



Universiteit  
Leiden  
The Netherlands

## Western ideas percolating into Ottoman minds

Meral, A.

### Citation

Meral, A. (2010, June 1). *Western ideas percolating into Ottoman minds*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/15571>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/15571>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

**Stellingen** behorende bij het proefschrift van A. Meral, *Western Ideas Percolating into Ottoman Minds: A Survey of Translation Activity and the Famous Case of Télémaque*:

1. Without a comprehensive bibliography of translations from Western languages into Arabic and Turkish during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the historiography of Ottoman modernization will remain incomplete.
2. Parallel with translations from Western languages, the Turkish translations of Arabic and Persian religious works need to be studied in order to understand the binary character of modern Turkish thought which evolved along both Islamic and secular Western trajectories.
3. Nothing illustrates better the transformation of the Turkish language and Turkish thought as much as the shift in the meaning of “*ilim*” as reflected in the famous statement of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk: “*Hayatta en hakiki mürşid ilimdir* (The truest guide in life is science).” Here the term *ilim* does no longer denote “knowledge” as it is connoted in traditional texts, but refers exclusively to “modern sciences” introduced through translations from European languages from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.
4. It was, to a great extent, the efforts of 19<sup>th</sup>-century translators both in Egypt and Turkey that laid the groundwork for the political ideas of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
5. A survey of the Ottoman periodicals testifies to the fact that the new intelligentsia were not only champions of European political ideas, but also of a modernized Islam.
6. Although we have witnessed a change here during the last decades, the Ottoman intellectual legacy has been, whether consciously or not, neglected for a long time by scholars of Islamic intellectual history. Neglecting the Ottoman period is the most crippling impediment to understanding the history of both classical and modern Islamic thought.
7. Tawfîq al-Ḥakîm’s *Awdat al-Rûḥ* (Return of the Spirit, 1933) is a typical product of the Egyptian cultural movement that from the beginning of the twentieth century attempted to create a national literature instrumental in bringing about political awareness and transformation.
8. Except a few studies, most scholars writing on Egyptian history ignore the Istanbul-centered Ottoman character of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Egypt, which continued to the end of the Empire.
9. It would be wrong to assume that untranslated European texts had no influence on late Ottoman culture. Many Ottoman intellectual/bureaucrats had read the works of the French Enlightenment thinkers in the original language long before they were translated.
10. The translation of a neglected source, namely Arabic and Turkish autobiographical texts, could challenge the stereotyped images of Arab/Turkish/Ottoman culture in Europe.
11. Each journey enriches one’s inner world and inspires to him/her to share the experience with others. Retelling the events of a journey is an endeavor similar to that of the act of translation.