¹⁸⁴.</p>		<p>Η Γεωργέττα με γυμνούς τους βραχίονας, ιστάμενη ορθία όπισθεν της δεσποίνης της, μετά βίας είχε συνενώσει εν τη μία των μικρών και λευκοτάτων χειρών της την απαστράπτουσαν εκείνην κόμην της Αδριανής, φωτεινοτέραν έτι καθορωμένην δια τας επ'αυτήν επιπτούσας ακτίνας λαμπρού ηλίου... 'Ότε δε η θελκτική θαλαμηπόλος εβύθισε το ελεφάντινον κτένιον εν τώ μέσω της κυματιζούσης και καταχρύσου και αφθόνου ταύτης μεταξωτής κόμης, ήθελεν είπει τις ότι μυριοι σπινθήρες αντέλαμπον¹⁸⁵</p>

¹⁸⁴ Sue 1983: 228

¹⁸⁵ Sue 1861: 16 (vol.3)

Fig. 5b *Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (6)*

French original	1846 Greek translation	1861 Greek translation
<p><i>We have already said that Adrienne was red-haired, but the way several of the admirable portraits of women by Titian and Leonardo da Vinci are... That is to say, molten gold does not present reflections more shimmering or more glittering than the naturally undulating mass of her hair, as soft and fine as silk, and long, so long, that they would reach the floor when she was standing up and she could wrap herself in it like Aphrodite... At that moment, they were particularly ravishing. Georgette, her arms bare, stood behind her mistress, and had painfully collected into one of her small white hands, those splendid threads whose ardent brightness was doubled by the sun. When the pretty chambermaid plunged the ivory comb into the undulating and golden waves of that enormous skein of silk, one might have said that it ignited a thousand; the light and the sun cast equally ruby-colored reflections upon the clusters of spiral ringlets which, combed away from her forehead, fell over Adrienne's cheeks and, in their elastic flexibility, caressed the limit of her snowy breast whose charming undulations they followed.</i></p>	<p>[Passage entirely missing]</p>	<p>[Missing paragraph] <i>Georgette, her arms bare, standing behind her mistress, had painfully collected into one of her small white hands the shimmering hair of Adrienne, made even more luminous by the rays of the shining sun that fell on it...</i> <i>When the pretty chambermaid plunged the ivory comb into the undulating, golden mass of that silky hair, one could have thought that a thousand sparks were shining.</i> [End of sentence missing]</p>

Fig. 6a *Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (7)*

French original	1846 Greek translation	1861 Greek translation
<p>À cette pression bien légère pourtant, Adrienne sembla ressentir une sorte de choc électrique ; elle frissonna de tout son corps ; ses yeux s'alanguirent, et après avoir un instant nagé dans leur nacre humide et brillante, ils s'élevèrent vers le ciel, et appesantis, se fermèrent à demi... Alors la tête de la jeune fille se renversa quelque peu en arrière ; ses genoux fléchirent insensiblement, ses lèvres vermeilles s'entr'ouvrirent pour laisser échapper son haleine embrasée, car son sein se soulevait avec force comme si la sève de la jeunesse et de la vie eût accéléré les battements de son cœur et fait bouillonner son sang ; bientôt enfin le brûlant visage d'Adrienne trahit malgré elle une sorte d'extase¹⁸⁶.</p>	<p>Εἰς τὴν ελαφροτάτην ταύτην πίεσιν, ἡ Ἀδριάννα εφάνη ὅτι ἠσθάνθη εἶδος ηλεκτρικοῦ τιναγμοῦ καὶ ανετριχίασε καθ'ὅλον αὐτῆς τὸ σῶμα. Οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ τῆς εχαννώθησαν, καὶ ἀφοῦ εβυθίσθησαν εἰς τὸ μαργαρώδες καὶ λαμπρὸν υγρὸν τῶς, υψώθησαν πρὸς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, καὶ βεβαρυμένοι ἠμικλείσθησαν... τότε ἡ κεφαλὴ τῆς νέας κόρης ἐκλείνειν ὀλίγον πρὸς τὰ ὀπίσω. Τα γόνατά τῆς ἔκαμψαν ἀνεπαισθήτως, τὸ ροδοκόκκινα χεῖλη τῆς ἠμῆνοιχθησαν δια ν'ἀφήσωσι νὰ ἐξέλθῃ ἡ πεπεσμένη ἀναπνοή τῆς, διότι τὸ στήθος τῆς υψούτο μετὰ δυνάμεως ὡς νὰ ἠύξησεν τοὺς παλμοὺς τῆς καρδίας καὶ ἀνεστάτωσεν τὸ αἷμα ἡ δρυμύτης τῆς νεότητος καὶ τῆς ζωῆς. Ἐντὸς ὀλίγου τέλος πάντων τὸ καίον πρόσωπόν τῆς Ἀδριάννας ἐπρόδωσεν ἀκουσίως εαυτῆς εἶδος ἐκστάσεως¹⁸⁷.</p>	<p>Ἡ Ἀδριανὴ ἠσθάνθη τότε ηλεκτρικὴν τινὰ ταραχὴν. Ἀνέφριξεν ὅλη, οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ τῆς ἐνεκρώθησαν, καὶ μετὰ μικρὸν ἀνυψώθησαν πρὸς οὐρανόν, καὶ πάλιν ἐκλείσθησαν...</p>

¹⁸⁶ Sue 1983: 724

¹⁸⁷ Sue 1846: 19-20 (vol. 7)

Fig. 6b *Le Juif errant: 1846 and 1861 versions (8)*

French original	1846 Greek translation	1861 Greek translation
<p><i>At this pressure, though very slight, Adrienne seemed to feel a sort of electric shock; her entire body shivered, her eyes languished, and, after swimming for an instant in their humid and brilliant crystal, they turned toward heaven and, heavy, closed halfway... Then the head of the maiden was thrown a little way back, her knees bent insensibly, her crimson lips were half opened to give passage to her heated breath, for her bosom heaved violently, as though the sap of youth and life had accelerated the pulsations of her heart, and made her blood boil in her veins. Finally, the burning cheeks of Adrienne betrayed a sort of ecstasy.</i></p>	<p><i>At this pressure, though very slight, Adrienne seemed to feel a sort of electric shock; her entire body shivered, her eyes languished, and, after swimming for an instant in their humid and brilliant crystal, they turned toward heaven and, heavy, closed halfway... Then the head of the maiden was thrown a little way back, her knees bent insensibly, her crimson lips were half opened to give passage to her heated breath, for her bosom heaved violently, as though the sap of youth and life had accelerated the pulsations of her heart, and made her blood boil in her veins. Finally, the burning cheeks of Adrienne betrayed a sort of ecstasy.</i></p>	<p><i>Adrienne then felt a sort of electric shock. Her entire body shivered, her eyes languished, and, after a while, they turned to heaven and closed again...</i> [Rest of paragraph missing]</p>

The next, mildly provocative paragraph, in which Sue equates Adrienne's corporal pleasure with a form of spiritual rapture was also entirely translated. By contrast, this scene of ecstasy was severely abridged in the 1861 translation and its religious undertones were removed altogether. Similarly, the treatment, in the two Greek-Ottoman translations of the novel, of another sexual allusion, relatively daring for the time, contradicts the idea of a generalized censoring of the erotic dimension in *The Wandering Jew*. In the chapter entitled "Le Réveil," Sue describes Adrienne lying on her bed naked while her chambermaids are preparing her bath in "a large tub made of crystal and shaped like an elongated seashell¹⁸⁸" in the adjacent room. The scene ends with the young woman beckoning one of her maids to come to her bed. In the original as in both translations –neither making any attempt whatsoever at censoring this passage- Adrienne's request was immediately followed by a full line of ellipsis points that come to interrupt the narration, which only picks up "about two hours later¹⁸⁹" in the exact same spot, thereby alluding to the possibility of sexual activity between the young woman and her maid Hebe, named after the Greek goddess of Youth.

I believe that this absence of consistency in the treatment by the two successive Greek-Ottoman translators of these scenes in *The Wandering Jew* points to the fact that the instances of textual manipulation leading to the removal of certain elements of the original French text were not primarily motivated by a desire to attenuate the erotic nature of the novel in order to make it fit the (supposedly) more conservative taste of the translations' target audience. In fact, as evidenced by the growing anxieties, on the part of intellectuals, that the eroticism of French popular novels would generate in the Empire in the second half of the

¹⁸⁸ Sue 1983: 622

¹⁸⁹ Sue 1983: *idem*

nineteenth century¹⁹⁰, that particular element undoubtedly came to constitute a large part of their appeal to Ottoman audiences and facilitated their wide circulation and great commercial success.

Therefore, in the process of negotiation through translation –and in the decision to keep erotic scenes intact or to abridge them, their subject matter *per se* mattered in fact less than other considerations, such as the position within the overall novel and the relationship with other elements in the text at large. A crucial factor that led *The Wandering Jew's* Greek-Ottoman translators to proceed to extensive cuts was, first and foremost, the novel's jarring lack of narrative concision. In other words, entire passages of the original text, including the aforementioned erotic scenes, were either shortened or removed altogether in translation because of their *repetitiveness*.

Indeed, Sue's writing in *The Wandering Jew* –as well as in every single one of his longer works- was characterized by the cyclical repetition of plot elements, motifs, and almost identical descriptions of characters and spaces. Read together the three scenes evoking the domestic privacy of Adrienne are striking by the similarity of both their structure and their specific content. After the character is introduced to the reader in a very intimate setting in "La Toilette," there remains very little for Sue to unveil and, with the exception of some minor details, the next two scenes ("Le Réveil" and "Le Secret") largely function as repetitions of the first, revealing nothing new of Adrienne's privacy and making no contribution to the progression of the plot. Without any doubt, the specific circumstances of the novel's original publication in French played an important part in making the recurrence of scenes and motifs such as the ones analyzed here, a distinctive feature of the work. In particular, Sue's tendency to duplication and almost *ad nauseam* repetition can be explained by the necessity for him to keep producing, over

¹⁹⁰ See for instance Etmekdjian 1964: 184-5 for an account of the gradual rejection of French "*décolleté* literature" by some Armenian intellectuals of the late nineteenth century.

a period of more than a year (from June 1844 through August 1845¹⁹¹) and on a quasi-daily basis, new installments whose length was pre-determined by the space allotted to the *feuilleton* in newspapers –which typically consisted of the lower part of the first page of each edition). In addition, the exceptional length of the novel's original publication period made it necessary for its author to find ways to remind faithful readers of earlier plot details that they might have forgotten and to provide some opportunities for the numerous new readers who started reading the novel midway through its serialized publication¹⁹². Such constraints did not apply in the case of the Greek-Ottoman translations of the novel since it was published directly in book form without pre-circulating in installments. As a result, the translators had absolute freedom to proceed to extensive cuts in an effort to keep the profligacy of Sue's writing in check and increase the readability of the source material. This process of removal of the novel's many redundant elements was not in any way limited to thematically problematic passages such as the ones that included erotic descriptions but extended to all kinds of scenes, regardless of their subject matter.

Interestingly, the shortening or complete discarding of certain passages that were not in and of themselves erotic but were situated in an adjacent position to passages that did themselves include risqué elements led, quite paradoxically, to an increase, in terms of "reading experience" of the impression of eroticism. In *The Wandering Jew*, the sensual never appears abruptly and eroticized, nude or semi-nude bodies are always framed first by a detailed description of the space they occupy. This pattern is at play in all three of the scenes involving Adrienne discussed

¹⁹¹ Adamowicz-Hariasz 1995

¹⁹² As it had been the case for *Le Journal des Débats* when it serialized *The Mysteries of Paris*, the publication of *The Wandering Jew* in *Le Constitutionnel* led to a dramatic increase in the number of daily subscribers. See Adamowicz-Hariasz 1995.

earlier. In "La Toilette d'Adrienne," the chapter that introduces the character for the very first time, the young woman only appears after a lengthy description of her private pavilion. Before centering it on Adrienne's naked body, the narrator guides the reader's gaze along the rooms of the building, describing in great detail the large number of luxurious pieces of furniture and delicate decorative objects that adorn the pavilion. The other two scenes (in "Le Réveil" and "Le Secret") not only reproduce the exact same movement that starts with the description of inanimate objects and progressively leads to that of a human body; they also recycle entire sentence segments from the first description. Adrienne's dressing room is for instance described in "Le Réveil" as "a sort of small temple that seemed to be dedicated to the cult of beauty" and the exact same sentence is used to evoke her pavilion as a whole in the first passage ("La Toilette"¹⁹³). Correspondingly, although the items described in each passage are nominally different, they often seem to echo one another, as similar decorative elements keep reappearing throughout all three passages: two naked caryatids flank a mirror here and a marble fireplace there; the same mother-of-pearl incrustations are found on Adrienne's bed, as well as on her bathtub. A true temple to Restoration-era *kitsch*, Adrienne's pavilion is filled with artifacts evoking both the conception of Greco-Roman Antiquity characteristic of late Neoclassic decorative arts (for instance statues representing scenes from Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*) and vague notions of an idealized Orient (the Indianesque bronze bas-relief, Japanese vases, etc.) Together, the items that compose the decor of Adrienne's domestic quarters form a space where sensorial perception –and, in particular, the sense of smell¹⁹⁴– is mobilized and prepares the

¹⁹³ Compare "*une sorte de petit temple qu'on aurait dit élevé à la beauté*" (Sue 1983: 226) with "[*une*] *sorte de petit temple élevé au culte de la beauté*" (Sue 1983: 619).

¹⁹⁴ Smells play an important part in all three passages: "the suavest perfumes permeated the room" (226); "the balsamic vapor which arose from the tepid, transparent, and perfumed water that filled the crystal shell was entering the room" (622); "a suave and light perfume, like an

reader for the apparition of the sensuous. Thus, the eroticism emerges gradually in these scenes, almost, so to speak, by capillarity, through the preliminary eroticization of the inanimate objects whose lengthy description precedes that of the naked body that they surround. In these passages, naked bodies, be they made of marble or of flesh, are intricately merged with furniture and decorative objects; in other words, the interior spaces and the intimacy of moment that they enclose are part of the same coherent whole, captured by an all-encompassing gaze which transforms the scene into a carefully-composed, sensual *tableau*¹⁹⁵.

From the point of view of Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators, the repetitiveness of these descriptions that framed moments of eroticism, as well as the fact that they encumbered the plot and significantly slowed down its progression, turned them into a form of surplus of which they could easily dispose. Because they were interested in providing their readers with a more concise and narratively effective text than they original they were adapting, the translators saw no point in retaining, for instance, the paragraph-long *ekphrasis* of Adrienne's bathtub¹⁹⁶ that served no direct purpose other than a demonstration of rhetorical prowess on the part of the author. As a result, the descriptions of nude bodies, although abridged, appeared unmediated in translation, once much of the buffer zone that surrounded them in the original -the description of the interior

almost indiscernible mixture of violet and jasmin emanated from the corolla of these admirable passiflores" (723).

¹⁹⁵ Although much shorter, another passage in *The Wandering Jew* describes the Indian prince Djalma reclining on a sofa in his lavishly-decorated interior, offering a male counterpart to the three aforementioned scenes depicting Adrienne in her private space. Starting with a detailed description of the decor and following with an evocation of the character's semi-nude body, the passage in question (Sue 1983: 611-12) closely resembles, in both structure and content, the ones analyzed above: Djalma's room is filled with "suave smells mixed with the fragrance of Persian tobacco," his hair is described as "ondulating sweetly around his face and neck," and an opening in his robe reveals "the elegant and pure shapeliness of ones of the legs of that Antinous of Asia." In Sue's orientalist gaze, the non-Western male body is subjected to an eroticization, which mirrors that of the Western female body.

¹⁹⁶ Sue 1983: 622.

space- had been altogether removed, thus indirectly reinforcing the erotic nature of these passages, now entirely focused on flesh rather than on decor. In that regard, for reasons that had primarily to do with considerations of length and narrative structure, the two Greek-Ottoman translations of *The Wandering Jew* proceeded to a form of *de*-composition of the *tableaux* so carefully assembled by Sue in the original text.

Symptomatically, this process was accompanied by the parallel removal of much –if not all- of the pictorial references that saturated Sue's descriptions and all the mentions that compared Adrienne to portraits by Titian, da Vinci¹⁹⁷, or Velazquez¹⁹⁸ disappeared in both Greek-Ottoman translations. As it was the case for the references to Callot, Gavarni, and Hogarth in the descriptions of the maskers in "La Reine Bacchanal," these elements pertaining to a specifically Western European visual culture were of little use to a non-Western audience and could therefore be easily removed in translation. Interestingly, the Greek-Ottoman translators chose, in a few instances, to replace these references to Western painting of the modern era with mentions of classical Greek art not found in the original French text. Thus, when Sue describes a nude Adrienne lying on her bed and compares her to "an admirable marble statue¹⁹⁹," the author of the 1861 Greek-Ottoman version added "built by the hands of Phidias" (κατασκευασθέν από τας χείρας του Φειδίου²⁰⁰), shifting the frame of reference from the pictorial to the sculptural and from the foreign to the Hellenic, thereby underlining the movement of appropriation at play in the process of translation.

¹⁹⁷ Sue 1983: 226; see also fig. 3a and 3b.

¹⁹⁸ Sue 1983: 722.

¹⁹⁹ Sue 1983: 622.

²⁰⁰ Sue 1861: vol. 6, 41.

c) *Translating the political*

In addition to the erotic passages, another important feature of *The Wandering Jew* constituted a challenge for Greek-Ottoman translators and demanded a form of negotiation through translation: the rather frequent political digressions inserted by Sue in the plot of the novel and in which he tackled a variety of social issues. As mentioned earlier, elements in *The Wandering Jew* attest to the gradual and somewhat unexpected conversion of its author to socialist ideas in the 1840s –Sue was the godchild of the Empress Joséphine²⁰¹ and had been, in his youth, one of the founding members of the very selective Jockey Club of Paris²⁰². In fact, the primary agenda of the novel was perhaps more polemical than directly political. It consisted in a particularly virulent denunciation of the Society of Jesus that coincided with a generalized climate of defiance against the Jesuits in European liberal circles after the reinstatement of the order in 1814. Yet, in keeping with the fascination of the nineteenth-century French novel with secret societies²⁰³, Sue attack on the Jesuits never goes beyond mere conspirationist theories. Of more interest are the passages he devotes to social ills primarily affecting the working class, in which he frequently hints at the necessity and possibility of social reform. Once again, "La Reine Bacchanal" offers an opportunity to examine the response of Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators to this particular feature and to analyze their treatment of these passages.

As mentioned earlier, the unit ends with one such digression, that comes to interrupt the dialogue between Céphyse and her sister La Mayeux, and where the author suspends the course

²⁰¹ Bornecque-Winandy 1980: 22.

²⁰² Roy 1958: 34.

²⁰³ One could think of *les Treize* ("the Thirteen") who appear in various episodes of Balzac's *Human Comedy* or, in a register closer to that of Sue, of *les Gentilhommes de la Nuit*, a secret organization in Paul Féval's *Mysteries of London*.

of the narration to insert a lengthy address to the reader that expands upon particular details of the novel's plot and delivers a more general form of political commentary –on the exploitation of low-income women, in the particular case. For Sue, the dissolute life led by Céphyse – a condition that her sister has managed to avoid herself only thanks to the exceptional strength of her moral principles- is not the result of a true choice on her part but, rather, a consequence of low-wage employment which forces women to seek the protection of men that exploit them instead of following a "natural" inclination toward modesty:

The insufficiency of the salary unavoidably forces a very large number of young women who receive such a poor compensation for their work to seek a way to survive by forming bonds that lead them to depravity. (...) It is the first phase of the degradation that the guilty carelessness of society imposes upon a huge number of poor working women, born with an instinct for modesty, righteousness, and honesty²⁰⁴.

Although most of the passage is devoted to an analysis of the connection between the capitalist exploitation of women and its sexual extensions, Sue also presents the question of low wages as a problem also affecting male workers, although it leads them to alienation rather than to "depravity": "Another deplorable consequence of the disorganization of labor other than the

²⁰⁴ " L'insuffisance du salaire force inévitablement le plus grand nombre des jeunes filles ainsi mal rétribuées à chercher le moyen de vivre en formant des liaisons qui les dépravent. (...) Ceci est la première phase de la dégradation que la coupable insouciance de la société impose à un nombre immense d'ouvrières, nées pourtant avec des instincts de pudeur, de droiture et d'honnêteté." (Sue 1983: 378-79).

insufficiency of the salary is, for men, the profound abhorrence that they have for the work that is imposed upon them²⁰⁵."

The solutions proposed by Sue are aligned with the social reform ideals that he progressively endorsed from the early 1840s onward: beyond an increase in wages, the issues faced by workers, both men and women, can be addressed by implementing a strict organization of the labor force and putting in place a system in which workers take pride in the work by participating in decision making processes within the industry –ideas that are realized, in the novel, in the utopian *fabrique*, owned by one of the Rennepont heirs who runs it according to the Fourierist doctrine²⁰⁶. This particular insistence, on the part of Sue, on the notion of labor organization might, to an extent, explain the radical changes brought by both Greek-Ottoman translators: in both translations of *The Wandering Jew*, the passage in question disappeared entirely.

In theory, however, the issues evoked in the passage in question, and specifically the problem of prostitution had enough transnational appeal to guarantee the translatability of Sue's digression at the end of "La Reine Bacchanal," in particular when used as an element of melodrama. After all, the topic of female labor was not at all foreign to Ottoman audience, the existence of such labor in the late Ottoman Empire being well-documented²⁰⁷. I therefore argue that, for Greek-Ottoman translators, the challenge lay not so much in a hypothetical foreignness to the Ottoman context of the topics evoked in these passages but in the possibility of using them as literary theme. In others, a digression on the exploitation of women's labor like the one that

²⁰⁵ " Une autre conséquence de l'inorganisation du travail est, pour les hommes, outre l'insuffisance du salaire, le profond dégoût qu'ils apportent dans la tâche qui leur est imposée." (Sue 1983: 379).

²⁰⁶ See the fourteenth part of the novel titled "La Fabrique" (Sue 1983: 667-714). The chapters in question were substantially abridged in both Greek-Ottoman translations.

²⁰⁷ See for instance Vardağlı 2013.

closes "La Reine Bacchanal" was not left out of the Greek-Ottoman translations because it was "culturally" untranslatable but because the questions that is raised where no deemed worthy of *literary* representation in the social and cultural context where the translation took place. The same was also true of most of the other political digressions inserted by Sue in the novel which including lengthy exposés on, among others, the dire treatment of the mentally sick in church-run institutions²⁰⁸, on the catastrophic living conditions of the urban poor²⁰⁹, or on the inadequate organization of hospitals and dispensaries in times of epidemics²¹⁰. For Greek readers living in Istanbul, all of these topics were largely familiar from a cultural standpoint –and the passages of the novel that presented them were therefore potentially translatable. Yet very little of them survived in both translations –when they were not entirely removed, as in the case of the final pages of "La Reine Bacchanal."

It thus appears that the complete removal or extreme shortening of these political passages in *The Wandering Jew* by the novel's Greek-Ottoman translators had little to do with fears that Sue's radicalism might conflict with the worldviews of a supposedly more conservative audience in the Ottoman Empire than in Greece, or with the hypothetical untranslatability of social questions incorrectly perceived as specific to Western Europe. Instead, these voluntary omissions point, on the part of the translators, to a *literary* decision to intervene in the very structure of the source text. The non-inclusion of these political digressions are therefore the result of the interest of the Greek-Ottoman translators in reinforcing the smooth progression of the novel's plot and attest to their investment in presenting the French popular novel to their audiences primarily as an entertainment product rather than as a tool for political proselytization.

²⁰⁸ Sue 1983: 610-11.

²⁰⁹ Sue 1983: 677.

²¹⁰ Sue 1983: 1020-22.

The removal of passages like the one on which "La Reine Bacchanal" ends underlines how, when it started to circulate in the Ottoman Empire, the French popular novel was not approached as a coherent and untouchable whole whose translation required absolute deference. On the contrary, texts like *The Wandering Jew* were perceived as loose narrative assemblage, entire elements of which could be removed with great flexibility and subjected to radical forms of appropriation through a constant process of negotiation.

How can we make sense of these important torsions to which a novel like *The Wandering Jew* was subjected during the process of its translation in the Ottoman Empire?

As I have underlined earlier, various elements –such as the extensive presence of *argot* or, to some extent, the subject matter of certain scenes- can probably account, at least partially, for their removal from the translated text. However, my claim is that these instances of textual manipulation on the part of Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators can also be read differently. Indeed, there exist clear indications, including the ones that I highlighted earlier, that the suppression, in the Greek-Ottoman translations, of portions of the original French text was sometimes due either to the relative inadequacy of the target language to render certain aspects of Sue's writing with precision, or to the fact that various linguistic and cultural elements remained somewhat opaque and impenetrable to the two successive translators. This phenomenon of partial translation should not, however, be primarily interpreted as the sign of any shortcomings on the part of the Greek-Ottoman translators of French popular novels. On the contrary, I suggest that, rather than describing their work only negatively and instead of framing the lacunas in their translations primarily as the tangible marks of a supposed deficiency of their translational skills or of the linguistic means at their disposal, their engagement with novels such as *The Wandering Jew* can be mostly defined as a form of critical reading, as an active process of selection aimed at

correcting what the translators perceived as the weaknesses of the source material. As such, these decisions enacted by the translators can be interpreted as a form of active and conscious intervention in the very economy of the original work, one that amended Sue's tendency toward textual prolixity and worked to tighten the progression of the plot as a way to reinforce the value of the novel for entertainment purposes.

In making such a suggestion, I question the lexicon developed in translation studies to account for the *de-formations* that take place during the translation of a text from one language to another. In *L'épreuve de l'étranger* (*The Trial of the Foreign*, 1984), an otherwise important and highly influential work -whose only limitation lies perhaps in the fact that it purports to develop universally-applicable tools for the study of literary translation, but remains itself entirely focused in transnational cultural exchanges between Western European literatures and is grounded in the study of highly canonical works- Antoine Berman offered a list of the "tendencies" pertaining to the "system of deformation" at play in "any operation of translation"²¹¹. For most of these, Berman uses a terminology that insists on an idea of deficiency and connotes translation strategies negatively: "qualitative impoverishment" (*appauvrissement qualitatif*), "quantitative impoverishment" (*quantitative impoverishment*), "destruction of rhythms" (*destruction des rythmes*), "destruction of underlying networks of signification" (*destructions des réseaux signifiants sous-jacents*), "destruction of vernacular terms or their exoticization" (*destruction des termes vernaculaires ou leur exotisation*), "erasure of linguistic superpositions" (*effacement des superpositions de langues*), "functioning of inadequate literary horizons" (*fonctionnement d'horizons littéraires inadéquats*).

²¹¹ Berman 1984: 296. I translate Berman's terms myself rather than relying on the existing English translations of his work.

Undoubtedly, it would be easy to read the difficulty of Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators to render the nuances of the Parisian *bohème* into Greek as a "destruction of underlying networks of signification" or as a "destruction" and "exoticization" of the "vernacular terms." Similarly, the shortening of descriptions and the removal of political digressions could be seen as both a "quantitative" and "qualitative impoverishment" with respect to the original text. However, the negative connotations of the terms used by Berman tend to frame translation practices such as the ones used by Sue's Greek-Ottoman translators in terms of their supposed shortcomings. In that regard, their use generates, in the textual analysis of nineteenth-century translations of French popular fiction in the so-called periphery, an impression of deficiency that mirrors surveys of Ottoman translations of Western European novels, such as the one proposed by Tanpınar in the essay quoted at the beginning of this chapter, which see this corpus as an incomplete one, marked by the absence of canonical works.

In an essay on the work of Ottoman novelist Ahmet Mithat as a translator of foreign novels, Cemal Demircioğlu²¹² lists the various terms employed by the author in several paratextual notations to describe his approach to translation. These terms –which, beyond *terceme* ("translation"), include *iktibas* ("quotation"), *nazire* ("imitation"), *muhavere* ("conversation"), *nakl* ("transposition"), or *hulâsa* ("summary")- have the great advantage, compared to Berman's categories, of shifting the focus to the agency of the translator. I conclude in suggesting that this terminology, specific to the late Ottoman context, could be fruitfully used in an analysis of the translation techniques set in motion by Greek-Ottoman translators when they endeavored to import a genre such as the French popular novel. The adoption of such a framework would not only help resituate the Greek-Ottoman praxis of literary translation within

²¹² See Demircioğlu 2009.

the immediate cultural surroundings in which it developed in the nineteenth century; in addition, by reappraising the work of Greek-Ottoman translators as a form of active and critical engagement with foreign literature, it would allow us to fully account for the importance of translation as a site of initial experimentation with prose fiction that played a crucial role in later processes of domestication of the novel as a genre and as a medium, such as the ones explored in the next chapters of this work.

Chapter 3

Armenian Ivanhoses, Greek Rob Roys: Historical Fiction and the Nationalization of the Novel

While contacts with Western sentimental fiction allowed for the domestication of the novel as a narrative regime in the literatures of the Ottoman Empire, it is their encounter with another type of fiction, the historical novel, that led to a form of nationalization of the newly-imported genre. Yet, because of the political dimension inherent to historical fiction, the importation of the genre from the West presented new challenges that called for creative responses on the part of novelists in the broader Ottoman literary field.

The present chapter surveys part of the large body of scholarship on the global spread of historical fiction in the nineteenth century in an attempt to show that the role played by Sir Walter Scott in the international diffusion of the genre has perhaps been overestimated. Shedding some light on the often complex genealogies of global historical fiction, this chapter suggests that the development of the genre in narrow literary fields led to profound mutations, both esthetic and ideological, as attested by the Greek and Armenian examples analyzed here.

1. Beyond Walter Scott: The Historical Novel in Romantic Europe

The national character of the nineteenth-century historical novel is so well established that an inclusion of patriotic or nationalist rhetoric can almost always be assumed to be present in examples of the genre. Indeed, the ability of historical fiction to display and create national self-awareness through an antiquarian inquiry into the past of the community often turned it into a powerful ideological tool in times where national (or subnational) groups sought to construct and promote an identity.

The genre was characterized by its exceptionally large diffusion in the nineteenth century. Not only was historical fiction particularly popular in the largest markets of Western Europe but also in all of its narrower fields, such as Italy²¹³, Spain²¹⁴, Portugal²¹⁵, Belgium²¹⁶, the Netherlands²¹⁷, or Scandinavia²¹⁸. In fact, the prominence of the genre, sometimes at the expense of other forms of prose fiction, was often a direct corollary of the narrowness of a literary field. In fact, it appears that, in the nineteenth century, the narrower a field, the more likely it was that historical fiction would, if not always chronologically inaugurate, at least often dominate its limited novelistic production. Examples of this phenomenon can be found, during the nineteenth century, in extremely constricted literary fields of Western Europe such as those of Malta -which produced only a handful of novels in the nineteenth century, all of them historical²¹⁹ or

²¹³ See for instance Manzoni 1827.

²¹⁴ González Álvarez 2001:103.

²¹⁵ Benoît-Dusausoy and Fontaine 2007: 466.

²¹⁶ Quaghebeur 2006: 39 ; Denis and Klinkenber 2005: 117.

²¹⁷ Benoît-Dusausoy 2007: *ibid.*

²¹⁸ Nielsen 2006.

²¹⁹ See Briffa 2012.

Flanders²²⁰. It is, however, on the oriental fringe of the European continent, where both cultural dependence and political submission played a part in the narrowness of literary fields, that the supremacy of the historical novel, as well as its intrinsically national character became the most apparent²²¹. The genre reached extremely high levels of popularity on the Polish²²², Hungarian²²³, Slovenian²²⁴, and Bulgarian²²⁵ markets, among others.

Beyond the diversity of the landscapes described in these novels, the variety of past events covered (with a strong predilection for medieval or early modern settings), and the specificities of the local historical episodes incorporated in these examples, most of them presented, at least from a superficial standpoint, very striking formal and thematic similarities. Because of the very large diffusion of the genre, the conventions of the historical novel often marginalized the local character that novelists sought to emphasize in their effort to highlight both the singularity of their respective community and the supposed originality of their literary endeavors.

The reason for the overwhelmingly *repetitive* nature of the historical novel as it manifested itself for most of the nineteenth century, across the European continent and beyond, lay in what constituted, more than any other, the defining characteristic of the genre and its overarching motif, that of *conflict*. More than oppositions between individuals, the nineteenth-century historical novel almost always staged a clash, often violent, along national, ethnic, linguistic or religious lines. Through the binary opposition between two (or more) groups, it served, in times when national and sub-national identities were being built, as a powerful

²²⁰ Benoît-Dusausoy and Fontaine 2007: 467.

²²¹ Benoît-Dusausoy and Fontaine 2007: 466.

²²² See Modrzewska 2006.

²²³ See Szaffner 2006.

²²⁴ Smolej 2006: 243.

²²⁵ Tschizewskij 1971: 163.

promoter of the presumed singularity -or proclaimed superiority- of a given community, imagined or real.

In the Romantic and post-Romantic age, along with being often repetitive, historical fiction was, at least according to most traditional narratives, eminently *derivative*. In fact, the very source of many of the occurrences of the genre has long been localized, interestingly not in Paris or London, the main centers of nineteenth-century novel production, but in the city of Edinburgh where Sir Walter Scott started to publish his stories of the Scottish Highlands in 1814:

Of course, novels with historical themes are to be found in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (...) and, should one feel inclined, one can treat medieval adaptations of classical history or myth as “precursors” of the historical novel and go back still further to China or India. But one will find nothing here that sheds any real light on the phenomenon of the historical novel. (...) What is lacking in the so-called historical novel before Walter Scott is precisely the specifically historical²²⁶.

For Georg Lukács, there is no doubt: the genre had a single genitor, a true founding father who inaugurated a genealogy, a literary lineage that neither required, nor could accommodate the idea of a more ancient heritage, of roots reaching to pre-Romantic times. The Hungarian critic's dismissal of the instances of historical fiction written before Scott's *Waverley* Novels is absolute; Lukács shows nothing but contempt for the authors of pre-Scottian historical fiction, and refuses to acknowledge them as true precursors. In his view, the genre had no real past before Scott and the very history of the novel-as-history began with *Waverley*.

²²⁶ Lukács 1962: 19.

From the perspective of Lukács' teleological approach, Scott's innovation is linked to his Hegelian notion of history as process and to the shift he operates toward a greater sense of realism, two characteristics that the Hungarian critic identifies and constantly underscores in the work of the Scottish novelist²²⁷. The second of these two elements, Scott's (alleged) realism, serves, for Lukács, the purpose of constantly downplaying the author's affiliation with Romanticism. It allows him to reclaim the legacy of the politically conservative Scotsman for a Marxist theory of literature, by insisting on his capacity to create an accurate image of the various "historical-social types" of his time²²⁸.

Lukács' assumptions have proved particularly influential and his strictly normative conception of what constitutes a true historical novel has served as a theoretical basis for much of the criticism around the genre for the rest of the twentieth century, enabling the development of an entire sub-field of literary historiography, the study of Scott's reception across the continent and beyond. The idea of an absolute dominance of the Scottian model has been particularly ingrained in philological studies of the historical novel in the confines of the European literary realm, as exemplified by the geographical width displayed by recent collective publications like *The Reception of Sir Walter Scott in Europe*²²⁹, with chapters devoted to the influence of the author of *Waverley* in narrow literary fields such as Slovenia or Catalonia.

Some scholars have, however, attempted to counter Lukács's narrative by presenting a more nuanced and complex image of the relationship between Walter Scott and some of his contemporaries and immediate successors in order to problematize the traditional genealogical

²²⁷ DeGroot 2010: 29.

²²⁸ Szamosi 2006: 164.

²²⁹ See Pittock 2006.

tree of the European historical novel. Inspired by this type of scholarship, the following pages will seek, through a study of nineteenth-century Greek and Armenian examples of historical novels, to make the following claims:

a) Without denying that Walter Scott's historical novels were, indeed, widely read and almost unanimously praised in a variety of literary scenes across the European space and beyond, the idea of a complete prevalence, in terms of both form and content, of his specific approach to the genre is only partially accurate. In fact, Scott's works, coexisted –and even competed- with other modes of writing history under the guise of fiction, due to the delayed and often mediated diffusion of novelistic techniques across the global literary field. In other words, Scott's example was but *one* in the range of other models of historical novels from which authors in narrow fields could –and did- choose to draw inspiration for their own original literary endeavors.

b) There exists a specificity of the historical novel in narrow fields which was written and consumed there in distinctive ways. This specificity is illustrated by three main characteristics of historical fiction as it developed in narrow fields during the nineteenth-century: a constant insistence, on the part of authors of historical fiction, on the national character of their work; a specific relation with the past and with history; and a divergent definition of what these two notions truly encompassed.

In Hesketh Pearson's words, quoted by Stuart Kelly²³⁰, “[*Waverley*] changed the direction of imaginative literature in every civilized country.” This kind of exaggeration, along with

²³⁰ Kelly 2010: 14.

Lukács' simplifications, testify to the significance of Sir Walter Scott in the European literary consciousness, a position he started to occupy already in his lifetime and kept at least until the mid-twentieth century, when his importance in the Western literary canon began to wane. In his Scottish homeland, that limbo-state -"neither a nation, nor a province"²³¹- which had seen the definitive loss of its autonomy sealed in 1701 by the Act of Union, the early Scottish-themed novels of Sir Walter Scott (who later moved on to English and European history, starting with *Ivanhoe* in 1819) served as a means to stage and perform -and, in a sense, vicariously experience- a form of national singularity that had no real translation in the political realm. On the continent, an avid interest in the remote and exotic landscapes of Scotland had already developed, largely thanks to the success of James MacPherson's Ossianic hoax a few decades earlier. It is therefore almost as a captive audience that the reading public quickly embraced Scott's novels. For European readers and authors, these texts had the advantage of combining antiquarian inquiry with the seductiveness of fiction, thus providing a ready-made example of literary nationalism, pliable enough to be adapted and transformed in order to accommodate local needs. The extremely wide diffusion of Scott's novels started with the anonymous publication of *Waverley* in 1814 and followed by over twenty works of fiction until 1831, as well as multiple reprints, reeditions, translations, stage and screen adaptations²³². This phenomenon, paired with Scott's huge influence on extra-literary cultural practices such as the visual arts, fashion or even tourism²³³, makes it impossible to support the claim that there was not a durable and powerful moment of encounter –or rather a series of encounters- between the novelist and his European contemporaries which lasted for over a century and whose ramifications were particularly far-

²³¹ Muir quoted by Kelly 2010: 46.

²³² Stuart Kelly (2010, 15) counts over 4000 plays based on Scott's works.

²³³ For an assessment of Scott's influence on literary tourism, see Durie 2006.

reaching. One must, however, seek to analyze with precision the modalities of this pan-European "Scott moment" and to locate them in their historical and cultural context by exploring what comes immediately before Scott, as well as the aftermath of his appearance on the British and continental literary scenes. As Katie Trumpener notes,

(...) most modern Scott scholarship has placed the Waverley novels above the fiction writing of their time, seeing Scott as the sole inventor of the historical novel, at once the adjudicating biographer of his novelistic predecessors and the kindly patron of "lesser" novelists²³⁴.

Trumpener attempts, in her study of the historical and literary context in which Scott's works are inscribed, to resurrect the somewhat forgotten genre of the "national tale", a mode of writing about the past similar to, yet profoundly distinct from the historical novel:

The national tale is a genre developed initially by female authors, who from the outset address questions of cultural distinctiveness, national policy, and political separatism²³⁵.

The pre-Scottian tradition of historical fiction which emerged as an object of study in the work of Trumpener and other scholars²³⁶ was marked by a form of double peripherality (mostly female authors, such as Maria Edgeworth and Sydney Owenson, lady Morgan; most of them from Ireland) which can account for its partial suppression in traditional literary historiography. Far

²³⁴ Trumpener 1997: 130.

²³⁵ Trumpener 1997: 132.

²³⁶ See, among others, Ferris 2002.

from constituting insignificant predecessors, as Lukács believed, they in fact laid the ground for their immediate Scottish successor who positioned his own production in a situation of simultaneous dialogue and rupture with their model. To use Trumpener's expression, Scott "masculinized"²³⁷ both the authorship and the readership of historical fiction in the early nineteenth century, while establishing the depiction of change and progress as the constitutive element of a revamped novelistic form. As Trumpener points out

with their respective focus on the domestic and political spheres as the sites of national and historical formation, on the stability of culture in place and the fragility of culture over time, the two genres develop dialectically opposed ways of situating culture. The national tale before *Waverley* presents national character as a synecdoche of an unchanging cultural space; here nationalism is a self-evident legacy, the result of unbroken continuity and a populist community that unites aristocracy and folk²³⁸.

As demonstrated by Maurice Samuels²³⁹, a parallel phenomenon -the existence and subsequent silencing by literary historiography of a well-established tradition of historical fiction, predominantly written by women, mostly addressing women readers and centered on female historical figures- existed in France in the early nineteenth century, before Scott first appeared there in translation in 1816. Without even needing to go back to Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678) or Madeleine de Scudéry's *Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus* (1649)- undoubtedly two of the figures that Lukács had in mind when he talked of "so-called historical

²³⁷ Trumpener 1997: *ibid.*

²³⁸ Trumpener 1997: 142.

²³⁹ Samuels 2004: 154-155.

novels" in the seventeenth century -the works of Sophie Cottin (*Mathilde*, 1805), Stéphanie de Genlis (*La Duchesse de la Vallière*, 1804; *Madame de Maintenon*, 1806; *Jeanne de France*, 1816), Amélie Simons-Candeille (*Bathilde, reine des Francs*, 1814) or Marie-Adèle Barthélémy-Hadot (*Clothilde de Habsbourg*, 1817) attest to the vitality of this scene immediately before the "British invasion" of Scott and his followers -even though they never truly entered the canon of the nineteenth-century French novel. These texts by female authors of historical fiction were marked by a formal and thematic proximity with the type of gothic esthetics prominent in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British novel. This particular element allowed later historians of the genre, such as Lukács, to insist on the supposed authenticity and verisimilitude of Scott's approach to history, in order to dismiss his predecessors. Ironically, in spite of Scott's effort to reassign the gender of the genre and to instill masculinity in the authorship and readership of historical fiction, his European reception was the site of a paradoxical return of the feminine repressed and women across the continent embraced, not only his work, but a range of folkloric aesthetics that stemmed from it. France was, for instance, seized by a "Scottish craze" in the late 1820s, with fashionable women sporting tartans "à l'écossaise" and decorating their boudoirs "to look like a Scottish castle"²⁴⁰.

Fiction itself reacted to this "Caledonian mania"²⁴¹ and examples of women swept up in the Scott fad are found in various works satirizing female novel-reading in the nineteenth century, from Sarah Green's *Scotch Novel Reading, or Modern Quackery* (1824) to Flaubert's *Emma Bovary*, the quintessential figure of female novel-reading in the nineteenth century- who, enthused by a representation of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* (based on a novel by Scott) eventually follows the tragic steps of her Scottish model.

²⁴⁰ Samuels 2004: 163.

²⁴¹ Trumpener 1997: 17.

Conceptualizing the European diffusion of Walter Scott's works as the creation and subsequent internationalization of a *fashion* rather than as a mere case of literary influence allows us to broaden our scope and to focus not only on a series of texts but, more generally, on an entire cultural climate. Outside the British Isles, in literary fields both wide and narrow, Scott's novels, his specific approach to History, some of the literary devices and techniques of fiction-writing he used, as well as a certain repertoire of images he popularized became trademark items and easily reproducible commodities, while, at the same, time Scott's name turned into a household name²⁴².

Presence, however, doesn't always imply absolute prevalence. While, in purely spatial terms, the Scottian (and Scottish) fashion did, in fact spread across the entire European continent in the nineteenth century, the actual degree of penetration of Scott's texts themselves was not constant in all of the various cultural spheres where they were imported. In fact, specifically in narrow literary fields, that penetration was not as uniformly deep as Lukács' assumptions seem to indicate but, on the contrary, appears to have been largely a mediated one. The main reason for this mediation was linguistic: in the nineteenth century, although it was more and more becoming the language of international trade, English had not yet acquired a dominant status as a vehicular idiom in the cultural real. In the case of the novel, this process of mediation was further intensified by the fact that, for much of the nineteenth century, the idea that translation should always be based directly on the original was far from having achieved the importance it

²⁴² The examples of such a trend abound, even outside of Europe: the Bengali author Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was thus sometimes called "the Walter Scott of India." ("Historical Novel." *The Encyclopedia of the Novel*. London: Blackwell, 2011). Many similar examples, many other "Walter Scotts of...", can also be found on a sub-national level: a review of 1825 in the *Journal des Débats* deplored that "(n)ow it's the turn of those who ape the famous writer from Scotland [...] this one's editor calls him the Walter Scott of Picardy; that one's bookseller dubs him the Walter Scott of Franche-Comté." (Quoted by Samuels 2004: 177).

possesses today. In fact, the recourse to French translations of Scott's works became relatively common in narrow literary fields across the European continent. As Richard Maxwell notes

(f)rom the 1820s onwards, Scott's fiction was dispersed to much of the globe through French translators (especially the prolific Auguste Defauconpret); meanwhile, the novelist's most committed French admirers, above all Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo, and Alexandre Dumas, took their own cue from his work. Overall, the strong cosmopolitanism of France, a culture that had long thought of itself hegemonically, came to reflect and enlarge the weak cosmopolitanism of Scotland (...) By the late nineteenth century, even Robert Louis Stevenson, the greatest Scottish writer of his generation, could reclaim the heritage of Scott only through *The Three Musketeers*. And outside Europe –in North America, Brazil, even in China- this French mediation of a Scottish heritage could seem more conspicuous yet: an odd process of hybridization whose compromises and contradictions productively bemused even distant observers²⁴³.

This idea of a foreign -predominantly French- mediation through which the work of Walter Scott reached narrow literary fields across the continent can be verified in various markets and sheds a different light on the reception of the Waverley novels. In Spain²⁴⁴, Italy, Poland²⁴⁵, Russia, as well as in the German-speaking sphere²⁴⁶, the translations of Auguste-Jean-Baptiste Defauconpret, which gained legitimacy by receiving the approval of Scott's literary agent in London, appear to have been more readily available to readers than Scott's original texts. As one

²⁴³ Maxwell 2009: 5.

²⁴⁴ García-González and Toda 2006: 47.

²⁴⁵ Modrzewska 2006: 192.

²⁴⁶ Barnaby 2006: 32.

scholar noted, an important ideological distortion was present in the bowdlerized versions of Defauconpret who inscribed his own political agenda in his translations, thus profoundly altering the message of Scott's work:

[...] Scott often undergoes a startling transformation at Defauconpret's hands.

Particularly in his earliest translations, Defauconpret tailors the Waverley novels to a Legitimist, Catholic, post-Napoleonic readership. Abandoning the political impartiality that offended Conservative and Liberal alike, Defauconpret's Scott unreservedly condemns all popular challenges to constituted authority²⁴⁷.

In central and eastern Europe, other languages -which locally enjoyed an equal or even greater prestige- sometimes replaced French, but the same phenomenon of mediation (and distortion) was at play: in Czech culture, where the knowledge of English was still rare in the first half of the nineteenth century, the early translations of Scott were based on German or even Polish versions²⁴⁸; Slovenian readers first got acquainted with Scott's work through stage versions of his novels performed in Ljubljana by German theatre companies²⁴⁹; in Scandinavia, even though the penetration of British culture was greater than in other parts of Europe, some of the early translations of Scott were still based on German versions²⁵⁰.

²⁴⁷ Barnaby 2006: 32.

²⁴⁸ Procházka 2006: 173.

²⁴⁹ Smolej 2006: 241.

²⁵⁰ Nielsen 2006: 253.

2. Historical fiction in Greece and Armenia

A similar trend can be partially observed in Greece where, even though Scott was first translated directly from English (with Georgios Lambises' translation of *Ivanhoe* in 1847), his second translated work (an anonymous rendering of *Guy Mannering* published 1865) was based on a French translation, proving that, relatively late into the century, the idea that translations should be based on original works had not yet been firmly established in the Greek literary field²⁵¹.

As Richard Maxwell has shown²⁵², a direct corollary of Scott's importation by many literary cultures across Europe through the mediation of French translation was the prominence of historical novels by French authors all over the continent. By the time when, around the middle of the century, the translation of foreign novels started to accelerate in many narrow literary fields, Walter Scott had already died and his work had begun to be replaced by that of more recent authors, most of them French, which participated in slowing down the diffusion of his works in several markets.

The case of Greece constitutes, once again, a particularly telling example. Throughout the nineteenth century, only four of Scott's twenty-five novels were translated into Greek (*Ivanhoe*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Bride of Lammermoor* and the lesser-known *Woodstock*²⁵³), the latter three being reprinted only once, while the first had only one single edition. In addition, two of Scott's narrative poems (*Harold the Dauntless* and *The Lord of the Isles*) were also translated²⁵⁴.

²⁵¹ Denisi 1994.

²⁵² Maxwell 2009: 5.

²⁵³ All data from Kasines 2006.

²⁵⁴ *Ivanhoe*. Izmir: 1847. Translated by G. Lambises; *Guy Mannering*. Athens: 1865. Anonymous translation (reprinted in 1883 in Izmir); *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Athens: 1865.

Compared to Scott's limited presence in Greece (a meager total of nine entries in the Greek bibliography), that of his main competitor, French novelist Alexandre Dumas, can only be described as massive. From the first translation of his work (*The Count of Monte-Cristo*, Istanbul, 1845-46) to the end of the century, over 240 translations of his novels were published in Greek, both in Athens and in the Ottoman Empire. A large portion of these translations were, in fact, reprints of earlier publications: *Monte-Cristo* had nine editions in Greece during the nineteenth century while *The Three Musketeers* had at least four- both contrasting with Scott's *Ivanhoe*, which was never reprinted in the nineteenth century. Overall, the vast majority of Dumas' catalogue was made available to Greek readers, while, as we saw, that of Walter Scott remained largely untranslated.

The absolute dominance of Dumas over Scott is even more striking when one looks at the chronology of their respective translations into Greek: even though both authors appeared roughly at the same time on the Greek market (1845 for Dumas, 1847 for Scott), Scott disappeared for almost twenty years and only resurfaced in the mid-1860s, when the bulk of his translations were published. Dumas, on the other hand, almost immediately reached a position of quasi-monopoly on the Greek market and, with the exception of a short period between 1855 and 1857 (probably because of Greece's isolation during the Crimean War), there was not a single year, for the rest of the nineteenth century, without at least one translation of Dumas into Greek.

The reason for the absolute domination of Dumas and, as a result, the relegation of Scott's historical novels to a secondary role on the Greek market for foreign translations is twofold. On the one hand, both authors appeared at a time (the mid-1840s) when the Greek

Translated by Zoe Dragoumi (reprinted in 1893); *Harold the Dauntless*. Athens: 1868. Translated by Th. Antoniadou; *Woodstock*. Athens: 1868. Translated by Th. Antoniadou (reprinted in 1871); *The Lord of the Isles*. Athens: 1869. Translated by Th. Antoniadou.

readership was gradually turning to new categories of imported literary texts. As I have shown in Chapter 2, the year 1845 must be understood as a major turning point in the history of Greek culture, marked by a sudden opening of the literary market. Until then, the foreign texts translated and read in Greece had been, almost exclusively, Western works of fiction from the seventeenth, eighteenth and early-nineteenth century. Beginning in 1845, contemporary works by living authors published a few years -or even just a few months- earlier in the original started to be translated into Greek. All of a sudden, the Greek public demanded to read the same texts available in the West and the appeal of novelty became a strong commercial argument for translators and publishers alike. In such a context, even works only slightly older, like the *Waverley* novels, had almost no chance to survive on the market.

The second reason for the marginalization of Scott in Greece has to do with the fact that the novel, as a new commodity, was ascribed a clear geographic origin: in nineteenth-century Greece, readers quickly became used to considering the novel as a predominantly French genre. In fact, for most of the nineteenth century, Scott's fate in Greece echoed the very precarious position of English-language prose fiction in general on the translation market. The strong Francophile inclinations of the Greek reading public were such that they trumped any consideration of canonical primacy. French popular novels, in particular, circulated very widely in Greece²⁵⁵ and the number of their works available in Greek translation during the nineteenth century was far greater than that of any work originally written in English²⁵⁶: there were, for

²⁵⁵ See Chapter 1 of the present work.

²⁵⁶ Interestingly, Walter Scott was even marginalized *within* the small corpus of nineteenth-century Greek translations of British literature: with seven works translated, his epigone Edward Bulwer-Lytton had a stronger presence on the market, probably due to the fact that the ancient Rome where his *Last Days of Pompeii* (1834) was set had more appeal in Greece than the Jacobite Scotland of his predecessor.

instance, more Greek translations of Alexis Ponson du Terrail or Xavier de Montépin during the nineteenth century than there were of Shakespeare.

Despite -or perhaps because of- the extreme popularity of authors like the aforementioned, the dominance of the French novel did provoke a certain backlash from a certain number of Greek intellectuals. In 1856, for instance, the daily newspaper *Athina* launched an attack on the leading literary review of the time, *Pandora*, lambasting the publication of "immoral" French *romanza* ("cheap novels") and opposing the "good" novels of Sir Walter Scott and others to the lighter type of historical fiction produced by Alexandre Dumas²⁵⁷. Ironically, such attacks failed to reverse the established trend and the Scottian revival of the mid-1860s was, as we saw, very limited.

The exact same phenomenon can be observed in Armenian literature: only a handful of Scott's novels are translated²⁵⁸, while Alexandre Dumas' works become so popular from the 1860s onwards that the number of the translations of his multiple imitators, such as Jules Lermina, author of the unauthorized sequel *Le fils de Monte-Cristo* (1881; translated in 1885), is greater than the total of Scott's translations²⁵⁹. In the Armenian case (as well as, to a slightly lesser extent, in the Greek one), the existence of strong cultural ties with France, where a significant number of young Armenians from the Ottoman Empire traveled to complete their studies, was undoubtedly a factor that accounted for this massive presence of French novels. It is, however, important to note that the markedly popular nature of the vast majority of the novels translated seems to indicate that the interest of the Western Armenians in French culture extended far beyond strictly academic spheres.

²⁵⁷ Denisi 1994: 47.

²⁵⁸ See Oshagan 1982.

²⁵⁹ See entries in the bibliography provided in Etkmekjian 1964.

In both communities, the saturation of the market for fiction was not without effect on the development of the local novel, whether historical or otherwise. Yet this flood of foreign works in translation did not entirely preclude the rise of alternative, local attempts at responding creatively to the massive influx of outside texts did emerge. A brief survey of the corpus of nineteenth-century historical novels in both Greek and Armenian can highlight the singularities of the genre in narrow literary fields.

Greek literary historiography has mostly relied on Lukács's conception of historical fiction and has often assumed this the Scottian model was the dominant one. There existed, indeed, within the relatively small corpus of nineteenth-century Greek historical fiction, a text so clearly derived from the work of Walter Scott that the concept of influence seems too weak to describe the debt of its author to the Scottish novelist. One could, in fact, easily borrow the term of “remake” from the vocabulary of cinema to characterize the process of appropriation of a foreign model at play in Alexandros Rizos Rangaves’ *Lord of Morea* (*Ο Αθέντης του Μωρέα*, 1850), the first clearly historical novel published in Greek language. In his novel, Rangaves largely transposed the action of *Ivanhoe* from twelfth-century England to the Peloponnese in the thirteenth-century, substituting the Byzantine aristocracy and the Frank Crusaders with the Saxons and Normans of *Ivanhoe*. The novel was published at a time when Greek intellectuals were starting to rediscover the medieval history of the nation and constructed the period of Frankish rule over the Peloponnese, in the wake of the conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204, as the moment of crystallization of national consciousness. Critics²⁶⁰ have underlined the extent to which Rangaves imitated Scott in his novel and the ways in which he used the Scottian model to discretely promote his personal political agenda.

²⁶⁰ See notably Mylonas and Pieris 1980.

In *The Lord of Morea*, unlike in *Ivanhoe*, the rebellion of the "natives" against the rule of the foreigners was dismissed by the author and presented as an inevitable failure. Rangaves championed the allegiance of the Byzantine elite to their new Western rulers. The motif worked as a thinly veiled allegory of the author's personal support of the regime of Bavaria-born King Otto. Rangaves' novel, however, was relatively unsuccessful and remained an isolated case of direct Scottian influence and, therefore, did not truly increase the limited impact that Walter Scott had on the Greek historical novel. *The Lord of Morea* did, in fact, inaugurate a long series of texts, primarily narrative poems and theatrical plays, set during the Frankish rule over Greece²⁶¹. Within this extensive corpus, only two works are historical novels. However, *The Cretan Wedding* (*Οι Κρητικοί Γάμοι*, 1871) by Spyridon Zambelios and *The Merchants of Nations* (*Οι Έμποροι των Εθνών*, 1882) by Alexandros Papadiamantis have, in fact, very little to do with Scott's model of historical fiction and fail to reach the necessary balance between history and fiction. The first one, whose perfunctory plot is ceaselessly interrupted by page-long footnotes and endless historical digressions, is barely a novel at all and remains closer to a historical treatise clumsily disguised as fiction. The second seems to be historical only by accident, its being more interested in the romantic element of his plot than a very precise depiction of the life in the Aegean shortly before and after the sack of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade.

Thus, overall, the historical novel was, unlike in many other narrow literary fields, largely underrepresented in nineteenth-century Greece and, in terms of the number of texts, came far behind other genres of fiction. In terms of setting, classical antiquity, a period that one could expect to provide fertile ground for fictional explorations of the national heritage, was strikingly

²⁶¹ For a detailed analysis of this little-known corpus, see Mike 2007.

absent. Alongside with the Greek Middle Ages, as exemplified in the novels mentioned above²⁶², the vast majority of the historical novels published during the nineteenth century dealt with the period of Ottoman rule, especially with its later period, the one that immediately preceded the Greek Revolution. The novels of Konstantinos Ramphos (*Despo of Epirus*, 1861; *The Last Days of Ali Pasha*, 1862; *Katsantonis*, 1862; *Halet Effendi*, 1869), Emmanuel Makres (*The Royal Sultana of Athens*, 1878), Dimitris Vikelas (*Loukis Laras*, 1879) or the anonymous *Hasan Aga* (1876) belong to this category.

One of the most enduringly famous examples of Greek historical novel dealing with the Greek Revolution, very successful at the time of its publication and frequently reprinted throughout the nineteenth and the early twentieth century was Stephanos Xenos' *Heroine of the Greek Revolution* (1862). With over one thousand pages in its modern critical edition²⁶³, remained for many decades the longest work of prose fiction published in Greece. Xenos's work followed the adventures of Andronike, a young shepherdess from Arcadia, and her lover Thrasyboulos, the nephew of the Patriarch of Constantinople, during the Greek Revolution. To these two main protagonists, Xenos adds the figure of the evil suitor of Andronike, Thrasyboulos' rival, the vile Varthakas, who betrays his nation by converting to Islam and takes the side of the Turks against the national cause. The melodramatic plot is little more than a pretext for Xenos to powerfully describe key events of the national uprising (the start of the Revolution at the monastery of Aghia Lavra near Patras, the massacres in Chios, the siege of Missolonghi, as well as the battles of Tripolitsa, Navarino, etc.) and to evoke a host of historical figures that cross paths with his protagonists. The novel gives Xenos the opportunity to provide

²⁶² To the works of Rangaves, Zambelios and Papadiamantis, one could add Emmanuel Roides' *Popess Joan* (1866), also set in the Middle Ages. The work, however, belongs to an somewhat distinct category of historical fiction, due to its parodic nature and palimpsestic character.

²⁶³ Xenos 1988. All quotes from Xenos are taken from the English translation (Xenos 1899).

his reader with detailed information on the cause of the Revolution or its development through numerous footnotes and direct textual interventions in the form of long digressions that often stop the progression of the plot entirely.

The extended stay of Stephanos Xenos in London has led some Greek critics to somewhat exaggerate his debt to Walter Scott. Indeed, Xenos very frequently resorts to a staple technique of the historical novel, the intermingling of real and fictional characters. That characteristic of historical fiction, sometimes wrongly presented as an innovation of the Scottish novelist but actually present in historical novels that predate him by centuries, such as Madame de la Fayette's *Princesse de Clèves* (1678), is in fact much more present in Xenos's novel than in any of Scott's works. In addition, Xenos's prolonged stay in London has led to the assumption that he predominantly found his inspiration in the works of British novelists of the time. Yet a detailed analysis of his first novel, *The Devil in Turkey*, shows the extent of his knowledge of the French novel, extremely popular and widely available in England at the time of his presence there.

What London truly offered Xenos was the opportunity to access historiographical and archival material on the Greek Revolution that he was later able to integrate into his work as a novelist. In British libraries, Xenos read foreign-language accounts of the Greek national uprising, such as Thomas Gordon's *History of the Greek Revolution*, as well as testimonies by former European fighters in the Greek War of Independence. He also had the opportunity to conduct interviews with some surviving British veterans of the Greek war of independence, at a time when such sources were, paradoxically, less available in Greece, where no exhaustive history or study of the Greek Revolution had yet been published.

Here lies the major difference between Xenos's historical novel and most of its Western counterparts: in his case, historical fiction does not constitute the byproduct of an established, domestic historiographical tradition. On the contrary, it comes to fill the absence of such a tradition. There is not, in the case of Xenos, any dilemma, any choice to be made between writing as a novelist and writing as a historian; in his mind, as well as in his authorial posture, the prerogatives of both types of writer, the novelist and the historian, are entirely synonymous. In the narrow literary field where Xenos operates, a space yet deprived of both a historiographical tradition and the institutions able to produce one, writing a historical novel or a historical study are fundamentally the same thing.

In Armenian literature, as in Greece, the novel developed relatively late in the nineteenth century, yet the historical genre was present from the outset. While not very numerous (the total number of nineteenth-century Armenian novels is itself relatively small), historical novels appeared on both sides of the geographic and political divide that separate the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire from the Armenians living in the Caucasus under Russian rule. If one might find the title of "father of Modern Armenian literature" sometimes awarded to him somewhat exaggerated and even conceptually inoperative, it must be acknowledged that Khachatur Abovian's *Wounds of Armenia* (written in the 1840s; published posthumously in 1858), one of the first original novels published in Armenian, constituted an important turning point in the history of Eastern Armenian literature, notably because of its use of the modern (eastern) vernacular instead of the classical literary idiom. On a thematic level, Abovian's novel also inaugurated the trend followed by virtually all Armenian historical novels in the nineteenth-century: the action is centered on the uprising of a group of Armenians (in the present case against the Persian khans in the 1820s) and focuses on the figure of a charismatic and idealist

leader able to unify and galvanize his countrymen into action. In *The Wounds of Armenia*, the strong patriotism expressed throughout the text is only moderated by the constant praise of the Russian "liberators"²⁶⁴.

Abovian's model was not immediately followed but the other historical novels that started to appear in the 1860s and 1870s exhibited many of the characteristics already present in his work. The war of 1827-28 between Persia and Russia and its consequences on the fate of the Armenian population of the greater Caucasus area was, for instance, the topic of one of the first historical novels in Western Armenian, *The Man of the Black Mountain* (unfinished; serialized between 1871 and 1881) by Matteos Mamurian, a prolific intellectual noted for his activity as a translator. A slightly earlier stage of the Persian rule over Eastern Armenia was also the subject of Perch Proshian's *Bone of Contention* (1878), a romance set in the late eighteenth century that contained, in its observation of village life, a certain amount of political criticism against the Armenian religious and political elite.

Another prominent figure of the Western Armenian literary scene made the most durable contribution to the development of the Armenian historical novel: published in the span of only four years, the three historical novels of Tzerents (*T'oros Levoni*, 1877; *Ninth-Century Travail*, 1879; *Teodoros Rshtuni*, 1881) moved the focus of Armenian historical fiction from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century to earlier periods of Armenian history, respectively twelfth-century Cilicia (*Toros Levoni*), ninth-century Armenia under Arab rule (*Ninth Century Travail*), and seventh-century Armenia caught between Byzantium and the Arabs (*Teodoros Rshtuni*). The plot of all three novels revolves around conflicts between the Armenians and oppressive forces coming from the outside; they all insist on the importance of strong leadership

²⁶⁴ Bardakjian 2000: 137.

and on the need to overcome internecine divisions. At a time when the Armenian community in the major urban centers of the Ottoman Empire was marked by profound divisions along religious and political lines, the novels of Tzerents, himself a Catholic, read as allegorical calls for unity and used history as a way to enhance patriotism, as well as to educate readers on both the travails of the community in the past and the challenges of the future.

Around the time Tzerents published his three historical novels in Istanbul, the genre found one of his most influential figures in Eastern Armenia, in the person of Raffi (pen name of Hakob Melik Hakobian). Having started to experiment with prose fiction as early as the late 1850s, Raffi remained committed to his goal of raising the level of domestic prose fiction and, from the 1860s to his death in 1888, published a series of texts that greatly contributed to the development of the Armenian novel in general. Among his works -most of them were originally serialized in newspapers published in Tiflis- three clearly belong to the genre of historical fiction: the first one, *Davik Bek* (1881), set in the 1820s, reprises the motif of the national uprising led by a charismatic young leader; the second and third of these novels (*Paruyr the Armenian*, 1883, relatively short; *Samuel*, 1884) expand the historical horizons of the Armenian novel by going back to much earlier stages of national history, the fifth and fourth century respectively.

However, as some have pointed out, "some of Raffi's novels with contemporary themes may also be considered as [historical], given that many of them have the same aim: to stimulate awareness of the struggle for national liberation²⁶⁵". Therefore, to Raffi's three texts immediately identifiable as historical novels in the traditional acception of the term, one could add a fourth, one of Raffi's most enduring works, *The Fool*, published in 1881 and which, as will be argued,

²⁶⁵ Hacikyan 2005: 94.

belongs to the type of texts that have been called "novels of the recent past"²⁶⁶, one of the common incarnations of historical fiction in narrow literary fields.

Subtitled "Event from the Last Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78," Raffi's novel starts with the description of a military siege, a theme with a rich tradition throughout the evolution of the historical novel²⁶⁷. In the first chapters of the novel, a young man escapes from the city of Bayazid besieged by the Ottoman army and, dressed as a "fool" (or jester), manages to reach the Russian camp to inform them of the need to send reinforcements. A long flashback ensues, taking up most of the novel, where the reader learns about the love of the young hero (Vartan) for the country girl Lala disguised as a boy by her family and coveted by both a Kurdish lord of war and the local tax-collector, the Armenian traitor Tomas Effendi. While the novel retains the basic structure of numerous earlier Armenian novels (national awakening under the tutelage of a charismatic guide), the responsibility of this leadership shifts from the aristocratic leaders present in Tzerents' novels to the more ambiguous figure of Vartan the Fool, a former monk turned smuggler. In his effort to awaken the peasantry of Eastern Armenia, Vartan is seconded by another "fool," the young and idealist Mr. Salman, an intellectual educated in Europe who travels from the capital to the Armenian-populated Ottoman hinterland in order to open schools for both boys and girls, thus countering the negative influence of the Armenian clergy, which is the object of Raffi's staunch criticisms throughout the novel.

In *The Fool*, the question of education determines both the relationship between the various characters and social groups in the novel (Vartan and Mr. Salman educate the peasants as much as they are educated by them) and the mission that Raffi assigns to his own text, that of helping his urban readers gain greater consciousness of the travails of the peasants in the

²⁶⁶ Jones 2006: 14.

²⁶⁷ See Maxwell 2009.

Armenian provinces. Therefore, as in Xenos' *Heroine of the Greek Revolution* and many other historical novels published in narrow fields during the nineteenth century, the text reaches degrees of didacticism seldom found in British or French examples of the genre such as the novels of Walter Scott or Alexandre Dumas.

Overall, the historical novel as it developed in the second half of the nineteenth century in narrow literary fields like the Greek or the Armenian distanced itself from the dominant models originating from Western Europe, even though the presence of such examples, through importation and translation, within those fields could be described as nothing less than massive. The genre of historical fiction in prose allowed novelists in narrow fields to exhibit a certain amount of formal and thematic autonomy with relation to their foreign models. This creative reception of historical fiction marked the beginning of processes of autonomization -which would intensify with when novelists turned to other genres such as urban popular fiction²⁶⁸- happened along three main axes. First, novelists in narrow literary fields operated a drastic nationalization of the historical novel by turning it into a powerful vehicle for the consolidation of a greater sense of national community. Second, they transformed the paradigm which formed the basis of the genre in Britain and France -and which envisioned history as *difference* and historical progress as *rupture*- by emphasizing, on the contrary *sameness* and *continuity*. Third, with its special interest in novels depicting recent events, these same novelists liberated the genre from a conception of the past as necessarily distant.

In order to understand to what extent novels such as Xenos' *Heroine of the Greek Revolution* or Raffi's *Fool* broke away from Western models of historical fiction, it is necessary to analyze the nature of the conflicts depicted in historical novels in both wide and narrower

²⁶⁸ See next Chapter 2 of the present work.

literary fields. As stated earlier, the motif of conflict, between groups or factions rather than between individuals, can be singled out as one of the few true common denominators of all the different types of historical fiction. Even if one insists on closely following the Lukácsian tradition of considering Sir Walter Scott as the central figure in the genre, it appears that, while conflicts between various groups were found throughout his work, they rarely -if ever- followed purely national lines. In the Scott's Scottish-themed novels such as *Waverley* or *Rob Roy*, the conflict between the Highlands and the English South was the reverberation of the political opposition between the Jacobite rebels and the Crown. In his English-themed works such as *Ivanhoe*, the "ethnic" nature of the conflict between Saxons and Normans is nullified by its outcome, celebrated by the novel, the eventual merging of the two groups to form a unified British nation.

In nineteenth-century French historical novels -whose diffusion in narrow fields was, as shown earlier, much larger than that of Scott- the conflicts depicted were almost always staged within the borders of the nation and always oppose various domestic factions instead of describing fights between the national community and exterior forces. In *Cinq Mars* (1826) by Alfred de Vigny, or in the many swashbuckling novels of Alexandre Dumas (the most popular and widely translated author of historical novels and perhaps the one who most denationalized the genre), the plot is always based on conflicts between political factions, supporters or opponents of the regime. In Mérimée's *Chronique du règne de Charles IX* (1829), or in Dumas' *La Reine Margot* (1845), both set during the religious wars of the sixteenth century, the opponents are all French, Catholics or Protestants. In the novels, such as Balzac's *Les Chouans* (1829), which deal with the counter-revolutionary uprisings in Western France in the aftermath of the Revolution, local French particularisms clash with the French central authority.

In fact, in narrow fields, historical novels such as the ones written by Xenos and Raffi also presented episodes of internecine conflict, civil strife and dissensions within the community, usually centered on the figure of a traitor betraying the community (Varthakas in the *Heroine of the Greek Revolution*, Tomas Effendi in the *Fool*). However, in both cases, these conflicts are a symptom of the greater fight opposing Greek or Armenians as a community to outside enemies. In addition, since it always led to the repentance of the traitor (both Varthakas and Tomas Effendi express regret for their actions before dying), this type of conflict between individuals and their community served the purpose of underlying the unity of the national group that eventually prevailed.

The historical fiction produced in France or Britain during the nineteenth century was, of course, never completely devoid of nationalist undertones. Yet the patriotic subtext of historical novels like the ones analyzed here was of a distinct nature and evokes Pascale Casanova's definition of "combative literatures" –a notion which, although it is described using Casanova's usual problematic terminology²⁶⁹ - can be applied to both narrow literary fields studied in this chapter, at least for the nineteenth century:

Of course, the 'oldest', 'major' literatures also assert forms of literary and cultural nationalism, not least in declining countries like France. But these nationalisms of decline or reaction operate within a field that generates its own forms of opposition. In contrast to emerging literatures, here they represent neither the totality of national literary production nor the dominant ideological outlook. Multiple contestations of nationalist belief make themselves felt in diverse aesthetic forms. Furthermore, this nationalism promotes forms

²⁶⁹ See introduction

of aesthetic conservatism very different from those of ‘combative’ cultural nationalist movements²⁷⁰.

The nationalization of historical fiction at stake in narrow fields took various forms and came to saturate the examples of the genre produced in Greek or Armenian. In the *Heroine of the Greek Revolution*, an acute sense of the historical "fall" of Greek culture is present throughout the text and Xenos clutters his novel with constant references to the classical Greek past. His characters spend their time reminiscing about ancient Greek history and, during their itinerary in the devastated landscapes of the revolutionary Greece, Andronike and Thrasyboulos constantly evoke their forefathers, travelling historically as much as they travel geographically:

Thrasyboulos and Andronike met more than once upon the mountains. Soon the shepherdess of Arcadia became as unhappy as Calypso if a single day passed without her seeing Thrasyboulos. With him she traversed the ancient places of Arcadia. The thought of the past and of liberty inflamed them to enthusiasm. They sang their heroic and mournful songs, and amid these surroundings recalled the grand events of Greek history, the only education either of them possessed²⁷¹.

In Xenos’ novel, the Greek landscape, the setting of his historical novel, becomes invested with a depth of time that marks the nationalization of the genre:

²⁷⁰ Casanova 2011: 130. On the concept of "combative literatures," see also Casanova 2011b.

²⁷¹ Xenos 1899: 30.

Andronike chose ten *pallikaria* to accompany her to Patras. By her confident air she inspired obedience and respect. She placed the old *armatolos*, named Lambros, at the head of the troop. After they had breakfasted they began their march.

In a few days, they reached the Ladon, the river in which Hercules captured the Arcadian stag. On April second, they climbed the lofty and glittering mountains of Erymanthus, where Hercules slew the Erymanthian boar. One branch of the Erymanthus bounds on the East the Cyllenian mountains, where Hermes was born, and another branch on the West the mountains of Olenos and Pholoe.

This mountain range, haunted by myths, forms the definite boundary of Arcadia, Elis, and Achaia.

There they encamped that night. Whoever knew well the ancient world could not gaze from that splendid outlook without emotion. All Grecian history seemed spread out below. In front was Elis with Olympia, and the river Alphaeus under its modern name of Roufias. (...) On the other side was Achaia, the last torch-bearer of Greece, the country of Aratos and Philopoemen. There was the plain where the Roman Mummius buried Greece for twenty centuries²⁷².

The character of Andronike, a typical example of the female as metonymy of the nation, reiterates the figures of the Homeric heroes as she crosses gender lines by adopting a male costume:

The *effendi* or gentleman into whom the maiden had been thus transformed, deserves special description.

²⁷² Xenos 1899: 59-60.

The jacket was of purple velvet, embroidered with flowers and bosses in gold thread. All the minor articles, belt, leggings, garters, were of the same material. From her waist hung the snowy *fustanella* with its countless folds. On her head was a high fez, drooping over the right ear, with a deep-blue tassel fastened with a golden buckle. A brace of pistols, a *yataghan*, and a dirk, all mounted in gold and silver, were attached to the belt. On the shoulder was carried a long gun, inlaid with silver.

If Andronike had found a less striking costume among the treasures of her father, she would have preferred it, but only their most precious things had been concealed. But many other armed gentlemen of the day dressed with the same magnificence. In fact, all had a certain resemblance to the heroes of the Iliad, the moderns being more arrogant and always pretending that they had taken their gilded and splendid arms as booty from the pashas and beys whom they had slain.

The height of Andronike, unusual for a woman, was no more than ordinary, after her transformation into a young man. Her figure would have delighted any painter as his model. No longer showing timidity, she now set out on her journey like a bold warrior, inspired by faith and love²⁷³.

In Raffi's *Fool*, the references to the historical past are less numerous and oblivion is even thematized in the text when Vartan laments the absence of historical consciousness of the Armenian peasantry he tries to awaken:

²⁷³ Xenos 1899: 57-58.

"Those people are just like the Sphinx; they're a complete riddle," he said to himself.

"Try as hard as you can to figure them out, and you still can't do it. They have no sense of history; or, if they do, it's just some distorted and odd impression..."²⁷⁴

There, the nationalization of historical fiction manifests itself in a slightly more subtle way than in *The Heroine of the Greek Revolution*. The two "educators," Vartan and Mr. Salman, repeated use of allegory to expose the problems faced by the community. In one of the many scenes of dialogue between Vartan and the sons of Khacho the villager, the young idealist adopts the tone of a national prophet and, in accordance with the many Christlike features given to him by the author, uses the symbolic language of a parable to warn the peasants against the dangers of conflicts within the community:

"I will explain everything to you with a parable," he said to his fellow prisoners:

"The trees of a forest sent word to their king, saying, 'A tool has appeared in our midst, and cuts us down without mercy.'

'What is this tool called,' asked the king of the trees.

'It is called axe,' answered the trees.

'How is it made?' asked the king.

'Its head is made of iron, and its handle of wood,' the trees replied.

'Then that is the most dangerous tool, since its handle comes from one of our own,' said the king."

²⁷⁴ Raffi 2006: 83.

"The handle comes from one of our own," Vartan repeated with emphasis. "The handle of the instrument that is used to oppress, torment, and subjugate us and destroy our home is furnished by our fellow Armenians -those [...] who, from the village *moultezims* right up to the *amirahs* in the service of the Sublime Porte, provide just such a handle to be wielded in the hands of our enemy. Such dangerous handles have never been lacking in Armenian history. Wherever you see our nation and people betrayed to foreign powers, an Armenian hand will be involved. [...] In short, an Armenian axe is involved in every tribulation, in every persecution, in every atrocity and barbarity that is inflicted upon us by our enemy [...] I, like a prophet, could see that things were going to turn out like this, and I knew it would be stupid to expect anything else²⁷⁵"

Alongside a discourse on the nation established through prophecy and allegory, Raffi's novel also celebrates the national community through a form of ethnography. The prolonged stay of Vartan among the Armenian peasants of eastern Anatolia gives Raffi the opportunity to evoke their life and customs in vivid descriptions: in a long scene at the beginning of the novel, the reader is introduced to the "simple, yet prosperous" village life of Khacho and his family. The passage begins with an idealized and quasi-edenic depiction of rural abundance:

Despite its simplicity, life in this traditional home went on with joy and prosperity. Work proceeded at a steady pace, and God's blessings flowed down upon it. The store-rooms were kept full of wheat, oil, olives, and wine, supplying their needs through all the

²⁷⁵ Raffi 2006: 144-45.

seasons. Whether it was hot or cold, all their needs were satisfied, and there was also work to do.

The idyllic depiction culminates in an almost paganistic ritual during which Khacho blesses his oxen by cracking a raw egg on him. The primitive nature of the custom described by Raffi in this scene, as well as his insistence on its "immemorial" roots, gives to his depiction of rural Armenia, presented as the true source of the national ethos, an almost Biblical character, reinforced by frequent comparisons between Khacho and his family to figures of the Old Testament (Job, Abraham, Joseph and his brothers, etc.)

Both the Homeric references in Xenos' *Heroine of the Revolution* and the sort of ethnographic inquiry found in Raffi's *Fool* participate in the same patriotic takeover of historical fiction that seeks to emphasize constancy, repetition and continuity in the national community. In that sense, these works elaborated in narrow literary fields present a sharp contrast with the historical novels of the "Franco-Scottish" tradition which focused on historical change and rupture. Xenos and Raffi thus appear to share the same conception of history present in the pre-Scottian "national tales." As Katie Trumpener points out, these earlier novels, mostly written by female authors insist on topography rather than history, moving the focus from history itself to an attention to a national landscape charged with historical reminiscence:

The national tale before *Waverley* maps developmental changes topographically, as adjacent worlds in which characters move and then choose between; the movement of these novels is geographical rather than historical. In contrast, the historical novel [of Walter Scott and his followers] finds its focus in the way one developmental stage

collapses to make room for the next and cultures are transformed under the pressure of historical events²⁷⁶.

One of the examples of national tale studied at length by Trumpener provides a particular clear example of this insistence on diachronic repetition, in sharp contrast with the Scottian model and its emphasis on change. Written only a few years after –and, presumably, in reaction to– the Irish rebellion of 1798 and the Act of Union of 1800 which sealed the fate of the entire island as a British colony for more than a century, Lady Morgan's *Wild Irish Girl* (1806) sought to restore the image of Ireland in the eyes of its English readers. The text can be seen as the culmination of the antiquarian interest for Irish history and culture of the late eighteenth-century Gaelic revival. Much like Xenos sixty years later, Lady Morgan frequently interrupts the plot with lengthy footnotes that provide the reader with detailed information on, among others, the role of the bards in Irish culture or the resurgence, in a deeply Catholic context, of traditional pagan rituals. In fact, in spite of their antiquarian character, the long footnotes and digressions in the *Wild Irish Girl* tend to blur the line between history and ethnography. Lady Morgan appears particularly interested in highlighting, not historical change as Walter Scott would start to do a decade later, but permanence through history. Ireland might have been vanquished, Lady Morgan seems to be insisting, but the songs of the bards can still be heard in the mouth of the Irish peasantry and the Irish soul lives on in the ruins of the castles destroyed by the English. Interestingly, in her effort to highlight the endurance of the Irish character through time, Lady Morgan (who later penned a novel entitled *Woman, or Ida of Athens*²⁷⁷) draws multiple parallels between the Irish and the Greeks and has Glorvina declare "I know of no country which the Irish at present resemble more

²⁷⁶ Trumpener 1997: 141.

²⁷⁷ Morgan 1809.

but the modern Greeks²⁷⁸". In fact, both the text and the footnotes of her novel are literally saturated with references to the similarity that she sees between the Irish and the Greek. For her, both people are united by a common endurance of their national soul through time and by the fact that they seem impervious to historical change in spite of the attempts of powerful enemies at imposing such change.

With its insistence on sameness, the historical novel as it developed in narrow literary fields often abolished the distance separating readers and characters in the Scottian and Dumasian novel:

In the novels of Scott and his followers [...] the reader observed the protagonist from a distance, across a space dividing present from past, like the gap between the viewing platform and the canvas of the panorama. [...] In the swashbuckling adventures of Dumas's *Les trois mousquetaires*, the reader remains in a passive role. The characters serve as a kind of optical instrument, allowing the reader to gaze on the otherness of the past²⁷⁹.

These incarnations of the historical novel thus managed to effectively cancel this distance between reader and characters and removed the otherness of the past through a strong emphasis on sameness which led to a nationalization of the genre. The disappearance of the divide between past and present was also marked temporally and it is no accident if the historical novels written in narrow fields oftentimes tested the validity of a crucial assertion of the Lukácsian tradition according to which a gap "of at least one generation" must separate the time of writing and the

²⁷⁸ Morgan 1999 [1806]: 138.

²⁷⁹ Samuels 2004: 175-176.

time of the action in order for a novel to be considered historical. The subgenre -and rather paradoxical category- of "novel of the recent past" appears to have particularly thrived in these fields, as demonstrated by the example of Raffi's *Fool* set only a few years before its publication or in the many Greek novels published in the nineteenth century and set during the recent Greek War of Independence, such as Xenos' *Heroine of the Greek Revolution* or Iakovos Pitzipios' *Orphan Girl of Scio* (1839), an even earlier example of historical novel dealing with very recent events.

The reasons for such a prevalence of this specific type of historical fiction in narrow literary fields needs to be sought in the distinct relationship with the past that characterized the national communities to which authors like Xenos and Raffi belonged. In Britain or France, powerful nation-states in a situation of world dominance in the nineteenth century, the events that served as the backdrop of the historical novel, be they the religious wars of the sixteenth century or the Jacobite uprisings and the *chouannerie* of the late eighteenth century, were all solved issues, therefore firmly anchored in the past. On the contrary, Greece and Armenia were still caught in an ongoing process of historical change during the entire nineteenth century. Greece had inherited from its revolution a minuscule state that contained only a fraction of those who identified with the national community, while Armenia remained a nation without a state, split between two empires and with yet unfulfilled aspirations for independence.

When history is still a promise and not yet an accomplishment, the limits between present and past become blurred and history is experienced through a different paradigm from the one at play in communities enjoying greater social and political stability. The relationship between the fulfillment of national goals and the type of historical fiction produced by a given literature is further demonstrated by the fact that, when instances of profound historical rupture come to

shatter political stability, the historical novel tends to forsake the distant past and becomes suddenly more interested in the recent travails of the community. For instance, the defeat of 1871, which led to important territorial losses for France, was rapidly incorporated into French historical novels of the late nineteenth century (Jules Vallès' *L'Insurgé*, 1886; Emile Zola's *La Débâcle*, 1892, etc.)

In historical fiction produced in narrow fields, the absence of strict boundaries between what constitutes the past and the present leads to yet another important departure from the traditional historical novel. Since the past is still largely lived in the present, the historical novel can also integrate the immediate *future* of the national community, describing in a sort of "uchronia" the attainment of the social and political goals of the nation. In the final chapters of *The Fool*, Raffi describes the dream of Vartan who returns to the sites where the action of the novel took place and witnesses the positive changes that have transformed the Armenian countryside. Intercommunal violence has receded and, when the young man evokes the conflicts between the Armenians and their oppressors, his interlocutor reveals that these now belong to history:

"You were talking about the sad times of the Kurds and the Turks," Vartan's host continued with a special happiness in his voice, "But after those days, a great many changes took place. Do you see those breath-taking mountains? Well, a century and a half ago, they were totally bare, without so much as a shrub on them. In those days, the trees were destroyed by the barbarians with the same cruelty that the people had been destroyed. Everything was gone. [...] But when peace returned, then hosts of people came back to the destroyed towns, and the mountains became covered with forests, all

planted by our hard working, dedicated villagers. See that beautiful green valley? It had been turned into a totally dry wasteland, without any water. There was only a little river left, and it would dry up completely in the heat of the summer. But from the moment the forests were planted, there was water in abundance. This is now one of the most fertile and fruitful places in the region. Yes, a great deal has changed....²⁸⁰

Along with being politically pacified, the ideal Armenian village of the future also presents all the characteristics of a socialist utopia:

They passed by a sawmill where most of the labor was carried out with steam-powered machinery. The mill produced lumber in many different sizes and styles, and supplied all the nearby villages and towns.

"Who owns the mill?" asked Vartan.

"The village owns it. Any enterprise you see here isn't the property of just one individual," replied his host. "All the facilities belong to the entire village community; each villager has a share in it. They are constructed of wood from the nearby forests. These, too, are owned by the entire village²⁸¹."

And what a school this was! Vartan had never seen a school like this before [...] Inside of it could be found everything connected with the village economy. Next to this enormous building was a vast farm divided into sections, cultivated by students, both

²⁸⁰ Raffi 2006: 216-217.

²⁸¹ Raffi 2006: 218.

male and female. Plants from almost everywhere in the world could be found here: herbs, flowers, shrubs, etc.

The students here did not engage in book learning or dead literature. Everything they learned, they took from nature's wondrous book. At set times, they engaged in both callisthenics and military exercises. Vartan thought to himself, "This is the kind of education that produces both good cultivators and good soldiers"²⁸²

This often utopian character of the historical novel produced in narrow literary fields, as well as its specific relationship with an ever-present past, is the mark of its divergence from the centrally-defined norms of the genre. By redefining what historical fiction means, Greek and Armenian authors broke from the situation of unequal exchanges that prevailed in the nineteenth-century global literary field. By modifying the established models of a foreign genre to make it better fit their own needs, they came to occupy a narrow space of literary independence.

Originally codified as a genre in hegemonic literary markets, the historical novel fully realized its potential to support and carry efforts of national self-awareness and consolidation when it was adopted by narrow literary fields across Europe. The models of its most celebrated and successful practitioners from Britain or France were modified and, unsurprisingly, formal, thematic or ideological affinities developed between actors in narrow fields, such as the female authors of early national tales in Ireland or Wales or the early historical novelists from Greece and Armenia.

²⁸² Raffi 2006: 219-20.

Chapter 4

The Novel as Commodity: Virginie and Her Ottoman Sisters

During her formative years, the young Emma Bovary is exposed to three different modes of reading, which correspond to three different types of texts -and even, in a sense, to three different types of formats. The first of these modes is solitary reading: the text is a novel and takes the form of a book. For Flaubert's character, this mode belongs to childhood and predates any other engagement with reading; the novel in question, Bernardin de Saint Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* (1788), is therefore Emma's primordial text. The work, a story of nature corrupted by culture in far-away Mauritius, paradoxically triggers Emma's own corruption by literature:

She had read *Paul and Virginia*, and she had dreamed of the little bamboo house, the Negro Domingo, the dog Faithful, but most of all of the sweet friendship of a good little brother who goes off to fetch red fruit for you from great trees taller than church steeples, or runs barefoot over the sand, bringing you a bird's nest²⁸³²⁸⁴.

In the second mode, reading becomes a social, collective practice. In the context of the convent where she is a boarder, the young Emma is more often read to than she reads on her own, and

²⁸³ Flaubert 2010 [1856]: 103.

²⁸⁴ "Elle avait lu *Paul et Virginie* et elle avait rêvé la maisonnette de bambou, le nègre Domingo, le chien Fidèle, mais surtout l'amitié douce de quelque bon petit frère, qui va chercher pour vous des fruits rouges dans des grands arbres plus hauts que des clochers, ou qui court pieds nus sur le sable, vous apportant un nid d'oiseau." (Flaubert 1910 [1856]: 48.)

reading effectively becomes a *lecture*. Unavoidably, the texts involved are chosen for their edifying qualities:

In the evenings, before prayers, a pious work was read aloud to them in the study hall. During the week, it was some digest of Biblical history or Abbé Frayssinous's *Lectures*, and, on Sunday, for a change, passages from *The Genius of Christianity*²⁸⁵²⁸⁶.

In between those two spaces –the house and the convent- and those two modes of reading – solitary and communal- there exist another space and another mode of reading, perhaps less evident. On their way to the convent, Emma and her father stop for the night:

They stayed at an inn in the Saint-Gervais quarter, where they were served supper on painted plates depicting the story of Mademoiselle de La Vallière. The explanatory legends, crossed here and there by knife scratches, all glorified religion, refined sentiments, and the splendors of the Court²⁸⁷²⁸⁸

²⁸⁵ Flaubert 2010 [1856]: 103.

²⁸⁶ "Le soir, avant la prière, on faisait dans l'étude une lecture religieuse. C'était, pendant la semaine, quelque résumé d'Histoire sainte ou les *Conférences* de l'abbé Frayssinous, et, le dimanche, des passages du *Génie du christianisme*, par récréation." (Flaubert 1910 [1856]: 49.)

²⁸⁷ Flaubert 2010 [1856]: 103.

²⁸⁸ "Ils descendirent dans une auberge du quartier Saint-Gervais, où ils eurent à leur souper des assiettes peintes qui représentaient l'histoire de mademoiselle de La Vallière. Les explications légendaires, coupées çà et là par l'égratignure des couteaux, glorifiaient toutes la religion, les délicatesses du cœur et les pompes de la Cour." (Flaubert 1910 [1856]: 48.)

This time, the "text"—the tragic story of a mistress of Louis XIV abandoned by the monarch for another woman—seems to combine elements of the other two instances of reading, the "refined sentiments" of *Paul et Virginie* and the devotional character of Chateaubriand's *Genius of Christianity*. But here the format matters even more: Emma is, quite literally, presented with a novel—or rather history as a novel—on a plate, in the form of faded illustrations. Fiction has become an object.

What this passage in Flaubert's work signifies is that, in the nineteenth century, novels were not necessarily always books, and that one could read a plate the way one read fiction. In a culture where such an intense cross-fertilization between literariness and quotidian materiality was at play, the novel was not necessarily only a text and, fiction could sometimes take the shape of a commodity.

In the following pages, I look at some of the instances in which the Western European sentimental novel was subjected to various and complex types of commodification in the late Ottoman Empire. In this particular context, I understand commodification as a form of rupture, as a process of disjunction through which the novel is removed from the realm of exclusive literariness, and is called to assume other functions, either material or ideological. By exploring the ways in which, for instance, a novel (or the fragment of one) becomes an object, or how a novel effectively ceases to be a novel when it becomes a vehicle for a certain esthetic or political agenda, I show that the genre creates a culture of its own, whose complex ramifications go beyond texts and textualities.

In the previous chapter, I used historical fiction as an example of the ways in which the genre of the novel, imported from Western Europe into the Ottoman Empire, underwent formal and thematic mutations that allowed it to become enrolled, as a cultural artifact, in the

ideological fermentation that accompanied the elaboration of a national project for non-Muslim minorities. In the present chapter, I turn to another genre, Western European sentimental fiction, to explore the transformation of the novel into a commodity. The particular reception of one, highly seminal, example of this genre -Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* (1788)- serves here as a way to explore three such instances of commodification, in three of the literary communities of the late Ottoman Empire.

Originally published as an appendix to the third volume of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Etudes de la nature* (1784-88), *Paul et Virginie*²⁸⁹ constituted the first foray of its author - previously known for his work as a botanist, as well as for his travel writing- into the genre of sentimental fiction. Set in the luxuriant landscapes of Mauritius (then known as Isle de France), an island that Bernardin de Saint Pierre had visited, along with Isle Bourbon (modern-day Reunion Island), in the late 1760s, the novel tells the tragic love story of Paul and Virginie, the children of two French widows living with their respective slaves in an isolated corner of the island. Raised together away from civilization, the two young protagonists are separated when Virginie is forcefully taken back to France by distant relatives. The novel ends with the death of both lovers, the loss of Virginie in the wreck of the ship bringing her back from Europe being shortly followed by Paul's own passing. For all the naïveté of its subject matter, the novel's Rousseauist celebration of uncorrupted life in nature ensured its enduring popularity through the Romantic age and beyond, as evidenced by the multitude of translations, adaptations, and reprints throughout the nineteenth century²⁹⁰. In addition to Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* –as well

²⁸⁹ Bernardin de Saint Pierre 1984 [1788].

²⁹⁰ See the place assumed by the novel on the French literary market of the first half of the nineteenth century, see Chapter 2 of the present work.

as to his short story "Un coeur simple"²⁹¹- *Paul et Virginie* functioned, as a more or less evident intertext for works as diverse as Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1803²⁹²), George Sand's *Indiana* (1832²⁹³), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1845²⁹⁴), Lamartine's *Graziella* (1849²⁹⁵), as well as various works by Balzac²⁹⁶ and, in the twentieth century, by J.M.G. Le Clézio²⁹⁷. In addition, as pointed out by April Alliston in her study of the cross-Channel reception of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel, the work very rapidly acquired an important trans-national fame, and its diffusion was particularly wide in Great Britain, where it circulated both as a text and the source of a mechanically reproducible imagery attesting to its early transformation into a commodity²⁹⁸. In the British Isles alone, *Paul et Virginie* had, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, been translated at least three times²⁹⁹, and imitated at least once³⁰⁰.

In a first section of this chapter, I treat a small and seemingly insignificant reference to *Paul et Virginie* in Armenak Haykuni's Armenian novel *Eliza, or A Recent Event That Took*

²⁹¹ Chambers 1980: 780.

²⁹² Alliston 2002: 140.

²⁹³ Prasad 2009: 56.

²⁹⁴ Alliston 2002: *ibid.*

²⁹⁵ Heydt-Stevenson 2008: 37.

²⁹⁶ Vellenga Berman 2006: 89.

²⁹⁷ Ravi 2007: 127.

²⁹⁸ "The readership of [Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's] novel crossed the Channel (...) leading to at least as many literary responses, not to mention mass sales of buttons, buckles, and lampshades bearing images from the novel, in Britain as in France." (Alliston 2002: *ibid.*)

²⁹⁹ At least two of these were translated by women. The first English translation, published less than a year after the original French novel, changed the name of the female protagonist: Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *Paul and Mary, an Indian Story*. London: 1789 (See Pauk 2014: 105). The title page indicates Daniel Malthus –the father of economist Thomas Malthus and a friend of Rousseau and Hume- as the translator, although the real translator was actually Jane Dalton, a cousin of Daniel Malthus (See Bashford and Chaplin 2016: 149). A second translation kept a similar title but significantly abridged the novel: Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *The Shipwreck, or Paul and Mary, an Indian Tale*. London: 1789. Anonymous translation. A third version by Helen Maria Williams, herself a renowned novelist and poet, was published in 1795: Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *Paul and Virginia*. [London?]: 1795. (See Kirkley 2011).

³⁰⁰ In Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801). See Kirkley 2011.

Place During the Eastern War (Էլիզա, կամ վերջին արևելեկան պատերազմի ժամանակ տեղի ունեցած իրական դեպք մը, 1861) as a symptom of the interpenetration of the novel culture and material culture in the nineteenth century, and as an example of the transformation of the Western European novel into a commodity in the late Ottoman Empire. In parallel, I interpret this particular reference as a way for an Armenian novelist like Armenak Haykuni both to highlight and to conceal the presence in his work of a vocabulary of sensibility borrowed from the Western European novel of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and incorporated into the Armenian text of his novel primarily through the use of linguistic calques. In reading this phenomenon through the lenses of materiality, I show how a novel like *Eliza*, composed and published in the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century, subtly subverted the codes of sentimental fiction as they had been elaborated in Western Europe and were imported into the late Ottoman cultural context through translation.

In a second section, I briefly return to the question of novel translation examined in Chapter 2. Reading a Ladino version of the story of Paul and Virginie by Sefaradi-Ottoman journalist Alexander Ben-Guiat, I use this text, presented as a translation but consisting in fact of a short summary of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel, as another vantage point from which to look at the commodification of Western European fiction in the literatures of the late Ottoman Empire. In my analysis of the text itself and of its immediate and broader context of publication, I argue that the extreme abridging of the original text of *Paul et Virginie* in the Ladino version led to both a "reformatting" of the work and a reinterpretation of its philosophical implications. In doing so, I show how the various mechanisms of commodification to which works of Western European fiction were subjected in the late Ottoman context involved the novel both as text and as an object.

Lastly, I turn to Zafirakis Hypandrevmenos' *Zenobia* (*Η Ζηνοβία*, 1872), a largely unknown Greek-Ottoman novel published in Izmir -like both Haykuni's *Eliza* and Ben-Guiat's *Pablo y Virginia*. In my reading of the text, I focus on the insertion of the motifs and tropes of Western European sentimental fiction in the particular ethno-linguistic context of nineteenth-century Istanbul. In parallel, I examine how, by commodifying the register of sentimentality and inviting other types of discourses into the text, the author turned his work into a political treatise, thus taking the novel to its formal and generic limits.

1. The Novel as Object: Virginie's Visit to Eliza's Boudoir

In the short span of his lifetime, Armenak Haykuni (pen name of Armenak Chizmejean, 1835-1866) managed to produce a body of work that left a mark on both drama and prose in Western Armenian literature. A journalist and a publisher, Haykuni founded the short-lived periodical *Musayk Maseats* (*Muses of Masis*), the first Armenian publication entirely devoted to theatre, as well as the the periodical *Tsaghik* (*Flower*), in the early 1860s. In parallel, he contributed to the political, educational and scholarly debates of his time in a series of publications that promoted rational and scientific thought and were marked by a strong anti-clericalism. Published in 1861 in Izmir, *Eliza, or A Recent Event That Took Place During the Eastern War* was Haykuni's only novel and constituted, at the time of its publication, the second attempt at original novel writing in Western Armenian, after Yovhannes Hisarean's *Hosrov and Makruhi* (*Խոսրովի և Մարտի*, 1851³⁰¹).

³⁰¹ On Haykuni, see Bardakjian 2000: 366-67 and Hacikyan, Basmajian, Franchuk and Ouzounian 2005: 92 (vol.3).

Set against the backdrop of the Crimean War, *Eliza* follows the troubled love story between the narrator -a young Armenian from Istanbul hired as a translator by the British army and stationed in the seaside city of Varna, in present-day Bulgaria- and a young Italian girl of aristocratic birth, the titular Eliza. The first few chapters of the work document the nascent love of the two protagonists who must face at once the consequences of a dark secret in Eliza's mother's past, and the narrator's own precarious position as the Crimean War unfolds. In these scenes, every element, in terms of either setting or tone, or in terms of the characters' demeanor and dialogues, is reminiscent of the Western European sentimental novel of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Hesitant to pursue a relationship that, he fears, might be soon interrupted by his forced departure from Varna, the narrator reads, in Eliza's body language, the signs of an erotic passion presented as an affliction: "and truly it pains me to say that Eliza had already fallen in love; the malady of love had taken over her chest, as pure and virginal as marble, and had started to oppress her more day by day³⁰²." In a chapter simply entitled "Love" ("Սէր"), Eliza and the narrator come close to confessing their love for one another when they are interrupted by the entrance of L lie, the young heroine's mother. As the two characters struggle to hide their emotion from the newcomer, the narration suddenly turns to the decor of the scene, which had, until then, been only barely alluded to, the text being entirely focused on the characters' interior turmoil:

³⁰² "Եւ յիրաւի դառն է ինձ ըսել որ էլիզա արդէն սիրահար եղած էր, սիրոյ ախտը սիրած էր անոր մարմարիօնի պէս անբիծ եւ կոյս կուրծիին մէջ եւ օրէ օր գայն նեղելու սկսած էր:" (Haykuni 1861: 16).

Eliza had stood up and was playing with the fringe of the tablecloth; her eyes were fixated on a little box on which Paul was painted, throwing himself in the furious waves after Virginie...³⁰³

Immediately after this short parenthetical notation, the conversation between the narrator, Eliza, and L lie resumes and no other mention of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel is made in the rest of the work.

At first glance, this very brief reference to *Paul et Virginie* in Haykuni's *Eliza* appears to be little more than a somewhat insignificant detail in the novel. At best, the picture painted on the box -which evokes the tragic and untimely death of two archetypal lovers and appears to exert a particular fascination on Eliza- can be read as a form of foreshadowing of the fate that awaits Haykuni's heroin herself. I argue, however, that there is more there than meets the eye, and that the painted box needs to be opened to a deeper interpretation, in order to unpack its exact function within the novel as a whole.

There was, in fact, nothing particularly surprising in finding a visual reference to *Paul et Virginie* on a decorative object described in a mid-nineteenth-century novel. As highlighted by April Alliston, the particularly broad circulation of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's work immediately after its original French publication in 1788 and throughout the following century was accompanied by the production, on a continent-wide scale, of a plethora of visual and material

³⁰³ "□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□
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□□□□□□□□..." (Haykuni 1861: 15-16).

representations based on iconic episodes of the novel³⁰⁴. More than any other modern fictional work before it, the story of Paul and Virginie rapidly escaped the realm of exclusive textuality and became integrated into the visual and, perhaps even more so, into the material culture of its time³⁰⁵. The most famous episodes of the novel's rather naïve plot not only inspired paintings and sculptures, but also adorned commodities such as clocks³⁰⁶, decorative plates (fig. 7), and a myriad of other items, even finding their way to publicity materials that advertised products entirely unrelated to the novel's subject matter or setting (fig. 8).

In this dense network of exchanges between a text and the visual and material culture it inspired, the novel's illustrations -as well as, more broadly, printed images- seem to have played the part of an intermediary, and to have facilitated the wide circulation of an iconography derived from the themes and motifs of *Paul et Virginie*. From the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century, the innumerable editions of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel in French or in translation were accompanied by an equally large number of illustrations, most series being frequently reused from one edition to the other, while new ones were created for the most prestigious printings³⁰⁷. As shown by both material and literary evidence, many of these illustrations were extracted from the context of their original mediatic use -where they served to complement the text of the novel- and, once transformed into commodities, became invested

³⁰⁴ See note 16.

³⁰⁵ An online database, developed as a digital companion to an exhibition entitled "Paul et Virginie: Du roman à l'image" (Musée Léon Dierx, Saint Denis de la Réunion, May 17 –October 5, 2014) and maintained by the Iconothèque Historique de l'Océan Indien (IHOI), collects a particularly large number of items, including illustrations, paintings, lithographs, photographs, and other documents related to *Paul et Virginie*. http://www.ihoi.org/app/photopro.sk/ihoi_expo/publi?docid=97337&lang=fra (Accessed June 2016).

³⁰⁶ See for instance Labio 2004.

³⁰⁷ The IHOI digital database includes the complete illustration sets for five of the earliest French editions of the novel (1789, 1791, 1794, 1795, 1806). See note 23.

Fig. 7 "The Death of Virginie"



Creil-Montereau faience plate, lead-glazed earthenware, France, second half of the nineteenth century (Musée Gallet, Creil, France).

Source: Base Joconde, Réunion des Musées Nationaux.

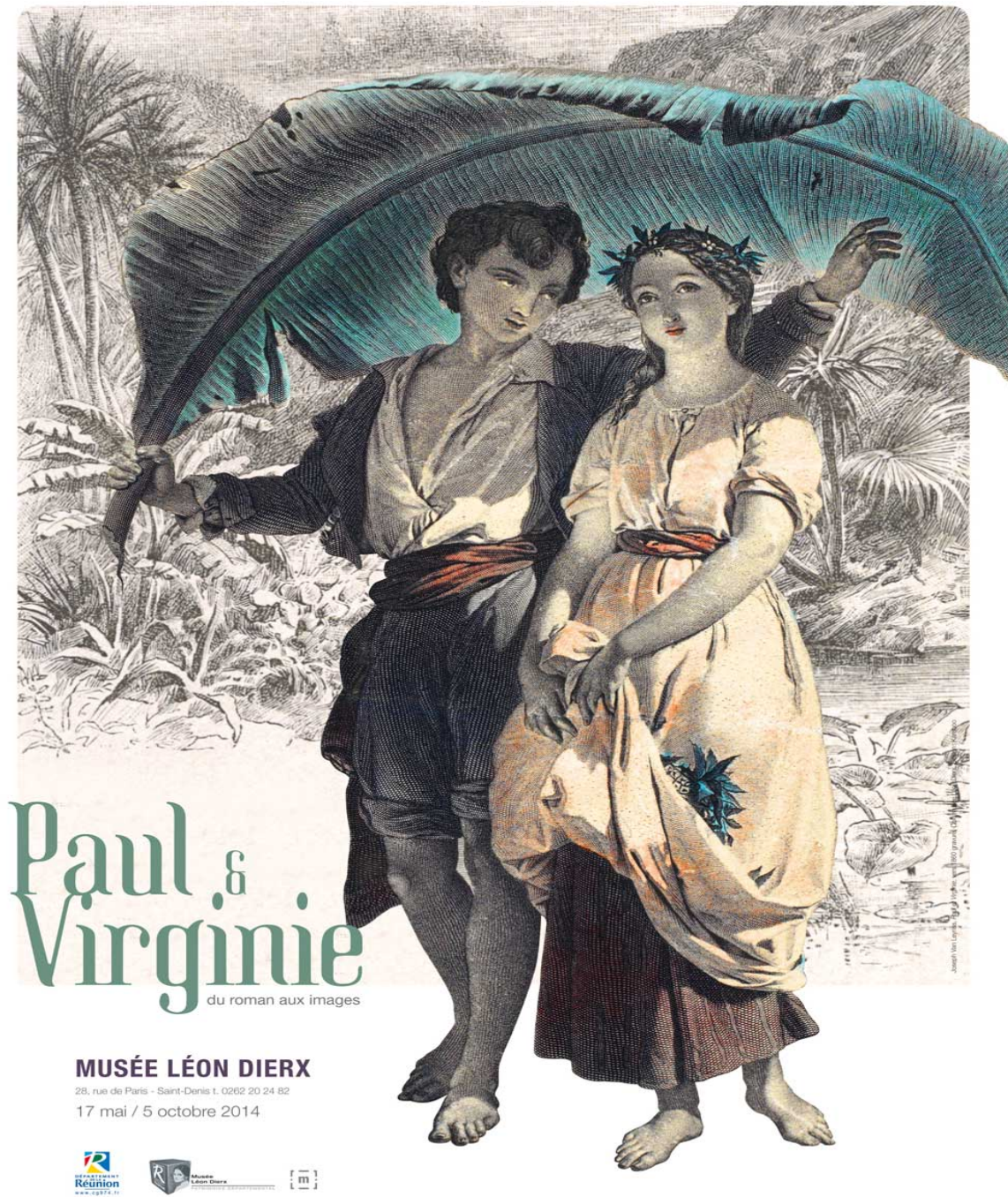
Fig. 8 "Shipwreck off the coast of the Isle of France"



Publicity leaflet ("carte-réclame") for a shirt manufacturer, chromolithograph on cardboard, France, last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Source: Base Joconde, Réunion des Musées Nationaux.

Fig. 10 Unidentified lithograph



Source: Musée Léon Dierx. Saint Denis de la Réunion, 2014.

Fig. 11 "Paul's Death"



Source: *Paul and Virginia*. Translated from the French of J. Bernardin H. de Saint- Pierre by Helen Maria Williams. Dayton: 1854.

with new, primarily decorative purposes. These pictures could either take the form of chromolithographs based on original illustrations created for a particular edition of the novel and sometimes accompanied by a short summary of the story (fig. 9), or simply consist of reprints of book illustrations, sold separately and often framed³⁰⁸. An example of this second type of use is for instance mentioned in Maupassant's *Bel Ami*, whose main character owns a lithograph representing Paul and Virginie "under a blue palm tree"³⁰⁹.

This brief allusion in Maupassant is not only evidence of the persistent popularity of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel almost a century after its composition; it also attests to the complex ways in which the visual and material products inspired by the text of the novel oftentimes departed from its plot. The lithograph that adorns the living quarters of Maupassant's *Bel Ami* can be identified, with relative certainty, with a particular anonymous illustration – an image which, among the plethora of visual representations of the story of Paul and Virginie, constituted one of the most popular and most often reproduced in a variety of different media in the second half of the nineteenth century and beyond (fig. 10). The image in question does, indeed, represent the two young protagonists of the novel under the inexplicably blue leaf of a palm tree. Interestingly, while Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's own involvement with the science of botany led him to include very extensive descriptions of the flora of Mauritius in his novel, at no point in the plot are Paul and Virginie described in the immediate proximity of the plant in question. The scene represented in the lithograph was therefore consistent with the overall imagery of the novel although, in itself, it was entirely

³⁰⁸ See Heinrich and Sadion 2014; Leprêtre, Audoin, and Rouet 2014 (exhibition catalogues).

³⁰⁹"They were ushered through a door to the right, into an unheated room with tiled floor, whitewashed walls, and a bed with white cotton curtains. A crucifix above a cup of holy water and two colored pictures, one representing Paul and Virginia under a blue palm tree, and the other Napoleon the First on a yellow horse, were the only ornaments of this clean and dispiriting apartment." (Maupassant 1917 [1885]: 174).

imaginary: in other words, *Paul et Virginie* as a text, and *Paul et Virginie* as an image did not entirely coincide.

The fact that, in the reception of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel, the various illustrations of the novel rapidly became as popular as the text of the novel itself has been, in fact, corroborated by recent scholarship. In her analysis of the reference to *Paul et Virginie* in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* on which the present chapter opens, Françoise Gaillard has for instance highlighted that the second part of the reference ("she had dreamed (...) of the sweet friendship of a good little brother who goes off to fetch red fruit for you from great trees taller than church steeples...") did not actually originate in any passage of the text of *Paul et Virginie*. Instead, what Flaubert was evoking there was a lithograph that he knew from an edition of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel in his possession³¹⁰. In other words, what Emma read as child was a visual work more than it is a literary one, and *Paul et Virginie* existed, as a cultural product, at the intersection of words and images. Incidentally, the same trend is a play in the material culture inspired by the novel: as Catherine Labio has shown in the case of a monumental early nineteenth-century mantel clock representing the two protagonists of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's work, the iconographic tradition based on *Paul et Virginie* often diverged substantially from the plot of the novel³¹¹.

The exact same feature is at play in the reference to *Paul et Virginie* in Haykuni's *Eliza*. The visual and material reception of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's work in the Ottoman Empire being much more difficult to trace than in France or Britain, I have not been able to match the box described by the Armenian novelist with any real object, and it is quite likely that the trinket in question was Haykuni's invention. However, regardless of the actual existence of such an

³¹⁰ Gaillard 2014.

³¹¹ Labio 2004: 674.

object, the image painted on it and described in *Eliza* deserves particular attention. Although the overall scene it represents –Virginie's death in the wreck of the *Saint-Géran*³¹²- constituted by far the most famous episode in the novel and was included, in the form of an illustration, in virtually every edition of the text from its original publication to the end of the nineteenth century, the precise moment within the scene in question –Paul's attempt to rescue his lover- was very rarely the focus of visual and material representations inspired by the work. More often, representations of the tragic event on which the novel ends tended to place an emphasis on the female character and showed Virginie alone on the sinking ship a few instants before her demise or her dead body washed ashore after the tempest –either before its discovery by Paul and their two slaves (primarily in French and British academic painting of the second half of the nineteenth century), or surrounded by mourners (in particular in the first series of illustrations and in later images recycling them, fig. 8).

The focus on Paul rather than on Virginie in the image that adorns Eliza's box is thus relatively unusual but, more importantly, it presents, like the reference in *Madame Bovary*, or the lithograph described in *Bel Ami*, certain discrepancies with respect to Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's narrative. While, in Haykuni's novel, Paul is represented "throwing himself" (հիփօզիփօզ ցետեղլը) in the sea to try to rescue Virginie, the character's approach in the novel is in fact slightly more cautious –as is also the case in one of the very rare cases of an illustration of the shipwreck scene where Paul is placed at the forefront (fig. 11):

³¹² A ship by that name was indeed lost off the coast of Mauritius in 1744.

Paul rushed towards the sea, when, seizing him by the arm, I exclaimed, 'Would you perish?'--'Let me go to save her,' cried he, 'or die!' Seeing that despair deprived him of reason, Domingo and I, in order to preserve him, fastened a long cord round his waist, and seized hold of each end. Paul then precipitated himself towards the ship, now swimming, and now walking upon the breakers³¹³³¹⁴

By not including the rope that, in the novel, is fastened as a safety measure around Paul's waist and which, in fact, does save his life, by removing any mention of the presence of other characters in the scene (the narrator, the slave Domingo), Haykuni added to the pathos of an already very melodramatic scene and subtly diverged from the plot of the novel.

Thus, the process of progressive autonomization of the visual representations of Paul et Virginie with respect to the text that inspired them was fully at play in *Eliza* and, for all its brevity, the mention of the painted box in the heroin's boudoir reflected this trend in a relatively sophisticated way that a cursory reading would fail to reveal. When he described the image painted on the box, Haykuni in fact inserted, in his Armenian novel, the short ekphrasis of a picture –in all likelihood imaginary- which was itself based on an episode borrowed from another novel, whose plot it subtly transformed. The hidden complexity of the passage is further evidenced by a more discreet allusion to another short scene in *Paul et Virginie*, one that comes immediately after the shipwreck episode. In this passage, the narrator

³¹³ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre 1841: 83.

³¹⁴ "Paul allait s'élaner à la mer, lorsque je le saisis par le bras: « Mon fils, lui dis-je, voulez-vous périr ? — Que j'aie à son secours, s'écria-t-il, ou que je meure » ! Comme le désespoir lui ôtait la raison, pour prévenir sa perte, Domingue et moi lui attachâmes à la ceinture une longue corde dont nous saisîmes l'une des extrémités. Paul alors s'avança vers le Saint-Géran, tantôt nageant, tantôt marchant sur les récifs." (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre 1984 [1788]: 223).

walks to the shore, accompanied by one of the slaves, and discovers the dead body of Virgnie, described as follows:

One of her hands was placed upon her clothes: and the other, which she held on her heart, was fast closed, and so stiffened, that it was with difficulty that I took from its grasp a small box. How great was my emotion when I saw that it contained the picture of Paul, which she had promised him never to part with while she lived³¹⁵³¹⁶.

Read together with the corresponding passage in *Eliza*, this short description reveals the great sophistication of the *mise en scène* staged by Haykuni who, through the reference to a material object present in both the French and the Armenian text, made the two works subtly mirror one another. In the Armenian novel, Eliza looks at an image on a box, representing the tragic death of Virginie, heroin of a French novel, as well as Paul's attempt to rescue her; in parallel, the object that captures Eliza's attention echoes a similar object –another box containing a picture of Paul– that her now dead double keeps in her embrace beyond death.

In the light of the comple dialogue between Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's and Haykuni's respective novels, I argue that, in *Eliza*, the "image on the box" can be interpreted as playing a part akin to that of the "figure in the carpet" in Henry James' homonymous short story: that of a seemingly unimportant detail which, in fact, carries, if correctly identified, the potential to uncover the overall architecture of the work that contains it, and functions, perhaps, as the repository of its essential meaning, voluntarily hidden from sight by the author. There exists,

³¹⁵ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre 1841: 85.

³¹⁶ "Une de ses mains était sur ses habits, et l'autre, qu'elle appuyait sur son cœur, était fortement fermée et roidie. J'en dégageai avec peine une petite boîte: mais quelle fut ma surprise lorsque je vis que c'était le portrait de Paul, qu'elle lui avait promis de ne jamais abandonner tant qu'elle vivrait !" (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre 1984 [1788]: 226).

however, an important difference between James' carpet and Haykuni's box: unlike the former, the latter is a tridimensional object, one that can be opened or closed, and that possesses therefore both an inside and an outside. I suggest that what is hidden in the painted box is Haykuni's debt to Western European sentimental fiction; and that what is represented *on* the box is the author's attempt at attenuating, through commodification, the importance of that very same genre for his own writerly practice.

In terms of tone, language, and subject matter, Haykuni's *Eliza* can be described, in particular in the first few chapters that focus on the two young lovers' erotic awakening, as a calque of the defining characteristics of the sentimental novel as it became codified in Western Europe during the long eighteenth century and of which *Paul et Virginie* constitutes a particularly archetypal example. Like the two titular characters of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel, the two protagonists in Haykuni's work experience the emergence of adolescent love as a process mobilizing the entire body -and, in particular, its complexion, its temperature, and its respiration- and as a series of symptoms in which one lover can discern, as in a mirror, the other lover's parallel affliction and thus become conscious of the mutual character of the sentiments involved. Alternatively growing pale or blushing, growing cold and warm, sighing, fainting, and crying, the narrator and Eliza find in the Black Sea landscapes outside of Varna a natural decor whose constant transformations echo their own interior turmoil –much in the way that the exotic landscape of Mauritius reflects, in Bernadin de Saint-Pierre's work, the emotions experienced by Paul and Virginie.

In this context, the presence in the Armenian text of a reference to a celebrated French novel, in the form of a picture on a small decorative object, allowed the author to signal the influence of Western European sentimental fiction upon his own work as a novelist. At the same

time, however, because the mention of *Paul et Virginie* was only made in passing and in an entirely parenthetical notation, the image of the box, along with what the object metaphorically implies in terms of closure and concealment, served to keep this influence at bay -and even perhaps to partially disguise it. In *Eliza*, a novel set on the easternmost fringe of Europe, the repertoire and the textual tradition of eighteenth-century Western sentimentality -as well as its most prominent vehicle, the novel- was symbolically reduced to a small trinket, both contained and movable. By referencing *Paul et Virginie* through the intermediary of an object rather than through direct textual quotations or by borrowing entire episodes from its plot, Haykuni seemed to indicate that, in his practice as a novelist, he was as much indebted to the visual and material ramifications of Western European novel culture than he was to its textual core. In that regard, a work like *Eliza* is indicative of the particular moment in the nineteenth century when the novel started to gradually lose its originally exclusive affiliation with textual culture, and progressively assumed the function of a commodity.

2. The Novel from Book to Chapbook: Alexandre Ben-Guiat's *Pablo y Virginia* (1905)

Unsurprisingly for a work with such a broad international circulation in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* was translated in all four of the major literary languages of the late Ottoman Empire, although the Greek and Armenian translations were published outside of the Empire itself. The first known Armenian translation of the novel was for instance published by the Mekhitarists of

Venice in 1860³¹⁷, while the first published Greek translation³¹⁸ appeared in Paris in the early years of the Greek War of Independence and was printed on the press of the Didot family, whose connections with the French Philhellenes were particularly strong³¹⁹. The translation by Nikoalos Pikkolos was lauded for its quality and greatly impressed the Greek intellectuals living in Paris, in particular the poet Andreas Kalvos³²⁰³²¹. This first Greek version was followed by at least another three by the end of the nineteenth century, all published in Athens, which indicates that the novel, although published in the late eighteenth century in French, remained extraordinarily popular in the Greek world even after the mid-nineteenth-century shift toward the translation of contemporary foreign fiction³²². Additionally, the novel was translated twice into Ottoman-

³¹⁷ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. □□□□ □ □□□ □□ □ □□□□□□□□□ [The Novel of *Paul and Virginie*]. Venice: 1860. Translated by Kevork and Yetvart Hürmüz.

³¹⁸ An earlier translation, today lost, appears to have circulated in manuscript form in the Danubian Principalities at the turn of the nineteenth century. See Ruffini 1958, quoted in Vitti 1974: 59, n.3.

³¹⁹ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *Ηθικά Διηγήματα Τέσσερα* [Four Moral Tales]. Paris: 1823. Translated by N. Pikkolos. Along with *Paul et Virginie*, this edition also included three other short texts by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre: *La chaumière indienne*, *Le café de Surate*, and *Voyage en Silésie*. This version was the most successful of the different Greek translations of the novel during the nineteenth century and was reprinted at least three times in Paris (1824, 1841, 1860) and once in Athens (1836). Some of these reprints (notably Paris 1824 and Athens 1836) split the collection in two volumes, the first consisting in *Paul et Virginie*, the second in the three lesser known works, retitled *Three Moral Tales* in that case.

³²⁰ See Vitti 1974.

³²¹ Interestingly, the title chosen by the Greek translator (*Τα κατά Παύλον και Βιργινίαν*, where the definite article in the neutral plural followed by the preposition *κατά* and the accusative case can be rendered as "the narrative involving Paul and Virginie") hellenized the French novel by mirroring the format of the Greek titles given to prose narratives of 2nd and 3rd centuries CE, for example the works of Achilles Tatius (*Τὰ κατὰ Λευκίππην καὶ Κλειτοφῶντα*, *The Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon*) or Xenophon of Ephesus (*Τὰ κατὰ Ἄνδειαν καὶ Ἄβρακόμην*, *The Tale of Anthia and Habrocomes*, also known in English as *The Ephesian Tale*). This element attested to the attempts of certain Greek intellectuals of the early nineteenth century –and in particular of Adamantios Koraes, a close friend of the Didot family- to establish a relation of continuity between the Hellenic prose fiction of late Antiquity and the modern novel, be it foreign or Greek. On the constructedness of this idea continuity, see Chapter 1 of the present work.

³²² On this shift, see Chapter 2 of the present work.

Turkish, in 1870³²³ and 1894³²⁴ and twice into Ladino, in the early twentieth century, in 1901³²⁵ and 1905. The first and longest of these two Ladino versions³²⁶ of *Paul et Virginie* was the work of Sara Siman-Tob (or Simantov), one of the very few Sefaradi female translators of the late Ottoman period, and, based on the page count given by Ladino bibliographies, must have been close at least in length to the original French text. In this chapter, it is, however, the second one that I am interested in: barely twenty pages long, Alexandre Ben-Guiat's version of *Paul et Virginie*³²⁷ was little more than a summary of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel and, as such, offers a new vantage point from which to look at issues of commodification of the Western European sentimental novel in the late Ottoman Empire.

Published in book form in Jerusalem, *Pablo y Virginia*³²⁸ had in fact been originally serialized in *El Meseret*, a Ladino-language newspaper of Izmir, of which Ben-Guiat (c.1862-1924) was the director from 1901 until the end of its publication in 1922³²⁹. Bekhor Ben-Guiat (alternatively spelled Benghiat), who later adopted Alexandre as his first name, was one of the key figures of Jewish journalism in Izmir at the turn of the twentieth century³³⁰. He collaborated

³²³ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *Pol ve Virjini*. Istanbul: 1870. Translated by Emin Sıddık.

³²⁴ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *Pol ve Virjini*. Istanbul: 1894. Translated by Osman Senai Erdemgil.

³²⁵ Ladino publications in the Ottoman Empire usually only mention the publication year in the Hebrew calendar, which can sometimes correspond to either of two consecutive years in the Gregorian calendar. In order to distinguish this case from multi-volume publications extending indeed over two years, I systemically indicated only the latest of the two possible years in the Gregorian calendar for Ladino publications.

³²⁶ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. *Pol y Virjini*. Istanbul: 1901. Translated by Sara Siman-Tob. (Barquin 1995: 375, n.2).

³²⁷ The text, transcribed in Roman characters, is included, along with eleven other works by Ben-Guiat in Barquin 1995.

³²⁸ Ben-Guiat, Alexandre. *Pablo y Virginia*. Jerusalem: Estamparia Shelomoh Yisra'el Sherezli, 1912 [1906].

³²⁹ Barquin 1995: 47.

³³⁰ On Ben-Guiat's life and activities see, among others, Barquin 1995: 45-59; Borovaya 2012: 142.

—with articles and translations— to a variety of Ladino- and French-language Sefaradi publications in the city (*La Verdad*, *La Buena Esperansa*, *El Telegrafo*, *Les Annales*, the last title being directed by his wife Graziella), as well as to a few newspapers in Thessaloniki (*La Epoka*, *Le Journal de Salonique*) or Cairo (*La Luz*, published by his brother³³¹). However, Ben-Guiat's most important journalistic endeavor was *El Meseret*, a journal which he did not found but that, under his directorship, turned into the most widely read Jewish newspaper in Izmir in the 1910s³³². In Ben-Guiat's own words, the newspaper's main objective was to function as "a kind of school, where everybody—young and old— [would] be able to study³³³." This clearly-stated pedagogical agenda highlight Ben-Guiat's alignment with the policies of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, although *El Meseret* continued to be published in Ladino and never switched to French, the language that the Alliance sought to promote among the Jews of the Levant. Primarily a cultural and literary publication, the newspaper stayed largely away from the debates—in particular those around Zionism— that agitated the Sefaradi community of Izmir and of the Empire at large in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, although it implicitly advocated the assimilation of Ottoman Jews to Western European culture. It is in this context that *El Meseret* published, between 1901 and the beginning of the First World War, a rather large number of summaries of famous novels in the Western canon—inclusing Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*— which were probably all penned by Ben-Guiat himself, and were frequently reprinted in the form of chapbooks by Shelomoh Yisra'el Sherezli, an associate of Ben-Guiat who operated a printing press in Jerusalem³³⁴.

³³¹ Borovaya 2012: 142.

³³² Borovaya 2012: 52.

³³³ Ben-Guiat, *El Meseret*, January 15, 1897, quoted in Borovaya 2012: 43.

³³⁴ Borovaya 2012: 142.

As was the case for all of these summaries of Western novels published in *El Meseret*, Ben-Guiat's *Pablo y Virginia* drastically condensed the plot of the original French material and, in the chapbook edition, the text only numbered twenty-one pages. A comparison of the beginning of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel with the opening paragraph of the Ladino version gives an idea of the extent of the cuts performed by the Sefaradi "translator." In the French text, the narrative begins with a description of the landscape of Mauritius where an unnamed narrator –presumably a French traveller to the island- notices the ruins of two old huts:

On the eastern coast of the mountain which rises above Port-Louis, in the Mauritius, upon a piece of land bearing the marks of former cultivation, are seen the ruins of two small cottages³³⁵³³⁶.

Curious about the nature of these ruins, the narrator asks a native to explain their origins to him and learns that they were formerly inhabited by the mothers of Paul and Virginie and their respective slaves:

"Father, can you tell me to whom those cottages once belonged?"

"My son," replied the old man, "those heaps of rubbish, and that untilled land were, twenty years ago, the property of two families, who then found happiness in this solitude. Their history is affecting: but what European, pursuing his way to the Indies, will pause one moment, to interest himself in the fate of a few obscure individuals? What European

³³⁵ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre 1841: 5.

³³⁶ "Sur le côté oriental de la montagne qui s'éleve derriere le Port-Louis de l'Isle-de-France, on voit, dans un terrain jadis cultivé, les ruines de deux petites cabanes."

can picture happiness to his imagination amidst poverty and neglect? The curiosity of mankind is only attracted by the history of the great; and yet from that knowledge little use can be derived."

"Father," I rejoined, "from your manner and your observations, I perceive that you have acquired much experience of human life. If you have leisure, relate to me, I beseech you, the history of the ancient inhabitants of this desert"³³⁷³³⁸.

In the Ladino version, the text did not only cease to be a first-person account and replace the French traveler of the original by an omniscient narrator; not only did it merge the discovery of the ruins and the meeting with the native man, two distinct scenes in Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's work; it also revealed both the names and the ultimate fate of the two heroes in the very first paragraph, whereas, in the French novel, the two young lovers are only introduced to the reader after a full account of the circumstances that have brought their mothers to Mauritius, and their tragic death is never explicitly mentioned or even foreshadowed until the very end of the story:

In Port-Louis -a city which faces the Sea of the Indies and, having been a French possession in the past, belongs now to the English- one can see, by the entrance of the port, two small mounds: those are the tombs of Paul and Virginie. With respect to those

³³⁷ Bernardin de Saint-Pierre 1841: 6-7.

³³⁸ "Mon pere, lui dis-je, pourriez-vous m'apprendre à qui ont appartenu ces deux cabanes? » Il me répondit: « Mon fils, ces masures et ce terrain inculte étoient habités, il y a environ vingt ans, par deux familles qui y avoient trouvé le bonheur. Leur histoire est touchante: mais dans cette isle, située sur la route des Indes, quel Européen peut s'intéresser au sort de quelques particuliers obscurs? qui voudroit même y vivre heureux, mais pauvre et ignoré? Les hommes ne veulent connoître que l'histoire des grands et des rois, qui ne sert à personne. — Mon pere, repris-je, il est aisé de juger à votre air et à votre discours que vous avez acquis une grande expérience. Si vous en avez le temps, racontez-moi, je vous prie, ce que vous savez des anciens habitants de ce désert."

tombs, a traveler who had ventured there tells the story of the life and death of the two young lovers, as it was told to him by a old man of the vicinity who saw them being born and die³³⁹.

In her detailed analysis of the process of reduction of the original French material at play in Ben-Guiat's *Pablo y Virginia*, Amelia Barquin has emphasized the type of features within Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel that were removed in the Ladino version³⁴⁰. The cuts primarily affected passages in the original falling into four main categories. First, the lengthy descriptions of the natural landscapes of Mauritius that featured so prominently in *Paul and Virginie* disappeared entirely in *Pablo y Virginia*. As a result, the trope so characteristic of the Western European sentimental novel –which was, as we saw, also present to a limited extent in Haykuni's *Eliza* and which consisted in establishing a dense networks of analogies between the lovers' emotional state and the appearance of their natural surroundings- could not operate anymore, an element that resulted in a profound alteration of the ways in which human sentiments and emotions were represented in the Ladino work.

Second, the switch from first-person to third-person narration -and, as a consequence, the disappearance of the narrator who, in Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's work, was the primary exponent of the novel's (pseudo-)Rousseauist discourse on nature and culture- led to the complete silencing, in the Ladino version, of the French novel's philosophical underpinnings.

Third, Ben-Guiat removed, in his summary of the work, the entirety of the political implications

³³⁹ "En Porto Luige, ciudad enfrente de la Mar de la Indias aparteniendo agora a los ingleses y un tiempo antes a los francezes, ven a la entrada del porto dos chicas alturas: son las tumbas de Pablo y de Virginia. Un viajador que se tuvo rendido en aqueas partes raconta a este sujeto la vida y la muerte de estos dos jovenes amorosos, fato que un viejo del lugar que los vido nacer y morir se lo tuvo contado." (Ben-Guiat 1912: 3).

³⁴⁰ See Barquin 1995: 377-387.

of the original material and, in particular, its mild attacks on the institution of slavery in the French colonies –a polemical dimension which became more marked in the successive revisions of the text by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre after the French Revolution. Indeed, in the Ladino version which reduces the already limited cast of the original novel to the two main characters and their mothers, the two slaves Domingue and Marguerite are almost never mentioned. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, *Pablo y Virginia* is a text almost entirely devoid of dialogues. In removing this specific type of passage present in the original French work, Ben-Guiat not only further reduced the philosophical message of the novel, often expressed through dialogues, in the fashion of eighteenth-century prose; he also deprived Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's work of an element which had turned it into one of the most iconic Western works of fiction of the late-eighteenth century, the elaborate lexicon of proto-romantic sentimentality that it had helped create.

What, then, was left of *Paul et Virginie* in *Pablo y Virginia*? The process of cannibalization to which Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's text was subjected by Ben-Guiat only left behind what Amelia Barquin has called the "narrative skeleton" (*el esqueleto argumental*³⁴¹) and most of the Ladino focused in fact on one episode in the plot –incidentally the same that was represented on the box in *Eliza*: the wreck of the *Saint-Géran* and the tragic death of Virginie. Thus, the original French sentimental novel was reduced to an anecdote –or, more precisely, to a frightful tale of shipwreck, by and large similar to the ones that readers could find, in the form of news reports, in the press of a port city like Izmir. In other words, the sentimentality of the late eighteenth century gave way to the anxieties of the early twentieth century.

³⁴¹ Barquin 1995: 386.

An attention to the context of publication of Ben-Guiat's take on Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* is, I believe, crucial in that it allows us to frame the process of commodification of a Western European novel in the late Ottoman Empire both as a reformatting –from book to serial to chapbook- and as a repurposing of the original French text, through its inscription into a new textual and editorial environment. Although it almost immediately acquired a complete autonomy as a novel and rapidly eclipsed the rest of its author's literary output, *Paul et Virginie* had been, from its very first edition as an appendix to its Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Etudes de la nature*, a text adjacent to other texts. In its original context of publication, the text was a fictional narrative inserted into a work that combined the discourses of philosophy and natural sciences. As a serial in *El Meseret*, as well as a chapbook in the series of reprints of Ben-Guiat's works by Shelomoh Yisra'el Sherezli in Jerusalem, *Pablo y Virginia* coexisted almost exclusively with other short fictional texts. These included the summaries³⁴² of other novels of the Western European canon (Prévost's *Manon Lescaut*³⁴³, or Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*³⁴⁴) but also included, in much greater numbers, texts whose Western source is much more difficult to identify, to the point that it is possible to wonder whether, instead of being translations *stricto sensu*, they were not, in fact, amplifications of anecdotes that Ben-Guiat had found in the popular Western press of the time. These brief narratives belonged to a decidedly popular repertoire, quite similar in terms of tone and themes to early twentieth-century "penny dreadfuls," or to the Grand-Guignol genre of popular theater which flourished in France at the

³⁴² The terms used by Ben-Guiat to describe his work varied from edition to edition: thus, for instance, his version of Lamartine's *Graziella* (Izmir, 1913) bore the mention "summarized by Alexandre Ben-Guiat" (*rezumido por*), while an adaptation of an unidentified English novel titled *En las tenievlas de la noche* in Ladino was described on the cover page as "imitated by Alexandre Ben-Guiat." For both works see relevant entries in Rodrigue 1992.

³⁴³ Ben-Guiat, Alexandre. *Manon Lesko. Romanso muy ezmuviente*. Jerusalem: 1905.

³⁴⁴ Ben-Guiat, Alexandre. *Los dos viajes de Guliver: ande los Lilipusyanyos y ande los Djigantes*. Jerusalem: 1912.

same time. Their plots were often located in exotic locales outside of both the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe, and invariably involved horrific crimes, natural disasters, or supernatural events: a ship sailing from England to Norway is caught in a storm of prodigious violence and drifts across the Atlantic to the mouth of the Amazon river at the price of unbearable suffering for its unfortunate passengers³⁴⁵; a young girl from Missouri turns to a life of crime in the Wild West³⁴⁶; a mad doctor from Caracas finds a way to reattach the head of a famous bandit to its body after its execution by decapitation³⁴⁷; a colonel of the Cossacks and his soldiers are subjected to horrible torture at the hands of fierce Chechen rebels in the Caucasus³⁴⁸.

Consequently, there was absolutely nothing strange in the fact that the episode in Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's to which Ben-Guiat devoted almost a third of his brief *Pablo y Virginia* was the shipwreck scene, which lent itself particularly easily to the exploitative treatment that his readers probably expected both in *El Meseret* and in the Jerusalem chapbook series. Unsurprisingly, in his effort to recast *Paul et Virginie* as the horrific story of a shipwreck, Ben-Guiat conserved, in his radical shortening of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's text which left out so much of the original material, the most gruesome details of the scene, such as Paul bleeding profusively through his mouth and ears after attempting and failing to rescue his lover.

While in the case of Haykuni's *Eliza*, a Western European novel like *Paul et Virginie* was turned into a commodity, in Alexandre Ben-Guiat's *Pablo y Virginia*, the process of commodification and appropriation implied stripping the work of most of its philosophical implications in order to make it pliable enough to fit the purposes with which it became invested

³⁴⁵ Ben-Guiat, Alexandre. *Perdidos en mar*. Jerusalem: 1902.

³⁴⁶ Ben-Guiat, Alexandre. *La brigante*. Jerusalem: 1912.

³⁴⁷ Ben-Guiat, Alexandre. *El muerto ke esta vivo*. Jerusalem: 1906.

³⁴⁸ Ben-Guiat, Alexandre. *Cascambo*. Jerusalem: 1906.

in its Ladino version, and to allow it to enter in a dialogue with other fictional texts that belonged to registers far removed from that of the original text.

3. Toward the End of the (Western) Novel: Zafirakis Hypandrevmenos' *Zenobia* (1872)

The text I examine in this final section differs from the previous two in that its connection with Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* is much less apparent than in Haykuni's *Eliza* or, needless to say, in Ben-Guiat's *Pablo y Virginia*. However, although no mention is ever made of the French novel in question, the plot of *Zenobia* (*H Ζηνοβία*, 1872-1875) by Zafirakis Hypandrevmenos –who appears to have been an educator born on the island of Lesbos and active in Izmir, but left no other trace of literary activity besides this particular text- closely follows, at least at first glance, the template set by Western European sentimental novels like *Paul et Virginie*. The plot follows the emotional awakening of two young adolescents (aged 12 and 14 in the present case) who, after a brief period of bliss, face separation and a multitude of other obstacles to their love, leading to the tragic death (here by suicide) of the heroin, shortly followed by the death of her lover. In addition, the vocabulary of eighteenth-century Western European sentimentality was as present in Hypandrevmenos' *Zenobia* as it was in Haykuni's *Eliza*, in particular through the ample use of meteorological topoi to describe the emotional changes through which the two young lovers go.

The first volume of *Zenobia* appeared in Izmir in 1872³⁴⁹ and seems to have had only a very localized audience as evidenced by the list of subscribers³⁵⁰ which primarily indicated as their place of residence the city of Izmir -as well as, to a much more limited extent, a few

³⁴⁹ Hypandrevmenos, Zafirakis. *H Ζηνοβία*. Izmir: 1872.

³⁵⁰ Hypandrevmenos 1872: 215-16.

Aegean islands among those located closest to the coast of Asia Minor (Samos, Symi, etc.). For unknown reasons, the publication of the second volume of *Zenobia* was delayed until 1875 and, once again, its list of subscribers –much shorter than that of the first volume³⁵¹- almost exclusively included names from Izmir, as well as a handful from Istanbul³⁵².

As it was already the case, albeit to a much more limited extent, in *Eliza*, which evoked the love between a young Armenian man and an Italian woman, *Zenobia* domesticated Western European sentimental fiction by inserting its tropes into a discourse on cross-ethnic, or cross-sectarian love that corresponded to anxieties specific to a multicultural and multilingual society like that of the late Ottoman Empire. In that respect, *Zenobia* continued a trend that started, in the novel, with the Armeno-Turkish work *The Story of Akabi* (*Akabi Hikâyesi*, 1851) by Hovsep Vartanean (Vartan Paşa) where the two protagonists respectively belonged to the Armenian Orthodox, and Catholic Armenian Churches³⁵³. Before the nineteenth century and before the emergence of the novel in the Ottoman Empire, these types of union across community boundaries had already been the object of fictional narratives as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for instance in *The Story of the Jewess Markada* (*Ιστορία της Εβραιοπούλας της Μαρκάδας*, Venice, 1668), a highly antisemitic verse narrative, written in a form of demotic Greek, describing the abduction of a Jewish girl from Istanbul by her Christian Albanian lover, or in one of the short stories that composed the anonymous *Results of Love* (*Ερωτος Αποτελέσμα*, Vienna, 1792), a tale of love between a Greek boy and an Armenian girl that served as a frame story for the publication of love songs popular among the Phanariots.

³⁵¹ Hy pandrevmenos 1875: 54-55.

³⁵² This very limited circulation of the novel at the time of its publication probably accounts for the fact that it has, to my knowledge, never been the object of any scholarly work, even in Greece.

³⁵³ On *Akabi Hikâyesi* see, among others, 2011; Cankara 2014.

In its first few chapters, the plot of *Zenobia* appears particularly naive and full of narrative clichés. The young Terpandros, born on the island of Lesbos, is denied an education by his conservative, middle-class Greek father who decides to move the family to the wealthy Bosphorus suburb of Neohori (Yeniköy) where many Armenians live. Convinced by an uncle to steal money from his parents and to run away to Athens to study, the young man is however caught by his father and severely punished. Set on acquiring an education at any cost, Terpandros manages to take private lessons in secret, paying for them with the product of petty theft. Excelling in every subject, he however turns out to be a particular gifted student of the Ottoman and Persian languages: one of Terpandros' Ottoman poems –an ode to the Sultan written on the occasion of the Bayram- becomes an instant success at the Imperial Court and earns him a visit from the Grand Master of the Dervishes who invites him to join the state administration. In the meantime, Terpandros has, during a particularly violent storm, caught a glimpse of his young neighbor Zenobia, the daughter of a rich Armenian banker. The feelings are later revealed to be mutual but Terpandros learns from Mariam, Zenobia's nurse, that the young girl is about to be married against her will. The nurse agrees to let Terpandros into Zenobia's room but, before doing so, proceeds to recount a conversation she had with Zenobia on the topic of love a few days prior.

In Hypandevmenos' novel the events described above constitute the first part of the novel and correspond to the first twenty or pages of the text. At that point in the plot, when Terpandros and Zenobia are about to be united for the first time, the narrative structure of the work –and indeed, as I will show, its very *genre*- abruptly shift from a typical –and, by and large, quite unremarkable- naive and sentimental plot to an entirely different register. Zenobia's conversation with Mariam –or, rather, the former's monologue, only occasionally interspersed

with brief reactions of the latter who is also the one reporting Zenobia's speech to Terpandros- extends over more than one hundred and thirty pages and brings the progression of the plot to a complete halt.

Zenobia's lengthy speech begins with a discussion of her emotional state and of her feelings for Terpandros, a passage that still bears the visible marks of the influence of the Western European discourse on sentimentality. However, the young girl quickly moves away from her personal case to engage the topic of love and, later on, the question of women's place in society. Although not entirely unusual for the ideological context of the Ottoman Empire in the 1870s, the views that the author places in the mouth of his central character still stand out due to their progressivist nature and their suggestion that women not only deserve political rights –or, at least, the right to occupy positions of power in society- but that they, in fact, might be better suited for leadership than men. Male rulers, as Zenobia highlights by listing a large number of them, have, throughout history, often proved to be inept, corrupt, or, worse, particularly prone to violence:

What woman, by God, what woman wearing a crown and equipped with the right education would ever show such monstrosity and extinguish the flame of her dark passions by plunging it in human blood? (...) Not one! Not one! For woman, as I have said before has a sensibility greater than that of man, and she feels better than he does what her duties are; being of superior intelligence, she is able to walk on the road to civilization without needing to dig it in human blood first³⁵⁴!

³⁵⁴ "Ποία γυνή, προς Θεού, ποία γυνή εστεμμένην έχουσα την κεφαλήν και τυχούσα της δεούσης ανατροφής ήθελε δείξει ποτέ τοσαύτην θηριωδίαν, σβύνουσα την φλόγα των μαύρων παθών αυτής δι'ανθρωπίνου αίματος (...) Ουδεμία! Ουδεμία! Η γυνή, ώς άλλοτε είπον, έχουσα μείζονα

An important idea is here that of "being equipped with the right education," and, in her speech, Zenobia connects the notion of an advent of female rule with the necessity to provide women with opportunities to acquire higher education:

I know, mother, the views that the public holds regarding woman, I see her today, crawling in the mud of trivial labor that would be fit for apes rather than for beings capable of reason. However, my personal opinion is diametrically opposed. I believe that woman, equipped with the right education, will prove to be as important as man, as highly-regarded as man, and she might even prove superior to him in many respects (...) Indeed, the door of higher education has never been opened to the unfortunate woman³⁵⁵.

Other more progressivist nations might, Zenobia suggests, provide an example to be followed, in that they have understood that educating women is turning them into potential agents of change, ultimately able to bring peace among the nations:

In North America, they have already started to found such institutions of higher learning for women. During the Crimean War, one of these students was speaking from the

ή ο ανήρ την ευαισθησίαν, αισθάνεται και κάλλιον αυτού τα καθήκοντά της. Έχουσα δε και μείζονα ή ο ανήρ την νοημοσύνην, δύναται να βαδίση την οδόν της πολιτείας, χωρίς να διαχαράξη αυτήν πρότερον δι'ανθρωπίνου αίματος!" (Hyandrevemos 1872: 129).

³⁵⁵"Γνωρίζω, μήτερ, ποίαν ιδέαν έχει το κοινόν περί της γυναικός, βλέπον αυτήν σήμερα κυλιομένην εις βόρβορον ουτιδανών έργων, αρμοζόντων εις πίθηκας μάλλον παρά εις λογικά όντα. Η ιδική μου όμως γνώμη είνε εκ διαμέτρου αντίθετος. Εγώ φρονώ, ότι η γυνή, τυχούσα της δεούσης ανατροφής, θέλει καταστή επίσης σπουδαία, καθώς και ο ανήρ, επίσης υψιλή, καθώς και ο ανήρ, ίσως δε θέλει υπερτερεί και κατά πολλά τον άνδρα (...) Και τω όντι η θύρα της ανωτέρας παιδείας ουδέποτε ηνεώχθη τη δυστυχεί γυναικί." (Hyandrevmenos 1872: 136).

tribune: "If today the people in charge of the destiny of mankind were women, we would not have to shed som many tears and mourn the loss of so many human beings, of so many of our siblings³⁵⁶!"

The young girl then proceeds to list, over several pages, some of the women that, both in the past and in the present, have contributed -and continue to do so- to politics, sciences, the arts, and to the advancement of human civilization, including –although they are relegated to a short footnote- some Ottoman women, primarily Greek educators of the 1850s and 1860s.

Quite dense and somewhat rambling, Zenobia's speech moves, sometimes seemingly at random, between a variety of topics that, all together, form a sort of political treatise that denounces the ills of society in general – and, more or less implicitly, of Ottoman society in particular. The question of the relationship between religion and violence is for instance evoked at length:

(...) How many, how many, using in vain the sacred name of religion out of ambition and self-interest, have set ablaze the world with the most horrific wars and have reduced mankind to ashes (...)? Is it really God himself who orders the extermination of his creature through fire and through blade, and through thousands of other infortunes and abominations³⁵⁷?

³⁵⁶ "Εν τη Βορείω Αμερική ήρξαντο ήδη καθιδρύοντες τοιαύτα ανώτερα εκπαιδευτήρια δια τας γυναίκας. Μία των μαθητριών τούτων κατά τον Κριμαϊκόν πόλεμον έλεγεν από του βήματος: 'Αν οι διέποντες τας τύχας των ανθρώπων ήσαν γυναίκες και ουχί άνδρες, σήμερα δεν θα είχομεν να χύσωμεν τοςάυτα δάκρυα επί τη απωλεία τοςούτων ανθρωπίνων πλασμάτων, τοςούτων αδελφών!'" (Hypandevmenos 1872: 136).

³⁵⁷ "(...) οπόσοι, οπόσοι φιλόδοξοι και ιδιοτελείς, καταχρώμενοι του ιερού ονόματος της θρησκείας, δεν άνηψαν πυρκαϊάν φρικωδεστάτων πολέμων, την ανθρωπότητα αποτεφρώσασαν

This attack on some of the political uses of religion -which, according to Zenobia, pervert its true nature- is accompanied by a direct attack on what the young girl sees as the shortcomings of clerics:

The people of the Orient, mother, being deprived of education, are thirsty for it and, they accept with zeal and gratitude anything that could contribute to its diffusion. But people without leaders are never able to achieve anything, as much as they desire it. And who is the natural leader of these people if not the Priest? However, one might think that some of these Priests –not to say most of them- not only do not seem to be leaders interested in good deeds (...) but seem, on the contrary, to prevent good deeds from happening due to the multiple obstacles that they put in the way of their realization³⁵⁸.

Moving on to question of power, the text adopts almost messianic tones in its evocation of the coming advent of more enlightened forms of political leadership bound to bring about the peaceful coexistence of nations:

(...)! Είνε λοιπόν αυτός ο Θεός, ο δια πυρός και μαχαίρας και μυρίων άλλων δυστυχημάτων και απανθρωπιών την εξολόθρευση του πλάσματός του διατάσσων;" (Hypandrenmenos 1872: 110).
³⁵⁸ "Οι λαοί της Ανατολής, μήτερ, άμοιροι παιδείας όντες, διψώσι παιδείας, και μετά ζήλου και ευγνωμοσύνης άμα αποδέχονται παν ό,τι δύναται να συντελέση προς διάδοσιν αυτής. Αλλ'οι λαοί άνευ αρχηγού ουδέποτε κατορθούσι τι, όσον και αν ήθελον το επιθυμεί. Και τις ο φυσικός αρχηγός των λαών τούτων ειμή ο Αρχιερεύς; Και όμως τις δύναται να πιστεύση ότι τινες των Αρχιερέων, ίνα μη ειπά οι πλείστοι, ουχί μόνον δεν φαίνονται αρχηγοί των καλών έργων (...) αλλά και εμμέσως πως παρεμβάλλουσι προσκόμματα μυρία, προς μη πραγματοποίησιν αυτών." (Hypandrenmenos 1872: 58).

But alas! The blinding light of the poorly-understood royal power has brought them darkness and they cannot distinguish anything anymore, anything! But a day will come, a day will come when, like a ray of light, a more penetrating thought will break the obscurity in which they are kept and will finally show them what their duties are: a policy of peace, which they owe to themselves and to their people, about which they never give any serious thought, if not to tax them or to slaughter them for the own interests³⁵⁹.

There is, in itself, nothing intrinsically unusual in an author suspending the progression of a novel's plot to insert lengthy philosophical or political digressions. At a time when the moral and social usefulness of literature remained invested with a particular currency, the idea that the novel could serve as a vehicle for the articulation of philosophical, pedagogical, or scientific discourses was commonplace. Indeed, a relatively brief work like *Paul et Virginie* did include, as mentioned in the previous section, a few short philosophical dialogues, as well as frequent digressions, notably on the flora and fauna of Mauritius, or on the topic of slavery in the colonies. However, what made *Zenobia* stand out was the scale and the extent of these detours from the plot. As I have pointed out earlier, the young heroin's speech came to interrupt the plot and suspend the action only after the first twenty pages or so, and continued almost until the end of the first volume, relegating the sentimental plot to the background –and, in fact, effectively

³⁵⁹ "Αλλοίμοι! Η υπερβολική λάμψις της κακώς εννοουμένης βασιλικής δυνάμεως αυτών επέφερον αυτοίς το σκότος, και ουδέν πλέον, ουδέν διακρίνουσιν! Έσσειται πλην ήμαρ, έσσειται ήμαρ, καθ'ό ακτίς εμβριθεστέρας τινός σκέψεως θέλει διαλύσει τα σκότη, εν οίς ευρίσκονται, και θέλει δείξει αυτοίς ποτε ποία ήσαν τα καθήκοντά αυτών, η πολιτική της ειρήνης, και απέναντι εαυτών, και απέναντι των λαών αυτών, περί ων ήδη ουδέποτε ίσως σκέπτονται σπουδαίως, ειμή οσάκις πρόκειται να τους φορολογήσουν ή οδηγήσωσιν εις το αποτρόπαιον σφαγείον των συμφερόντων αυτών (Hyppandrevmenos 1872: 121).

erasing it. Indeed, the second volume did return to the story of Terpandros and Zenobia but, published three years later and shorter than the first one, it almost read like an afterthought and seems, judging from the small list of subscribers, to have had an even more limited audience than the already quite localized readership of its predecessor. In the second volume, the two lovers finally meet and confess their mutual love. Terpandros promises to earn enough money to be able to elope with Zenobia and finds employment at the Imperial Court. However, Zenobia's parents decide to proceed with their plans to marry her by force and the young girl commits suicide, soon followed in the tomb by her disconsolate lover. However, if the centrality of the sentimental plot is somewhat restored in the second volume, digressions abound once again, constantly threatening the very existence of the narrative.

What we see in Hypandevmenos' *Zenobia* is the enlistment of a fictional template imported from Western Europe to serve an ideological agenda largely expressed through non-fictional means. The archetypal features of the sentimental novel function here, quite literally, as a *pre-text* for *Zenobia*, as a framework largely disconnected from what it ultimately is called to accommodate. Western fiction provides codes and motifs that the Greek-Ottoman novel ends up discarding; in Hypandevmenos' novel, the sentimental novel is nothing more than a primordial soil used to grow something entirely different. This retreat of elements pertaining to *action* due to the overinflated presence of *digression* signals a rupture with one of the crucial conventions of novel writing which consists in a necessary balance between these two dimensions. Moreover, this embrace of the diatribe, of the sermon, to the detriment of the novel is enacted, in the text itself, by the insertion of a multitude of rhetorical devices pertaining to non-fictional registers and which function as parasitic elements that further divorce the work from the realm of the novel. Throughout her speech, Zenobia supports her arguments by quoting, *ad nauseam*, lengthy

passages from Ancient Greek grammatology (in particular Euripides and Homer), as well as a variety of other texts, including entire French poems in the original and not accompanied by any intra- or para-textual translation. In addition, the work makes an impressively ample use of footnotes, some of which extend over several pages and even include, notably in the passages that expose the structural flaws of the Ottoman Empire, detailed figures and statistics, thereby slowing down the progression of the plot even more, and further delaying the meeting between the two characters. This last element constitutes yet another mark of the rupture with the conventions of the Western European novel performed in *Zenobia* in that it breaks an implicit pact upon which novelistic discourse is usually built and which stipulates that the reader's disbelief can be suspended provided that, if not the events described, at least the situation of enunciation remain somewhat plausible. However, when the same narrative voice appears to be heard in both the main text *and* in the footnotes, when, in other words, it is the character –and not the author- who comments, by way of footnotes, upon elements from her own speech, presumably at the very moment of its utterance, the diegetic ambiguity is such that it becomes incompatible with novelistic discourse. Thus, under the weight of the digressions that prevent it from assuming its most elementary function, that of a love story, the sentimental novel can no longer exist.

Interestingly, this break away from the template of Western European sentimental fiction –this form of deconstruction of the genre, as it were- is coupled, in *Zenobia*, with a very explicit attack on the genre of the novel at large, one that questions its moral relevance to society:

Some write novels, most of them immoral, or at least devoid of any benefit for society
 (...) And indeed what is the real benefit for mankind of, for instance, the much-celebrated

Notre Dame de Paris, of *Chansons des rues et des bois*, of *Les Travailleurs de la mer* by Victor Hugo, a poet famous in France and in the entire world? What is the benefit of *Josely*, of *Rafael*, of *Graziella* by Lamartine? What is the benefit of *Mademoiselle de Maupin* or *Albertus* by Théophile Gautier? That of *Werther*, *Faust*, or *Wilhelm Meister* by Goethe? Of *Don Juan* and *Thomas Moore* by Byron? Of anything written by George Sand? Or, lastly, of anything written by Alfred de Musset? Is the current state of society so ideal, so blooming, has it arrived to such a degree of perfection and happiness that its members do not need to do anything important for it, and can limit themselves to offering it entertainment, charming poems and charming novels to be read while laying like kings on a bed of roses³⁶⁰?

In *Zenobia*, this critique of the novel is thus performed through a specific emphasis on its foreignness, as evidenced by the fact that, in the original Greek, the text lists foreign works – which also include, along with novels, some works of poetry- using their original title in the Roman script, instead of the Greek translation which, for most of these, had already been published by 1872. This passage is part of a broader concern, present throughout

³⁶⁰ "Συγγράφουσιν οι μεν μυθιστορήματα, ως επί το πλείστον ανήθικα, ή τουλάχιστον μηδεμίαν πρακτικήν ωφέλειαν παρέχοντα τη κοινωνία (...) Και τω όντι ποίαν ωφέλειαν παρήγαγον εις την ανθρωπότητα λ.χ. το πολυθρύλλητον *Notre Dame de Paris*, ή το *Chansons des rues et des bois*, ή το *Travailleurs de la mer* του άλλως τε περιφανούς ποιητού της Γαλλίας και του κόσμου όλου Βίκτωρος Ουγγώ [sic]; 'Η ποίαν το *Josely*, ή το *Rafael*, ή η *Graziella* του Λαμαρτίνου; Και ποίαν η *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, ή ο *Albertus* του Théophile Gautier; Και ποίαν το *Werther*, ή το *Faust*, ή ο *Wilhelm Meister* του Γάητου; Και ποίαν ο *Don Juan*, ή ο *Thomas Moore* του Βύρωνος; Και ποίαν τα άπαντα της Γ. Σάντ; Και ποίαν τέλος τα άπαντα του Alfred de Musset; Μήπως τάχα η κατάσταση της κοινωνίας είνε τοσούτον καλή, τοσούτον ανθηρά, προήχθη εις τοσούτον βαθμόν τελειότητος, εις τοσούτον βαθμόν ευδαιμονίας, ώστε τα μέλη αυτής ουδέν έχουσιν να πράξωσιν υπέρ αυτής σπουδαίον, και προσφέρουσιν αυτή μέσα διασκεδάσεως, τερπνά ποιήματα, τερπνά μυθιστορήματα, ίνα αναγιγνώσκουσιν οι επί στρωμνής από ρόδων βασιλικώτατα κείμενοι;" (Hypandrevmenos 1872: 103, n.1).

Hypandrevmenos' work, with the relationship of Ottomans with the culture of Europe. Instead of an outright rejection, what the text calls for is a selective engagement with Western civilization, and the rejection of its less beneficial elements –of which the novel is undoubtedly a part:

Instead of trying to acquire the gold of European civilization, which lies in great number in front of our very eyes, (...) we limit ourselves to grabbing its refuse³⁶¹.

Not without paradox for a text that looks toward the West with admiration with respect to the advancement of women, Westernization is approached in *Zenobia* as a perversion, a de-civilizing force turning humans into beasts, and whose deleterious effects are most acutely felt in the behavior of women:

The day before yesterday some woman of Pera came to see me: her nails were so long that, truth be told, she looked like a tiger to me, under the guise of a woman! And do you know why, mother? Because she heard (I say "heard" and not "saw," because she's never been to Europe in her life) that Europeans, or at least the majority of them, have the bizarre habit of letting their nails grow very long. It seems that the woman in question wanted, because of her rank in society and of the neighborhood where she lives, to be a part of the so-called European civilization³⁶².

³⁶¹ "(...)αντί να προσπαθήσωμεν να αποκτήσωμεν τον προ των οφθαλμών ημών μέγαν όγκον του χρυσίου του ευρωπαϊκού πολιτισμού (...) περιοριζόμεθα μόνον αρπάζοντες τας ακαθαρσίας του." ((Hypandrevmenos 1872: 51-52).s

³⁶² "Προχθές είδον κυρίαν τινα του Πέρα, ελθούσαν προς επίσκεψίν μου, ήτις είχε τους ονύχας της τοσούτον μεγάλους, ώστε μα την αλήθειαν, μοι εφαινότο ότι ήτο τίγρις, μορφήν γυναικειαν λαβούσα! Και ηξεύρετε, μήτερ, διατί; Διότι ήκουσε (δεν λέγω είδε, διότι ουδέποτε υπήγεν εις την Ευρώπην), ότι οι Ευρωπαίοι, τουλάχιστον οι πλείστοι, έχουσιν την αλλοκοτίαν να φέρωσιν

Perhaps unsurprisingly, this critique of Westernization through the subversion and ultimate displacement of the tropes of the sentimental novel leads, in *Zenobia*, to the same kind of submission of Western fictional models to a national(ist) agenda that was already at play, as shown in Chapter 3, in the reception of Western European historical fiction in the late Ottoman Empire. Interestingly, this nationalization is, at first glance, concealed behind the façade of cosmopolitan politics. In a rather curious passage of her lengthy speech, Zenobia defines herself as "another Joan of Arc...but with Socratic ethics" (άλλη Ιωάννα Αρκία (...) ηθικής πλην Σωκρατικής.³⁶³) However, she makes sure to clarify what distinguishes her from the French historical figure:

But I am not, like her, only against the enemies of France, which she saw as her only homeland; I am not, like her only, in favor of one single nation (έθνος), the French one, which she saw as her own. I am against the enemies of the entire world, which I see as my homeland, and in favor of all mankind, which I see as my nation³⁶⁴.

The historical figures mobilized to support this call toward cosmopolitanism legitimize the notion by inscribing it into a frame of reference that mixes classical Antiquity with Christianity:

τους όνυχάς των μεγάλους. Η κυρία εκείνη, φαίνεται, επεθύμει, και ως εκ της κοινωνικής θέσεως της, και ως εκ της συνοικίας εν ή κατοικεί, να μετάσχη του ευρωπαϊκού λεγομένου πολιτισμού." (Hypandevmenos 1872: 52).

³⁶³ Hypandevmenos 1872: 103-104.

³⁶⁴ "...ουχί πλέον, ως εκείνη, κατά μόνων των εχθρών της Γαλλίας, ην και μόνην εθεώρει ως πατρίδα της, ουχί μόνον υπέρ ενός και μόνου έθνους, του Γαλλικού όπερ και μόνον εθεώρει ως έθνος της, αλλά κατά παντών των εχθρών του κόσμου, ον θεωρώ ως πατρίδα μου, και υπέρ απάσης της ανθρωπότητας, ην θεωρώ ως έθνος μου." (Hypandevmenos 1872: 104-105).

Because as the great Socrates, the greatest of men, rightly said: "I am neither Greek, neither Athenian, I am a citizen of the world (κοσμοπολίτης)". And doesn't Our Lord Jesus Christ himself say, in the mouth of Paul the Apostle: "I am neither a Jew, nor a Greek³⁶⁵"?

Yet, a dialogue between Zenobia and her nurse Mariam soon reveals what is truly at stake. For the young girl, war and discord among nations are a result of the absence of universal modes of communication. The advent of global peace is therefore contingent upon the widespread adoption of an international language, Zenobia asserts, thus echoing the various attempts at developing such a tool that punctuated the nineteenth century. And the nature of the language in question comes as no surprise to the reader:

-To achieve this goal, answered Zenobia, I only see one appropriate language (...)

-The Armenian language?

-Unfortunately, she replied, the Armenian language has never acquired any philological importance in the world, at least not a very significant one. Only the language of Plato and Homer (...) can be used to achieve this goal because the Greek tongue is an inexhaustible treasure among languages; it is the language of arts, of sciences, and of civilization in general; it is the language of the gods³⁶⁶.

³⁶⁵ "Διό δικαίως ἔλεγεν ὁ μέγας Σωκράτης, ὁ μεγαλειότερος τῶν ἀνθρώπων: Δεν εἶμαι οὔτε Ἕλληνα, οὔτε Ἀθηναῖος, εἶμαι κοσμοπολίτης. Καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς δια τοῦ στόματος τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Παύλου δὲν λέγει: οὐκ ἐνὶ Ἰουδαίῳ, οὐδ' Ἕλληνα;" (Hypandivnemenos 1872: 105).

³⁶⁶ "-Πρὸς τοιοῦτον τινα σκοπὸν, ἀπήντησε ἡ Ζηνοβία, μίαν μόνην θεωρῶ κατάλληλον γλῶσσαν (...)
-Τὴν Ἀρμενικὴν; ἠρώρησα.

There lay the essential agenda of Hypandevmenos' novel: the promotion of a nationalist linguistic utopia which expanded on the textually-constructed notion of a monolingual, entirely Hellenized Aegean like the ones where the action of the novels analyzed in Chapter 1, and globalized it in imagining the spread of Greek on a planetary level. In this context, Zenobia breaks free from the heritage of Virginie and all her sentimental sisters to turn into a prophetess of Hellenism, an Armenian girl who teaches Greeks how to be Greeks –including her lover Terpandros who tries -and fails- to assimilate fully in Ottoman society by learning the language of the Imperial Court.

In order to assume this role, the young girl must relinquish, along with her function as the heroin of a sentimental novel, her own national identity and become the puppet conveying the author's nationalist ventriloquism. Just as he reduced his main character to a vessel for his ideological agenda, Hypandevmenos used the template of the Western European sentimental novel as a vehicle for the expression of his political views but, in order to do so, he proceeded to hollow it out, empty it of its substance, and ultimately divorce it entirely from the conventions of the genre. In Haykuni's *Eliza*, the commodification of sentimental fiction implied its reification; in Ben-Guiat's *Pablo y Virginia*, commodification was achieved through extreme condensation and repurposing; in Hypandevmenos' *Zenobia*, the process consisted in turning the Western European model of sentimental fiction into what could be called, borrowing a term from the

-Δυστυχώς η Αρμενική, απήντησεν εκείνη, ουδεμίαν ουδέποτε εκτήσατο φιλολογικήν αξίαν εν τω κόσμω, τουλάχιστον σπουδαίαν. Μόνη η γλώσσα του Πλάτωνος και του Ομήρου (...) δύναται να χρησιμεύση προς τοιούτον σκοπόν, διότι η Ελληνική γλώσσα είνε ανεξάντλητος θησαυρός των γλωσσών, είνε η γλώσσα των τεχνών και των επιστημών και του πολιτισμού εν γένει, είνε η γλώσσα των θεών." (Hypandevmenos 1872: 112).

vocabulary of economics, a *fungible* entity, a product whose constitutive elements can be modified and substituted with others, an absolute commodity.

Conclusion

I have suggested, in the title of the last section of this chapter, that works like Hypandevmenos' *Zenobia* brought about, in their extreme commodification of its tropes, a form of death of the Western European novel in the late Ottoman Empire. By that, I did not mean to imply at all that the types of engagement with the genre examined in the present work lead to the end of novel-writing in the last few decades before the demise of the Empire, or to the complete autonomization from the Western European novel culture of the entities that composed the late Ottoman literary landscape. Most of the works that I have analyzed here appeared before the First Constitutional Era (1876-1878) but the modes of engagement of foreign prose fiction I have surveyed in this work (translation, nationalization, commodification) would continue to be enacted by the various components of the late Ottoman literary mosaic until the demise of the Empire -and even beyond, although in infinitely more precarious ways in the case of the minorities, especially after the Armenian Genocide of 1915, the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922 and the subsequent population exchange of 1923, the discriminatory tax policies of the 1940s, and the pogroms of 1955.

The present study constitutes an attempt at rethinking the ways we can write the history of novel culture in the late Ottoman Empire. In addition, it asks *how* can we write this history in such a way as to bring to light the agency of the various communities that occupied this space on the edge of Europe. Indeed, tracing the development of a culture of the novel in such a

context presents a particular danger. When we follow, as I have done in these pages, the migration of the novel, and of some of its sub-categories, from the literary capital of Western Europe to the Ottoman cities of Istanbul and Izmir, how can we avoid to reinforce the often reductive diffusionist narratives that have been formulated to account for the global adoption of cultural tropes and practices originally defined in Western Europe? In other words, is there truly a way to *de-center* the rise of the novel? Can we talk about virtually any nineteenth-century Greek, Armenian, Turkish, or Ladino novel published in Constantinople, and entirely refrain from labeling it as peripheral?

At first glance, the picture that emerges from the study of bibliographic data for the period is a merciless one: if we compare the number of foreign novels translated into Greek, Ottoman-Turkish, Armenian, or Ladino on any given year during the last century of the Empire with the number of original novels published in any of those same language during the same year, we cannot but notice that we are in presence of a particularly acute case of cultural hegemony, one in which the massive influx of imported novels prevented –or at least greatly complicated- the emergence of domestic writing. In fact, references of this state of affairs were abundantly present in nineteenth-century conversations around the state of local literature that took place in the various communities. This conscience of their own peripherality with regards to the novel would in fact continue to echo in literary scholarship on nineteenth-century prose fiction published during the following century, for instance in Tanpınar's account of Ottoman novel translations, as seen in Chapter 2, or, as mentioned in Chapter 1, in the disdain with which Greek literary historiography traditionally approached the prose production of the Greek Romantic period.

Indeed, in the very specific case of a literary genre such as the novel, the patterns of its diffusion in the late Ottoman literary landscape seem to point to the existence of a center and of a periphery, given that evidence points to the almost complete absence of a multidirectional character in the trans-national exchanges at play. Western European novels were imported and read in the Ottoman Empire by the thousands; yet not a single Greek, Armenian, Turkish, or Ladino novel published in the Ottoman Empire was translated into a Western European language during the nineteenth century. When it comes to the novel, there is no equivalent to Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan*, only the stale Orientalism of a Pierre Loti.

In the present work, I argue that there is a way out of this grim reality –or rather two ways; two approaches that allow us, not to erase, but to circumvent the center/periphery binary that a study of the emergence of Ottoman novel culture seems to require. My contention is that it is possible, when we talk about the dialogue between the Western European novel and the corresponding traditions it generated in the literatures of the late Ottoman Empire, to both do justice to the creativity and agency of the latter, while problematizing the supposed supremacy of the former.

The first of these approaches requires us to return to the theory of the novel itself and to define the genre by *circumscribing* it, by divorcing it from "fiction," and even from "literature" and by asserting that the novel is never coterminous with either of these terms, but always only a very particular and limited subset of these notions. In other words, we need to offer a stern resistance to the narratives that, in past as in present scholarship, insist on describing the genre as both diachronic and universal. What the present study tried to do is, on the contrary, to approach the novel as a very time- and place-specific regime, one that was the product of cultural forces that coalesced at a very particular point in time and in a very specific geographic space, and, as

such, one that simply cannot be studied diachronically for more than a few centuries without running the risk of reproducing a triumphant Eurocentric narrative. What such a detour permits us to do when we turn to the emergence of the Ottoman novel is to realize that, when we recognize it as a situation of cultural hegemony in which cultural exchanges are necessarily unequal and largely unidirectional, we are saying absolutely nothing of the cultural contacts between Western Europe and the Ottoman Empire *at large*. Since the novel is such a particular mode of representation, the structure of uneven global exchanges it creates in the nineteenth century corresponds to the genre out of which it is born and *only* to it, without any necessary overlap with other genres, other cultural realms, and other types of trans-national encounters. Furthermore, it might be helpful to divorce the novel from the very notion of "text," and to define it instead as a *technology*, a cultural artifact akin to, say, the telegraph, which the Ottomans also imported from Western Europe during the same period. Both novel-writing and telegraphic communication were first developed outside of the Ottoman Empire before their importation there; both technologies required the mastery of a particular set of skills, of the specific code and tools that allowed them to function effectively. But once these skills, this code, these tools had been successfully assimilated, nothing required Greeks, Armenians, Turks, or Jews in the Ottoman Empire to use the telegraph –or the novel- in the exact same way it was used by the French or the British, or to employ either to convey the same messages and contents that they served to deliver in Western Europe.

In parallel with this detour through the theory of the novel, the second way to approach the late Ottoman culture of the novel from the perspective of its relationship with the West consists in emphasizing the agency present in this culture *in spite* of the hegemonic character of the exchanges at play, and in bringing to light the creative engagement with the Western

European novel of an Hypandevmenos, of the Greek and Armenian authors of historical fiction, of the Sephardic translators that transformed Western classics into mass-produced commodities. Here lies precisely what the present work attempted to show: that, by experimenting with novel translation, or by nationalizing and commodifying imported fictional templates, the figures discussed here, active during the formative period that saw the gradual emergence of an Ottoman culture of the novel cutting across community boundaries, all answered the call for action inserted by Stephanos Xenos in his preface to the 1851 English-language edition of his novel *The Devil in Turkey* and which gives its title to the present work: " We must ourselves write about ourselves." In short, what these authors and translators showed was creative resilience, and the particularity of this phenomenon is that it was perhaps this very element, this common engagement with the imported genre of the novel that united the different component of the late Ottoman cultural mosaic across community boundaries. Novelists of the late Ottoman period produced relatively few works of great esthetic merit, but what they managed to do is to make a home for the novel in the space that they occupied and, perhaps more importantly, to carve a home for themselves *within* this imported genre by subjecting it to a wide range of distortions.

When using the term "home" in the particular context of the late Ottoman Empire, it is impossible not to remember that, all too soon after the publication of the last works that fall within the scope of the present work, home would cease to be a home for many, in particular for much of the minority populations, and that this loss of home would be accompanied, on a massive scale, by the most extreme forms of political violence, and by unfathomable human suffering. In the light of this fact, looking at the complex and imperfect late Ottoman *vivre ensemble* and, more specifically, at the intersections of peoples, languages, scripts, and texts through the distorting lenses of nostalgia would be at best a dubious approach –if not a

dangerous one. There is, after all, in this context as in every other, no way to mourn empire that is not profoundly immoral.

What the present work attempts to do is to *document* certain aspects of this late Ottoman traffic in languages, scripts, and texts. By shedding light on cultural practices that cut across ethnic, religious, and linguistic boundaries, it aims to go beyond scholarly approaches to the late Ottoman literary system that tend to see each of its components as hermetically-sealed entities. By emphasizing the complexity of the engagements with foreign fiction on the part of the various actors that participated in the trans-communal emergence of a culture of the novel in the Empire, it shows how a study of the diverse Ottoman literary landscapes –these interconnected narrow literary fields- can help to further complicate entrenched notions of the relationships between literatures in global networks of cultural exchanges.

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