

AN UNKNOWN TEXT BY AKA GÜNDÜZ AS AN EXAMPLE OF OTTOMAN–GERMAN JOINT WAR PROPAGANDA DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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Abstract: *The aim of this study is to unearth an unknown text by Aka Gündüz published in Germany in the in the second morning edition of 1 January 1915 of the 'Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt'. This text titled "O Young German!" is an example of German–Turkish joint war propaganda during the First World War. The text was handwritten and signed by Aka Gündüz. In the introductory part of the newspaper text, "The most important Turkish poet of our age, Ata Gündüz wrote a poem to the Germans at our request. [...] We have added a photograph of the original text in Ottoman (i. e. Turkish) language next to the German translation." note is included.*

According to archive records, Aka Gündüz did not publish it in Turkey. The text published in the 'Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt' was translated from Ottoman into German by Dr. Fr. Schrader. When the handwritten version is compared with the one published in the newspaper, it is revealed that there are some (intentional or unintentional) translation errors. Although the name of the poet was written as 'Ata Gündüz' instead of 'Aka Gündüz' at the beginning of the text, when the signature in the text is compared with the signatures in other texts by Aka Gündüz, it is seen that it belongs to him. It was written in a bespoke manner to show the German people the friendship and unity of the Turkish allies. The text was created with idyllic landscapes and an emotional atmosphere. Some sentences such as "You are nice and humane...", "As long as you and my Hungarian brother live, we will make this world strong", "Let's move on to war. Come on, so that there will be no savagery, no hatred, no enmity in the world" reveal the propaganda purpose of the text. This text is important in terms of both war propaganda studies and the identification of an unknown text in terms of Turkish literary history.

Keywords: Ottoman-German Alliance, Aka Gündüz, Propaganda, Enver Pasha, First World War.

Rezumat: *Un text necunoscut al lui Aka Gündüz ca exemplu al propagandei de război comune otomano-germane în timpul Primului Război Mondial.* Studiul pune în evidență un text necunoscut al poetului Aka Gündüz, publicat în „Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt” din Germania, la 1 ianuarie 1915, în cea de-a doua ediție matinală a ziarului. Textul intitulat „O, tinere german!” reprezintă un exemplu de propagandă comună germano-turcă din timpul Primului Război Mondial. Textul a fost scris de mână și semnat de Aka Gündüz. În partea introductivă a textului ziarului este scris: „Cel mai important poet turc al epocii noastre, Ata Gündüz a scris o poezie pentru germani la cererea noastră. [...] Am adăugat o fotografie a textului original în limba otomană (adică turcă), lângă traducerea germană”.

Potrivit înregistrărilor de arhivă, Aka Gündüz nu a publicat acest text în Turcia. Textul publicat în „Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt” a fost tradus de dr. Fr. Schrader, din turcă în germană. Când se compară textul scris de mână cu textul publicat în ziar, se vede că există unele erori de traducere (intenționate sau neintenționate). La începutul textului, numele poetului a fost scris ca „Ata Gündüz” în loc de „Aka Gündüz”. Când semnătura de pe text este comparată cu semnăturile din alte texte ale lui Aka Gündüz, se vede că aceasta îi aparține. Evident, textul a fost scris „la comandă”, pentru a arăta poporului german prietenia și unitatea aliaților turci, fiind împănate cu pasaje idilice, pentru a crea o atmosferă emoționantă. Câteva propoziții precum „Ești draguț și uman...”, „Atâta timp cât tu și fratele meu maghiar vei trăi, vom face această lume puternică”, „Hai să trecem la război. Haide, ca să nu existe în lume sălbăticie, ură, dușmănie” dezvăluie scopul propagandistic al textului. Acest text este important atât în ceea ce privește studiile de propagandă de război, cât și identificarea unui text necunoscut din istoria literaturii turce.

INTRODUCTION

It is inevitable to seek alliances among countries before great upheavals and world wars. This situation, which we can closely follow in world politics today, was also experienced before the First World War. Due to its geopolitical position, Turkey – a country established after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire – has been more or less affected by all kinds of tensions in the Balkans, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe. Therefore, it has to be part of the game in the plans related to the geography above.

The Ottoman Empire decided to join the First World War with the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria) against the Allied Powers (England, France, and the Russian Empire forming the Triple Entente) due to

following reasons: a) Hope to gain economic independence via getting rid of capitulations¹, b) Desire to create a modern economic system by radical reforms, c) Awareness of Germany's respect for the Ottoman Empire's integrity and survival, and d) Hope to reinforce their regional security by constructing a Balkan bloc with Bulgaria and Romania.²

Before the First World War, the Ottoman Empire had tried to get closer to the Entente Powers. As a result of not receiving a positive response from them, it made an alliance with Germany. In fact, it should not be thought that this alliance emerged suddenly.

Except for the geographic position of the Ottoman Empire, Germany was right not to favour the latter as a military ally due to many aspects (educationally backward, industrially underdeveloped, financially bankrupt, and lacking enough resources). Conversely, the Ottomans did trust Germany because the Germans had not occupied any Ottoman territory up to the First World War.³

Starting from the 1880s, especially during the reign of Wilhelm II (1888–1918), the Germans were an important figure and example for the Turks from economic, political, and military points of view. For the Germans, the Turkish homeland was a source of raw materials, a market, and a means of directing the Muslim geography by the effect of the caliphate. The intensification of interest towards German technology during the reign of Abdulhamid II evolved into a strong German admiration due to the problems encountered during the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) (*İttihat ve Terakki* in Turkish) government.⁴

¹ For detailed information about Ottoman Capitulations, see Hilal Çiftçi, *Mediation as a Diplomatic Tool in Ottoman Capitulations*, in "Codrul Cosminului", Vol. XXVIII, 2022, no. 1, p. 29–54.

² Mesut Uyar, *Ottoman Strategy and War Aims during the First World War*, in Holger Afflerbach (Ed.), *The Purpose of the First World War: War Aims and Strategies*, Oldenbourg, De Gruyter, 2015, p. 165-166; Mehmet Biçici, *Memories of the Ottoman Empires Entry into the First World War*, in "Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences", Vol. 33, 2014, Issue 3, p. 693-722.

³ For detailed information, see Edward J. Erickson, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War*, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 2001, p. 15; Edip Öncü, *The Beginnings of Ottoman-German Partnership: Diplomatic and Military Relations between Germany and the Ottoman Empire Before the First World War*, Master Thesis in History, the Institute of Economics and Social Sciences of Bilkent University, 2003, p. 70-71.

⁴ İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Alman Nüfuzu* [German Influence in the Ottoman Empire], İstanbul, Alkım Publications, 2006, p. 135-145.

Before the First World War, the CUP regime's completely taking over the administration of the Ottoman Empire had marked the beginning of the golden age of the Turkish-German Friendship. Especially Enver Pasha, one of the most prominent figures of the CUP, encouraged entry of both Germany and the Ottoman Empire in the First World War on the same front against the British, French, and Russians.⁵ On the one hand, Enver Pasha believed that he could realize the *Touran Ideology*⁶ with the support of the Germans. On the other hand, Germany thought that, since the Ottomans held the caliphate, it could mobilize the Muslim people against the British and French through the religious leadership of the Muslims.⁷

It cannot be denied that Enver Pasha was one of the biggest factors in the entry of the Turks in the war on the side of the Germans in the First World War. Although Enver Pasha's closeness to the Germans is frequently mentioned in history books, we are aware of the different dimensions of this closeness in some recent scientific studies. For example, the fact that the letters written by German Naval Attaché Humann to Enver Pasha in 1915 were unearthed by Sezen Kılıç shows how much the Ottoman Empire was politically and socially connected to Germany at that time.⁸ Kılıç – pointing to the origin of the friendship between Humann and Enver Pasha – shows the sources of Enver Pasha's trust to the Germans in the person of Humann.

⁵ Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, in Marian Kent (Ed.), *Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, London, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 2005, p. 117-135; Caner Çakı, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndaki Alman Propaganda Kartpostallarında Kullanılan Karikatürlerde Türklerin Sunumunun Göstergibilimsel Açından İncelenmesi* [The Semiotic Study of the Presentation of the Turks in the Caricatures used in German Propaganda Postcards during the First World War], in "Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi" [The Journal of Akdeniz University's Faculty of Communication], 2018, No. 29, p. 77.

⁶ Ziya Gökalp – the father of modern Turkish nationalism, poet and sociologist – states that "To a Turk the homeland is neither Turkey nor Turkistan/ But a Big and Eternal country that is Touran". The first phase is creating a 'nationalist Turkey', the second phase 'Oguzism' (uniting the Turks West of the Caspian Sea) and final objective 'Touranism' (uniting all the Turks under one state). See detailed information about Touran Ideology: Alihan Limoncuoglu, *The Evolution of Turkish Nationalism between 1904 and 1980*, PhD Thesis, University of Exeter, UK, 2015, pp. 54, 61, 71; Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün Esasları* [Components of Turkism], İstanbul, İnkılap Publication, 2009.

⁷ Michael Howard, *The First World War*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003; Çakı, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndaki...*, p. 77.

⁸ Sezen Kılıç, *Alman Deniz Ataşesi Humann'ın Mektuplarında Enver Paşa* [Enver Pasha in the Letters of the German Naval Attaché Humann], in "Bilig", Spring 2016, No. 77, p. 109-130.

According to German historians, Humann is one of the most important representatives of Germany in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War due to his dialogue with many Ottoman statesmen (especially Enver Pasha).⁹ Humann was born in Izmir in 1878 as the son of German archaeologist and engineer Carl Humann (who found the Bergama ruins). He grew up with Enver Pasha in Turkey, where he spent twelve years of his childhood, and their friendship continued constantly via meeting and writing letters. Papen – another close friend of Humann’s – used the phrase ‘milk brotherhood’¹⁰ to explain the degree of closeness of Humann and Enver Pasha. After returning to Germany in 1890 and completing his school education, Humann started his career as an officer in the German Naval Forces. He worked for a while in the intelligence branch of the German Naval Ministry, and, in the autumn of 1913, he was assigned to Istanbul.¹¹ He officially served as Naval Attaché from 1915 until he was summoned to Germany in 1917. Sezen Kılıç emphasizes that the event of hoisting the Turkish flag on the German ships *Goeben* and *Breslau*, which led the Turks to enter the First World War, was said by some German historians to be Humann’s masterful plan. While it is observed in Humann’s letters that he felt a great sincerity and friendship starting from his address to Enver Pasha, we also understand how much he guided Enver Pasha politically with his harsh and commanding style from time to time.

On the one hand, the unity of Germany with the Turks enabled the Turks to benefit from Germany’s advanced technologies, war propaganda techniques, and all kinds of military experience during the First World War. On the other hand, despite the success of the Turkish soldiers on the battlefield, when the whole of the war is considered, the martyrdom of the soldiers on many distant and close fronts and the acceptance of being defeated together with the Germans have been

⁹ Mustafa Çolak, *Enver Paşa; Osmanlı-Alman İttifakı* [Enver Pasha; Ottoman-German Alliance], İstanbul, Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2008; Şükrü Hanioglu, *Kendi Mektuplarında Enver Paşa* [Enver Pasha in His Own Letters], İstanbul, Der Yayınları, 1989.

¹⁰ Sources emphasize that Enver Pasha admired the Germans due to the atmosphere in the military school and that his admiration was reinforced after his appointment as attaché to Berlin in 1909. The main sources and Enver Pasha’s memoirs do not mention his friendship with Humann. Based on German archival sources (Archiv der Marine, Kriegsakten 1-105 (60876) Enver Pascha: 1-27), Sezen Kılıç mentions the childhood acquaintance between Enver Pasha and Humann and their correspondence. This information about Enver Pasha is the first data that has emerged for the first time in Turkish history and has the power to reshape our perspective.

¹¹ Kılıç, *Alman Deniz Ataşesi Humann’ın...*, p. 111.

painful in terms of Turkish history.

WAR, PROPAGANDA, AND LITERATURE

Propaganda was used actively by Alliance Power and Central Powers during the First World War. Several books have been published by some authors (George Creel¹² in the United States, Sir Campbell Stuart¹³ in England, Nicolai in Germany, Waitz and Tonnelet in France) who held responsible propaganda positions during the War.¹⁴ Literature review shows that the number of studies on German propaganda efforts is very limited during the First World War. Fondren explains this on account of its “being written off as either negligible or too ham-fisted to be worth studying.”¹⁵ The term propaganda is explained as “the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols”,¹⁶ “the war of ideas on ideas”,¹⁷ “a kind of advertising – or vice versa”¹⁸. War propaganda is defined as “demoralisation of the enemy”¹⁹. The First World War brought forth propaganda wars as well as the front wars of between Germany and England with its allies.

The propaganda activities of the British against the Turkish soldiers in a concrete way can be seen especially during the Çanakkale War (Dardanelles, Gallipoli Campaign).²⁰ For example, short and striking brochures explaining that

¹² George Creel, *How We Advertised America*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1920.

¹³ Sir Campbell Stuart, *Secrets of Crewe House; The Story of a Famous Campaign*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1920.

¹⁴ Harold D. Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, New York, Peter Smith, 1938, p. 1.

¹⁵ Elisabeth Fondren, *Fighting an Armed Doctrine: The Struggle to Modernize German Propaganda during World War I (1914–1918)*, in “Journalism & Communication Monographs”, 2021, Vol. 23, No. 4, p. 257.

¹⁶ Harold D. Lasswell, *The Theory of Political Propaganda*, in “The American Political Science Review”, Vol. 21, 1927, No. 3, p. 627.

¹⁷ Idem, *Propaganda Technique...*, p. 12.

¹⁸ Fiona Reynoldson, *The Home Front Propaganda*, England, Wayland, 1991, p. 4.

¹⁹ Edward L. Bernays, *The Marketing of National Policies: A Study of War Propaganda*, “Journal of Marketing”, Vol. 6, 1942, No. 3, p. 237.

²⁰ The British benefited from well-known writers, scientists, intelligence personnel, and politicians, as well as expert journalists in their propaganda units. Wellington House, which has a great infrastructure and painting, photography, and cinema departments, carried out propaganda activities by publishing various books, brochures and newspapers. For more information, see: Servet Avcı, *Birinci Dünya Savaşında İngiliz Propagandası* [British Propaganda in the First World War], Ankara, Kim Yayınları, 2004.

the Union and Progress, deceived by the Germans, had brought the Ottoman Empire into the war, that the general situation of the Ottoman country was getting worse day by day, the mistake of the Holy Jihad, and the desire of the Germans to own the Turkish homeland, were thrown to the fronts by the British from airplanes and balloons at regular intervals.²¹ Despite all the negativities, the Turks did not stay idle and made similar counter-propaganda at the front to the extent of the possibilities at hand. War propaganda based on literature constitutes the primary issue in this study.

“It can be said that the short history of the state’s realization of the need for propaganda literature does not date back to the Balkan War, and that it learned to use it as a support force, coinciding with the years of the First World War. There is no doubt that such an activity was initiated by the personal efforts of the Enver Pasha – Minister of War... Enver Pasha, who became acquainted with propaganda literature while he was still in Berlin as a major and an attaché, received the information he needed by visiting the Military Propaganda Office in Berlin during his trip to Germany in 1915. On his return, he initiated propaganda literature in the Ottoman Empire, especially with the encouragement of the ambassador Wamgenheim, the Naval Attaché Humann, and Liman von Sanders Pasha. Acting on the principle of ‘a book in every backpack’, the publication of works that the soldiers would read and gain morale on the front began later than Enver Pasha took his decision from force to action”.²²

It can be said that the Ottoman Empire tried to use the war propaganda techniques that it learned under the guidance of the Germans during the First World War as much as possible. “War Magazine” (Turk Harb Mecmuası), which started to be published by the Ministry of War in 1915 at the beginning of the war, created an important psychological effect with its photographs of the front and soldiers on quality paper. As mentioned above, the books ordered by the Ministry

Ömer Çakır, *Türk Şiirinde Çanakkale Muharebeleri* [Battles of Çanakkale in Turkish Poetry], Ankara, Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayınları, 2004, pp. 38-95; Nesime Ceyhan Akça, *Gallipoli Campaign in the Poems of British-Australian Soldier/Poet Geoffrey Wall*, in “RumeliDe Journal of Language and Literature Studies”, 2023, No. 33, p. 444.

²¹ Hamit Pehlivanlı, *Çanakkale Muharebeleri Sırasında Müttefiklerin Propagandası ve Karşı Propaganda* [Allied Propaganda and Counter-Propaganda during Çanakkale Battles], in “Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi”, Vol. 7, 1991, No. 21, pp. 535-552.

²² Metin Kayahan Özgül, *Harp Edebiyatına Harbî Bir Bakış* [The Looking Straight Ahead to War Literature], in Ömer Çakır (Ed.), *Türk Harp Edebiyatı Konulu 1. Uluslararası Türkiyat Sempozyumu Bildiri Kitabı* [Proceeding Book of 1st International Turkic Symposium on Turkish War Literature], Ankara, Berikan, 2014, p. 10.

of War were to give morale to the soldiers. Taking artists to the Çanakkale Front (Gallipoli Campaign) for observation is also a propaganda activity that should not be forgotten.²³ At the beginning of the war, it is seen that especially Turkish writers fully supported the war in the press. In the first two years of the war, it can be said that the literary works about the war were included in the newspapers and magazines, even if not intensely. However, the worsening of the conditions in 1918-1919 affected literary production in a negative way. The impact of heavy censorship in the press is undeniable in this.²⁴

The works of many literary figures, especially Mehmed Emin and Ziya Gökalp, were printed in thousands of copies and distributed to the army free of charge. Their costs were funded by the budget of the Ministry of War. After a while, it is seen that especially poetry books were added to the war texts due to their short, effective, and memorable features. The first work on this path will be a poem by Yusuf Ziya (Ortaç), entitled *Akından Akına* [From the Raid to the Flood], and many works will be published later. It can be said that the real rise and spread of the national literature movement took place after this date; in other words, national literature developed under the wings of Enver Pasha.²⁵

The Germans – allies of the Ottoman Empire – opened war literature and painting exhibitions in Istanbul, Konya, Aleppo, and Baghdad, and tried to raise awareness of the course of the war by establishing information offices.²⁶ War painting exhibitions were also organised in Vienna and Berlin, and Turkish painters participated in these exhibitions with their works.²⁷

Cartoons in the First World War, where propaganda was used more intensely than ever before, became a propaganda weapon by which the enemy countries satirized each other,²⁸ as well as a tool that made the parties accept their

²³ Nesime Ceyhan Akça, *Osmanlı'nın Cihan Harbi'nin Hikâyesi* [The Ottoman Empire's War's "Story"], in "TYB Akademi", Vol. 4, 2014, No. 11, p. 92-93.

²⁴ Nesime Ceyhan, *II. Meşrûtiyet Dönemi Türk Hikâyesi (1908-1918)* [The Turkish Story of the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1918)], İstanbul, Selis Publications, 2009.

²⁵ Özgül, *Harp Edebiyatına Harbî Bir Bakış*, p. 11.

²⁶ Erol Köroğlu, *Türk Edebiyatı ve Birinci Dünya Savaşı (1914-1918): Propagandanan Millî Kimlik İnşasına* [Turkish Literature and the First World War (1914-1918): From Propaganda to the Construction of National Identity], İstanbul, İletişim Publications, 2004, p. 47.

²⁷ Mustafa Selçuk, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sürecinde Harbiye Nezareti'nin 'Çanakkale Kahramanlığını Yaşatma' Amaçlı Faaliyetleri* [The Activities of Ministry of War for Cherishing and Heroism of Gallipoli during the First World War], in "Avrasya İncelemeleri Dergisi", Vol. 1, 2012, No. 2, p. 229-234.

²⁸ Caner Çakı, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndaki Alman...*, p. 80.

allies and make the events seem reasonable. Caner Çakı has interpreted the Turkish image on the postcards printed in Germany during World War I in his article. He concluded that while trying to establish Turkish-German friendship in the drawings on the postcards, the perception that the Turks served the Germans was also prepared. It is understood from the drawings that Turks were very eager to enter the alliance. They were drawn as small and weak compared to the Germans and Hungarians to show them in need of protection, but they are strong and fearless people who promise victory in wars.²⁹

The German press, which did not hesitate to commemorate the outstanding success of the Turkish soldiers, which they supported in all aspects (military consulting and ammunition delivery), especially in the Battle of Çanakkale, was also criticized for the danger that they could pamper the Turks and that the Turks could only claim this victory for themselves.³⁰ While the war was going on, "Illustrierten Zeitung" published a special issue (No. 3803, 16 May 1916). It is important in terms of the propaganda of the Turkish-German alliance towards the German people.

After the announcement of the alliance with the Germans, the Turks resorted to propaganda activities to legitimize this alliance in the eyes of the people. "The activities of imposing German admiration, initiated through the civil and military press, were conveyed to the public with very interesting headlines in the newspaper columns."³¹ Upon the Ottoman Empire's participation in the First World War by making an alliance with Germany, the former was subjected to intense criticism both inside and outside the country and, for this reason, the Ottoman Empire began to carry out a praising propaganda activity concerning the Germans in the press. The article titled *If Only Our Enemies Were Germans* by Mahmut Muin in the "Navy Magazine" (*Harb Mecmuası* in Turkish) is one of the typical articles containing German propaganda that appeared in the Ottoman press at the time. While the newspapers praised German industry, army, and technology, their treatment of the people on the battlefields became part of the propaganda. The war ethic of the German soldier was praised by saying that the German soldier who occupied Paris did not even touch or mistreat prostitutes³².

This shows that their activities are carried out very consciously. A similar

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

³⁰ Necmettin Alkan, *Alman Kaynaklarına Göre Çanakkale Savaşı ve Zaferi* [Çanakkale War and Victory According to German Sources], in "Belleten", Vol. 80, 2016, No. 289, p. 911-912.

³¹ Mehmet Ali Karaman, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Osmanlı-Alman İttifakını Meşrulaştırma Çabaları* [Ottoman Efforts to Legitimize German Alliance within World War I], in "Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi", Vol. I, 2014, No. 1, p. 57.

³² Karaman, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Osmanlı-Alman...*, p. 54.

attitude is observed in the only humour magazine, named “Karagöz”,³³ that was published during the war. In “Karagöz”, “the negativities of the war were not shared with the reader and the Germans, with whom we were allies, were always portrayed as strong, mighty, and dominating everything. In those days, the majority of the media were heavily broadcasting in favour of Germany. Talat Pasha mentions that in the first two years of the war, neither the administration nor the people believed that the Germans would be defeated in the war. (...) In «Karagöz»’s cartoon dated August 17, 1914, the German Emperor Wilhelm I was portrayed as a wrestler, who took the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Franz Jozeph on his shoulders, and lifted the French President Raymond Poincaré and Russian Tsar Nicholas II with his hands.”³⁴

It is noteworthy that Germany intended to present its desire to provide more convincing information about the ongoing war to its citizens through cinema and that it appointed one of its intelligence officers, Ulrich, with the permission of Turkey, to take images from the Turkish fronts. In the meantime, Enver Pasha’s decision to open a Central Army Cinema Department (SOND) within the Ottoman army with its function in the German army, with the effect of his testimonies during his trip to Germany, and the appointment of Hungarian citizen Sigmund Weinberg as the head of the unit and Fuat Uzkınay, one of the first filmmakers,³⁵

³³ Karagöz is the most striking example of the shadow plays in the traditional Turkish performing arts. The comical shows shaped around the dialogues of two heroes named ‘Karagöz’ and ‘Hacivat’ based on misunderstandings are watched with interest to this day. “Karagöz” Humour Magazine, which began its publication life with the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy in 1908, continued to be published after the Republic, albeit with interruptions. “Karagöz” Humour Magazine closely followed the war, especially during the First World War and the Turkish War of Independence, and gave morale to the Turkish people through its cartoons and articles. For detailed information, see Fevzi Çakmak, *Karagöz Mizah Dergisi Sütunlarında Birinci Dünya Savaşı* [First World War in the Columns of Karagöz Humour Magazine], in Mustafa Daş et al. (Ed.), 2. *Uluslararası Tarih Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı-100. Yılında Birinci Dünya Savaşı* [Proceeding of 2nd International History Symposium on First World War Centenary], 16-18 October 2014, İzmir, 2015, pp. 361-381; Fevzi Çakmak, *Aydede ve Karagöz Mizah Dergilerinde Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı* [Turkish War of Independence in Aydede and Karagöz Humor Magazines], *Büyük Taarruzun 90. Yılında Millî Mücadele ve Zafer Yolu Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı* [Proceedings of the International Symposium on the National Struggle and the Path to the Victory on the 90th Anniversary of the Great Assault (2-4 October 2012)], Vol. 2, Ankara, Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayını, 2014, pp. 1113-1142.

³⁴ Çakmak, *Karagöz Mizah Dergisi Sütunlarında Birinci Dünya Savaşı ...*, p. 364-365.

³⁵ Selçuk, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sürecinde...*, p. 225-226.

as his assistant is one of the important indicators of our joint action with our allies.

As seen, both Germany and the Ottoman Empire tried to consolidate their unity and power in the war in the eyes of the people via propaganda in similar ways.

AKA GÜNDÜZ AND WAR PROPAGANDA

Aka Gündüz (his real name is Enis Avni), one of the most important writers of the National Literature period,³⁶ who is mentioned together with Ömer Seyfeddin, has recorded the loss of land of the Ottoman Empire moment by moment in his stories, poems, and plays since 1911. Apart from the Tripoli War, the Balkan Wars and the First World War, the days of the National Struggle were also immortalized in the stories of Aka Gündüz and his poems (although little known). Aka Gündüz showed how responsible he was as a writer during the war period in his books titled *Türk Kalbi* (*Hearth of Turk*, 1911, story), *Türk'ün Kitabı* (*Book of Turk*, 1913, story), *Bozgun* (*Defeat*, 1918, poetry), *Muhterem Katil* (*Reverend Killer*, 1914, stage play) written with the thought of Turanism, *Yarım Türkler* (*Half Turks*, 1919, stage play), *Asker İçin Seçilmiş Yazılar* (*Selected Essays for the Soldier*, ?), *İki Süngü Arasında* (*Between Two Bayonets*, 1929, long story). The topics that, in his writings, Aka Gündüz shared with his nation on the pages of newspapers and magazines without losing hope include the families waiting for the soldiers behind the front, the Turkish friendship or enmity in the broken lands of the Ottoman Empire, as well as scenes of war.

³⁶ National Literature is the term representing the period between 1911 and 1923 in the history of Turkish Literature. It is a fact that nationalism was supported by state policies under the Committee of Union and Progress after the declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy in 1908. The manifesto written by Ömer Seyfeddin in the magazine "Genç Kalemler" [Young Pens] in 1911 is considered as the beginning of National Literature. This date also marks as the beginning of the Ottoman Empire's entry in the period of hot wars. The Tripoli War (1911), the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), the First World War (1914-1918) and the National Struggle / War of Independence (1919-1922) were the years in which the Turks' life-and-death struggle took place. It is natural that the literature that emerged during these years, when unity was needed as a nation, adopted a nationalist discourse. For detailed information about National Literature period, see: Nesime Ceyhan, *Millî Edebiyat Devrinde Hikâye ve Roman (1911-1923)* [Story and Novel in the National Literature Period (1911-1923)], in Metin Kayahan Özgül (Ed.), *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihine Bir Bakış: Yeni Türk Edebiyatı* [An Overview of the History of Turkish Literature: New Turkish Literature], Ankara, Kurgan Edebiyat Publications, 1913, pp. 333-366; Orhan Okay, *Millî Edebiyat Akımı* [National Literature Movement], in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 30, TDV Publications, p. 72-74.

The fact that Aka Gündüz used a pen name in many of his articles published in newspapers and magazines is the main reason why many of his works have not yet been revealed. Aka Gündüz, who published his articles in various magazines and newspapers since the age of sixteen, worked for many years as founder, editor-in-chief or responsible in the magazines named “Kadın” (1908), “Karagöz” (1908–1918, humour magazine), and “Alay” (1920, humour magazine).³⁷ “Aka Gündüz, who has an organic relationship with the CUP, joined the New Language Movement advocating the simplification in language and literature for the construction of national identity, after the Woman magazine. (...) He adopted Turkism as a cultural ideology and defended Turkism in language.”³⁸ “Nationalism, heroism and patriotism are the dominant qualities seen in the poems, plays and novels written by Aka Gündüz during the Second Constitutional Era.”³⁹

Aka Gündüz’s initial closeness to the CUP, his Turanist thoughts and his active writing life in a magazine such as “Karagöz”, which was actively used in war propaganda, especially during the First World War, provides an understanding of the background of the text that is the subject of this article. The short information at the beginning of the text informs that the Germans asked Aka Gündüz to write a text describing the feelings of Turks towards their German allies and that Aka Gündüz sent this text to them.

AN UNKNOWN TEXT BY AKA GÜNDÜZ: “O YOUNG GERMAN”

This text, which we did not come across in Turkish sources, was published in the newspaper “Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt” on 1 January 1915. This text, which the Germans demanded to show the strength of Turkish–German friendship, was written by Aka Gündüz and sent to the newspaper. The text was published in the newspaper in Ottoman alphabet (in Aka Gündüz’s handwriting)

³⁷ For detailed information about Aka Gündüz’s life, pen-names and works, see: Abide Doğan, *Aka Gündüz*, Ankara, Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1989, pp. 18-110; Sema Uğurcan, *Aka Gündüz*, in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 2, İstanbul, TDV Publications, 1989, p. 208-209; Metin Oktay, *Aka Gündüz’ün Hayatı, Sanatı ve Eserleri* [Aka Gündüz’s Life, Art and Works], PhD Thesis, Selçuk University Institute of Social Sciences, Konya, 2008.

³⁸ Yaşar Zorlu, *Mütareke İstanbul’unda Mizah Gazetesi ‘Alay’ ve Politik Tavrı* [The Humor Newspaper *Alay* During the Armistice Process in Istanbul and Its Political Attitude], in “*E-Journal of New World Sciences Academy*”, Vol. 10, 2015, No. 1, p. 20.

³⁹ Ahmet Demir, *Aka Gündüz’ün Bozgun Adlı Şiir Kitabında Milli Romantik Duyuş Tarzı ve ‘Türk’ İmgesi* [National Romanticism and ‘Turkish’ Image in the Poetry Book Titled *Bozgun* Written by Aka Gündüz], *SOBİDER*, V, 2018, No. 26, p. 58.

and German (translated by Dr. Fr. Schrader).

The English translation of the text from Ottoman alphabet is as follows (See: Figures 1 and 2):

"O Young German

I feel the beating beats of your heart with an unquenchable fervour in my own heart; Does excitement and love caress your heart? Which captive, which angel sends and binds the same blow that strikes these two hearts at once?

I know the power that dominates your vast soul that even this endless universe cannot fill: the love of victory.

I have this love in my broad soul, which has been crying for years, happy and dejected. We, you and me, two lovers; let's run to the east, west, to the snowy mountains, to the climates where the rivers cascade to find our beloved! This road that you opened with your sword leads to the land of truth, I am with you, come! Let's not return without conquering this land.

It's not blood that comes out of the enemy's chest that you pierced with your bullet. It is the tears of humanity that have been waiting for salvation from us for centuries; Come! Let's not cut our fire until we dry it with the fire in our hearts and comfort it!

You are brave. You are the hero, you are the saint and the human being. So you are German. O young German who mingled with my soul with all its nature! Know that I am Turkish and I am young too. Let's shake our sword-wielding, rifle-firing hands. May the divine power in them also know each other. You, me and my brother Hungarian are quite sure that the universe will make this world a man.

Sounds from the horizon are not gunshots; history laughs. It laughs with joy as it sees real humanity and real civilization emerging.

O, young silk-haired friend! Let the flowers of (Hyde Park) fall on him when the hand of the angels of victory raises his proud head. I too would like to sing your epic as we pass through the snow-covered Caucasian groves.

O young German with golden spurs, who makes the ruins he treads rosy! When the sun-covered cloud horse of the nymph of splendour and glory sets its proud foot upon its shores, let the (Volga) stand in reverence to give you way, and let it not flow. I would like to tell your story to the slowly flowing (Nile) under the palm leaves illuminated by the crescent that night.

Give me your hand, young brother! Let's go ahead! Forward until there are no more savagery, grudges, and enemies in the world!

Aka Gündüz

1 January 1915

It is obvious that the text was written in the style of prose poetry. Considering that the Ottoman Empire officially entered the First World War on 11 November 1914, the date of 1 January 1915 shows the first months of the alliance between the Germans and the Ottoman Empire. On this date, the Çanakkale (Gallipoli, Dardanelles) Front was not opened yet (19 February 1915). Mutual trust and friendship should be felt to the peoples of both sides. As mentioned above, in the first two years of the war, there was not the slightest hesitation in the Ottoman Empire that the Germans would emerge from the war in defeat. At the same time, the German people should be persuaded about the Turks.

Aka Gündüz wrote this text, most likely, upon a request made by German officials of Turkish officials. Rather than contacting Aka Gündüz directly with the German newspaper, it seems the most logical way to reach him with the request of the newspaper's propaganda unit from the Turkish state because it is impossible for Aka Gündüz to be known as a poet in Germany at that time. In fact, Aka Gündüz was known more as a writer in Istanbul at that time, not as a poet. It has been mentioned above that Enver Pasha was aware of war propaganda techniques as a major while he was in Berlin as an attaché, and that he visited the Military Propaganda Office in Berlin during his trip to Germany in 1915. It is certain that this text by Aka Gündüz is also a part of the joint propaganda activity of the Turkish and German units.⁴⁰

The stylistic similarity of the lines written by Aka Gündüz in the last paragraph of the prose text called *Open Letter to the Army* [*Orduya Açık Mektup* in Turkish] in his book, *Selected Articles for the Soldier* [*Asker İçin Seçilmiş Yazılar* in Turkish], with the Ottoman text published in Germany, vocabulary, addresses, emphatic expressions, imperative expressions, exclamations show that there should be no doubt that the text that forms the basis of our article was written by Aka Gündüz: "Don't come before you turn the enemy, turn off his light! You are young, you are brave, you are noble! Army! The road you take leads to Sofia. Won't you send me a message with the morning stars when you get there and read the Morning Prayer! Oh, send it and in an irreparable moment, let's do it together for a while..."

⁴⁰ Although it does not have as strong an organization as the British, The Ottoman Empire carried out war propaganda activities with guidance and support from the Germans. For example, the publication of the "War Journal" [*Harp Mecmuası* in Turkish] in 1915, the preparation of a book by the Ministry of War (Harbiye Nezareti), the taking of a delegation of poets, writers, and artists to the Çanakkale Front for the intention of sightseeing and observation. For more information, see: Ceyhan Akça, *Osmanlı Cihan Harbinin Hikayesi...*, p. 93.

Braves... Behind you, a nation consisting of orphans, women and innocents remained. *You are young, you are brave, you are noble!* Army! Do not leave the orphans to the square, the women to the enemy, and the innocent to disappointment. Right now, peace be upon you, may your path be clear. *Let the fire spread always to your right and left;* don't bend your arm from anything. Peace be upon you, may your path be clear."⁴¹

The text is handwritten and signed by Aka Gündüz. Although the name of the poet is written as "Ata Gündüz" at the beginning of the text, when the signature is compared with the signatures in other texts of Aka Gündüz, it is clear that it belongs to him. The text was translated from Ottoman Alphabet to German by Dr. Fr. Schrader. It is understood that Schrader misread the K(af) (ك in Ottoman Alphabet) in the Aka expression as T(e) (ت in Ottoman Alphabet) in the signature due to the handwriting. Moreover, before and after these years, there was no Turkish writer named Ata Gündüz. The person in question is Aka Gündüz (Enis Avni), a famous writer-poet who produced many war literature works at that time and before.

The difficulty in the introduction of this prose praise text written by Aka Gündüz for the German soldier is an important sign that it was written at the request of the other party. In the text created with idyllic landscapes and an emotional atmosphere, the sentences such as "*You are kind and humane... Because you are a German...*", "*As long as you and my Hungarian brother live, we will make this world strong, and whip into shape.*", "*Extend your hand my young friend...! Let's move on to war. Come on, so that there will be no savagery, no hatred, no enmity in the world.*" reveal the propaganda purpose of the text. It gains fluency after the first few paragraphs.

CONCLUSIONS

It is seen that Dr. Fr. Schrader, who translated the text into German, did it quite freely, and re-created a poetic text by interpreting the places he could not read in his mind. The most obvious mistake is to read 'Hyde Park' as 'Hyderabad'. Aka Gündüz wishes the flowers of Hyde Park to be poured on the German soldier when victory is achieved. Meanwhile, he will tell their epic in the Caucasian groves. These spatial references indicate that at the end of the joint victory, one of the two allies will be the dominant element in the West (England) and the other

⁴¹ Aka Gündüz, *Asker İçin Seçilmiş Yazılar* [Selected Articles for the Soldier], İstanbul, Matbaai Askeriye, 1914, p. 98-99.

in the East (Russia). A similar intention is felt in the dream of the Volga River stopping its flow to give way to the German soldiers, and the author's telling of these heroic deeds to the Nile River. North to the Germans; the south is given to the Turks.

When we examine Aka Gündüz's book of poetry titled *Bozgun* [*Debacle* in English], published in 1918, leaving aside the poems about the Balkan War, it is seen that in his poems about the First World War, he sometimes mentions the British and French in a negative way and does not say any bad word about the Germans. Aka Gündüz, who mainly wrote poems about the Caucasian front in this book, tells a young Polish girl in his poem titled *Vistol Kızı* [*Vistula Girl*]⁴² not to be afraid and sad anymore because the Turkish soldiers have come to save them from their enemies. Here, too, not a word is used about our alliance with the Germans. In one of his poems, he invites the people of 'Iraq' and in another poem the people of 'Iran' to fight together with the Turks. But mainly anger towards the Russians and pity for the Caucasian people and their front and shame for not being able to meet them are felt. We can say that this text, which is different from the general atmosphere of Gündüz's poems, was written as a bespoke result, probably as part of a task, and that he did not need it to be published in Turkish. However, we think that this text is important both for the historiography of war, war propaganda studies, and for the identification of an unknown text in terms of the history of Turkish literature.

⁴² Aka Gündüz, *Bozgun* (written in *Ottoman Alphabet*), İstanbul, Dersaadet-Kanat Matbaası, 1918, p. 104-105.



Figure 1: The front page of the Newspaper "Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt", 1 January 1915, Germany.



Figure 2: The Text used in the study (*O Junger Deutscher!*).
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