

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF “LITERARY LIFE”
IN İSTANBUL



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DECEMBER, 2019

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF “LITERARY LIFE”
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BY
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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY
IN
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

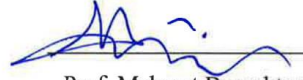
YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY
DECEMBER, 2019

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23.12.2019

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ABSTRACT

The literature of a society is one of the important indicators reflecting the people, values, hopes, life, past and present of this society, and its projections about tomorrow. Those who make up the world of literature are authors and readers; as well as publishing houses, editorial and technical teams in the publishing house, printing houses, bookstores, distribution companies, mass media. The function of each is unique and one cannot replace the other. Together they form a “literary world” which provides the most intimate knowledge of society.

This research as well, in addition to looking at how authors and literary figures relate to each other, where they come together especially in 2000s; examines the author-publishing house, author – reader, author – media relations within the framework of changing and developing communication technologies. Since it is necessary to look at the past in order to understand the present, Tanzimat period author–publisher–reader–press / publicity relations have been handled within the scope of the thesis study, thus the changes and developments in the literary world have been conveyed.

Within the scope of the field study conducted using direct observation, participant observation and in-depth interview technique, a wide panorama of the world of literature has been provided from the 1980s to the present through interviews with twenty-two people between 11 March 2017 and 16 October 2018. These twenty-two people are the authors and literary figures who have contributed to the literature world for many years and have witnessed the important events of their time, as well as young authors and literary figures whose works have been published from leading publishers of the literary world and have received various literary awards that have retained their importance from past to present.

In the thesis, the concepts of “network society”, public space”, “global village” and communication theories are utilized to understand the changing and newly forming relationships in the world of literature from past to present.

Key words: Literary world, centers of literature, Istanbul as cultural center, writers, literary figures



ÖZET

Bir toplumun edebiyatı o toplumun insanlarını, değerlerini, umutlarını, yaşayışını, geçmişini ve bugününü, yarına dair projeksiyonlarını yansıtan önemli göstergelerden biridir. Edebiyatı oluşturanlar yazarlar ve okurlardır; yanı sıra yayınevleri, yayınevindeki editoryal ve teknik ekipler, matbaalar, kitabevleri, dağıtım firmaları, medyadır. Her birinin işlevi biriciktir ve biri diğerinin yerini alamaz. Hep birlikte bir “edebiyat dünyası” oluştururlar ve söz konusu bu dünya topluma dair en içten bilgiyi sağlar.

Bu araştırma da özellikle 2000’li yıllarda edebiyat dünyasında yazarların, edebiyatçıların birbirleriyle nasıl ilişki kurduklarına, nerelerde bir araya geldiklerine bakmasının yanı sıra yazar–yayınevi, yazar–okur, yazar–medya ilişkilerini değişen, gelişen iletişim teknolojileri çerçevesinde incelemektedir. Tez çalışması kapsamında bugünü anlamak için geçmişe bakmak gerekli olduğundan Tanzimat dönemi yazar–yayınevi–okur–basın/tanıtım ilişkileri ele alınmış, böylelikle edebiyat dünyasındaki değişimler, gelişmeler de aktarılmıştır.

Doğrudan gözlem, katılımcı gözlem ve derinlemesine görüşme tekniği kullanılarak gerçekleştirilen alan çalışması kapsamında, 11 Mart 2017 ve 16 Ekim 2018 tarihleri arasında edebiyat dünyasına uzun yıllar katkıda bulunmuş, aynı zamanda kendi dönemlerinin önemli olaylarına tanıklık etmiş olan yazar ve edebiyatçılarla; edebiyat dünyasının önde gelen, köklü yayınevlerinden eserleri yayımlanan ve geçmişten bugüne önemini muhafaza etmiş çeşitli edebiyat ödülleri almış olan genç yazar ve edebiyatçılar olmak üzere yirmi iki kişiyle gerçekleştirilen görüşmelerle 1980’lerden günümüze edebiyat dünyasına dair geniş bir panorama sağlanmıştır.

Tezde “ağ toplumu”, “kamusal alan”, “global köy” kavramlarından ve iletişim kuramlarından yararlanılmış ve geçmişten günümüze, edebiyat dünyasında değişen ve yeni oluşan ilişkileri anlamak amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Edebiyat dünyası, edebiyatın merkezleri, kültür merkezi İstanbul, yazarlar, edebiyatçılar





To my grandparents...

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Subject and Aim of the Research

The French philosopher and political scientist Louis de Bonald stated that “literature is the mirror of the age in which it is written”, while Stendhal referred to the novel, one of the most popular literary forms of our day, as “the mirror accompanying us throughout our journey”. The German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey also focuses on the relationship between literature and culture, remarking that “The work of every great artist emerges from his own internal relationship with the existing culture and conflicting ideas of his era” (Alver, 2006, p. 135).

Leo Löwenthal, commenting on the views of de Bonald, (philosopher and political scientist), on the relationship between literature and culture, reflects that “Even if one were ignorant of the history of a society, one could draw conclusions on the character of its people through its literature; adversely, by studying the history of a particular society, one may conclusively summarise the basic characteristics of the literature that might emerge from it, even without prior knowledge,” (Löwenthal 2017, p. 8). According to Löwenthal, “To examine history through the perspective of literature enables us not only to understand the contemporary world, but also potentially to gain skills with which we can foresee its possible future directions” (Löwenthal 2017, p. 9). Literature reflects not only the social behaviours of the individual but also the process of this socialisation, a notion prompting Löwenthal to refer to the author as both philosopher and expert on the human condition.

The function of literature in society is a topic much studied by philosophers. However, despite multiple formulations of its various perspectives, that literature emerges from a culture and society which it not only reflects but actually shapes remains the basic premise. This clearly points to the dominant role of literary figures in the process; hence the focus of this study on literary figures within the greater context of the world of literature.

When considering the notion of a literary world, one thinks first of the author as its central figure, since without authors neither reader nor publisher would exist. Without a publisher, executive editors, editors, translators, illustrators, graphic designers, depot staff and even distributors and bookshops would become redundant and books would not reach the reader. Literary critics, long considered an integral part of the world of publishing, and their more recent counterparts, book review writers, would also not exist; nor would the critic's other modern counterparts, those bi-products of modern technology, the cyberspace 'influencers', such as bloggers and instagram users. We would intimate here the existence of a literary ecosystem in which all participants, while remaining uniquely individual, are an integral part.

Despite the great number of studies on the subject of literature itself, relatively little attention has been paid to the many institutions controlling the emergence, production and distribution of literature, which are integral to the literary world in a broader context. Similarly, little attention has been paid to change and evolution within that world. This thesis therefore seeks to examine the changing institutions and processes of the literary world of Istanbul through the perspective of the writer, focusing primarily on where and how literature was produced and distributed through past and present in the many cultural centres of the metropolis, in attempt to break new ground in the study of the cultural dynamics of literature in specific urban contexts in Turkey's cultural capital.

This research focused first on developing a historical profile of the Istanbul literary world, particularly examining the places where literature emerged and was disseminated in the past, through various studies and published documentary sources, personal memoirs and such like. For Istanbul's contemporary literary profile, key figures from the current literary world, including prominent writers, poets, authors and critics were the main source, extensive in-depth interviews being carried out with a number of them.

1.2 The Central Question and Scope of the Research

The foundations of Turkey/s contemporary literary world were established during the Reform Period (Tanzimat), in the mid-19 Century. The move towards Westernisation in the Ottoman state prompted the emergence of the first locally-available versions of various forms of Western literature in translation (the earliest translated novel of western origin was Fenelon *Telemak*, which was translated in 1859 by Yusuf Kamil Pasha, published in 1862). This was followed by Victor Hugo’s *Les Miserables*, first published in serialised form in the daily Gazette *Ceride-i Havadis* in 1862. Between 1860-1880, a number of Western classical works were translated into Turkish. When Gül Mete Yuva refers to “the re-orientation (‘eyes turned’) (in literature) towards the West” (Yuva, 2011, p. 14), she is in fact referring to French literature intimating, as Kenan Akyüz points out, that French was the dominant cultural influence of the time, and in his words “ During the Reform Period, Western literature was, in fact, synonymous with French literature” (Akyüz, 2016, 28). However, according to Mustafa Nihat Özön, the majority of translations were “a disorganised collection of low-grade action novels” “written in a language specifically targetting second-class readers” (Özön, 2009, p. 142).

Following the appearance in translation of stories and novels in the true European sense in Reform literature, the first works authored in Turkish began to emerge. These were, according to Cevdet Kudret, “mere imitations and copies”. This type of literature gradually acquired an identity of it’s own, in time evolving into recognisable forms of contemporary literature (Cevdet Kudret, 2009, p. 11). According to many literary historians, among the key works of this transition were: Şemsettin Sami’s *Taaşuk-ı Talat ve Fitnat*, published in 1876, which is widely considered the first Turkish novel in the trully western sense while, according to Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Ahmet Mithat Efendi’s *Kıssadan Hisse* and *Letaif-i Rivayat*, published in 1870, may be regarded as the first examples of the Turkish short story.

However, the publication of western-style dailies and periodicals actually precedes that of novels and stories. The first official daily was the *Takvim-Vakayi* (1831), the first semi-official daily *Ceride-i Havadis* (1840) and the first proprietorial daily *Tercüman-ı Ahval* (1860), which counted Şinasi among its publishers; while the first periodical was the *Mecmua-ı Fünûn*, published by Münif Paşa (1860). Besides contributing significantly to the dissemination of new ideas among the intellegensia, dailies and periodical journals both acted as conduits for new literature and as a medium for the emergence of literary groups, since they were regularly subscribed to by members of the literary community.

Literary specialist Öztürk Emiroğlu stresses that the publication of the *Tercüman-Ahval* was particularly influential in the emergence of a new era in Turkish social, political and cultural life. In Emiroğlu's view, the fact that the publishers of the dailies were, as mentioned above, literary figures themselves, meant that "Modern Turkish literature emerged from the pages of the daily press" (Emiroğlu, 2016, p. 35). already familiar with both translated and original works published in the popular press, the reader first encountered other forms of literature, articles, excerpts and essays via the same source. Emiroğlu claims that exposure to these newly emerging literary forms reflected the conscious editorial policy on the part of the press to inform and educate the reader. Access to the earliest novels would encourage the acquisition of reading habits, columnists informed the reader about cultural, political and current events, while critical texts and essays drew them towards the arena of philosophical and critical literature. Emiroğlu likens this process to a kind of 'readership training' which would encourage the reader to expand their areas of interest and provide the impetus for a greater breadth of ideas and opinion among their readers (Emiroğlu, 2016, p. 35).

The researcher Ahmet Ö. Evin indicated that the earliest Turkish novels were written by "state-employed civil servants, who are members of the new intellegensia and aficionados

of French literature”, stressing that they were an educated elite whose goal was to “expose their readership to new ideas for which literature was the chosen means” (Evin, 2004, pp. 3-4). Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, one of Turkey’s most significant literary figures, also commented specifically on the impact of the popular literary media on the development of language, as well as its importance in introducing the reader to new literary forms:

“The regular / periodical press not only reflects public opinion and employs a popular literary style but also provides a platform for the emergence and dissemination of new ideas. The earliest articles, novels, reviews, critical and experimental pieces of translated and original fiction and theatrical works were initially widely aired via these forms of media. Popular political columns, opinion leader pieces and editorials brought literary and philosophical issues to the fore,” (Tanpınar, 2009, p. 232).

Emiroğlu refers to a further issue of considerable significance for the literary world and various literary groups, which was the introduction of censorship in 1878 during the Abdülhamit II period, with the establishment of the Censorship Council – (Sansür Heyeti). According to the account of journalist and author Server İskit, the scope of this censorship included the prohibition of the use in the press of such vocabulary as: strike, assassination, revolution, anarchy, socialism, dynamite, explosion, chaos, Macedonia, Crete, Cyprus, Yildiz (Palace, seat of government) (İskit, 2000, p. 90), among others. Following this turn of events, “the topics of art and literature initially covered in the daily press” were transferred to journals. From Emiroğlu’s sources, it would appear that during the 1880’s, the number of journals rose as that of dailies declined. The most significant consequence of this being that a number of literary groups began to form around those periodicals, and in time a number of them even adopted the name of the publication with which they were associated.

There were further consequence to increased access to the popular press, dailies and journals for authors and poets. Emiroğlu, quoting Tanpınar’s (*XIX Asır Türk Edebiyatı*

Tarihi), (*IXI Century Turkish Literature*) states that it was this platform that afforded Turkish poets and authors an ease of connection with their readers which would effectively transform the relationship between writer, poet and society.

Several factors, namely, the proliferation of publishers, the arrival of the novel and short story as literary genre in Turkish literature, the event of popular dailies and journals, along with a growing debate on the function of literature all contributed to the emergence of a literary environment; albeit one which was primarily dominated by an elite ‘literati’ of patricians (“paşa” “paşazade”), due to the prohibitive costs of acquiring published material and keeping abreast with current international literary trends. The literary salon was an *au rigueur* addition to many a patrician’s mansion. The first recognisable literary group known to have formed in that era was the *Servet-i Fünûn Topluluğu* (1896), emerging from between the pages of one of the longest running publications in the Turkish media, the *Servet-i Fünûn Dergisi*. This publication established many of the basic media milestones. A number of significant literary figures undertook the role of its Editor-in-Chief, including Tevfik Fikret, Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın and Halit Fahri Ozansoy, besides the owner-founder, A. İhsan Tokgöz.

According to sources quoted by Öztürk Emiroğlu, between the years 1891-1944:- “2464 issues of this journal were published during more than half a century in print, (54 years)”. The same source describes the membership of the literary group it spawned, as an Istanbul-born, well-educated elite, consisting predominantly of the offspring of high class state beaurocrats each member possessing at least one European language. The group was known to espouse a generally a-political stance, avoiding any social comment in their work. Emiroğlu’s source, Rauf Mutluay, characterises the *Servet-i Fünûncu* group as an exclusive collection of “Istanbulites of independent means, who were oblivious to the general state of the nation,” (Emiroğlu, 67: 2016). Following the dissolution of that group, the *Fecri Ati Topluluğu* (1909) emerged, bearing the slogan “art is personal and honorable” and the *Young*

Pens Group – “*Genç Kalemler Grubu* (1911), known for pursuing a rational approach to language, and responsible for penning the term: “National literature”. These overshadowed other, somewhat less-significant groups such as the *Rûbâbcılar*, their successors, the *Nayiler* (1912) and the *Nev-Yunanîler* (1912).

Among the more significant groups to emerge during the First World War and the decades of struggle for national independence were those who became regarded as representative of the literary voice of the era, including the *Hecenin Beş Şairi Topluluğu* (1914), which focused mainly on poetic works, the Poets Society - *Şairler Derneği* (1917), which pledged “nationalism in art and rationalism in language” (Emiroğlu, 97: 2016), and the Dergah Group - *Dergâh Topluluğu* (1921), which emerged from the *Dergâh Dergisi*. These groups were followed by the *Yedi Meşale* Movement (1928), *Garip Hareketi* (1941), *Hisar Topluluğu* (1950), *Mavi Grubu* (1952), and the *İkinci Yeni Hareketi* (1954). They and their counterparts were later superseded by more ideologically and politically-motivated movements.

The literary world of the Republican Period was dominated by bureaucrats. In the 1930’s, in particular, many of a particular group of authors and literary figures enjoyed official patronage, some were assigned key roles in state diplomacy and politics. The writer Mahmut Şevket Esendal, for example, was appointed ambassador to Tehran (1925-30), then member of parliament for Elazığ (1930-32) later becoming ambassador to Kabul (1932) and Moscow (1938) and finally serving as parliamentary member for Bilecik (1941-50). The poet Yahya Kemal Beyatlı became a member of parliament in 1923, later serving as ambassador to Warsaw (1926) and Madrid (1929), followed by the position of parliamentary member for Tekirdağ (1935-42) and Istanbul (1943-46), and finally that of ambassador to Pakistan in 1948. The author Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver also became a member of parliament, serving twice as Minister of Education, in 1920 and 1925. Between the years 1931-44, Tanrıöver

acted as ambassador to Bucharest, entering parliament twice during the elections of 1946 and 1950. The author Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu became member of parliament for Mardin between (1923-31) and Manisa between (1931-34), later becoming ambassador to Tirana (1934), Prague (1936), the Hague (1939) and Berne (1942) in succession. The author Falih Rıfkı Atay became member for Bolu between (1923-27) and Ankara between (1927-50). Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar was elected to parliament between (1942-46), and served as a school inspector for the Ministry of Education.

The literary world of the 1940's not only became more diversified, but acquired an overtly political identity. The generation who lived through the Second World War; Aziz Nesin, Sabahattin Ali, Rıfat Ilgaz, Hasan İzzettin Dinamo, Ömer Faruk Toprak, Samim Kocagöz, Sadri Ertem, Cahit Irgat, A. Kadir and Arif Damar both contributed significantly to the literary scene as authors, and also presented a strong political opposition in the popular and literary press.

In the literary generation of the 1950's we find the foreign-language speaking college graduates such as Onat Kutlar, Ferit Edgü, Demir Özlü, Hilmi Yavuz, Erdal Öz, Nezihe Meriç, Vüs'at O. Bener, Orhan Duru and Leylâ Erbil, but alongside them were also writers emerging from the Village Institutes, namely Fakir Baykurt, Mahmut Makal, Mehmet Başaran, Behzat Ay, Osman Şahin, Emin Özdemir, Adnan Binyazar and Talip Apaydın. The co-existence of these two distinct, mutually-critical groups created a lively atmosphere of literary debate. The short story remained the dominant genre of the time, and in fact the decade between 1950-1960 is referred to as its 'golden era'. A number of innovative writers, focusing primarily on language, began to question the position of the story in its traditional form as a genre. Simultaneously, an innovative concept of poetry began to emerge during that decade. The 1950's were marked as being the years in which the influence of American literature first became evident.

The literary tendency in the 1960's was to reject the wave of the previous decade, taking an ideological shift back towards the political stance of the 1940's. The most popular authors of the decade were Sabahattin Ali, Nazım Hikmet, Aziz Nesin and Rıfat Ilgaz. Globally, the winds of change were beginning to stir as new dailies appeared and publishing houses grew exponentially. By the 1960's, literary material had largely disappeared from the pages of the daily press.

The possible impact of the extremely close German-Turkish relationships on Turkish literature, a long-term relationship first established during the Ottoman period which sustained into the Republican era, may be considered a separate topic. However, it would be fair to say that the contribution of foremost German academics who were refugees in Turkey, particularly during the Second World War, was significant in the fields of education, art and culture. In his article "The Arrival of Academic Refugees in Turkey During the Nazi Period in Germany", Ali Sertpolat describes the process of the emigres' passage to and relocation in Turkey, beginning in the later years of the Ottoman era, and culminating in the proposition of a detailed Universities Reform Plan by the Swiss academic, Albert Malche, Professor of Pedagogy, in 1933. Sertpolat specifically remarks on the sustained impact of exiled German academics in education, both in the late Ottoman period and during the foundation years of the Turkish Republic (Sertpolat, 2015, p. 27). The significance of the role played by this group in the modernisation of what was formerly known as the *Darülfünun* is indisputable, as it laid the foundations for the modern scientific institution which subsequently became Istanbul University,.

According to Hilmi Hacaloğlu, in his article for the journal *Popüler Tarih*, between the years 1933-1945 a total of 139 German and Austrian 'academic refugees' were employed in universities in Istanbul and Ankara as researchers: professors, associate professors, lecturers and assistant lecturers (Hacaloğlu, 2001, p. 77). The same source cites some of the

leading Turkish literary figures who studied under these ‘emigree’ academics, including Macit Gökberk, Azra Erhat, Hıfzı Veldet Velidedeoğlu, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Mina Urgan, Muammer Aksoy and Orhan Cavit Tütengil. During the second half of the twentieth century, from 1961 onwards, the phenomenon of large numbers of workers migrating from Turkey to Germany in response to growing workforce demands in that country at the time was another refugee movement that had significant impact on literary developments, since it led to the emergence of what was dubbed an ‘immigration literature’. On the same theme, a so-called ‘literature of exile’ is referred to in relation to the generation of refugee writers seeking political asylum following the Turkish Coup d’Etat of 12 March, 1972 who then remained in Germany for an extended period.

By the beginning of the 1970’s, novels and stories were no longer being serialised in the popular press, thus severing the connection between authors, the literati and the popular media. During the decade following the coup, we begin to see the emergence of the political novel in Turkish literature. The 1980’s hailed a new generation of authors and literary movements, literary supplements and the replacement of criticism with the literary review.

Just as the typewriter was one of the harbingers of change in literary circles during the 1950’s, the computer claimed just such a role in the 1980’s. Meanwhile, if the 1990’s were marked by expansions in publishing, the Millenium years were notable for diversification in the publishing field and the effective transformation of the literary world into a vast sector spurred on by the potential of mass media tools. Today, publishers, writers and literature review journals own and manage their own marketing outlets via printed media or web-based platforms; websites and social media, which allow swift and direct access to their readers. This ease of access afforded by the mass media has irrevocably transformed the author-publisher relationship. The author, if he so wishes, is now able to publish and distribute his own work, without using a publishing house.

The expansion in publishing begun in the 1990's escalated beyond the Millenium to create the vast current sector. Publishers, distributors and booksellers have changed substantially in response to the sector's growing needs. The amateur initiatives of a group of literary aficionados: writers, publishers and booksellers just forty years ago had exponentially transformed into a globally significant sector by the onset of the Millenium. The aim of this study is to examine this transformation from the authors' persepective and hence to identify the underlying dynamics of today's literary world.

1.3 Theoretical Framework of the Research:

"The world may never have been so free and yet, simultaneously, so interdependent and attached" (from Van Dijk, Mulgan, 2018, p. 12)

"Video, interactive screens, multimedia, internet, cyber-space, hyper-reality – we are surrounded by interactivity. What were once things considered to be quite seperate have now merged. Our sense of dimension, space has disappeared. Gender identity, opposing views, stage and floor, actors, object and subject, and the space between has gone" (Jean Baudrillard, 2005, p. 74)

" Ours is a brand new world of 'relativity'. 'Time' has stopped, ' space' dissolved. We are all living in a global village..... (in which) everything is occuring simultaneously. We have reverted to the auditory mode. We are beginning to rebuild the primitive senses and tribal instincts which mankind lost touch with along with the acquisition of literacy. (McLuhan and Fiore, 1967, p. 63)

As determinents of human connectivity and productivity, the multiple forms of technology utilised by mankind throughout history are among the most significant elements to shape human society. Technological determinism underpins the notion that developments in

productivity within the capitalist system are synonymous with the advance of science and technology, which in turn impacts on society. Gül Batuş believes that we can only fully understand human development, social evolution and diverse cultural developments by examining the innovations in communication. The writer holds that one of the most critical evolutionary moments in the history of communication was the invention of writing in the fourth century BC., followed in significance by the spread of the printing press in the 15. century, and from the mid-nineteenth century onwards the development of such innovative communication tools as the telegraph, radio, cinema, television and computer (Batuş, 2005, p. 265). According to that writer, the fourth stage in the technological revolution was the development of satellite communication.

Marshall McLuhan's insightful statement in the 1960's, that the entire world had become a 'global village' may be regarded as prescient in light of the technological advances of the last thirty years. We are now universally inter-connected through global communication networks. As Jan Van Dijk says, we have become a 'society of networks'. Our very survival is dependent not only on 'roads, electric cables, water pipes, drainage, mail boxes, telephone wires and cable TV' but also on essential electronic networks (Van Dijk, 2018, p. 12). Manuel Castells extrapolates from this trend the concept of the 'network society', according to which such networks are the determinants of a new global order.

As a result of technological innovation, the internet, and all the possibilities it provides have become an essential part of our lives. So much so that we have invented new concepts to demonstrate aspects of our dependence; we may suffer from 'Nomophobia' (No Mobile Phobia), or fear of being without a mobile phone, and 'phomo' or 'fear of missing out', (anxiety about being left out of the loop, being unaware of events}. Van Dijk remarks on the fact that that not only individuals but almost all organisations throughout the developed world have become dependent on mobile and internet networks (Van Dijk, 2018, p. 12), to the

extent that they would fail to function without them. According to Van Dijk, media, social and economic networks are so essential to us that “in any future war, it would be much more effective to disable those types of network than to target mere physical infrastructure”.

Such arguments, Van Dijk claims, may justify the use of the term ‘network era’ for the 21. century. Castells’s concept of a network society outlines how changes to the social order are determined by such developments:

“Networks are the causal feature of the new societal morphology; the processes and outcomes of production, human experience, power and culture are all being significantly transformed by the expanding concept of the network. Since the social economy may be defined itself as a network, the new technological paradigm also provides the necessary economic means to ensure the spread of that network throughout societal structure as a whole, regardless of temporal or spatial parameters. Further, I would claim that the rational behind network-formation implies the existence of a more powerful sociological determinant than mere social advantage, the motif commonly attributed to networks. The power of flow supercedes the flow of power. The means to dominate, or to create change within a society are basically determined by whether or not one is part of a specific network, and shaped by the dynamics of one network set against others. The existence of such dynamics would serve to justify the term ‘societal network’ in just such a society where social morphology dominates social practice (Castells, 2013, p. 621).

Manuel Castells points to the speed of knowledge production, distribution and consumption in a network society; hence the growing importance of rapid access to knowledge. He also reflects on the truism that to possess knowledge is to hold power.

According to Castells, the new world order may be defined as a network society formed as a result of people making connections through the internet, which is the most comprehensive network to be created in contemporary human existence, along with other technological developments. The impact of technological change on the city and urban culture in particular is clearly inevitable. When we look at the contemporary literary world within the scope of this thesis, we may observe how technology has impacted the social relationships of writers and literary figures, as well as its formative role in publisher-reader-media interactions and even literary productivity. To fully understand the transformation in today's literary world, it would seem pertinent to examine the effects of change on developments within the sector, both past and present.

As has been stated above, technology has been a formative element on human lifestyle, affecting both human relationships and society. Walter J. Ong, who refers to writing as a technology, describes in some detail the process of change by which the emergence of script caused the transition from oral to written culture, and the subsequent invention of the printing press allowed literary culture to aspire to such great heights. In his work, *Oral and Written Culture: the Technologising of the Word*, Walter J. Ong not only refers to the written word but in particular to writing based on an alphabetical-script as a form of technology, claiming that, as such, it enhances the power of language, script being 'the link between word and space' and thus, that which transforms forms of thought. Script, Ong indicates, remains tied to the word, while verbal expression continues to exist even without its written counterpart. "Although not every oral language has a written form, script would not exist without the oral word," (Ong, 2003, p. 20).

Ong separates oral culture into two stages: the first, that of primal oral culture, in which "the existence of script and the notion of printing was unknown, and all communication was achieved through the medium of speech" (Ong, 2003, p. 15), and the

secondary stage of oral culture, an ‘age of electronics’ in which “an oral culture has evolved through script and print technology, whose existence is reliant on the language of the telephone, television and radio (Ong, 2003, p. 15). In primary oral societies, both thought and the spoken word were reliant on memory. Speech was in the form of cliched phrases; containing much repetition in order to ensure the survival of knowledge, supported by the use of proverbs and sayings, and accompanied by facial expression and gesture. “Slow, measured speech and frequent repetition served to maintain the attention of both listener and narrator” (Ong, 2003, 56). Secondary oral culture is similar to primal oral culture, in that it involves the collaboration of participants, thus developing a form of community; where the focus is on the moment and, as in primal culture, the use of verbal cliché. However, Ong stresses that secondary oral culture is strikingly different in a number of ways from its precursor, being “more purposeful and conscious”. In the latter context, the participatory group is much larger, and although the art of rhetoric may be employed, it is no longer a spontaneous form of address. For example, a television announcement will be prepared in writing beforehand, and the time, place and target audience all pre-ordained.

“The secondary oral culture both closely resembles the primary culture and yet is quite distinct from it too. Although both script and printing press leave the reader to make meaning of a text in isolation, the primal and secondary oral cultures both create a strong collective consciousness between culture and group. However, the scale of the listener group reached in the secondary oral culture is much broader than that of its primal counterpart – “the global village” to quote McLuhan. Prior to the event of script, humankind resorted to collective consciousness out of necessity. Today, however, we are able to program collective consciousness at will. Each individual is conscious of their obligation towards the collective group. While members of the primal oral culture had little opportunity for introspection, being focused on external

necessities, we, on the other hand, having the opportunity to be sufficiently introspective are able to focus voluntarily on extroversion. Similarly, lacking the analytical thinking approach reinforced by the act of writing, participants of the primal oral culture were inclined to act instinctively, while members of the secondary oral culture have determined, due to analytical thinking, that spontaneity is a desired quality to be attained. So, to be totally spontaneous we plan our movements in finest detail,” (Ong, 2003, p. 161).

Ong, while claiming script to be the one ‘singular’ invention that transformed human consciousness, acknowledged that verbal communication connects people (Ong, 2003, p. 97), reflecting that writing and reading are introspective actions carried out by the individual in isolation from others (Ong, 2003, p. 86). When a public speaker addresses a group of listeners, both listeners and speaker are effectively merged into one. If the text of the speech is distributed to the audience, as they read, its members would become introspective, only returning attention to the speaker and becoming once more an integral part of the interaction when he resumes his speech. Hence, Ong makes the point that script and printing are ‘insulators’.

There is no term of definition for ‘the listener’ that would be a representative equivalent of ‘total readership’. “To say that a particular journal has a readership of two million is an exaggeratedly abstract concept to express the connectedness between readers; we refer to the reader as if they were a collective ‘unit or force’, almost the equivalent to the concept of being ‘members of an audience’. The spoken word, in short, can also connect people on a much greater scale [....]” (Ong, 2003, p. 3).

Plato quoted Socrates in his critical commentary on the subject of script and the changes brought about through script. Ong remarks how the same phrases are being used today in relation to the computer. According to Plato, “writing destroys the memory; he who

becomes habituated with writing will become forgetful, and instead of utilising his own innate resources, will become addicted to external sources, losing his essential faculties,” (Ong, 2003, p. 98). In other words, writing weakens one’s intelligence. Ong refers to similar comments made by parents today whose children prefer to use calculators rather than learn their multiplication tables. According to Plato, script cannot “fundamentally” answer questions. It is possible for a person questioning the meaning of a verbal exchange to obtain clarification from the speaker, whereas were one to pose questions to a text, the only response – usually a banal one – would be nothing more than a mere repetition of the words which were the subject of the inquiry (Ong, 2003, p. 98). Ong again points out that today, similar criticism is being directed towards the computer. A further critical point posed by Plato in relation to script is that writing is a passive activity which “does not create the kind of interaction that occurs between true individuals during natural conversation and verbal thought” (Ong, 2003, 98). This, Ong again notes, is one of the criticisms levelled against the computer. Although he also comments on the contradiction in Plato’s argument against script that Plato poses his argument through the medium of writing itself.

Following the invention of script, the gradual spread of literacy would eventually lead to fundamental social change. However, along with the emergence of writing, “knowledge” became objectified and categorised. In an oral culture the person transferring knowledge and the recipient of that knowledge are both present in the same place; whereas in a literate culture, the provider and recipient of knowledge are no longer speaking face to face. Manuel Castells defines this situation as “facilitating conceptual discourse by separating the statement from the speaker” (Castells, 2013, p. 439). Kocabay refers to the phenomenon of “the creation of script as a significant turning point in facilitating the transference of knowledge, the diversification of memory, the definition of inter-governmental power-relations, diversification of societal structures and the conscious discipline of perception and visual

analysis” (Kocabay, 2015, p. 102). Literacy, as Ong states, “created a potential which would have been unimaginable for verbal communication and human existence without the event of script” (Ong, 2003, p. 205) .

During the earliest years of its invention, the printing press faced the sort of criticism recognisable, in contemporary terms, in relation to those directed towards script. Ong, quoting Lowry, relates that Hieronimo Squarciafico, who was instrumental in the publication of the Latin classics, complained in 1477 that “the increase in the number of books has led to a decline in people’s motivation for reading” (Ong, 2002, p. 99). The proliferation of literature has weakened intelligence, “intellectual men and women have lost respect due to the easy availability of this new product (Ong, 2003, p. 99). Ong, however, also mentions an alternative point of view held by those who welcomed the arrival of the printing press since they regarded the term ‘intellectual’ as applying to a broader public. To explain the impact of the printing press, Ong quotes from the two volume work of Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change (Değişim Çağını Başlatan Baskı Makinası, 1979)*:

“Eisenstein explains in great detail how the emergence of the printing press initiated the spread of the Italian Renaissance and its transmogrification into an ongoing European Renaissance, which led to the Protestant Reformation and instigated fundamental changes within the Catholic Church. The author further describes how the printing press impacted the development of modern capitalism, initiated the age of exploration in Western Europe, transforming both domestic life and state politics, and how it targetted universal literacy by facilitating the dissemination of knowledge at a previously unimaginable speed, unlocking routes to the contemporary sciences and many other innovations in social and intellectual spheres” (Ong, 2003, p. 140).

The Platonic contradiction inherent in the philosopher’s use of the written word to criticise ‘text’ may also be applied to the use of the printing press to criticise printing. Ong

claims the existence of a similar contradiction in the arguments of those adhering to an ‘anti-computer’ stance; since such communications technology dissuaders plan and publish their arguments “via the screens of the very tool they claim to reject”. In short, in Ong’s view, text, printing and the computer are “all forms of technology through which the word is manifest” and further, to comprehend and analyse the outcomes of innovative technology requires our interaction with the most advanced tools of just such technology. Ong indicates that technology is not only used to disseminate critical analysis, but that “the very creation of each new technology is actually the product of its own previously non-existent critical standpoint” (Ong, 2003, p. 99). Further, that through the “secondary oral culture” which following on from printing brought us into the electronic age, by means of the “telephone, radio, television and various sound recording tools“, oral culture reverted more closely than ever to its original form” (Ong, 2003, p. 162).

Each new communication tool, inherently distinct from any previously widely-known tool of this sort may be considered, by definition, a ‘technological’ innovation. The scope of this thesis does not, of course, justify an examination of every new form of technology that significantly impacted the history of mankind, in terms of communications. However, to better comprehend the contemporary situation does require an understanding of the evolution of developments in this area, from the printing press to the internet; an evolution which Marshall McLuhan defines in terms of its various stages as follows: “the verbal age, from the development of the earliest human language up to the invention of script; the visual age from the invention of the printing press onwards; and the verbal, oral and visual amalgamate age, from the event of electronic printing onwards (from: Onat ve Alikılıç, 2008, p. 1114), to which we may add what might be termed the “digital age”.

Today’s dijital age, also defined as the ‘information’ era or the era of the ‘mobile human’ not only embraces audial, visual and verbal forms of communication but is also a

world in which geographical borders have been removed, which has provided the opportunity to create world-wide simultaneous communication. The internet, considered the most comprehensive communication tool of the century, was founded as a network in the 1960's to interconnect computer systems in different locations, within the Advanced Research Project Agency Network (ARPA) operating within the USA Ministry of Defence. The first computer network bearing the name ARPANET was set up in 1969, linking up the Universities of Los Angeles, California, the Research Institute of Stamford, the University of Santa Barbara, California and the University of Utah (Castells, 2013, p. 5). The first electronic mail system was developed over the ARPANET network and used for military purposes in the early 1970's.

What was instrumental in spreading the internet to a global population was the development of internet sites with content organised by type rather than by information source. This was followed in the 1990's by the event of the World Wide Web which application offered its users access to a simple search engine enabling them to access specifically-targetted information (Castells, 2013, p. 65). The rise of the mobile phone in the 1990's provided a personalised communication device with the option of mobile internet connection built-in.

For internet users, access to the internet meant the option of inexpensive and speedy messaging and e-post communications; 24-hour information access; and dialogue and data exchange via chat, forum and news groups. In 2004, the broad distribution of Web 2-based interactive applications allowed users "the option of writing, exchanging and publishing content which did not require designated programs" (Dan Laughey, 2010, p. 163). Social media platforms such as Youtube (2005), Facebook (2004), Twitter (2006), Instagram (2010) and other similar platforms facilitated connecting at both an interpersonal and global level.

The “Global Dijital Report” is published jointly by the global social media agents *We are Social* and *Hootsuite*, on an annual basis. In their most recent report, published in 2019, statistics related to internet, social media and mobile usage for 2018 indicate that the number of internet users globally constituted 56% of the world’s population of 7.6 billion, representing a figure of 4.38 billion people. 3.48 billion people used social media, 5.11 billion people are using mobiles, with 3.25 billion mobile social media users. In 2018, the figure for Facebook users had risen to 2.21 billion, generally representing a user profile aged 18-30, 96% of which accessed the platform via their mobile devices. There are 894 million instagram users, one third of whom are in the 18-34 age group. When comparing Instagram and Facebook, use of the platform is seen to drop as user age rises. In 2018, figures indicate the existence of 250 million Twitter users. The majority (65.5%) of whom are male and one third between the ages of 25-34. Snapchat user statistics, published for the first time this year, reveal that this platform, which has 306 million users, appears to be, comparatively speaking, the preference of female users. LinkedIn has a predominantly male user profile, totalling 604 million individuals, one third of whom are aged between 18-34 years (We are social).

According to the report entitled ‘Dijital Türkiye 2019’, as quoted online on the Turkish site *Dünya Halleri*, within a total population of 82.4 million, 98% of Turkish adults are currently mobile phone users and 77 % of adults use smartphones. According to the above-mentioned report, Turkish users spend an average of 7 hours, 15 minutes daily on internet, of which 2 hours, 46 minutes are devoted to social media. One in two users owns a desktop or laptop computer and one in four possess a tablet. Almost every household possesses at least one TV (99%) and a digital clock, and 9% of users possess wearables such as the digital wristband and VR glasses. Turkey has a total of 59.4 million internet users, representing 72% of the total population. 56.3 million of these users access the internet via their mobile phones. According to the ‘Dijital Türkiye 2019 Report’, there are 52 million

social media users in Turkey, 44 million of whom access the platform via mobile phone.

There are 43 million Facebook users, 38 million Instagram users, 9 million Twitter users, 7.3 million LinkedIn users and 6.35 million Snapchat users (Dünya Halleri).

Looking at the world in general, and Turkey in particular, such high levels of internet usage would imply increased ease of access to information and rapid data processing and sharing. It could be argued that this process represented a form of equality and democratisation, and that the internet even has the potential to contribute the democratisation of the very tools of literacy, the alphabet and publishing, (Atikkan ve Tunç, 2011, pp. 96, 97).

The potential offered by the internet launched a new debate which sought to establish whether or not this new platform for communication and information-processing opened up a new public sphere. The concept of public sphere was first proposed by Jürgen Habermas in 1962. Habermas defined public sphere as an area where individuals had the right to equal access and participation, where people could speak out freely and engage in critical debate, where the people's right to gather, organise and disseminate is guaranteed; in short, a social area in which a form of platform for public opinion could be established. According to Habermas, the communication tools of the public sphere are the daily press, journals, radio and TV (Habermas, 2015, p. 95). The concept of public sphere itself is grounded in classical origins, where the notion existed throughout ancient Greek and Roman culture. Public space in the classical Greek sense was the arena of the civic state itself – the 'polis', in which citizens gathered, and it was here in the public area of the 'agora' that public life played out; in contrast to the private domain of the Greek citizen, his home, or 'oikos'.

“The Greek concept of the public space became that of an arena for freedom and independence, in contrast to the private domain of the citizen. It was only within the public space that civic life became visible in plain sight in its public form, in which civic issues could be unpacked, debated and became formalised. Here, citizens could

debate public issues openly and equally, with the most forceful arguments winning the day, immortalising great men among equals. While man cowered sheepishly under the everyday burden of his life struggle, providing for his family within the confines of ‘*oikos*’, the *polis* offered him an arena which elevated him to the dignity and freedom afforded by public life,” (Habermas, 2015, p. 61).

One cannot speak of a distinct separation between the public and private domain during the Middle Ages in Europe. It was an era when despotic monarchs invested with the power of the deity ruled over all humanity. We therefore may speak only of the existence of a symbolic form of civic or public life. As social and economic upheavals began to disrupt the medieval feudal system, however, great changes did occur. “It was only then, with the emergence of the publically civic environment of the bourgeoisie, that we could begin to distinguish between private and public space in the specifically contemporary sense” (Habermas, 2015, p. 70). The bourgeoisie public space referred to by Habermas was by no means a totally inclusive concept socially, but consisted primarily of a civic arena in which, a privileged section of the bourgeoisie class could interact with royalty and the nobility, the latter being predominant. For example, in 17th century France, participant members of the ‘public’, were “lecteurs, spectateurs, auditeurs, the privileged literati group who participated in cultural events were the consumers of art and culture and were also its critics” (Habermas, 2015, p. 98). However, cultural gatherings and artistic festivities under the patronage of nobility, moved out of the court into salons such as the Hôtel de Rambouillet, as cultural patronage moved away from the palace and the nobility into the hands of the civic domain. Which event, according to Habermas, demonstrated changes not only to the conveyors of civic life, but also to the definition of ‘public’ itself. The city “was no longer merely a place of economic activity in bourgeoisie society; it was primarily the first organised public literary arena independent of the cultural-political hegemony of the court, which began to emerge via public coffee-houses,

salons and civic festivities (Habermas, 2015, pp. 96-7). The many salons established in France prior to the Revolution, and the coffee-houses which proliferated in England between 1680-1730 were the newly designated public spaces for civic and cultural interaction where a degree of intellectual equality could be established between the nobility and the educated bourgeoisie. While initially platforms for literary criticism, such venues increasingly became platforms for political debate (Habermas, 2015, p. 100). Habermas mentions that while salons were mainly frequented by women, coffee houses were the domain of an exclusively male population. Customers of the latter included not only the literary intelligentsia, but also members of the petit bourgeoisie; such as artisans and craftsmen. In such an environment, topics previously rarely addressed began to be the subject of open discussion. Such public forums were inclusive in character. Consequently, what began as literary discussion often became political in nature, so much so, that such venues became identified as hotbeds of political unrest. We can refer to a fully fledged press by the end of the 17 century, the first daily having emerged mid-century. Hence, with the flow of information established, news became a commodity in the public domain. The literary journal, containing literary and artistic criticism may be considered a typical product of the 18 century. Habermas relates subsequent developments during the second half of the 18 century, quoting Karl Bücher as follows:

“The press ceased to be mere newsprint, and began to undertake the role of representing, even leading public opinion, to the point of becoming a party political weapon. This process completely transformed the function of journalism, necessitating the existence of editors between news gathering and newsprint. This meant that the daily news publisher, was no longer merely a vendor of last minute news, but was forced to operate also as a purveyor of public opinion” (ed. Meral Özbek, Habermas, 2015, p. 99).

As the power of the feudal system waned, the 17 and 18 centuries can be considered the period when the public domain was established and gained momentum. The 19 century is characterised by the demand for freedom and equality, the French Revolution, the emergence of the nation-state, bourgeoisie nationalism and the start of the Industrial Revolution. Public space is transformed once again to reflect the new concord between the state and the bourgeoisie which, in turn, provokes the emergence of a new 'working class' destined to take up position against the bourgeoisie. So the bourgeoisie, having struggled to render its own visibility during the Feodal period, passed the baton to the exploited working classes. The 20 century saw two world wars, and bore witness to a number of significant developments. It was an era when mass communication tools such as radio, TV and cinema began to dominate, and when the rapid development of information technology, the emergence of the internet during the last three decades of the century instigated renewed and widespread debate about the notion of public space. Habermas claims that the 'ideological beliefs' underpinning the emerging model of public space remain relevant in our time although also stressing that despite the exponential growth of this domain during the last century, it became much weakened functionally, as the sociological bases for public space were seriously compromised, and previous notions of 'public' disintegrated. Consequently, one might say that the notion of public space acquired an entirely new perspective beyond the Millennium due to technological developments, and particularly the event of social media, providing its users with on-line platforms for discussion, dialogue and the exchange of information via the internet.

The ongoing debate over public space has also brought with it a separate but important discussion around the issue of cultural capital, related to the speed with which all forms of knowledge, artistic and cultural expression may be produced and exploited; in short, the relationship between technology and culture. Raymond Williams, for example, has suggested

that advanced technology could spawn the dissemination of baser forms of culture, remarking that adversely, high culture can exist at a low technological level, adding that this is generally the case, cultural production generally thriving in such circumstances (Williams, 2018, p. 147). Williams adds the view that new technology is seen as a basic threat not only by cultural conservatives, but also by those with more radical beliefs.

Each new movement is a reaction to the dominant issues of the time, which inevitably results in a break with tradition. For some, this situation represents innovation, for others degeneration. Walter Benjamin, in a work written in 1936 and entitled *Art Works Re-Produced Through New Technical Possibilities*, refers to the significant impact of such reaction and severance on society when combined with the considerable potential of technology – he refers in this case to the technology of photography and the cinema. Benjamin holds that in the age of reproduction through technical possibilities, what he defines as the ‘special atmosphere’ of individuality and authenticity (of an art work) is lost: “In an age when works of art can be reproduced with the aid of technical devices, what is lost, he poses, is the aura of the original work” (Benjamin, 1993, p. 49). “The immediacy and presence of an original work of art constitute its conceptual authenticity” and “the authenticity of an artefact consists of the entirety of all that has, since its creation, been traditionally invested in its being, from its concrete value to its abstract value as a witness to history (Benjamin, 1993, pp. 48-9). Benjamin claims that the technique of reproduction severs the connection between “what is reproduced and its inherent tradition”. In this way, he claims, the “value of tradition” as we acknowledge it in artistic heritage is eliminated (Benjamin, 1993, p. 50). Benjamin cites magical and religious ceremonies as examples of the traditions from which the practice of reproduction by technical means liberates the artwork for the first time in history, freeing it from its position as an adjunct of religious ritual” (Benjamin, 1993, p. 52).

According to Benjamin, the gradual loss of ‘charisma, aura’ or mysticism is inevitable even in the timeframe contemporary to the art itself. Yet, he holds, that is a good thing. Once the mysticism of “uniqueness” has disappeared and an art work is severed conceptually from its tradition, it no longer becomes necessary for it to adapt. Such processes “express the renewal of mankind” (Benjamin, 1993, 50). For Benjamin, cinema is the most significant motor in such renewal. The author exemplifies the photograph while stating his case for reproduction destroying the authenticity of an article, since a number of printed copies may be made from the negative, which, he thinks, makes it meaningless to question which is the original print. “As the measurement of authenticity for the production of art is destroyed, the sociological function of art has undergone a totally fundamental shift. Art, rather than gaining credence from its primary setting in religious ceremony, engages in a different function grounded in the political dimension” (Benjamin, 1993, p. 52) .

According to Benjamin, another reason for the loss of charisma in a work of art is the capability of cinema to reach wide audiences, and the observer-player relationship formed through this artform. In the theatre, the actor senses his audience and responds to their reactions. Each performance is different. An imperceptible flow of interactive response exists between actor and audience. In films, there is no audience, just the camera. What the actor performs is not really one, but a series of performances. And his performance is to the camera rather than to an audience. Consequently: in order for an audience member to interact with a film actor, they must interact with the camera” (Benjamin, 1993, p. 56). Benjamin proposes that with the development of the cinema, the observer no longer feels excitement and awe when facing a work of art. Art has been essentially transformed. “With this transformation”, suggests the author, “the unique domain attributable to art, its “aesthetic” has been removed from it forever” (Benjamin, 1993, p. 58).

Once freed from the passive role of reverent appreciation for a work of art, there is more potential for the observer to engage with it from a political and creative standpoint. Just as the forms of reproduction made possible by cinema and other technical tools have transformed the reaction of the masses to art, they probably have also laid the groundwork for fundamental changes within the human mindset. In contrast to the very small number of individuals able to observe painting or sculpture in a museum, cinema presents a simultaneous mass experience.

Each new form of technology leads to the creation of new forms of communication, as Raymond Williams states. Each form of communication shapes human ways of thinking and living and impacts our cultural effectivity. Both the creative process involved in art production, its presentation, the required tools with which the presenter creates their products and their own reaction to them are all defined by technological devices. Prior to the invention of the printing press, manuscripts were read together in communal settings. In order to connect, or at very least to acquire information it was necessary to meet face to face. Presentation, exchange and response all took place in one time and place. However, the invention of the printing press provided books as a portable, reproducible product, allowing individuals the possibility of solitary reading, and stimulus for human individualisation. One to one communication disappears. Society consists of mainly passive TV viewers and radio listeners, although with some traces of interactivity detectable. Ultimately, the emergence of the internet and social media renders the time and space required for face to face interaction irrelevant. The flow of information has become incessant and instantaneous. Hence network societies are also seen as information societies. Once again, in McLuhan's words, the new (communication) tool for today's communities is 'internet space'.

1.4 Justification of the Thesis

The world of literature is no more fixed or permanent than any other field of study. Literary figures and institutions in today's world are quite unlike those existing during the Reform Period. Both the author, the reader and those providing the means of connection between the book and its reader are impacted by their environment and the realities of the period in which they live, which in effect, renders these factors formative influences on the individual. Every significant social, historical and political event framing the essence of an era has an impact on a writer's productivity, on the needs of the reader, and on the formation of the means to bring the two together. During the half-century of the Reform period, the 1850's, 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's, the author's oeuvre, the readers' needs, and their intermediaries will all be different. Not to suggest that beyond that period no authors were writing books, what is clear however, is that the *zietgeist* and technology of that era impacted not only on social and political life, but also on cultural life. The inherent transformation we refer to here is strikingly commented on by the critic Fethi Naci, in a piece based on Ali Püsküllüoğlu's *Türk Romanları Kısa Zamandizini (Short Chronology of the Turkish Novel)* in which novels published between 1872-1980 are listed chronologically (Fethi Naci, 1981, pp. 452-464). According to this source, the number of novels published in that period are listed as follows:

Table 1: *Numbers of novels published between 1872-1980*

Year	Published Novels (number)	Year	Published Novels (number)	Year	Published Novels (number)
1872	1	1925	5	1956	7
1875	2	1926	6	1957	14
1876	2	1927	6	1958	10
1878	1	1928	11	1959	10
1880	1	1929	3	1960	8
1881	1	1930	5	1961	13
1882	1	1931	4	1962	9
1888	3	1932	9	1963	10
1889	3	1933	6	1964	4
1890	1	1934	7	1965	8
1891	2	1935	6	1966	10
1894	3	1936	1	1967	10
1895	2	1937	4	1968	13
1896	4	1938	3	1969	11
1897	2	1939	8	1970	16

1898	2	1940	2	1971	10
1899	1	1941	3	1972	10
1900	6	1942	1	1973	21
1901	1	1943	5	1974	20
1905	1	1944	8	1975	16
1909	1	1945	1	1976	24
1910	6	1946	4	1977	35
1912	6	1947	2	1978	12
1913	1	1948	1	1979	18
1915	1	1949	4	1980	17
1918	2	1950	4		
1919	3	1951	2		
1920	2	1952	7		
1922	7	1953	7		
1923	2	1954	8		
1924	8	1955	9		

The significance of these numbers becomes clearer when compared with the numbers of Turkish novels published in a single year today.

Within the scope of this thesis, we focus particularly on the literary world of the 2000's, the Millenium decade, but seen within the context of the events of the preceeding years, since the 90's were formative years for the Millenium, as were the 80's for the nineties. Particularly after the military Coup d'Etat of 12 September, 1980, the literary world in Turkey underwent significant changes, as did all areas of society. These were the formative years for the next decade, the 90's. So we begin our investigation primarily with the 1980's, and subsequently study data garnered from in-depth interviews with authors and literary figures regarding the 90's and the decade following the Millenium.

1.4.1 The 1980's and beyond: A Transitional Period

Semih Gümüř, writer and critic, describes the 1980's as a transitional decade. As does the sociologist-writer Emre Kongar, who defines those years as based on a series of prohibitions and sanctions resulting from the oppressive cultural policies of the ruling political party of the time. For example, governmental monitoring of the state TV and radio channels (TRT) lead to imposing a form of censorship through a designated body established to "protect children from inappropriate published material" (Küçükleri Muzır Neřriyattan Korumu Kurulu); as a result of which, according to Kongar, "thousands of books designated undesirable were left to rot in cellars" (Kongar, 2012, p. 245). The existence of such a body was "an expression of the unitary cultural political approach" of the time which maintained the policy of continuous suppression of both the Turkish press and Turkish literature. Nurdan Gürbilek saw the 80's as a period during which "the right to free speech was denied, Turkey was effectively gagged"; while at the same time "new channels, new frameworks were established under the guise of 'Talking Turkey'" (Gürbilek, 2009, p. 9). While the decade was one characterised by oppression and prohibition, it was also "a time of frivolity and permissiveness when people were freed from political responsibility". The press sector amassed greater capital; new dailies and weekly news publications began to appear. These

publications, according to Gürbilek, were designed to target specific reader segments, such as women, youth, men, professionals and housewives. This coincides with the first airings of domestic issues in the public domain, matters previously considered sacred and confidential in Turkish society. “Private life, in Turkey, first became an acceptable subject for public discussion in the 1980’s, and then a platform for outpourings or confessions” (Gürbilek, 2009, p. 54). Although one would anticipate an “element of introversion” after a period of oppression, there was also an element of inevitability, of necessity in the withdrawal from the public into the private domain. According to Gürbilek:

“This was the uniqueness of the ‘80’s: What identified those years was not a form of introversion, nor was it a retreat to the private and confidential life. Quite the opposite, it was an explosion. It was the externalising, the open expression of many things previously considered untouchable. Everything was the subject of news, information, visual coverage, everything could become a public issue, distinctions between private and public space; the borders between ‘internal’ and ‘external’ disintegrated, personal expression became merged with public expression, as the distinction between them began to lose definition. Certainly one may refer to an “industry of private life”. It was inevitable that once that area of privacy had been captured by the media, as with all other areas, an industry of multiple professions would build up around it” (Gürbilek, 2009, p. 55).

Berna Moran, in her work *Türk Romanına Eleştirel Bir Bakış: Sevgi Soysal’dan Bilge Karasu’ya*, refers to the post-September 12 years in content and concept as “years which witnessed radical change in the Turkish novel” (Moran, 2007, p. 49). Moran claims that the reality of the political situation necessitated the search for a new form of narrative, which resulted, as mentioned above, in writers turning towards post-modernism. The fantastic novel and magic reality became the new popular trends of the day. Orhan Pamuk, Mehmet Eroğlu,

Latife Tekin are among the more prominent authors of this wave. This change in content and understanding in literature was to result in the emergence of a new type of writer.

Critic and writer Semih Gümüş sees the decade of 1980-1990 as transitional, commenting that as a result, the 1990's saw a new wave in literature emerge, characterised by a passion for the quest of the new (Gümüş, 20, p. 2014). Gümüş indicates that a "phase of diversification" instigated from the mid-eighties up to 1995, persisted without a break between 1995 – 2010. He refers to some differences between writers of his generation and the current generation.

"The lifestyle of our generation was totally different. It spoke to a culture characterised by friendships within a writing community, friendships based in a literary culture which played out in settings inhabited and nourished by writers and books. After some time, this culture began to disintegrate, under the pressure of new generations, new cultures, new concepts and multiple new quests emerging from the fragments of the old literary culture, as we move into a new era of increasingly individual, unique styles (Gümüş, 2014, p. 21).

Similar transformations were noticable in the realm of poetry. The poem, claimed to have been utilised before the 1980's as a device through which to reach and influence the public, transformed itself in order to survive as a creative form after the '80's. Most poets, whatever their conceptual persuasion, focused more on the aesthetic aspects of their work. This tendency was one of the consequences of the rise of individualism among writers and literary figures.

1.4.2 Contemporary Situation

Currently, as stated above, it is no longer relevant to talk of a new literary generation emerging every decade or so, nor, is there, ultimately in our day, any validity to the concept of the literary movement. Literature today is emerging as the work of individual authors, rather than that of a literary group. In contrast to previous eras, there are very few remaining spaces

in which writers and literati may meet and gather. This is due partly to a combination of modern urban lifestyles and the speedy evolution of communications technology. Authors in Istanbul live remotely from each other, rarely able to come together save for the impetus of an event such as a literary award or book fair. In fact, the TÜYAP Istanbul Annual Book Fair, that attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors, this year its 38th, is itself widely criticised by authors and literary figures for being difficult to access. Authors and critics, in fact, often boycott the event for this reason.

The current urban lifestyle implies living at vast distances between remote locations, so most authors today prefer to make use of the opportunities provided by IT and communicate via social media. This would imply that a distancing has occurred between authors / literati and the reader. For example, up to just fifteen years ago, a reader visiting Refik Reastaurant in Beyoğlu for lunch might have come across the author Ferit Edgü by chance, or have encountered Erdal Öz in Çiçek Bar towards evening; and on Fridays in Cumhuriyet Meyhane would have seen Fethi Naci or many many other authors and literary figures. This, unfortunately, is no longer the case, neither for veteran writers nor for the upcoming generation of authors.

We may say that the writer / literary figure has changed. In the past, an author 's work was written by hand, then with the typewriter, today only a handful of authors continue to write by hand, most preferring the medium of the computer. This tool has, one might say, reinstated the mobility of the author, who, formerly pictured at his studio desk among his old photographs and books, can now be spotted by his readers in a cafe or by the sea. This new mobility has, it is claimed, invested the 'writer / literary figure' with a new identity.

Another significant change is in the role of the journal. During the 40's and 50's, the pulse of the literary world could be measured through literary journals. The changes in people's lifestyle in general, brought about in the 1980's by TV and video, and in the 1990's

by the event of the computer and internet, impacted significantly upon the habits of literature readers. The internet became the preferred medium of communication, and indeed created a new platform for literary debate among writers, critics, literati and readers. During the mid-90's, the media interest in literature began to rise, as TV and radio channels began to feature book reviews and author interviews on their programs. The twin functions of showcasing literary works and acting as a platform for literary debate previously assigned to journals, lost much impact.

One distinct outcome of having access to a larger mass audience via the internet or through cyberspace was that distribution was transferred from the publishers and dedicated bookstores into the hands of chainstores and on-line sites. The reader no longer engaged tangibly with the writer or his work, largely leaving their choice of reading material to the 'newly published / bestsellers / book of the week or month / recommended reading' reviews and promotional texts of publishers or other on-line sites, including book promotions on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

1.5 Istanbul: Cultural Centre of Turkey

One of the most distinctive features of Istanbul must surely be that it is a city which changes at every step. Not only the view changes, but also its inhabitants, its creatures and its habitual behaviours. So much so, that I trully feel that Istanbul owes all its magic, all its ugliness to these incessant changes. Nowhere in the world can one find such a mass of dwellings excuding so many colours, so many sounds and scents. No streets anywhere where the trees or the clouds change so drastically, as if changing season, as ours appear to do.

Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu (Kültür Yokuşu, 1995, 31-33)

The United Nations defines any city with a population of over 10 million as a mega-city – megatropolis. According to UN statistics, in 2016, globally, there were thirty-one mega-

cities. Istanbul is estimated, by the size of its population, to be fifteenth among this group (UN).

According to the national census on Turkish households carried out in 2018 by the Turkish Statistics Institution (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu) (TÜİK 2018), as of 28 December, 2018, the population of Turkey was recorded as 82,300,882 million, of which 15, 067,724 individuals, representing 18.4 % of the total population, live in Istanbul. Compared to other cities, Ankara has a population of 5,503,985 and Izmir 4,320,519, Bursa has a population of 2,994,521, and Antalya has 2,426,356 inhabitants. (TÜİK). According to TÜİK 2014 figures, 705 of the 2,170 cinemas and 178 of the 611 theatres distributed throughout Turkey are situated in Istanbul. The headquarters of almost all the major publishing houses are also in Istanbul. In short, Istanbul is not only the most populous city, it is also, by a wide margin, clearly at the forefront of the local cultural and artistic world.

According to the Turkish Publishers' 2015 press statement on publication figures for the year 2014, the regions in which the most books were published by percentage were as follows;

1. Istanbul (59.5%)
2. Ankara (27.5%)
3. İzmir (13%)

The great majority of all theatre, cinema, music festivals, poetry readings, Bienales, international concerts, theatrical and other events are organised and held in Istanbul on an annual basis. Not only is it an important artistic and cultural centre, it is renowned as a city of great historical importance. As the centre of a number of civilisations over the centuries, including the Roman, Eastern Christian, Byzantine and Ottoman empires, it bears the traces of all these civilisation in its very texture. A metropolis with the unique feature of conjoining

two continents, it claims geographical, economic and historical significance that is undoubtedly reflected to equal degree in its cultural fabric. As may be verified from the above mentioned statistics, Istanbul retains the characteristics of a cultural hub or centre. As suggested by Martin Stokes, the city is not only the centre of Turkey's population, but also 'de facto' its cultural centre (Stokes, 2013, p. 150). However, one must remember that a great many important changes to this metropolis have taken place over time, particularly since the Reform Period. Indeed, in the words of Hikmet Feridun Es: "Istanbul is the most changing urban entity in the world" (Es, 2013, p. 10). "With the loss not only of its neighbourhoods, but some fading of its characters, its places of frivolity, its tastes and cuisine leaving much to be desired" (ES, 2013, p. 10). Murat Belge, in his work on Istanbul, describes the mass flow of economically underprivileged migrants from the provinces during the industrial explosion of the 1960's. According to the writer, economic changes also brought about parallel cultural changes. "This new population worked and struggled to adapt to a new culture, new language, new conditions, always looking towards the future" (Belge, 1997, p. 4). Doğan Hızlan referred to Istanbul as "the first city to manifest all these changes" (Hızlan, 2015, p. 266).

Istanbul experienced a notably dynamic phase during the 1950's and 60's as a result of continuous migration from country to city (Koçak ve Koçak, 2016, p. 12). Apart from migration, globalisation was another fundamental factor changing the urban character. Dilek Özhan Koçak ve Orhan Kemal Koçak, in their work *İstanbul Kimin Şehri*, indicate that Istanbul "took the first step towards becoming a global city in the 1980's". That decade, according to the writers, marked the beginning of the process of urban gentrification in that city. As a result of migration and globalisation, the city's fabric changed dramatically, "so much so that today these changes have begun to damage the historical silhouette, with dramatic impact on the physical fabric of the city occurring more rapidly and brutally than was ever experienced since its imperial past" (Koçak ve Koçak, 2016, p. 17). In the 1980's,

systematic ‘urban planning’ began (Yanardaroğlu, 2016, p. 35). Ebru Soytemel and Besime Şen point to a first wave of gentrification occurring during the 1980’s which, according to them, was in response to desires for a superior quality of environment, followed by a second wave during the 1990’s stimulated by the dynamics of mass entertainment and cultural activity, and finally a third wave during the Millenium years characterised by structured organisational investments (Soytemel ve Şen, 2016, p. 97). Adversely, Istanbul was described at the same time as “a city that is never complete” (Göktürk, Soysal, Türeli, p. 2011, 37). Çağlar Keyder describes Istanbul between the years 2000-10 as “a developing city with all the appearance of self confidence (Keyder, 2011, p. 49). A number of new cultural and entertainment venues opened during that time.

The urban centres of the metropolis changed drastically as a result of all these combined factors. Some centres diminished significantly in importance, while others, beset with numerous setbacks, lost their old attraction. Occasionally, new centres emerged; literature and art centres were also affected, changing radically. For example: during the second half of the 1990’s, Beyoğlu and Taksim became the main arena for followers of the literature and art worlds, particularly university students, concentrated around its bookshops and art centres, exhibition spaces, cinemas and theatres. In time, however, as the cinemas, theatres and bookshops began to close their doors, Beyoğlu lost its status as an artistic and literary centre.

1.6 Literary Centres of Istanbul in The Past

Since the foundations of modern Turkish literary traditions were first laid down by the literature of the Reform Period, to establish a framework for the Turkish literary world within the scope of this research, Reform literature has been taken as the starting point. We will examine the literary salons, the cafes, tea houses and journals which were the venues for literary gatherings, where the writers, poets and literary intellegensia of the Reform Period

met, conversed and shared their work, in short, the spaces where literature was created, produced and disseminated.

1.6.1 Literary Salons

When we examine the memoirs, portraits and notebooks of Reform Period authors and analyse their works, it appears that, at first, the literati gathered in the mansions and lodges of great patricians, then later in the houses of various literary figures and writers, where they organised regular literary evenings. Such locations were recognised and referred to as ‘literary salons’. Following the foundation of the Republic, due to changes in the structure of society, combined with the economic and political upheavals of the time, the practice of the grand salon gradually diminished, to be replaced by an atmosphere whereby the literary world was opened up to individuals of somewhat higher than average means, who valued sharing time and space with artists and writers, opened their homes to the literati and artists, seeking to establish close relationships with them (Anar, 2012, p. 88).

Turgay Anar, in his work entitled; *Mekândan Taşan Edebiyat*, reiterates that the meeting places particularly favoured by the literati of the Reform Period were the mansions and pavilions of high ranking, titled patricians. One example he gives is that of Hersekli Ârif Hikmet’s Çukurçeşme house in Laleli, where, from 1861 over a period of a year, poets gathered on Tuesdays to discuss, debate and criticise poetry. Many renowned poets of the day were among the regulars at such sessions, like Namık Kemal, which were also attended by statesmen and other literary sympathisers. The pavilion of Abdurrahman Sami Paşa, the father of Samipaşazade Sezai, was a regular weekly or twice monthly venue for Turkish and foreign authors, literati, scientists and statesmen of the era, including Namık Kemal, Abdülhak Hamid, Ziya Paşa, Ali Suavi, Sadrazam İbrahim Paşa, Yusuf Kâmil Paşa, Prens Mustafa Fazıl Paşa, until the death of Abdurrahman Sami Paşa in 1881, when, his son Abdülatif Suphi Paşa, like his father, opened the doors of his own house in the neighborhood of Fatih to many

writers and intellectuals, both foreign and Turkish. Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem, himself an author, was among those who in his shoreline mansion in Istinye and his lodge in Firuzağa hosted literary figures, musicians and composers, and was himself a great appreciator of music,. Tevfik Fikret, Halit Ziya, Mehmet Rauf, Hüseyin Cahit, Süleyman Nazif and Cenap Şahabettin were among the figures of importance who attended literary gatherings in his yalı each Friday, listened to the poetry of Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem being recited by his son, Ercüment Ekrem Talu and participated in literary discussions (Anar, 2012: p. 112), occasionally focusing on the current issues of the day. Anar points to the importance of Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem's Firuzağa house as one of the places in which the foundations of the *Servet-i Fünûn* literary movement were laid. The poet Nigâr Hanım was one of the first literati to introduce artistic and literary gatherings of a Western type, which she held from the 1880's onwards on Tuesdays, in summer at her shore house in Hisar and in winter in her mansion in Nişantaşı. At her gatherings, poets recited their own work, and writers read aloud their stories. Occasionally theatrical pieces were read and music was performed. Such gatherings went on until the death of Nigâr Hanım in 1918.

Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil 's director's room in the Directorate he entered in 1893, and where he worked for six years, and his Yeşilköy mansion were meeting places for leading poets, authors and literary critics of the time. Among his followers were such renowned figures as Mehmet Rauf, Rıza Tevfik, Ahmet Rasim, Hamdullah Suphi, Ahmet Haşim, İzzet Melih, Ali Sami (Yen) and Bedii Faik. As Anar relates, after the First World War, literary gatherings were held every Friday in Halit Ziya's Yeşilköy house. In his work *Edebiyatçılar Geçiyor*, first published in 1939, the writer Halit Fahri Ozansoy relates how, as a student at Galatasaray High School, he was able to attend such gatherings through the mediation of Celâl Sahir, and that during the meetings all attention was focused on Halit Ziya, who, he remarked, made a particular impression on youth.

“He spoke in such a way that I was quite astonished. What a wonderful way he had of expressing things. How he showered us, the youngsters, with praise and words of encouragement! When we left the mansion, even though it might seem a little arrogant, we felt somewhat different, more confident about our skills and competency in the craft of writing, so much so that we were even more driven than before to achieve greater things, to be worthy of the praise heaped upon us” (Ozansoy, 2015, p. 235).

Tevfik Fikret also held occasional literary gatherings with a selected group of poets and writer friends, first in his Ağayokuşu house in Aksaray and his shore yalı in Rumelihisarı, then later at Aşıyan. According to Anar, quoting Hüseyin Cahit, Tevfik Fikret first established such meetings in Ağayokuşu, Aksaray, prior to 1901, where various figures, such as Hüseyin Cahit, Mehmet Rauf, Halit Ziya, Hüseyin Siret, Ahmet Şuayp, Nurettin Bey, the father of Vâlâ Nurettin and Ali Ekrem Bolayır would meet regularly on Friday evenings. Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil recalls not only Tevfik Fikret’s great finesse as a host, but also the powerful impact he had upon his guests with influential discussions on poetry and art and many other subjects besides: “Such was his skill with language that with an artistry rarely to be seen, he went beyond mere ideas, skillfully piercing through paper with words jumping through hoops, to fall gracefully and feather-light onto the horse’s back, with the skill of an acrobat” (Uşaklıgil, 2014, p. 675).

Anar comments that such gatherings focused not only on literary and artistic discussion, but that new and unpublished work was often read in manuscript, and subjected to the critical appraisal of the assembled group. One such manuscript reading was of Hüseyin Cahit’s as yet draft-form novel *Hayal İçinde*. Mehmet Rauf recalled that those attending would also share their views on literary works they had recently read (Anar, 2012, p. 142).

These gatherings, which many of his friends attended, continued in Tevfik Fikret's house in Hisar, where he lived briefly, before moving with his salon to Aşyan.

Ozansoy also refers to literary evenings held in the Osmanbey apartment of Şahabettin Süleyman and his wife, the latter he describes as the “highly strung, aristocratic poetess” Ihsan Raif Hanım. These gatherings, which were probably held twice a week from 1913-14 onwards, brought together some of the most renowned literary figures of the day at what Ozansoy describes as “a kind of artistic shrine” (Ozansoy, 2015, p. 257). Among the devotees of this literary salon were Rıza Tevfik, Yahya Kemal, Halit Fahri, Ahmet Haşim, Ruşen Eşref and Selahattin Enis. Ihsan Raif Hanım performed at the piano and read her own poems, as did other poets, and story writers also read their own work. Şahabettin Süleyman talked about articles he had translated, and discussions centred around these pieces. Other writers read extracts from their work, among them, as Anar mentions, many unpublished pieces. Anar claims that such practices stimulated literary discussion on an unprecedented level, encouraging critical appraisal, opinion and analysis of the strong and weak points of a work, and, in effect, establishing a systematic approach to literary criticism, (Anar, 2012, p. 158).

Poets and writers gathered for tea every other Wednesday in what was both Abdullah Cevdet's house and his Journal's publishing office in İçtihat Apartment in Cağaloğlu. Although it is not exactly known when such meetings began, according to Anar the date was sometime between 1911 and 1914, and they are known to have continued until the death of Abdullah Cevdet in 1932, as related by Anar, whose source was Konur Ertop (Anar, 2012, p. 153). Ozansoy relates that these were the “most popular and best-frequented” meetings of their time, attended by foreign correspondants, accompanied by tea, and much gossip, occasionally the discussion turned to philosophy and literature (Ozansoy, 2016, p. 26). As stated by Ozansoy, Abdülhak Hamit, Celâl Nuri, Süleyman Nazif, and Rıza Tevfik were among the literary names attending.

According to Anar, we know that Abdülhak Hamit Tarhan held literary gatherings in his house on Maçka Caddesi in Şişli. Anar claims that these gatherings were established in response to Tarhan's wife Lüsyen Hanım's desire to hold a literary salon. Münevver Ayaşlı, as quoted by Anar, recalled that the gatherings took place on Wednesdays, while Taha Toros, who joined the gatherings after 1932, indicated that those he attended were held on Fridays (Anar, 2012, p. 173). Münevver Ayaşlı describing these meetings, said: "There were few of any consequence in those days who did not attend these gatherings in the 'refined Ottoman's garage', as Abdülhak Hamit's cellar flat was known at the time (Güngör, 2002, p. 54). The conversation at such gatherings was mainly confined to literature, occasionally interspersed with Abdülhak Hamit's anecdotes about his life, his memories, history and contemporary issues.

Two poets of the Republic Period, Şükufe Nihal and her second husband Ahmet Hamdi Başar gathered together poets, writers and artists in their house in Levent. Although it is not exactly clear when these meetings began to take place, according to Anar's account, his friend Adile Ayda related that she had met Refik Halit Karay in Şükufe Nihal's house in 1946 (Anar, 2012, p. 186). At these gatherings poetry recitals, literary debates and arguments about art and philosophy were the main agenda. They took place initially in Şükufe Hanım's house and later changed venue to the Büyük Kulüp in Taksim and the Hilton.

Meetings hosted by the artist and poet, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu in his house in Maçka on Mondays, known, according to Anar quoting Teoman Aktürel, as the 'House of Friendship' were events attended by a heterogenous group of followers, including Turkish and foreign poets, writers, literary figures, artists and others from a range of backgrounds (Anar, 2012, p. 182). Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu's daughter-in-law Hugnette Eyüboğlu refers to the 'Monday gatherings' held at the house of Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, where she observed that artists in the past were closer to one another: "For example, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, his elder

brother, held a literary salon at his own house on Mondays where various literary subjects, poetry and prose were discussed. Sabahattin Bey, since he loved documentaries and had established the documentary department always accompanied his talks with a slide show. Bedri Rahmi's salon was held on Fridays at his art studio in Tünel, and was attended by writers and artist alike" (Türkiye Yazarlar Birliği). According to Vedat Günyol's account as related by Anar, the Monday meetings began in the 1960's and continued until Sabahattin Eyüboğlu's death in 1973.

Nahit Hanım (Fıratlı)'s houses in Ankara and Istanbul were places where artists and literary personalities would always be welcome. Necati Güngör recounts a conversation with Nahit Hanım during an interview where she relates how Yaşar Kemal, who had arrived in Ankara looking for Abidin Dino, had sought him out at her house. "Yaşar Kemal.....was in Ankara one day, and was looking for Abidin Dino. They told him 'You can find him in Nahit Hanım's house'" (Güngör, 2002, p. 21). That day, Yaşar Kemal not only found Abidin Dino in Nahit Hanım's house, but also himself joined the group of regulars there. Anar, quoting from Cahit Külebi, informs us of the serious poetic discussions that took place in Nahide Hanım's house, among whose regulars were Orhan Veli, Cahit Sıktı Tarancı, Necati Cumalı, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Nurullah Ataç, Melih Cevdet Anday, Yunus Kâzım Köni, Dora ve Erol Güneşler. Anar relates that Cemal Süreya likened her house to an arts album, recounting how Nihat Hanım had been "a familiar of many artists and intellectuals from the 1930's to the 1990's, and particularly close to members of the wave between the 1940-50's" (Anar, 2012, p. 196). Amongst the regulars at her Istanbul home were Ahmet Oktay, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Azra Erhat, Melih Cevdet Anday, A. Kadir, Ömer Uluç, Sevim Burak, Edip Cansever, Vedat Günyol, İsmet Kür, Fethi Naci, Asaf Çiyiltepe and Selim İleri. In 2000, when Necati Güngör interviewed Nahit Hanım, her house was still the focus of visits from all her friends, "Even if she no longer answered the door herself, the house was open to all each evening. If you could

find someone with a key, or you went when visitors were there, whoever you may be, there was a place for you at her table (Güngör, 2002, p. 15).

In his work, *Edebiyatçılar Geçiyor*, Halit Fahri Ozansoy describes his visit to the house of Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu during the Balkan Wars. This was far from a mere social visit, it was to attend a reading by Yakup Kadri of his novel *Nur Baba*:

“Yakup welcomed us very warmly, and after some social chitchat, the literary feast commenced. As he read, we listened transfixed. Even in the first pages he had our attention, and as it went on we were drawn in even further. [...] What style was this! What momentum! Such lights and hues to his style! Yakup Kadri’s quavering voice, his nervous fingers turning the broad parchment pages of his novel, one by one, as outside the rain beat rapidly on the pines. Suddenly I caught a glimpse of his profile, his face half in shadow, caught momentarily in the light’s glow, and it seemed at that moment as though that face was the most beautiful, the most enchanting mask, the embodiment of art in words, telling tales of a mystic world” (Ozansoy, 2016, p. 24).

The writer Necati Güngör recounts how so many promenant literary and political figures of the period from Refet Paşa to Yahya Kemal, and from Abdülhak Hamit to Fuat Köprülü were invited to the Beylerbey yali of Münevver Ayaşlı; how leading figures in literature and science gathered once a week, at the mansion of İbnül Emin Mahmut Kemal in Beyazıt where he lived alone; how discussions were held there between cultural, artistic and scientific groups; and how some groups began to adopt the habit of meeting regularly, once a week, not in someone’s home, but in a particular bar, or meyhane. According to Güngör, the earliest of this kind of meeting took place with what became known as the Thursday group at the Mavi Tuna Meyhane on Rıhtım Caddesi in Kadıköy. Cemal Süreya’s group, meanwhile, met at the Hatay Meyhane in Kadıköy on Fridays; during the 80’s, similar meetings were held in Nişantaş organised by Hadi Olca, owner of the Akademi Booksellers, who also opened a

writers' bar named Yazarlar Evi in the same neighbourhood, which was, by all accounts, like an extension of the locale of earlier meetings. Güngör adds that the Raki table group gatherings remained a tradition on certain days of the week in and around the bars of Galata, at Nevizade and the Cumhuriyet Meyhane, and mentions the Friday group led by Cevat Çapan until not so long ago, as an example.

1.6.2 Literary Coffee Houses

The cafes breathe in, breathe out, 24 hours of the day.

They are like live creatures, are born, grow, fall in love, have happy and not happy days and die.

Cafes are a second self to the writer.

Ziya Paşa arrives there, writes poems and leaves.

Namık Kemal, Ebuzziya Tevfik, Muallim Naci, Ahmet Rasim, Neyzen Tevfik, Halit Ziya, Abdülhak Hamit, Süleyman Nazif, Yakup Kadri, Abdülhak Şinasi, Ahmet Hamdi, Halit Fahri arrive, talk, are applauded and leave. Yahya Kemal, Ahmet Haşim arrive, tear down the curtain and leave. Asaf Halet Çelebi arrives, gives out chicory, and leaves.

Sait Faik, Samim Kocagöz, Oktay Akbal, Orhan Kemal, Sabahattin Kudret, Behçet Necatigil, Rifat Ilgaz, Orhon M. Arıburnu, Orhan Veli, Cahit Sıtkı and still hundreds, thousands more bards arrive, light the place and go.

Salâh Bırsel

The coffee house, (kahve) was another venue frequented by groups of writers from the 1860's until the end of the 1970's. In his work, *Eski İstanbul Kahvehaneleri*, Cem Sökmen

reflects that the literati's preference for such venues emerged in the mid-19 century, urged on particularly by the growth in importance of the popular press in everyday public life, during the period of modernisation following the reforms; in conjunction with a "growing population of beaurocrat-civil servants and a swelling literate public". The burgeoning numbers of dailies and journals initially reached their reading public via the 'kahve'. This was due to the dominance of the oral tradition prevalent during those periods, and the existing practice, in the 'kahve', of communal manuscript recitation, which persisted and directly transposed to the daily and the journal, the newly emerging popular media forms. A further justification was undoubtedly that printed books were relatively scarce, as was the means to form a private library, there being no bookshops prior to 1875, which prevented many readers and book-lovers from acquiring them.

"The books, newspapers and journals, all the published material that was publically accessible, was first sold in tobacco and nargile shops, but in time became available and read in coffee houses and gamehalls, the first of which was Sarafim Kırathanesi" (Sökmen, 2012, p. 68). Sökmen, quoting Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, says that after the Reform Period, "as the population changed, so too did the taste in coffee houses", as new venues opened, adopting the look and feel of the cafes of Paris and Vienna, with mirrored walls and western furniture (tables and chairs) (Sökmen, 2012, p. 69).

The cafes of Europe were the meeting places of the intellectuals of the period, and their local equivalents were frequented by former visitors to Europe who had studied there, later becoming state beaurocrats on their return home. The coffee houses of Istanbul were the setting for literary and philosophical discussions and debates in equal measure; and it was in such venues that the intellectuals and philosophers of the day planned the publication of many journals and dailies. Here, the peers of authorship met and mingled with young and aspiring writers, creating an atmosphere which fostered master-apprenticeship relations; here too,

poets and story-tellers continued to launch their work. According to Salah Birscl, the history of the coffee house is “largely synonymous with the history of literature” (Birscl, 2014, p. 7). Again, as Birscl relates, Sait Faik, in an article on the subject in the weekly journal *Yedigün*, brands the “coffee and nargile houses as universities”. According to Faik, “these universities, having neither rector nor academics, totally independent, without faculties or budget, can without a shadow of doubt, instantaneously and accurately determine the popular mood, whether pulses are racing, or hearts fluttering” (Birscl, 2014, p. 22). In fact, particularly in Istanbul, many leading authors and thinkers such as Sait Faik, Orhan Kemal, Ahmet Haşim, Yakup Kadri, Ömer Seyfettin, Nazım Hikmet, Reşat Nuri, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar regularly frequented such coffee houses, some of the more renowned of which were the Sarafim Efendi Kahvesi, Meserret Kırathanesi, İkbâl Kahvesi, Küllük Kahvesi and the Marmara Kırathanesi.

According to Cem Sökmcl’s work, *Eski İstanbul Kahveler*, the Sarafim Kırathanesi in Beyazıt opened in 1857. In his study, *Mekândan Taşan Edebiyat*, Turgay Anar, suggesting that while its opening date was not certain, refers to M. Sabri Koz’s *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*’ which gives the opening year of Saraf Kırathanesi as 1857, and states that it remained open until the 1920’s. The Saraf was the earliest coffee house to stock newspapers and journals, later adding books to their stock, also publishing them. According to Anar, “Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar was of the opinion that newspaper-reading habits emerging in the Sultan Abdülaziz era were in large part popularised in such venues. (Anar, 2012, p. 208). Similarly, Ahmet Rasim comments that the “Sarafim Kırathanesi represented the first step to creating a mass reading public ‘by popularising reading’” (Anar, 2012, p. 210). Not only did it offer the means to develop a culture of literacy by providing reading material, and offer a space where writers, literary figures and state-employed beaurocrats of the period might meet, converse and socialise. Regionally-based periodicals used the Sarafim Kırathanesi of

Istanbul as a distribution centre, which drew those wishing to acquire information about the provinces to this venue. Similarly, it was an informaton centre for those from the regions. According to their memoires, Namık Kemal, Hersekli Arif Hikmet, Hasan Suphi, Şinasi, Ahmet Mithat Efendi, Muallim Naci bulunur. Ebüzziya Tevfik, Ahmet Rasim and Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil were among the Sarafin regulars.

It is not certain when the Meserret Kiraathanesi, situated in Istanbul on a corner at the junction of two streets between Sirkeci and Babıâli first opened, although according to a number of autobiographical accounts, and some press news items, this was towards the end of the 1800's, while it is said to have survived until the beginning of the 20 century. Salâh Bırsel, in his *Kahveler Kitabı*, indicates that, during the 1912's, the Nayi's frequented the Meserret, and that they were preceded in earlier times by the Servet-i Fünûncu group, although at that time the name of this location was the Yıldız Coffeehouse. The possibility that the use of the name 'Yıldız' might be viewed as a 'form of subversion' as far as sultan Abdülhamit was concerned, led to pressure being brought to bear on the owner of the coffee house, Salih Efendi (Bırsel, 2014, p. 271), who consequently changed its name to the *Yaldız Kiraathanesi*. Although the Meserret Kiraathanesi had lost much of its former glory by the 1960's, it remained open a very long time, and persisted as a venue for the literary, a place for literary debate. So much so that it was referred to as a 'writer's study'. Orhan Kemal was to refer to it as "The coffeehouse (of joy) ('Meserret Bâb-ı Ali') where I first struggled to earn a living":

"Necip Fazıl and Peyami Safa were discussing some of the evils of the Porte (the publishing house district). Rıfat Ilgaz and Sait Faik had previously delivered a talk at the Meserret on an almost identical topic. Rıfat Ilgaz told Sait Faik, whose work was being published by *Varlık Yayınları*, that the publishers were underpaying writers' copyrights. Whereupon Sait Faik went straight to *Varlık Yayınları*, took copyright

payment even before the second addition of his work had been published and returned to the coffee house. In Meserret, a debate ensued, with Emin Âli, Peyami Safa and Nâzım Hikmet vehemently defending the writer's materialistic stance, despite the strong objections of other members of the group [...]. Kemal Sülker, Suat Derviş and Neriman Hikmet, founder of the journal *Yeni Edebiyat* also carried out a discussion about the life, struggles, and poetic identity of Hasan İzzettin Dinamo (Anar, 2012, p. 219).

As Salâh Birsell suggests: "The Meserret coffee house was a 'kahve for all Istanbul' You couldn't find a single writer of any consequence that hadn't turned up there, even once" (Birsell, 2014: 274). Although it was also a place frequented just as much by journalists as by writers, and indeed there were some journals for whom it became their unofficial head office. The first preparations for publication of the *Yürüyüş* journal were carried out by Rıfak Ilgaz, Hüsamettin Bozok, A. Kadir, Ömer Faruk Toprak and Lütfü Erişçi at the Meserret, and it was from here that they ran the journal (Anar, 2012, pp. 217-8). *The Yaratış* journal produced by Selahattin Hakkı Esatoğlu, Halit Eskişar, Sabahattin Batur and Kemal Uluser was managed from there between 1944-46 (Birsell, 2014, p. 274). According to Cem Sökmen, during the foundation of the Turkish Press Association (Türkiye Gazeteciler Cemiyeti), around 1945, (the Meserret) was effectively the centre of operations (Sökmen, 2012, p. 112).

Although the exact date of the İkbâl Kahvesi opening is not clear, it is known that it was in operation from the first years of the 20 century. This coffee house, opposite Nuruosmaniye Mosque, on Nuruosmaniye Caddesi, hosted countless writers, critics and journalists who gathered there prior to 1965, where they held their literary talks and conversations, and it was here that the decision was taken to publish a number of journals, *a dergisi* and *Dergah* among them. Cem Sökmen suggests that there were two periods of activity connected to the coffee house; the first being during and after World War I,

particularly during the years when the *Dergâh* journal team frequented it, the second being the period when Orhan Kemal and his circle of friends, as well as his followers “those with whom he had a master-apprenticeship relationship” were frequent attenders. With the arrival of Yahya Kemal, *İkbal* turned completely into a literary coffee house.

Tanpınar relates in his work *Beş Şehir* that many of the young generation clustered around the *Dergâh journal*, which openly supported the national struggle for independence, among whom, notably Mustafa Şekip Tunç, Hasan Âli Yücel, Necmeddin Halil Onan, Ali Mümtaz Arolat, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, Mustafa Nihat Özon, Nurullah Ataç, Yunus Kâzım Köni and Zekâi would meet at *İkbal*, “sometimes remaining there the whole day, and much of the night, apart from mealtimes”. The same source tells us that although not directly connected to the *Dergah*, Mükrimin Halil and Osman Cemal Kaygılı came to *İkbal* regularly to participate in conversations with Yahya Kemal. Ahmet Haşım, who worked close-by at a Public Department would join them (Anar, 2012, p. 222).

After the closure of *the Dergah*, the majority of *İkbal Kahve*’s regulars tended to be journalists, until the arrival in Istanbul of Orhan Kemal, in 1951, after which the *İkbal* became the venue of Orhan Kemal and his friends. Orhan Kemal described *İkbal* as their home, in fact, even more than home, “They discussed events at home and abroad, talked about authors and argued literature. There was no little discussion of domestic and global political trends, disputes over the state of the country and the party political situation, along with much criticism of novel writers, poets, story writers, and scrutiny of plays and journals” (Birsell, 2014, p. 264). According to Sökmen, any writer or artist crossing the threshold of *İkbal Kahvesi* would be “stripped to the bone”. The same source tells us that Kemal Tahir was accused of portraying rural characters and Turkish folk in his novels as lazy, Fethi Naci would be ‘totally disintegrated’ for his judgements of Turkish literary figures. Yusuf Atılgan would

be ‘humiliated for mentioning disillusionment among youth, and drinking dens’ in his novel *Aylak Adam*. Even artists were by no means exempt from such treatment. Sait Faik, Fakir Baykurt and even Yaşa Kemal were amongst the writers subjected to such harsh criticism.

İkbal Kahvesi was so much part of his life that anyone wishing to reach Orhan Kemal would go there. If he was not there, they would leave a note with the waiter. As did anyone wishing to reach an author or another group member, or other writers wishing to make contact with each other. Among those who visited İkbal specifically for Orhan Kemal were Edip Cansever, Muzaffer Buyrukçu, Ferit Öngören, Yaşar Kemal, Ece Ayhan, Rasih Nuri İleri, Haldun Taner, Fikret Otyam, Ara Güler, Oktay Akbal, Konur Ertop, Ümit Yaşar Oğuzcan, Behçet Necatigil and İsmet Zeki Eyüboğlu. On the closure of the coffee house in 1965, Orhan Kemal wrote a piece entitled “İkbal Öldü” (İkbal is dead).

Küllük Kahvesi is a coffee house on Beyazıt square whose opening date is unknown, but which hosted not only writers but also academics and students. Hikmet Feridun Es, in his work, *Kaybolan İstanbul’dan Hatıralar*, recounts that “one of the greatest pleasures in life, especially for the Istanbul intelligensia, would be to congregate at Küllük after lunch for lengthy dialogues, discussions about literature, art and philosophy” (Es, 2013, p. 25). Not only at midday, but in the evening there was also a lively atmosphere of discussion at Küllük and around Bayezit Square. In the summer months, one could hear the click of backgammon pieces amidst animated literary debates at Küllük and Çınaraltı. For example, Nurullah Ataç could be heard in the centre of the Yeni Meşaleci group, his hand-rolled cigarette in hand, trying to complete sentences that began with: ‘Mon Chere...’ (Es, 2013, p. 28). The close proximity of Küllük to Istanbul University, The State Library at Beyazıt and the antiquarian book stalls of the Sahaflar Çarşısı was perhaps another factor contributing to its importance.

Anar suggests that the most significant period for Küllük as a literary gathering space after the declaration of the Republic was between the years 1930-55, when it acquired a more

‘cosmopolitan’ identity, attracting a diverse public from all walks of life. Many patrons, young and old, became regulars, and a form of ‘al fresco’ school, or ‘open-air forum’ was inaugurated where literature, culture and art were the topics of discussion and serious argument (Anar, 2012, p. 230). So much so that it became known as an ‘academy’ or ‘pedagog’s garden’. amongst certain groups of regulars in specific fields. “The importance of Küllük Kahvesi for Turkish cultural, artistic and literary history is quite plain when we consider the impact the existence of this venue has had on the formative figures of science, culture and literature during the first half of the 20th century” (Anar, 2012, p. 232). Beşir Ayvazoğlu recalls during a conversation on this subject with one of the regulars of Küllük, Tarık Buğra, that he had commented “I am a graduate of Küllük”, describing the atmosphere of the place as follows:

“You might see Peyami Sefa seated in one corner, Nurullah Ataç playing backgammon in another. Asaf Halit Çelebi could be smoking his nargile in his own corner, and the members of the 1940’s generation, the Orhan Veli’s, Melih Cevdet’s, the Abidin Dino’s would be seated in another corner arguing about the journal they were about to bring out. From their standpoint at the opposite end of the room, Nihal Atsız and his cronies might be glaring meaningfully across at the ‘40’s group; and Tanpınar and Necip Fazıl would be there too. Küllük was basically a place that opened its doors to every shade of culture in existence. If you read Sabahattin Ali’s *İçimizdeki Şeytan*, you will find plenty of references to Küllük; as in Kemal Tahir’s *Yol Ayrımı*. Towards the beginning of that novel, the main character meets the driver there. In Peyami Sefa’s novel *Fatih Harbiye*, the main character and his sweetheart meet at Küllük before going on to dine in Emin Efendi’s lokanta. In otherwords, you are highly likely to find references to Küllük in a great many novels or stories of the day,” (Dünya Bizim).

In his work, *Edebiyatçılar Çevremde*, Halit Fahri Ozansoy also refers to this “al-fresco coffee house as a place where, at one time, generations of poets congregated, especially satirists and those well versed in irony; where a great many foamy coffees were sipped, and stanzas from Fuzuli, Baki, Nedim and Şeyh Galip were aired,” (Ozansoy, 2015, p. 260). Küllük Kahvesi, a locale which once hosted significant numbers of great literati, was pulled down in the 1950’s to make way for road-widening during the renovation of Beyazıt Square.

The Marmara Kırâthane, also in Beyazıt, opened in 1958, remaining open until 1984. It became one of the places frequented by the former regulars of Küllük Kahve. The Marmara hosted people from various professions and walks of life, being especially popular in the 1960’s and seventies. Due to its proximity to Istanbul University, it was frequented as much by writers and journalists as by academics and students. Cem Sökmen recounts from the memoirs of Sezai Karakoç that, for his followers Marmara Kırâthane was like an alternative home or office. In the same source the author recalls arguments that might erupt between rightists and leftists, pointing out however, that despite such occasional eruptions, an atmosphere of open conversation and friendly interaction generally prevailed (Sökmen, 2012, p. 88). For its regulars, Marmara Kırâthane was the “last representative of the Kırâthane culture” in Beyazıt, where, during a period of socio-political upheaval in Turkey, one might find the opportunity not only for discussions about the political and cultural issues of the day, but also literary conversations” (Sökmen, 2012, p. 89).

The coffee house was not only a space for socialising and conversation among the literati and intellegensia, but a place in which literature and cultural creativity were actively fostered, and as such held an important place in the history of Turkish literature, particularly up to the end of the 1970’s. Sait Faik Abasıyanık so stressed the importance of the coffee house as far as to say: “I would consider the education of a university student only half-complete had they never attended a coffee house”. What turned such coffee houses into

centres of literature and culture were their regulars themselves. The Eptalafos Kahvesi in Beyoğlu, which opened in the 19 century, became a cultural centre especially in the 1920's, through its devotees, literati such as Sait Faik Abasıyanık, Salâh Bırsel, Edip Cansever, Attilâ İlhan, Behçet Necatigil, Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca, Oktay Akbal, Nahit Ulvi, Salim Şengil, Turgay Gönenç and Leylâ Erbil (Anar, 2012, p. 253). Acem's Coffee House, opposite the boat station in Kadıköy, acquired a reputation as a literary centre through Ahmet Haşim. Haşim is known to have met here with his close friend, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu; Reşat Nuri Güntekin and Mahmut Yesari were among its other occasional devotees; and between 1920-1925 Fahri Celal, Halit Fahri and Haşim Nahit regularly engaged in literary discussions with Haşim at that location (Anar, 2012, p. 486).

Mehtap Kafeterya was one of the so-called piazza coffee houses (set under a plane tree) boasting a glittering list of regulars, including Yahya Kemal, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Behçet Necatigil, Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Fuat Köprülü, Osman Yüksel Serdengeçti, Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel, Attilâ İlhan, Selim İleri and Celal Bayar. The Adliye Kiraathene in Sutanahmet, which is mentioned in Vedat Türkali's novel, *Güven* (Sökmen, 2012, 98) and had its heyday during the 1940's and 1950's, boasted Aziz Nesin, Peyami Safa, Orhan Kemal, Vâlâ Nurettin, Çetin Altan, Bedri Koraman, Semih Balcıoğlu, Hıfzı Veldet Velidedeoğlu, Yaşar Nabi Nayır, Yunus Nadi, Oktay Akbal, Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Bülent Ecevit, Doğan Avcıoğlu, Abdi İpekçi and Yaşar Kemal among its regulars.

1.6.3 Cafes

The cafe or pastry shop may also be counted among the types of public space favoured by artists and literati as locations for their literary conversations and discussions. One of the most renowned of these was Lebon, a locale preferred by the literati since the mid-19 century. Not only the latter, but also professionals, high ranking state officials also frequented this

location. The writer Salâh Birsell refers to four distinct types of customer; the first being those who enjoyed time there in the morning, early in the day. Yahya Kemal was the foremost example of this type. The second type was the lunch customer; the third consisted of female customers shopping in Beyoğlu; and the fourth being artists and literati who began to arrive between 4 and 5 pm and sat until 7 in the evening (Birsell, 2016, p. 44). Even if the writers and poets arriving at the cafe did not do so with the specific intention of meeting other literati, they would undoubtedly come across many, once there. “Faik Âli Ozansoy would sit in front of the window every evening in Lebon, watching all the passers by and daydreaming. But not for long, invariably being joined in due course by his brother Süleyman Nazif Bey, his friend Celâl Nuri Bey, or other associates who also frequented the same spot, and before long they would be deep into discussions on literature and sociology” (Ozansoy, 2015, p. 260).

According to Anar, it was in this location that Taha Toros engaged in literary discussions with Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar and Refik Halit Karay, one such discussion being on the subject of the title of Abdülhak Şinasi’s book. From the same source we learn of a discussion held between Necip Fazıl Abdülhak Şinasi, Yahya Kemal, Peyami Safa and Fikret Âdil in which Abdülhak Şinasi shared his opinions about the lack of strong opposition in the country, later also criticising the literacy reform - the introduction of the Latin script (Anar, 2012, p. 290).

It is not clear exactly when the Lebon Cafe first opened. Although it is known that Namık Kemal and Ziya Paşa were among the first regulars. Salâh Birsell while mentioning that Namık Kemal attended the cafe and frequently engaged there with his friends in literary discussions, also informs us of conversations between them in Lebon about the cholera outbreak that swept through Istanbul in 1865 (Birsell, 2016, p. 36). Lebon Cafe was the favored locale not only of Namık Kemal and Ziya Paşa for discussing literature and art, but that of many other writers, poets, artists and literati, among them Şinasi, Ebüzziya Tevfik,

Süleyman Nazif, Halid Ziya, Cenap Şahabeddin, Hüseyin Cahit, İzzet Melih, Abdülhak Hâmid, Yahya Kemal, Yakup Kadri, Abdülhak Şinasi, Mithat Cemal, Yusuf Ziya, Orhan Seyfi, Haldun Taner, Ahmet Haşim, Faruk Nafiz and Peyami Safa (Anar, 2012, p. 287). Although Lebon Cafe re-opened later, it was no longer the meeting place for literati.

When Lebon Cafe moved in 1940, its old location was taken over, re-opened as Markiz Cafe, and continued to be a literary venue. Anar recounts that Şükufe Nihal held her literary gatherings here for some time, instead of in her own home. Salâh Birsell, in his work, *Ah Beyoğlu Vah Beyoğlu*, recounts that Haldun Taner, who visited Markiz often to work and read, would often find Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar there. The latter writer, who was known as “one who was not particularly social or agreeable” would often invite Haldun Taner to his table to drill him about what was going on in the world of literature. They would also discuss Turkish and foreign writers. According to Anar, these two authors were totally identified with Markiz Cafe, and spent much of their time there. Notable regulars included Abidin Dino, Orhan Kemal, Peyami Safa, Atilla İlhan, Salâh Birsell, Orhan Veli, Edip Cansever, Haldun Taner, Minâ Urgan, Selim İleri and Ümit Yaşar Oğuzcan (Birsell, 2002, p. 34).

According to Salâh Birsell, when he was not in Markiz, Haldun Taner used to go to Pelit in Tepebaşı. Pelit, previously named Tilla, changed its name to Pelit in 1952 and was, he relates, a locale frequented by Germans in Istanbul. It was also a space attended by Nahid Sırrı Örik, Sadri Ertem, Avni Dilligil, Nurullah Berk and Salâh Birsell. During the 1950's, it was frequented by academics, among them philosophy professor Macit Gökberk, Bediâ Akarsu ve Nermi Uygur.

Baylan was another Beyoğlu cafe which opened as Lorient (L'Orient) in 1923 but later changed its name to Baylan “on the suggestion of the art historian Burhan Toprak, one of the cafe's most respected regulars” (Anar, 2012, p. 316). Immediately on opening, it became major competition for Lebon and Markiz, frequently visited by literati. Salâh Birsell

on Baylan Cafe, recounts: “If you were to visit Baylan of an early evening in 1948, you might find Fahir Onger, Oktay Akbal, Behçet Necatigil and Orhon Arıburnu as well as the author (Birsel, 2015, 210). It was not merely a social venue but one where important literary discussions took place. So much so that Demir Özlü referred to it as a “true” university, since in those days, Baylan was an arena for serious discussion on art, literature and philosophy, where books changed hands regularly (Özlü, 2003, pp. 17-18). Attilâ İlhan was one of the figures instrumental in transforming Baylan into a centre for literary discussion. For him it was both a cafe, an office and a lounge. Ahmet Oktay, himself a regular attendee of literary discussions at Baylan, recounts that Attilâ İlhan was the master peer of the younger generation of writers who began to attend the cafe in 1954. Salâh Birsel comments that the Ankara literary group, the *Maviciler*, who were affiliated with the *Mavi* journal, “would always visit Baylan to meet with Attilâ whenever they were in Istanbul, as they considered him their literary mentor,” (Birsel, 2016, p. 211). Sait Faik visited Baylan occasionally, and after reading the newspapers, would take a yellow notebook out of his pocket and begin to write his stories. Writers who were regulars of the cafe became so much a feature of Baylan that when someone needed to contact Demirtaş Ceyhun, his address was given as “Demirtaş Ceyhun, Baylan Cafe Customer, Galatasaray“ (Tamer, 2002, p. 156).

Another cafe which hosted literary regulars between 1930-1950 was Nisuz in Beyoğlu. This particular cafe was open from early morning until last thing at night. Although, in the words of Salâh Birsel, “These 20 hours of Nisuz were not one and the same cafe” (Birsel, 2016, p. 59). Birsel describes three distinct types of cafe, ‘Morning Nisuz, Afternoon Nisuz and the Nisuz of the Sleepless’, while Sait Faik describes two variations of the sleepless cafe, which he dubs the Nisuz of Terrors, the first phase existing between the hours of eight and ten in the evening, when the cafe was frequented by casual visitors to

Beyoğlu. These “were not liked by the cafe’s cognocenti regulars”, and the true Nisuaz of the Sleepless, which carried on late into the night, when writers and artists frequented the cafe.

From 1930-31 and beyond, İbrahim Çallı, Necip Fazıl, Fikret Adil and Peyami Safa were among the cafe’s regulars. During the second world war years Nisuaz regulars included Samim Kocagöz, Sait Faik, Orhon Arıburnu, Celâl Sılay, Sabahattin Kudret, Salâh Bırsel, Süavi Koçer and Avni Arbaş (Bırsel, 2016, pp. 61-2). Anar mentions that it was in just such a venue that the literary hopefuls acquired their literary identity, and that the true significance of regularly attending such places was well expressed by the words of Hasan İzzettin Dinamo, whom he quotes in conversation with Rıfat Ilgaz: “...Whether or not you wanted to, you had to go down Beyoğlu at least once a week! You had to turn up and be counted at Nisuaz! If you missed a single week they would strike you off the list of poets! (Anar, 2012, p. 296).

Nisuaz was a venue associated not only with poets and authors, but also with academics. Bırsel comments that on Saturdays, the ‘rear section’ of the cafe was transformed into a faculty of literary arts. Among the academics holding court here from the 1930’s onwards were Sabri Esat Siyavuşgil, Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Mustafa Şekip Tunç, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Emin Ali Çavlı and Münir Serim. Occasionally, literary figures joined these sessions. This meeting of minds from diverse disciplines, the exchange of knowledge, views and the heterogenous nature of the discussions that ensued among the regulars of Nisuaz Cafe enabled them to keep their finger on the pulse of literature and culture. The journal writers of the day and literati journal publishers journals both attended Nisuaz. This ensured that every regular knew instantaneously what the others were writing, and could follow criticism of their peers new work from discussions of the moment.

The Petrograd Pastanesi, which opened in 1920, is referred to by Hikmet Feridun Es as “different from all the others”. Although this cafe changed its name to the Ankara cafe in the 1940’s, it was still the Petrograd to its regulars. The Petrograd stayed open 24 hours a day,

and it was considered, as mentioned by Hikmet Feridun Es, a place where “bohemian intellectuals who couldn’t find a hotel, or could not afford one, might spend the remaining couple of hours of night free of charge” (Es, 2013, p. 70). It was a location where those who missed the last boat to Kadıköy could wait ‘till morning’. The philosopher Macit Gökberk and Niyazi Berkes spent many a night there “in their youth – during the 1930’s – waiting for dawn to break” (Birsell, 2016, p. 112):

“Petrograd was where writers and poets met and got to know one another. Salâh Birsell met Orhon Arıburnu and Cahit Sıktı here for the first time. As İlhan Berk and Celâl Sılay met Sait Faik there. Any artist in Beyoğlu would at very least, not want to pass by without glancing through the window of the Petrograd. Although the Vienna cafe was also a regular venue for the literary, it was the Nisuz and the Petrograd that attracted the majority of regulars, situated as it was in the heart of Beyoğlu” (Birsell, 2016, p. 124).

Until 20 years ago, when Onat Kutlar was killed during a bomb attack there, the Opera Cafe at the entrance to the Marmara Hotel was an address for writers and literati. The Gezi Cafe, regularly attended by Selim Ileri and Doğan Hızlan is perhaps the only cafe still frequented by the literary community, although it cannot be said that literary gatherings still take place there as they did during the first half of the 20 century.

1.6.4 Journals

In the forward to his work entitled *Edebiyatımızda Dergiler*, Erdal Doğan describes literary journals as “a window opening onto their readership for those engaged in creative writing”. The first Turkish journal was the *Vaka-i Tıbbiye*, which appeared between 1849 – 1851. One of the most important journals to be published during that period was the weekly *Servet-i Fünûn* journal, published by Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz in 1891 and renamed *Uyanış* after

the Declaration of the Republic and the introduction of the alphabetical reform. Despite the fact that, as Erdal Doğan stresses, there was a “plethora of journals” appearing between 1861-1923, this did not really effect the production of literary journals. The priorities of the period dictated the content of much of the new material, namely, medicine, science, military topics and news (Doğan, 1997, p. 9). The earliest issues of the *Servet-i Fünûn* were devoted to science until the journal was taken over by Tevfik Fikret, when he turned it into a literary publication (Anar, 2012, p. 371). Under Tevfik Hikmet’s management initiatives, the *Servet-i Fünûn* journal’s offices became a form of meeting place, bringing the writers and poets of the period together to discuss newly published works. “Every day, from morning to evening Tevfik Fikret and his team of publishers sat in their Office (at the journal) meeting and greeting everyone who turned up. Knowing that to be the case, almost all the writers and poets to appear in the journal inevitably gathered there in groups at certain times of the day” (Anar, 2012, 371). Anar relates, from the recollections of Mehmet Rauf, that the head offices of the journal were at times like a literary club, where any topic could spark off discussion, as long as it did not distract from the main subject of literature. According to Anar’s sources, there was much discussion and critical analysis of newly published books. Tevfik Fikret’s team of columnists, apart from meeting in Tevfik Fikret’s home, also had regular weekly meetings at the *Servet-i Fünûn journal offices*. Anar relates quoting Kenan Akyüz that:

“The writing team brought the latest pieces they had written for the journal, and literally read them out in person, so that each member of the team would be fully informed of their colleagues’ work and have an in depth awareness of current trends before they became the provenance of other, less reliable sources”. There can be little doubt that the mutual reciprocity of ideas fostered among participants by their interaction at such encounters must have played an influential role in shaping their literary identity. For the most part, the writings shared at the *Servet-i Fünûn* meetings

met with positive response, were sometimes were much praised but also criticised.

Praise acted as encouragement, criticism as a caution, neither being any cause for offence” (Anar, 2012, p. 373).

Among those frequently calling in to the *Servet-i Fünûn* offices were Mehmet Rauf, Cenap Şahabettin, Hüseyin Cahid and Celâl Sahir, while Recâizade Mahmud Ekrem and Halid Ziya were somewhat less frequent visitors. The *Servet-i Fünûn* journal closed in 1944. One of the other interesting characteristics of this journal was the group formed around the literary names connected with it. In the literary debate between the traditional and the new, the *Servet-i Fünûn*, as a journal, tended to take up stance supporting innovation. The new wave group set up through the initiatives of Recâizade Mahmut Ekrem and Tevfik Fikret included such names as Süleyma Nazif, Faik Ali Ozansoy, Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, Mehmet Rauf, Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın and Safvetî Ziya. This group, which was active between 1896-1901, may be said to have yielded the earliest examples of a number of genre in Turkish literature, including free verse, essay, interview, criticism and the short story. The *Servet-i Fünûn* or Tevfik Fikret-Halit Ziya School, although labelled as a source of “salon or ‘Alafranga’ literature, in fact can be said to hold a significant place in Turkish literature in that it represented the final stage in the long-standing literary debate over Eastern-Western trends on-going since the 1860’s, which was resolved in favour of western literature” (Emiroğlu, 2016, p. 69).

The *Genç Kalemler* journal, first published in Manastır in 1908 under the title of *Hüsün ve Şiir*, came out in Thessalonica for twelve months as a regular, twice monthly scientific and literary publication. The journal espoused a nationalistic stance, and supported the rationalisation of language. The aim was to align written text more closely to the spoken language, and so eradicate the existing discord between the two. The main figures contributing to the literary stance of the journal were Ali Canip Yöntem, Ömer Seyfettin and

Ziya Gökalp. Thanks to Ziya Gökalp, the journal's efforts to support rationalisation of the Turkish language escalated exponentially. The *Genç Kalemler* journal and the group of literary figures associated with it were the first to articulate the notion of 'National Literature', and in so doing started an influential movement which has its place in the literature of the Turkish Republic.

Although the number of journals in publication dropped during the War of Independence and the Republican era, journals continued to provide a platform for debate on both contemporary political issues and literary topics via the contributions of the finest writers of the day,. One such journal was of particular significance for Turkish literature, especially in its role as a precursor to the literary and art journals of the Republic period; the *Dergâh* Journal, published between 1921-23, which like the previous example, had a literary group associated with it. The journal was founded under the directorship of Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, with Mustafa Nihat Özön as chief editor, specifically "to support the national movement for independence and to take information to the people of Anatolia" (Emiroğlu, 2016, p. 100). Members of the *Dergâhçı* group were Yahya Kemal, Ahmet Haşim, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, Halide Edip Adıvar, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, Falih Rıfkı Atay, Ahmet Kutsi Tecer and Nurullah Ataç, among others.

Another journal, *Resimli Ay*, which was set up by Sabiha ve Zekeriya Sertel and first published in 1924, was somewhat different in both technique and content. Among the journal's writers were Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Sadri Ertem, Yusuf Ziya Ortaç, Reşat Nuri Güntekin, Mahmut Yesari, Mehmet Rauf and Ercüment Ekrem. When Nazim Hikmet joined the journal in 1928, Sabiha Sertel wrote that: "A phase indicating the birth of a new literature has just begun". The staff writers all changed, and new faces such as Sabahattin Ali, Suat Derviş and Vala Nurettin joined the team alongside Nazim Hikmet, and began writing in the journal as "representatives of a radical left literary trend". "Stories and poetry

were no longer written to satisfy the author's personal taste, but to expose the state of society. We may say that these were the nascent years of "realist literature in Turkey" (Sertel, 1969 , p. 89). The journal launched the campaign against Abdülhak Hamit Tarhan, Mehmet Emin Yurdakul, Hamdullah Suphi and Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu entitled "Removing the Idols", led by its foremost writers Nazım Hikmet, İlhami Bekir Tez and Sadri Ertem which was to prove one of the turning points in Turkish literature. The journal closed in 1930.

The longest-running journal in Turkish literature was *Varlık*, which was founded by Yaşar Nabi Nayır and first published in Ankara in 1933. The journal moved to Istanbul in 1946. Erdal Doğan describes the story of *Varlık* as: "not simply that of a publication, but of the history of modern literature" (Doğan, 1997, p. 25). Cevdet Kudret terms the *Varlık* as "the journal that created new Turkish literature". Its earlier writing line-up included such figures as Ahmet Muhip Dıranas, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, Nurullah Ataç, Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Vasfı Mahir Kocatürk, Nahit Sırrı Örik, Cedvet Kudret and Ziya Osman Saba. The earliest poetry of Behçet Necatigil, Orhan Veli, Oktay Rıfat and Melih Cevdet Anday was published in this journal (Doğan, 1997, p. 26). Frequent contributors included Sait Faik Abasıyanık, Oktay Akba, Necati Cumalı and Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu. Still in publication today, the *Varlık* journal head offices in Cağaloğlu, were, until relatively recently, a place to meet and congregate for many Turkish writers, poets and literati.

The journal of art and literature, *Yeditepe*, first published by Hüsamettin Bozok in 1950, and finally closed down in 1984, was a precursor in the field of art journals. According to Erdal Doğan, Hüsamettin Bozok created the journal *Yeditepe*, at the insistence of some of his friends who felt that *Varlık* was not for them. During its first years, the list of writers was long and included Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Samim Kocagöz, Salâh Bırsel, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, Attilâ İlhan, İlhan Berk, Sait Faik Abasıyanık, Behçet Necatigil, Oktay Akbal, Metin Eloğlu, Memet Fuat, Orhan Kemal, Muzaffer Buyrukçu, Hasan Hüseyin, Melih Cevdet

Anday, Necati Cumalı, Gülten Akin, Adnan Özyalçiner, Vedat Günyol, Edip Cansever, Asım Bezirci, Arif Damar and Can Yücel. Doğan recounts *Yeditepe* as being the journal where the work of many young poets and authors was published for the first time, commenting that it was between the pages of this journal that the work of these young authors encountered its first readers. He also points out that in addition to publishing books, like *Varlı*, he also founded the *Yeditepe Şiir Armağanı* (competition), which carried on for 13 years. The journal offices became a meeting place for notable poets and authors, not only the editorial team. Turgay Anar, quoting Yıldırım Keskin, comments that the journal's offices were a place where writers, poets, artists and scientists regularly met, and participated in conversations on art and literature:

“Some evenings, we would meet up with Orhan Kemal, Yaşar Kemal, Oktay Akbal, Agop Arad, Metin Eloğlu, Nevzat Üstün, Can Yücel, İlhan Berk and Behçet Necatigil, as well as a great many young writers whose names I don't recall, in the Yeditepe office. We would discuss the latest books, and talk about the stories and poetry just published in the journal, also criticising the writers of the previous generation. Those we would dismantle entirely and cast to one side. Yahya Kemal, in particular, was the target of most criticism” (Anar, 2012, p. 541).

A journal first entitled *Ufuklar*, founded jointly in 1952 by Orhan Burian and Vedat Günyol, and following the death of Orhan Burian, later relaunched as *Yeni Ufuklar*, under Vedat Günyol's management, remained in print until 1976. It started life as a critical journal dedicated to publishing “what was fine, good and true”. Under Burian, it accumulated a list of contributors including Fakir Baykurt, Talip Apaydın, Samim Kocagöz, Melih Cevdet Anday, Sabri Altınel, Tarık Dursun, Orhan Kemal, Orhan Duru, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu and Mehmet Başaran, to which later were added Yılmaz Güney, Muzaffer Buyrukçu, Fethi Naci, Azra Erhat, Rauf Mutluay, Afşar Timuçin, Selim İleri, Demir Özlü, Ferit Edgü, Demirtaş Ceyhun

and Nedim Sabancı among its contributors. As *Yeni Ufuklar*, with this writers' line-up the journal may be said to have contributed innovative approaches to the worlds of philosophy and art. It also contributed to the development of new approaches in criticism. The journal gave space to the work of young writers, and subjected them to in-depth critical analysis. Looked at from this perspective, *Yeni Ufuklar* appeared to be a sort of literary ideas studio (Doğan, 1997, p. 63). It brought together the foremost writers, artists and academics of the time. For example, the editorial team, consisting of Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Fethi Naci, Memet Fuat, Asım Bezirci and Vedat Günyol would meet two days a month in Sabahattin Eyüboğlu's house (Anar, 2012, p. 540).

A monthly journal entitled *Hisar* opened in Ankara in 1950 under the management of Munis Faik Ozansoy, closing in 1957. But reopened in 1964, remaining in publication until 1980. The journal was initially the idea of Mehmet Çınarlı, who devoted much time, resources and effort to create it. According to Emiroğlu, the idea for the journal came as a result of conversations during one of the poetry day meetings held monthly in the Ankara Halkevi, which were attended by approximately thirty poets, young and not so young. During one of these meetings, Çınarlı tells the group about his idea to bring out a journal (Emiroğlu, 2016, p. 177). Despite the initial negative response, he repeats his idea during one of his regular meetings with a group of literary figures in the Istanbul cafe. Finally he achieves his aim with the publication of the *Hisar* journal. The content consisted of poetry, poetic commentary, short stories, essays and criticism, it adopted an ideological stance close to "nationalistic literature, linked to certain principles to which it strongly adhered, claiming the militant role of defender against degeneration" (Enginün, 2009, p. 105). İnci Enginün, in her work, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Edebiyatı*, summarises the attitudes of the founders and writers of this journal:

These writers held to the following principles: “Opposition to ceceeding to the mere replication of western ideas; not totally rejecting change which is at the core of art, but opposition to the idea that change means the rejection of tradition; rejection of all art that is the tool of a particular political or ideological standpoint, or is in itself propeganda; and opposition to extremity in language, in favour of defending the use of vernacular speech.”. While espousing this common manifesto, they also rejected the new wave in Turkish, claiming that ‘öztürkçe’ reduced the capability for linguistic expression. All the poets writing for that journal maintained ties to traditional poetic style, particularly in meter and form (Enginün, 2009, p. 105).

The writers and poets clustered around the journal’s activities who were also contibutors were known as the “Hisarcılar”. Besides Ozansoy and Çınarlı, these included İlhan Geçer, Nüzhet Erman, Bekir Sıtkı Erdoğan, Gültekin Sâmanoğlu, Mustafa Necati Karaer, Yavuz Bülent Bakiler, Tarık Buğra and Cemil Meriç, with the occasional contributions of Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Halde Nusret Zorlutuna, Turgut Özakman and Sezai Karakoç.

The Mavi journal, first published in 1952, and carried on until 1956 was a monthly philosophy and art publication. Teoman Civelek first managed the journal up to the 25th issue, after which Özdemir Nutku took over the editorship between the 25th and 36th issue. As Öztürk Emiroğlu relates that: “All thinkers, (intellectuals) and artists who fundamentally understand this land and its people, their ideas and feelings, its destined identity in totality, can join the Mavi group” (Emiroğlu, 2016, 200). Referring to this statement, Attila İlhan said of the journal “It is a totally heterogenous publication, which publishes whatever it finds” (Doğan, 1997, p. 66). Later, however, Attilâ İlhan himself began to contribute copy and advice to the journal, although he did not join the staff. This instigated a new phase for Mavi,

when poets and writers gathering around it, and became known collectively as the “Maviciler”, led by Attilâ İlhan, whose devotees included: Ahmet Oktay, Ferit Edgü, Fikret Hakan, Demirtaş Ceyhun, Demir Özlü, Hilmi Yavuz, Asaf Çiyiltepe and Özdemir Nutku. Poets, story writers and columnists contributing to the journal included Fakir Baykurt, Hasan Tanrıkkurt, Şevket Rado, Ömer Faruk Toprak, Füzûzan, Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Cemal Süreya, Muzaffer Erdost, Ali Püsküllüoğlu, Tarık Dursun K., Tahsin Yücel, Muzaffer Buyrukçu, İlhan Tarus, Mahmut Makal and Orhan Duru.

a dergisi was first published in 1956 during a period when trends in poetry and story were in flux; current affairs were being exposed and discussed in such arena. This journal was particularly well-known for its investigative interviews. As Doğan relates in the first interview, in which Orhan Kemal, Metin Eloğlu and Demir Özlü were asked “What does it mean to be ‘local’ in art, in your view?” and used such questioning phrases as “Was this necessary? Why? In another investigative piece, when Tahsin Yücel was awarded the Sait Faik Story Award with his work *Haney Yaşamalı*, the instantaneous responses of Yaşar Kemal, Cemal Süreya, Attilâ İlhan, Behçet Necatigil and others to this moment were notable. In another issue, a round table is set up to study Onat Kutlar’s book of stories, *İshak* (Doğan, 1997, pp. 72-73). Prior to its closure in 1960, the journal frequently hosted such names as Hilmi Yavuz, Ercüment Uçarı, Cemal Süreya, Edip Cansever, Kemal Özer, İlhan Berk, Turgut Uyar, Ahmet Oktay, Ece Ayhan, Cevat Çapan, Adnan Özyalçiner, Onat Kutlar, Erdal Öz, Demir Özlü, and Muzaffer Buyrukçu. The writers and poets gathering around the journal became synonymous as a group with the name of the journal, and entered the history of literature as the “a’cılar” (a’cis), They tended to meet in Beyazıt, Laleli, Aksaray and Yenikapı.

The *Yeni Dergi*, which started out as a monthly art journal under Memet Fuat as managing editor in 1964 generally featured criticism and in depth studies in art and

philosophy, specialising, in particular, on pieces translated from other languages. Contributors included Oktay Rıfat, Konur Ertop, Doğan Hızlan, Asım Bezirci, Akşit Göktürk, Memet Fuat, Nermi Uygur, Mustafa Öneş, Mehmet H. Doğan, Fethi Naci, Sezer Tansuğ, Özdemir Nutku and Selim İleri. Poets whose work was regularly featured included Melih Cevdet Anday, Behçet Necatigil, İlhan Berk, Edip Cansever, Ülkü Tamer, Cemal Süreya, Ece Ayhan; and among the translators contributing were Bertan Onaran, Murat Belge, Asım Bezirci, Yurdanur Salman, Celâl Üster and Cevat Çapan. This journal was also known particularly for featuring the work of young authors, and contributed distinctive, innovative features in terms of journalistic format, especially in layout and printing. Within its remit as a journal *Yeni Dergi* initiated seminars on criticism and translation, and its offices were the hub of literary and art discussions among writers and poets. The journal closed down in 1975.

The journal *Papirüs* was the brainchild of Cemal Süreya. It was a place where writers, poets and literati congregated frequently to discuss and debate(14). Süreya published four issues in 1960, before suspending publication for a period, and launching it once again with the assistance of Tomris Uyar and Ülkü Tamer in 1966-80. Tomris Uyar undertook the role of editor, and the delivery of new issues to sales points in and around Karaköy. Ülkü Tamer was tasked with the organisation of paper supply, printing and distribution, as well as graphic design (Perinçek ve Duruel, 2008, p. 167). The journal began to see a regular flow of visitors to its office, many not only seeking Cemal Süreya himself, but also hoping to meet personalities such as Süreyya Berfe, Muzaffet Buyrukçu, Murat Belge and Füzûzan. In fact, the trail of visits was so intense that Tomris Uyar remarked that she was unable to work for constantly serving tea and coffee to all the visitors (Perinçek ve Duruel, 2008, p. 168).

Erdal Doğan suggested that the best years for the publication of journals were between 1960 ve 1970. Journalism took on new dimensions in response to new publications, adding diversity to the pool (Doğan, 1997, p. 11). One such journal was *Diriliş*, which first published

under Sezai Karakoç in 1960. Although only surviving initially for two issues, the journal reopened twice between 1966-80 and 1988-92. This publication was more politically-orientated than literary in content, advocating Islam as a form of protection against western imperialism and the threat of communism. Its offices were also occasionally frequented by writers, poets and the literary public (Anar, 2012, p. 542). Sezai Karakoç, Cahit Zarifoğlu, Ebubekir Eroğlu, İsmet Özel, Cahit Koytak, Abullah Öztemiz, Ali Özkavaf, Ahmet Yücel were among its writers and contributors. In addition to philosophical pieces, the journal also printed the poetry and prose of foreign writers.

In 1970, İsmet Özel and Ataul Behramoğlu first published *Halkın Dostları*, as “the banner of the struggle for revolutionary art and culture”, with the slogan “Destroy reactionary art”. Declaring the intention of becoming the “anti-Imperialist cultural platform”, this journal’s writers included İsmet Özel, Ataul Behramoğlu, Murat Belge, Ayhan Gerçekter, Haluk Şahin, Nihat Behram, Asım Bezirci, Nedim Gürsel, Adnan Özyalçınar, Bekir Yıldız and Süreyya Berfe, with, alongside the written pieces, the artwork of Tan Oral ve Ferit Öngören. The journal’s slogan, ‘Destroy reactionary art’ attracted much debate in the world of literature.

The *a dergisi* launched in 1956, was re-released as *Yeni a* in 1972. Erdal Doğan points out that both these journals coincided with phases of political crisis and uncertainty. The manifesto of the journal was ‘to find solutions to long evolving issues, to confront the bourgeois Western culture whose broad impact lies at the core of so many of our problems, to promote fundamentally grounded criticism of both traditional and current art trends, and while doing so, to act with solidarity towards the people’s struggle, to contribute to the development of an art and culture authentically grounded in its true class, and to take a strong position against any concrete conditions acting, in the immediate term, as obstacles to the realisation

of these goals” (Doğan, 1997, p. 97). The journal published essays, investigative pieces, as well as work engaging with the social issues and developments of the day.

The journal *Sanat Emeği*, owned by Barış Pirhasan, was published between 1978-1980, under the director-editorship of Turgay Fişekçi. As described by Doğan, the mission of the journal was based on the conviction that artists and writers should become closely affiliated with the workers’ movement of the period. Consequently, it aimed at bringing together more radical, social realist writers, giving space to political opinion, as well as pieces on all branches of the arts, including literature, music, art, cinema, sculpture, theatre, book reviews and art and culture news. The writing committee consisted of A. Kadir, Asım Bezirci, Orhan Taylan, Ataol Behramoğlu and Barış Pirhasan; and the writers contributing included Ali Taygun, Erdal Alover, Abdülkadir Bulut, Refik Durbaş, Ülkü Ayvaz, Ruhi Su, Vedat Türkali, Adnan Özer, Server Tanilli, Ahmet Erhan, Yaşar Miraç, Atilla Birkiye, Atilla Dorsay, Bilgesu Erenus, Enver Gökçe, Vedat Günyol, Özdemir İnce, Mahmut Makal, Adnan Özyalçın, Sennur Sezer, Özdemir Nutku, Talip Apaydın, Bekir Yıldız, Hilmi Yavuz, Ahmet Oktay, Tan Oral, Ülkü Tamer, Hüseyin Yurttaş, Can Yücel, Kemal Özer and Uğur Kökten.

Towards the 1980’s, major capital began to invest in the field of art and culture publications. One publication resulting from that was *Milliyet Sanat*, a weekly supplement to the daily *Milliyet* which came out under the direction of Akal Atilla. One of the aspects of this supplement was a section on art and cultural news and events at home and abroad. The writers included Hilmi Yavuz, Mete Tunçay, Alpay Kabacalı, Mehmet Doğan, Ferit Edgü, Kaya Özsezgin, Onat Kutlar and Özdemir Nutku. This supplement was closed in 1979, and reopened a year later in 1980, as a monthly magazine managed by Ülkü Tamer, later only to be returned to Akal Atila and published as a twice-monthly supplement. Among its contributors were Murat Belge, Cemal Süreya and Gülten Akın. As a publication it particularly attracted interest for its policy of including the work of young poets. It also

provided a wide reading public with access to current news on the arts and culture, while supporting creative artists in a number of fields. Vedat Günyol, Özdemir İnce, Atilla Dorsay, Tomris Uyar, Abidin Dino, Salâh Birsell, DoğanKuban, Konur Ertop, Evin İlyasoğlu, Cevat Çapan, Talat Halman, Orhan Duru, Bülent Erkman, Rekin Teksoy, Yekta Kara, Sungu Çapan, Ahmet Cemal, Sevin Okyay, Akgün Akova were among its author-contributors. *Gösteri* was another arts and literature journal that began publication in 1982. Initially owned by Egemen Bostancı with Doğan Hızlan as Advisory Editor-in Chief, it was out for six months when it was sold to Sedat Simavi. *Gösteri* was primarily a literature-focused publication that gave space not only to the work of the most renowned authors, but to young writers and poets, and organised poetry, story and essay competitions targeting young hopefuls. This journal brought together writers of different artistic persuasions. Doğan Hızlan describes the overall approach of the journal in an interview in the following words:

“It would hardly be right if the *Gösteri* reader could recognise Melih Cevdet as a good poet and yet not know Haydar Ergülen or Küçük İskender; or that Fethi Naci should be an example of quality in essay criticism while Mehmet Ergüven is not mentioned. I favour variety. I never produced a journal that featured work along parallel lines, it was always my intention to position myself at the centre of intersecting contours,” (Doğan, 1997, p. 187).

The journals mentioned above held an important place in Turkish journalism history. Others worthy of note include Yusuf Ziya Ortaç and Orhan Seyfi Orhon’s *Ayda Bir* (1935), which featured stories and poetry, interviews and local and international magazine news; Peyami Safa’s *Kültür Haftası* (1936); featuring debate on novels and rural vernacular literature, with writing contributions by Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel, Halit Fahri Ozansoy and Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar among others; Necip Fazıl Kürek’s *Büyük Doğu* (1936), featuring a string of writers including Ahmet Kutsi Tecer, Mustafa Şekip Tunç, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar,

Sabahattin Ali, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Ahmet Muhip Dıranas, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, Asaf Halet Çelebi and Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, not to mention Salâh Bırsel, Faik Baysal, Fikret Adil, Sabahattin Kudret Aksal, Ziya Osman Saba, Özdemir Asaf and Sezai Karakoç; *İnsan* (1938), established by Nurullah Ataç, Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu ve Muzaffer Şerif Başoğlu; *Çınaraltı* (1941), established by Orhan Seyfi Orhon and Yusuf Ziya Ortaç, which was a nationalism- leaning journal, to which the writers Halide Nusret Zorlutuna, Nihal Atsız, Peyami Safa, Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel, Halit Fahri Ozansoy, Zeki Ömer Defne and Tarık Buğra contributed, among others; *Markopaşa* (1946), the humorous social-realist journal of Sabahattin Ali, Aziz Nesin and Rifat Ilgaz containing satirical material with a socialist political stance; *Seçilmiş Hikâyeler* (1947), established by Salim Şengil as a journal of short stories, which added poetry, essays, drama, cinema and criticism to its pages after 1953, and relaunched as *Dost* in 1957; *Kaynak* (1948), which began as a platform for poetry and poetic criticism, adding short stories in later issues, with contributors including Melih Cevdet Anday, Edip Cansever, Attilâ İlhan, Şükran Kurdakul, Özdemir Asaf, Ümit Yaşar Oğuzcan, Ömer Faruk Toprak, Cahit Külebi, Ahmet Muhip Dıranas, Metin Eloğlu, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, Fethi Naci, Turgut Uyar, Ercüment Uçar, Salâh Bırsel, Cahit Irgat and Kâmuran Şipal; *Yaprak* (1949), published by Orhan Veli and with a writer's line up of Orhan Veli, Oktay Rifat ve Melih Cevdet Anday, Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca, Cahit Külebi, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu; *Pazar Postası* (1951), which had a heterogeneous list of contributing writers, including Nurullah Ataç, Aziz Nesin, Ceyhan Atuf Kansu, Can Yücel, Fethi Naci, Muzaffer Erdost, İlhan Berk, Turgut Uyar, Cemal Süreya, Asım Bezirci, Edip Cansever, Ece Ayhan, Ahmet Oktay, Sezai Karakoç, Orhan Duru, Ferit Edgü, Demir Özlü, Özdemir Nutku, Güner Sümer, Tarık Dursun K., Demirtaş Ceyhan, Erdal Öz, Metin Eloğlu, Bilge Karası, Ülkü Tamer, Özdemir İnce, Muzaffer Buyrukçu, Attilâ İlhan and Hüseyin Cöntürk, which was a platform both for various on-going literary discussions and pieces with a political flavour.

One notable long-running journal, *Türk Dili Dergisi* (1951) had Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Nurullah Ataç, Oktay Akbal, Orhan Hançerlioğlu, Peyami Safa, Sabahattin Kudret Aksal and Salah Birsal amongst its contributors; *Yenilik*, which started out as a newspaper, turned to journal format after two years, and was designed as an “art newsheet”, mainly containing poetry, stories and essays, but also book reviews, art, music and theatre criticism, including the poetry of Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Behçet Necatigil, Cahit Külebi, Sabahattin Kudret Aksal, Necati Cumalı, Özdemir Asaf, İlhan Berk, Edip Cansever, Attilâ İlhan, Metin Eloğlu, Cahit Irgat, Kemal Özer, Turgut Uyar, Cemal Süreya, Ümit Yaşar Oğuzcan, Ülkü Tamer; the stories of Zeyyat Selimoğlu, Tarık Buğra, Memduh Şevket Esendal, Samim Kocagöz, Muzaffer Buyrukçu, Oktay Akbal, Tarık Dursun K., Bilge Karasu, Tahsin Yücel, Erdal Öz, Adnan Özyalçın, Füzûzan, Demir Özlü and others. *Yenilik* (1955), although only in print for six months, was “influential in its search for the ‘new’ and brought together poets and story writers representative of the period”; writers such as Muzaffer Erdost, Yılmaz Gruda, Ömer Faruk Toprak, Mahmut Makal, Tarık Dursun K. and Fakir Baykurt, and poets such as İlhan Berk, Cemal Süreya and Ahmet Oktay.

Ataç (1962), owned by Şükran Kurdakul, with Afşar Timuçin as chief editor, was a journal providing space for young writers, with a bias towards the arts, some issues were devoted entirely to translated material, and the journal boasted a writer’s line up including Oktay Akbal, Tahir Alangu, Sabri Altınal, Melih Cevdet Anday, Oğuz Arıkanlı, Beyzat Ay, Halikarsan Balıkcısı, Asım Bezirci, Egemen Berköz, Muzaffer Buyrukçu, Demirtaş Ceyhun, Ferit Edgü, Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Orhan Duru, Selahattin Hilav, Hasan Hüseyin, Attilâ İlhan, Tarık Dursun K., Ceyhun Atuf Kansu, Samim Kocagöz, Ahmet Oktay, Ferit Öngören, Demir Özlü, Tarık Zafer Tunaya, Güven Turan and Nevzat Üstün; *Dönem* (1963) a mainly poetry-centred journal, founded by Turgut Uyar, Hüseyin Cöntürk ve Asım Bezirci, one of whom, Hüseyin Cöntürk, instigated considerable reaction in the literary world with critical

commentaries on poetry and poets in his “Şairler Sözlüğü”; *Şiir Sanat* (1965), a journal run by Kemal Özer, which aimed to provide some impetus to the connection between reader and poet, and focused on the issues of poems and poets in the writings of Cemal Süreya, Sezai Karakoç, Talat Halman, İsmet Özel, Süreyya Berfe, Güven Turan, Adnan Özyalçın, Melisa Erdönmez, Ataol Behramoğlu and others; *Yordam* (1966), run by Hüseyin Cöntürk, featuring writers such as Ahmet İnam, Haluk Aker, Gün Zileli, Tuncer Gönen, Güven Turan, Egemen Berköz and Nihat Behram, and featuring poetry, prose, analysis-review and criticism; *Türkiye Yazıları* (1977, established to publish poetry and essays, with a publishing committee consisting of Vecihi Timuroğlu, Ragıp Gelencik, Cemal Süreya, Ahmet Say and Ali Püsküllüoğlu; *Somut* (1979), designed to promote a form of art and literature which, although not divorced from society and social issues, retained its identity as works of art, published many first poems and stories, and the work of Sabri Altınel, Edip Cansever, Demir Özlü, Oğuz Demiralp, Behçet Necatigil, Refik Durbaş, Abdülkadir Budak, Metin Eloğlu, Cahit Irgat, Hilmi Yavuz, Uğur Kökten, Atilla Özkırmı, Jale Parla, Haydar Ergülen, Fethi Naci, Özdemir İnce, Tomris Uyar, İlhan Berk, Murathan Mungan, Burhan Günel, Süreyya Berfe, Metin Altıok, Adalet Ağaoğlu, İnci Aral and Sina Akşin; *Yusuçuk* (1979-1980), run by Ali Püsküllüoğlu, contained short pieces on poetry and related issues, and the work of local and foreign poets, and counted among its contributors Attilâ İlhan, Cemal Süreya, Cahit Külebi, Hilmi Yavuz, Özdemir İnce, Metin Altıok, Mehmet H. Doğan; and *Edebiyat Cephesi* (1979), founded under Demirtaş Ceyhun as a literary journal aiming to combat the deculturalisation of society by imperialism, which featured stories focused on current issues, by authors such as Talip Apaydın, Mehmet Güler, Turgut Çeviker and Behzat Ay, and the poems of Hüseyin Yurttaş, Afşar Timuçin, Metin Eloğlu, Talip Apaydın, Hasan İzzettin Dinamo, Yüksel Pazarkaya, Yaşar Miraç and Murathan Mungan among others. These were the most notable Turkish literary journals published prior to the 1980's.

1.6.5. Other Literary Meeting Places

In his work, *Mekândan Taşan Edebiyat: Yeni Türk Edebiyatında Edebiyat Mahfilleri*, Turgay Anar analysed the places where literary figures and writers congregated. Although he dwells extensively on the term: ‘literature club’, it will suffice to define this here as a place where poets, writers and literati gathered. As Anar points out, Istanbul as a city was well-endowed with such ‘literature clubs’. This thesis examines this subject in detail. However, it would be appropriate to point to one of Anar’s findings concerning the changes occurring to such venues in Istanbul. “During the period of the downfall of the Ottoman empire”, according to Anar, “such ‘clubs’ were founded particularly in the mansions and lodges of leading state functionaries, the houses of the wealthy and privileged, literary aficionados, and in public spaces (Anar, 2012; p. XIX). Whereas after the fall of the Ottomans, they were to be encountered in different types of space, due to the fundamental changes in the social, political, economic and other structures and parametres of society” (Anar, 2012; p. XIX).

Anar claims that changes occurring to the nature of their space also impacted the characteristics of these ‘clubs’. Poets, writers and literati themselves began to frequent the very public spaces that were easily accessible to the general public, and it was in such spaces, where the common man could come and go easily and freely, that they formed their new literature clubs. Anar clarifies that it was in this way that literature “moved into the heart of the public domain” where it attracted a broad public base to literature, creating a class of readers of varying social status and walks of life. And the existence of these places, he stresses, in turn led to a growing, more informed body of public interest in literary matters.

In addition, Anar states that during the period of the Republic, particularly in the earlier years, there were a great many cultural, artistic and literary centres in and around Sultanahmet and Beyazit. The founding of Istanbul University and the Municipal Library in Beyazit in the

1920's may also be counted among the factors behind such changes. In later years, such centres would relocate for various reasons to locations in and around Beyoğlu.

As Anar stresses, the existence of literary gatherings where poets could recite their poetry, writers read their stories and both literati and informed readers could discuss literature, actively contributed to literary development, since they constituted interactive public settings for such developments to occur (Anar; 2012, p. 555).

The Hürriyet Daily's New Year supplement for 1. January 2006 focuses on the topic "Friendship groups in Turkey", touching on literary groups among others. One such group was the *Pera Balık Group*, described by the author of the piece, Demirtaş Ceyhun, who points out the ancient origins of the tradition of literary gatherings around the dining table:

"One thinks immediately of the famous literary dinners of Atatürk, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Nahid Hanım, Nadir Nadi, Melih Cevdet and Fethi Naci, which were undoubtedly a tradition originating in the new Republican era. Notwithstanding the argument as to whether this form of literary gathering was typical of our culture, such gatherings are known to have been quite ancient in origin," (*Hürriyet Gazetesi Yeni Yıl Eki*, 2006, p. 40).

Demirtaş Ceyhun claims that the tradition of the 'literary dinner' originated from Atatürk's team discussions over the dinner table known as the 'Çankaya Sofraları', and indeed, go back to the 'Devotee Gatherings' which began during the period of the Ottoman sultan Murad II.

Ceyhun assumes that Sultan Murad's 'Devotee Tables' were the 'Literary Dinners' of the Divan poets: also stressing the presence at the 'Çankaya tables' of the foremost writers and literary figures of the day, such as Falih Rıfkı Atay, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Ruşen Eşref, Hasan Âli Yücel, Halide Edip Adıvar, Adnan Adıvar, Memduh Şevket Esendal and Yunus Nadi. The *Pera Balık Group*, which consisted of the writer Demirtaş Ceyhun, writer-

cinematographer Arif Keskiner, traditional folk music exponent Rahmi Saltuk, the poet İsmail Uyaroğlu, the writers Veysel Dikmen and Ülkü Ayvaz, the owner of Cem Publications Mehmet Ali Uğur and the artist Hakan Demirok saw themselves, in his view, as a continuation of the group which met in the 1970's and was first assembled by Nadir Nadi, Oktay Akbal and Melih Cevdet Anday. After meeting regularly for a very long time in Cumhuriyet Meyhanesi in Galatasaray Balık Pazarı, this group moved to the Pera Balık Lokantası, also in Beyoğlu, where they meet every Thursday at 2pm, to talk of history, poetry, national issues but mostly about literature.

The 1950's generation of literati was led by Doğan Hızlan, whom Erdal Öz, a writer of that era, describes as the president of literature. That generation congregated particularly around the *a dergisi*, and included such writers as Demirtaş Ceyhun, Orhan Duru, Ferit Edgü, Konur Ertop, Ergin Günçe, Doğan Hızlan, Onat Kutlar, Ahmet Oktay, Ferit Öngören, Erdal Öz, Kemal Özer, Demir Özlü, Adnan Özyalçın, Önay Sözer, Ülkü Tamer and Hilmi Yavuz (Hürriyet Yeni Yıl Eki, 2006, p. 10). As the writer points out, the common passion of this group, what brought them together was literature. As Doğan Hızlan comments, Although the members may have divergent literary tastes, no matter how differently each may interpret foreign sources, even though they may have their own idiosyncratic ideas, not quite in synch with a range of international philosophical movements from existentialism onwards, they still showed appreciation of each other's new works, and took pride in each other's success. After being friends for over half a century, it is hardly even necessary for them to meet regularly. Although through the contact chain, one call can ensure that "they all congregate at a coffee house, a cocktail venue or a meyhane". If one asked what did they do when they met, the answer would invariably be: "They actually do meet without gathering together; they follow each other's writings, poetry and critical work, which they appreciate and will defend. When they do come together, they share their passion for literature" (Hürriyet Yeni Yıl Eki, 2006, p.

10). Semih Gümüş stresses the importance of that generation, saying that had the '50's generation not existed, contemporary literature would have had a somewhat different perspective, perhaps would have been lacking in some respects:

“In fact, the literature of the time might well have faced stronger criticism for being outside acceptable parameters, for preserving its own independent identity against the unbending fervour of existing social movements. In other words, this generation of writers added such essential value to Turkish literature through its consistency that it may be considered the most important of all those generations of Turkish writers which emerged from within successive periods of social and cultural flux in Turkey” (Gümüş, 2010, p. 82).

The so-called Cuma Akademi, named by poet, translator and academic Cevat Çapan, and according to Aydın Boysan also named the Cuma Dem Akademi, is one of the literary groups that continues to meet every Friday. Among the regulars in this group are the literary critic Fethi Naci, the writer-architect Aydın Boysan, theatre artist Mücap Oflluoğlu, the poet Cevat Çapan, the lawyer Ziya Şav, Güngör Ergin- construction engineer, the artist Nuri Akay, the academic Prof. Dr. Selçuk Özarmağan, the lawyer Altan Akdeniz, the journalist Turhan Günay, Metin Fındıkçı - poet, Besim Dalgıç - graphic artist, lawyer Lale Kalpakçioğlu, writer Deniz Kavukçuoğlu, director Tunç Başaran, theatre artist Mustafa Alabora, poet Turgay Fişekçi, banker İbrahim Yolyapan and the writer Kemal Demirel (Hürriyet Yeni Yıl Eki, 2006, p. 26). The Cuma Toplantıları began at the end of the 1960's and the beginning of the 70's, with a core group which consisted of Rauf Mutluay, Fethi Naci and Edip Cansever, and which the architect Selçuk Batur and Ferit Erkmén joined soon afterwards. The journalist İhsan Yılmaz recounts in his article that this group first met in the Vilayet Lokantası in Cağaloğlu and later in Istanbul Lokantası. Later they changed location to the Sofra, and the day of their regular meeting to Friday “Because Muzafer makes beans on Fridays, and his

beans are legendary,” (Hürriyet Yeni Yıl Eki, 2006, p. 26). From the beginning of the eighties up to the nineties, the group continued at the meyhane / locale known as Şenol’un Yeri or Yayla in the Tan Printer’s Building. As the dailies began to leave Cağaloğlu in the 1990’s, gradually they were followed by the publishing houses. When Fethi Naci moved his publishing house Gerçek Yayınları to Tünel in 1995, the Cuma Toplantıları group continued meeting in Çiçek Pasajı at Bayram’ın Yeri’, or Sev İç Restaurant, then at Cumhuriyet Meyhanesi for a year, before returning to Sev İç Restaurant. The main topics of conversation were culture and art, and most of all literature.

A group of aficionados with a wide range of professional backgrounds but a common love of books, and a keen interest in discussing cultural and historical issues began to meet in the bookshop of Sahaf Lütfü Seymen, the bookseller in Akmar Pasaj, in Kadıköy at the beginning of the 1990’s. This group met every Saturday in the bookseller Seyman’s depot between 14.30 and 18.00 to discuss common topics. Although the group did not have a specific name, Serhan Yedig, in his piece in the New Year supplement of the Hürriyet Daily, recounts that since they were effectively the voluntary publishing committee of the literary journal published by Seymen, the Mütferrika, they became named after that publication. The group included retired banker and electrical engineer, Erol Üyepazarcı, writer, folklorist and educator Sabri Koz, publishers Raşit Çavaş and Fahri Aral, and poet Eray Canberk. Their discussion ranged from “rare antiquarian books, the errors in newly published books, history, classic Turkish music” and similar topics.

The poet Küçük İskender, in the decade up to 2006 met with other poets in Veli Bar every Tuesday up to 11pm, having previously met in other locations, According to Emel Armutçu, writing in the Hürriyet Daily’s New Year Supplement, in the earlier years, İskender, the organiser of these poetic gatherings, invited a different guest each week whom he interviewed. Then in the later years the gatherings turned into a free platform where poets

recited their own work. The group of poets included, apart from Küçük İskender himself, Hüseyin Alemdar, Onur Caymaz, Gonca Özmen, “Kötü Şair” (Bad poet) Şerafettin, Lale Müldür, Arif Damar, Haydar Ergülen and Orhan Alkaya. Armutçu adds that other groups of Beyoğlu poets such as Şair Çıkmazı, also participated in these gatherings, which was supported by Edebiyat Coop and Ölü Ozanlar Derneği.

1.7 Book Publishing Past to Present

Book printing began during the Ottoman period at the beginning of the 16 century, first in the hands of minority group printers. Later, Turkish printers carried on until the 1830’s. (Ersoy, 1959, pp. 14-47). The printing press was brought to Turkey by İbrahim Müteferrika.

According to İskit, the first printing house was founded in 1729 when the first book was printed in the Arabic script (İskit, 2000, p. 20). Although there is relatively little verifiable information about publishing and printing in Turkey up to 1839, it can be claimed that following the issue of the Reforms Edict (Islahat Ferman) (1856) in the subsequent period book publishing began to gain importance. One of the reasons cited for this was the expanding influence of the West over the Ottomans, when political and diplomatic relations established at the time were accompanied by an influx of cultural influences. This led to the importation of the printing press. According to the “İstanbul Matbuat Cemiyeti” (Istanbul Printers Association) almanac of 1933, there were 128 booksellers in Istanbul in 1908 (İskit, 2000, pp. 33-82).

Between 1803-1839, it would appear that an average of ten books were published per year, while during the first 20 years after the Reform Declaration (Tanzimat) in 1839, the average number of books published annually rose to 40 (Baysal, 1968). Between 1869-1875, this rose to an annual average of 160 books annually. After 1869, interest in the genres of the

short story, the novel and drama is known to have expanded exponentially (Baysal, 1968, pp. 79-80).

Kabacalı remarks on the growing numbers of bookshops to emerge after the second Reform Declaration:

“After the second Declaration of Reform, (İkinci Meşrutiyet) bookshops began to proliferate in the Bâbüali neighborhood. Most of these bookshops were also known to be involved in publishing. Some of the publishers founded at that time continued operations into the Republic. Some such publishers also set up their own printing houses, although rarely engaging in an organised publishing program. A great many books were published during the second Reform period, and the years between 1908-1912 appear to have been when Ottoman publishing particularly reached its peak” (Kabacalı, 2000, pp. 138-139).

The Alphabetic Reform of 1928, followed by the establishment of the Turkish Language Institute (Türk Dil Kurumu) in 1932 under the supervision of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the convening of the First Turkish Publications Congress in Ankara in 1939 also proved influential in the field of publishing. Two publishers founded in those years, İnkılap ve Remzi are still active in publishing. One of the innovations of the 1950's was the publication of pocket editions. In 1953, the publishers Çağlayan Yayınları, founded by Ertem Eğilmez, Refik Erduran ve Haldun Sel opened their own printing house, for which they imported European printing presses. Another significant innovation of the period was the sale of books via the distributors of the daily press. (Kabacalı, 2000, pp. 177-227).

During the 1960's, a number of new publishers were established. Particularly during the second half of the decade, along with the proliferation of journals. Among them were the following houses: “Ağaoğlu, Ant, Bilgi, Bilim ve Sosyalizm, Cem, Çan, Doğan, Dönem, E,

Gerçek, Gün, Habora, May, Yankı, Sol, Sosyal, Ararat, Ekim, İzlem, Köprü, Kovan Kitabevi, Öncü Kitabevi, Payel, Toplum, Yön and Sander,” (Kabacalı, 2000, p. 236).

According to Kabacalı, by the 1970's the foremost daily newspapers, such as Hürriyet and Milliyet, had entered the publishing sector with their own publishing houses. Tercüman Publications (Yayınları) published volumes in the series “1001 Classics” (1000 Temel Eser); Cumhuriyet newspaper founded Çağdaş Publications which focused primarily on the publication of theoretical, in-depth investigatory non-fiction (Kabacalı, 2000, pp. 243-244). Among others, Altın and E Publications became recognised for publishing best-sellers in translation. Cem, Yayınevi, Remzi, İnkılap, Bilgi, Payel and many more publishers emerged during that era.

During the 1980's and the first half of the 1990's, book sales fell, although the types of published works diversified (Kabacalı, 2000, pp. 258-259). a representative list of new publishers founded at the time despite adverse conditions managing to remain in print is as follows: Adam, Afa, Anahtar Kitaplar, *Ayrıntı Yayınları*, Bağlam, Broy, *Can Yayınları*, Cep Kitapları, Çınar, İletişim, İmge Kitabevi, İnsan, Kaynak Yayınları, Metis Kitap, Nisan, Oğlak, Papirüs, Say Yayınları, Yapı Kredi Yayınevi and Yar yayınevi.

Since the earliest years of publishing, the numbers of books being published has risen exponentially in time: from 2199 in 1940 to 3548 in 1960. Despite a drop in print during 1970, by 1980 the number of books published rose to 4,318, this figure reaching 6,586 by 1990. According to the Turkish Statistics Organisation (TÜİK)'s study *İstatistik Göstergeler: 1923-2011* (Statistical Indicators: 1923-2011), the figures for books published between 1978-2009 are as follows:

Table 2 *Number of Books Published By Subject for the Years (1978-2009)***5.2 Konularına göre yıl içinde yayımlanan kitap sayısı**

Number of book published during the year by subject

Yıl Year	Toplam Total	Genel General	Felsefe Philosophy	Din, ilahiyat Religion, theology	Sosyal bilimler Social sciences	Dil Philology
1978	5 033	407	166	267	1 626	138
1979	5 071	436	129	365	1 442	116
1980	4 318	328	111	347	1 107	82
1981	5 610	911	90	369	1 271	160
1982	6 190	1 025	97	359	1 360	177
1983	7 180	1 207	100	555	1 667	161
1984	7 224	1 133	121	505	1 690	192
1985	6 741	818	105	612	1 744	294
1986	6 794	698	125	618	1 884	192
1987	6 382	572	128	424	2 012	199
1988	6 101	539	89	473	1 965	156
1989	5 870	425	98	397	1 897	155
1990	6 586	566	267	534	1 995	154
1991	6 522	608	144	446	2 149	155
1992	6 151	464	184	481	1 996	171
1993	5 978	386	175	397	1 903	108
1994	5 631	374	155	319	1 910	128
1995	5 172	323	181	346	1 520	85
1996	8 207	1 024	255	654	2 391	165
1997	8 352	645	345	798	2 284	215
1998	9 383	835	455	863	2 584	195
1999	9 763	843	393	667	2 473	281
2000	8 905	643	425	575	2 411	145
2001	9 644	696	460	622	2 613	157
2002	12 497	1 079	504	853	3 165	360
2003	15 976	1 379	644	1 092	4 047	460
2004	15 434	1 111	741	1 003	4 168	247
2005	31 050	2 236	1 490	2 018	8 384	497
2006	14 322	1 031	688	931	3 867	229
2007	15 605	1 124	749	1 014	4 214	250
2008	17 929	1 291	861	1 165	4 841	287
2009	26 556	1 912	1 274	1 726	7 170	424

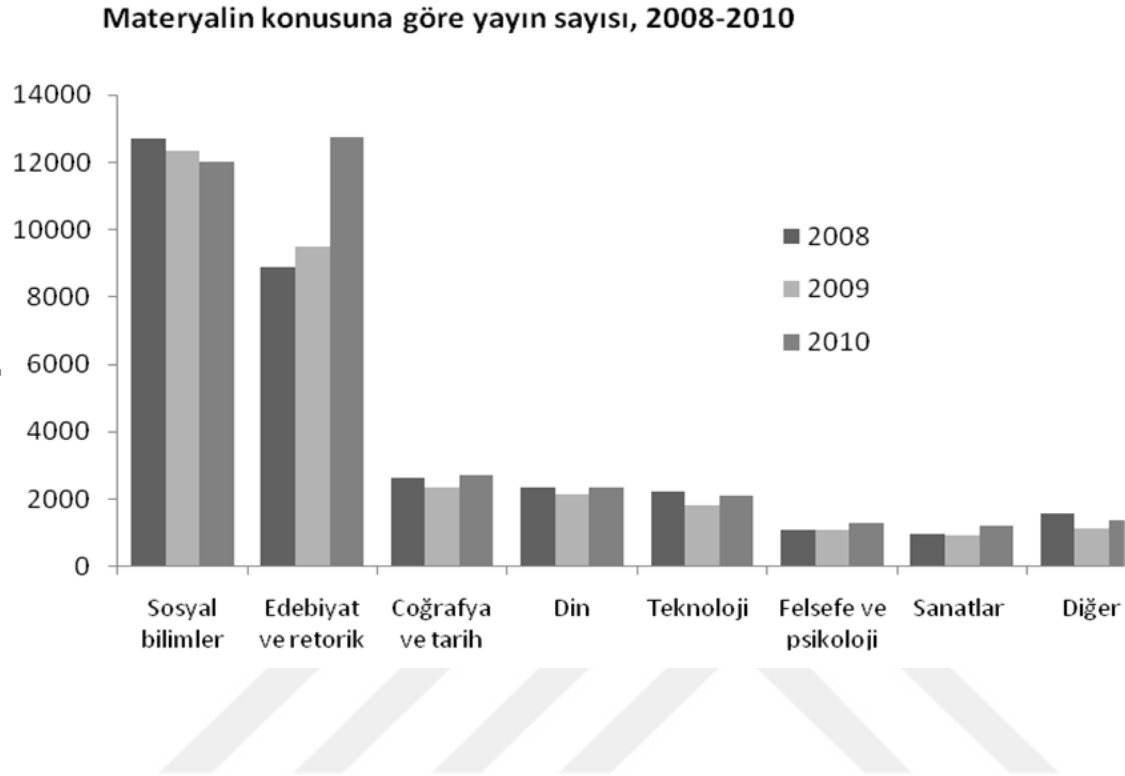
	Kuramsal bilimler Pure sciences	Uygulamalı bilimler Applied sciences	Güzel sanatlar ve eğlence Fine arts and entertainment	Edebiyat Literature	Tarih, coğrafya, biyografya History, geography, biography
1978	335	630	287	717	460
1979	379	674	206	918	406
1980	267	475	123	1 190	288
1981	220	931	210	902	546
1982	217	1 154	163	1 122	516
1983	254	1 309	229	1 233	465
1984	234	1 236	276	1 304	533
1985	212	1 069	201	1 218	468
1986	321	1 081	227	1 069	579
1987	192	1 050	205	1 069	531
1988	136	764	220	1 137	622
1989	209	894	163	1 016	616
1990	135	863	178	1 468	426
1991	154	945	202	1 307	412
1992	135	755	184	1 338	443
1993	81	902	266	1 298	462
1994	113	717	227	1 195	493
1995	127	695	161	1 175	559
1996	112	858	332	1 690	726
1997	108	1 109	242	1 765	841
1998	121	808	319	2 098	1 105
1999	97	1 152	318	2 520	1 019
2000	107	729	378	2 590	902
2001	115	789	409	2 807	976
2002	124	1 475	408	3 225	1 304
2003	159	1 885	520	4 123	1 667
2004	185	1 250	648	4 491	1 590
2005	373	2 515	1 303	9 036	3 198
2006	172	1 160	601	4 168	1 475
2007	187	1 264	655	4 541	1 607
2008	215	1 453	753	5 217	1 846
2009	320	2 152	1 115	7 227	2 736

Kaynak: Milli Kütüphane Başkanlığı

Source: National Library

The most significant rise in book publication figures occurs after 2000. In that year, 34,857 books were published (TÜİK, 09 March 2011). Book publication figures for 2008-2009-2010 have been compared by type by TÜİK.

Figure 1 2008-2010 Number of Publications by type - Publishing figures



In 2010, publishers produced 34 857 books; 330 e-media publications (DVD, VCD, CD), 305 e-books, 36 book cassettes; 83 cartography books and 156 other materials; and obtained ISBN for a total of 35,767 published items. 85% of this material was printed for the private sector, 11.1% for the public and educational sectors and 3.7% for the NGO sector. While the number of publications in the field of social studies dropped by 2.4% in 2010, compared to 2009, the number of literary and rhetorical works rose by 34,2%. In 2010, 33.6% of all publications were in social studies, 35.7% literature and rhetorics, 7.6% geography and history, 6.5% religion and 5.9% technology (applied sciences). A total of 93.6% of all works were published in Turkish, and 3.9% in English. In 2010, a total of 141 million, 345 thousand and 319 books were published, representing an overall rise of 8.6% over 2009 figures.

Table 3 *Subject of Published Material by Type in 2010*

Materyalin konusu	Toplam	Kitap	Elektronik				
			kitap (DVD, VCD, CD)	Elektronik kitap (web tabanlı)	Kitap kaseti	Harita	Diğer ⁽¹⁾
	35	34					
Toplam	767	857	330	305	36	83	156
Genel konular	475	397	61	12	-	-	5
		1					
Felsefe ve psikoloji	1 281	151	22	6	1	-	101
		2					
Din	2 332	288	6	28	3	-	7
	12	11					
Sosyal bilimler	027	781	94	97	14	24	17
Dil ve dilbilim	528	460	66	2	-	-	-
Doğa Bilimleri ve matematik	356	300	15	22	-	19	-
Teknoloji (Uygulamalı bilimler)	2 094	030	25	30	1	-	8

Sanatlar (Güzel	1						
sanatlar)	1 187	171	4	6	3	-	3
	12	12					
Edebiyat ve retorik	763	631	28	78	12	1	13
		2					
Coğrafya ve tarih	2 724	648	9	24	2	39	2

(1) : Braille, sesli kitap, video, mikrofiş, dijital materyaller, film ve bilgisayar programlarını kapsamaktadır.

In 2011, the figure for published books was 39.247. Of these, 86.3% were for the private sector, 9% for the public and educational sectors and 47% for NGO's. Works published on literature and rhetorics rose by 16.4% over figures for 2010, and in social studies by 14.8%. 35,9% of all published material in 2011 was in literature and rhetori, 33,4% in social studies, 7,3% in geography and history, 6,8% religion and 6,4% in technology (applied sciences). 96.6% of all publications were in Turkish and 2.9% in English. The total number of published items in 2011 was 176 million, 439 thousand, 551, representing a rise of 24.8% over 2010.

Table 4 *Numbers of Published Material by Type and Subject in 2011*

Materyalin konusu	Toplam	Kitap	Elektronik kitap (DVD, VCD, CD)	Elektronik kitap (web tabanlı)	Kitap kaseti	Harita	Diğer ⁽¹⁾
Toplam	41 386	39 247	258	1 037	60	127	657
Genel konular	528	442	51	17	-	-	18
Felsefe ve psikoloji	1 316	1 243	8	29	-	-	36
Din	2 798	2 715	8	54	8	-	13
Sosyal bilimler	13 812	13 395	109	181	21	32	74
Dil ve dilbilim	580	569	1	4	-	-	6
Doğa bilimleri ve matematik	424	394	4	19	-	3	4
Teknoloji (Uygulamalı bilimler)	2 629	2 507	39	44	2	28	9
Sanatlar (Güzel sanatlar)	1 411	1 338	23	33	1	3	13
Edebiyat ve retorik	14 853	13 891	11	488	24	-	439
Coğrafya ve tarih	3 035	2 753	4	168	4	61	45

(1) Braille, sesli kitap, video, mikroform, film ve bilgisayar programlarını kapsamaktadır.

In 2012, published items totalled 39,367, of which 88% was for the private sector, 8.6% the public and educational sectors and 3.5% for NGO's. Of the published material, 34.5% was in the fields of literature and rhetorics, 34.1% social studies, 6.7% geography and history, 6.6% religion and 4.9% technology (applied sciences)

Table 5 Year 2012 Number of publications according to type and subject

Materyalin konusu	Toplam	Kitap	Elektronik		Kitap kaseti	Harita	Diğer ⁽¹⁾
			Elektronik kitap (DVD, CD)	Elektronik kitap (web tabanlı)			
Toplam	42 626	39 367	311	2 617	56	64	211
Genel konular	901	876	9	7	3	-	6
Felsefe ve psikoloji	1 933	1 722	7	152	2	-	50
Din	2 826	2 666	8	147	4	-	1
Sosyal bilimler	14 542	13 736	207	537	13	6	43
Dil ve dilbilim	651	635	1	3	-	-	12
Doğa bilimleri ve matematik	656	593	28	14	-	8	13
Teknoloji (Uygulamalı bilimler)	2 104	1 980	14	72	4	30	4
Sanatlar (Güzel sanatlar)	1 420	1 394	5	19	-	1	1
Edebiyat ve retorik	14 726	13 135	6	1 484	28	-	73
Coğrafya ve tarih	2 867	2 630	26	182	2	19	8

(1) Braille, sesli kitap, video, mikroform, film ve bilgisayar programlarını kapsamaktadır.

In 2013, 42,655 books were published, of which 89.6% were for the private sector, 7.6% for the public and educational sectors, and 2.8% for NGO's. The statistics on published materials for the years 2008-2012 were gathered by the General Directorate of Libraries and Publications (Kütüphaneler ve Yayımlar Genel Müdürlüğü) and categorised by subject according to the Dewey Decimal System. In 2013, the subject-categorizing system was altered to BIC. Hence comparison between material types published in 2013 and previous years was not possible. According to this source, in 2013, 26.5% of all material was published in the educational sector, 20.3% in adult cultural publications sector, 17.2% children and youth, 14.8% academic, 14% adult literary fiction, and 7.2% religion.

Table 6 Year 2013 Number of publications by material type and subject

Number of publications by publisher category and material type 2012-2013

Yayımcı ve materyal türüne göre yayın sayısı, 2012-2013

Materyal türü	Toplam		Özel sektör		Kamu ve eğitim kurumları		Sivil toplum kuruluşu	
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
Toplam	42 626	47 352	37 523	42 438	3 667	3 606	1 436	1 308
Kitap	39 367	42 655	34 829	38 485	3 249	3 024	1 289	1 146
Elektronik kitap (DVD, VCD, CD)	311	1 981	152	1 587	148	351	11	43
Elektronik kitap (web tabanlı)	2 617	2 299	2 285	2 022	218	201	114	76
Kitap kaseti	56	13	49	12	6	1	1	-
Harita	64	21	24	13	40	5	-	3
Diğer ⁽¹⁾	211	383	184	319	6	24	21	40

(1) Konuşan kitap (kaset, CD, DVD), eğitici belgesel, film ve video (eğitim amaçlı), mikroform, kağıt üzerinde müzik, bilgisayar programları (eğitim amaçlı), braille, eğitim kartları, ayrı basım eğitim kitleleri, kart.

In 2014, 91.7% of all publications were in the private sector, 5.9% public and educational sectors, 2.5% NGO, in total representing a figure of 44,613 books published. Compared to 2013, adult literary fiction rose by 43.8% to 9,542, adult cultural publications rose by 21.2% reaching 11,652. In the same year, 24.4% of publications were in the education sector, 23% adult cultural publications, 18.8% adult literary fiction, 14.1% academic publications, 13.6% child and youth literature and 6.1% on religion.

Table 7 Year 2014 Number of publications by type of material and subject

Materyal türü	Yıl	Toplam	Yetişkin kurgu edebiyat	Yetişkin kültür	Çocuk ve ilk gençlik	Eğitim	Akademik	İnanç
Toplam	2013	47 352	6 637	9 611	8 130	12 565	7 003	3 406
	2014	50 752	9 542	11 652	6 889	12 380	7 171	3 118
Kitap	2013	42 655	6 024	8 012	7 512	12 003	6 105	2 999
	2014	44 613	7 726	9 381	6 127	12 081	6 635	2 663
Elektronik kitap (DVD, VCD, CD)	2013	1 981	32	992	177	106	655	19
	2014	483	37	112	41	43	231	19
Elektronik kitap (web tabanlı)	2013	2 299	528	519	378	305	211	358
	2014	5 245	1 683	2 107	647	142	246	420
Konuşan kitap (kaset, CD, DVD)	2013	66	26	18	4	12	-	6
	2014	193	93	26	52	12	1	9
Harita	2013	21	1	8	3	9	-	-
	2014	16	2	10	-	4	-	-
Diğer ⁽¹⁾	2013	330	26	62	56	130	32	24
	2014	202	1	16	22	98	58	7

(1) Eğitici belgesel, film ve video (eğitim amaçlı), mikroform, kağıt üzerinde müzik, bilgisayar programları (eğitim amaçlı), braille, eğitim kartları, ayrı basım, eğitim kitleri, tezler ve poster.

International Standard Book Number (ISBN) statistics for 2015 indicate that 49,148 books were published in Turkey during 2015. In the same year, all published material units increased in number reaching 56,414, which represents an 11.2% percentage increase against the previous year. The greatest increase was seen in the publication of e-books, which rose by 21.8%. In 2015, a total of 49,148 books, 539 e-books ((DVD, VCD, CD), 6,389 web-based e-books, 103 book cassettes, CD's DVD's) and 235 other categories, making a total of 56,56,414 published materials receiving ISBN registration in that year.

Table 8 *Number of publications by material type and subject: 2014-2015*

Materyal türü	Yıl	Toplam	Yetişkin kurgu edebiyat	Yetişkin kültür	Çocuk ve ilk gençlik	Eğitim	Akademik	İnanç
Toplam	2014	50 752	9 542	11 652	6 889	12 380	7 171	3 118
	2015	56 414	11 356	11 092	8 215	15 548	6 808	3 395
Kitap	2014	44 613	7 726	9 381	6 127	12 081	6 635	2 663
	2015	49 148	8 344	10 038	6 999	14 619	6 180	2 968
Elektronik kitap (DVD, VCD, CD)	2014	483	37	112	41	43	231	19
	2015	539	43	61	240	45	144	6
Elektronik kitap (web tabanlı)	2014	5 245	1 683	2 107	647	142	246	420
	2015	6 389	2 930	955	915	744	437	408
Konuşan kitap (kaset, CD, DVD)	2014	193	93	26	52	12	1	9
	2015	103	39	4	36	19	2	3
Diğer⁽¹⁾	2014	218	3	26	22	102	58	7
	2015	235	-	34	25	121	45	10

(1) Eğitici belgesel, film ve video (eğitim amaçlı), mikroform, kağıt üzerinde müzik, bilgisayar programları (eğitim amaçlı), Braille, eğitim kartları, ayrı basım, eğitim kitleri, tezler, posterler ve harita.

When examined by field, of all published material in 2015, 27.6% was in the educational sector, 20.1% adult literary fiction, 19.7% adult culture, 14.6% child and youth, 12.1% academic, and 6% religion. In 2015, the percentage of books sold, according to tax stamp records, rose by 11.5% compared to 2014, totalling 384 million, 54,363.

In 2016, 92% of publications were for the private sector, 5.5% public and educational, and 2.5% NGOs, and the total number of books published was 51,113. 27% of published material was in education, 20.5% adult culture, 16.8% adult literary fiction, 15.8% child and youth, 13.7% academic and 6.1% religion. The greatest increase of 9.9% was seen in academic publications. In 2016, the number of academic publications rose 9.9% when compared to 2015, reaching 7,481, children and youth literature rose 4.9% to 8,618. When compared to 2015, the number of books legally sold in 2016 rose by 5.2% to reach 404,129,293 units in total.

Table 9 Year 2016 Number of published items according to type and topic

Materyal türü	Yıl	Toplam	Yetişkin kurgu edebiyat	Yetişkin kültür	Çocuk ve ilk gençlik	Eğitim	Akademik	İnanç
Toplam	2015	56 414	11 356	11 092	8 215	15 548	6 808	3 395
	2016	54 446	9 166	11 150	8 618	14 711	7 481	3 320
Kitap	2015	49 148	8 344	10 038	6 999	14 619	6 180	2 968
	2016	51 113	8 567	10 341	8 094	14 458	6 791	2 862
Elektronik kitap (DVD,VCD,CD)	2015	539	43	61	240	45	144	6
	2016	325	63	35	10	14	200	3
Elektronik kitap (web tabanlı)	2015	6 389	2 930	955	915	744	437	408
	2016	2 697	519	717	453	143	426	439
Konuşan kitap (kaset, CD, DVD)	2015	103	39	4	36	19	2	3
	2016	30	12	7	3	6	1	1
Diğer ⁽¹⁾	2015	235	-	34	25	121	45	10
	2016	281	5	50	58	90	63	15

(1) Eğitici belgesel, film ve video (eğitim amaçlı), mikroform, kağıt üzerinde müzik, bilgisayar programları (eğitim amaçlı), braille, eğitim kartları, ayrı basım, eğitim kitleleri, tezler, posterler ve harita.

- Bilgi yoktur.

In 2017, a total of 58,027 books were published, of which 92.2% were in the private sector, 5.3% in public and educational sectors and 2.5% NGOs. Of those publications, 28.4% were in the field of education, 19.1% in adult culture, 16.6% child and youth, 16.3% adult fiction, 13.5% academic and 6.1% religion. The largest increase was to be seen in the field of education with a 16.6% rise, representing 17,143 books, with children and youth sectors rising by 16.5% over 2016 figures, representing 10,042 units in 2017. Book sales rose by 0.9% according to tax stamp records, reaching 407,739,008 units in 2017.

Table 10 Year 2017: Number of publications by type and subject

Materyal türü	Yıl	Toplam	Yetişkin kurgu edebiyat	Yetişkin kültür	Çocuk ve ilk gençlik	Eğitim	Akademik	İnanç
Toplam	2016	54 446	9 166	11 150	8 618	14 711	7 481	3 320
	2017	60 335	9 830	11 509	10 042	17 153	8 143	3 658
Kıtap	2016	51 113	8 567	10 341	8 094	14 458	6 791	2 862
	2017	58 027	9 502	11 057	9 606	16 910	7 513	3 439
Elektronik kıtap	2016	325	63	35	10	14	200	3
	2017	212	18	40	9	13	126	6
Elektronik kıtap (web tabanlı)	2016	2 697	519	717	453	143	426	439
	2017	1 767	298	376	309	127	464	193
Konuşan kıtap (kaset, CD, DVD)	2016	30	12	7	3	6	1	1
	2017	26	10	8	4	2	2	-
Diğer ⁽¹⁾	2016	281	5	50	58	90	63	15
	2017	303	2	28	114	101	38	20

(1) Eğitici belgesel, film ve video (eğitim amaçlı), mikroform, kağıt üzerinde müzik, bilgisayar programları (eğitim amaçlı), Braille, eğitim kartları, ayrı basım, eğitim kitleri, tezler, posterler ve harita.

- Bilgi yoktur.

According to the stamp tax authorities figures for official book sales and distribution YAYFED (Yayımcı Meslek Birlikleri Federasyonu), in 2018, a total of 410,641,305 books were published of which 67,135 were new titles. 18% of published books were adult reference books, 6% adult literature and art books, 10% child and youth books, 10.8% religion, 1% academic publications, 1.4% imported books and 52.4% books for education (<https://www.yayfed.org/website/content/285>).

Table 11 *Distribution by Category: 2018*

Türler Toplamı	2018 Yılı Verileri
Yetişkin (Araştırma-İnceleme)	74.484.289
Yetişkin Kurgu (Edebiyat-Sanat)	24.719.651
Çocuk-Gençlik Kitapları	41.273.395
İnanç Kitapları	44.431.096
Akademik Yayınlar	4.461.008
Eğitim Kitapları	215.370.387
İthal Kitaplar	5.901.479
Toplam	410.641.305

2 THE LITERARY WORLD OF THE '90'S: A PERIOD OF EXPANSION

During the 1990's, Turkish literature entered a wave of renewal, driven by a passionate curiosity which inevitably led to the breaking of new ground on several fronts. Clearly, the upcoming generations chose their own distinct way forward, and in doing so made a conscious effort to step out from the shadow of previous generations." Semih Gümüş,
2014,20)

"Subsequent to this, it was as if everyone began to live on their own individual island."

E.K.

The writer-critic E.K. considered the 1990's to be prolific years. He called that decade the "resurgence / revival years" for literature and cultural life. Fundamental changes had occurred, life had transformed inexorably, relationships were no longer as they had been. The revival characterising those years was undoubtedly influenced by a gradual release from the repressive atmosphere of the 12 September Coup and the years immediately following. According to E.K., living in the 90's had both positive and negative connotations. The critic comments that, although his natural tendency is always to think of the time in which we are living as more conducive, more positive than the past in terms of daily lifestyle, he ponders that perhaps the past was better. "I mean, it was easier, more comfortable, less problematic, in fact it was more civilised back then."

The writer S.R. views the 1990's as exciting, lively years full of hope. It was the end of the 1980's, a time when the coup was firmly in the past, and its impact had begun to fade. A time when people were in expectation of general improvements in living. The writer G.K. recalls that following the '1980's Coup', when journals were closed, publishers began to

focus on publishing only reliable titles from well-known authors that were guaranteed to sell well. They chose their titles very carefully. The three–four years following the coup were very difficult years. “I mean they really came down hard...” comments the writer. It was the 1990’s when “the winds of change really began to stir” he claims. As the environment became more conducive for writers, their numbers began to increase. “There were also fundamental changes taking place on the global sphere. Turkey is not, after all, isolated from all that, The winds of change were blowing around the world”.

In his article in the literary journal *Kitap-lık* supplement, entitled ‘Spaces of the Literati’, the poet Ahmet Oktay describes the negative aspects of certain developments. Oktay, in this article expresses the view that literature had become ‘merely’ an industry. “Publishers operating in offices of three or four rooms” with the managing editors, editors, and graphic designers sitting behind computers that had replaced the typewriter. “They were no longer places where the writer could turn up and ring the office bell with his manuscript under his arm. These days they are more likely to send their work by e-mail, or until recently, floppy disc. Ahmet Oktay calls this “Technological literature”. He proposes that the expansion of technology has made verbal communication redundant, and points to the almost total disappearance of the master-apprentice relationship. A young writer, according to Oktay, “Starts his career on an equal footing with a writer of fifty years standing. In a ‘technologised’ sector such as this, he comments, the ‘master craftsman’, with whom one converses, and from whom one might learn, gain essential knowledge, is no longer relevant. His place has been taken by literary agents, reviewers, *promoters*, in a world where the value of literature is measured by circulation and sales alone”.

Thus we see both the advantages and disadvantages in the dynamics and changes surrounding the literary world of the 1990’s. The above section was based on findings from interviews carried out with thirteen authors.

2.4 First Steps, First Experiments in the Literary World

The writer-journalist J.K. grew up in a home environment steeped in music, art, literature and books. As a child he could have any book he wanted. And as he grew older, he could meet any literary figure he wanted. Both due in part to his assertive character, and partly to the advantages of his home environment. While still a high-school student, with the support of his family, he visited the renowned professor of psychology, Sabri Esat Siyavuşgil, who was also a writer, poet and translator, and asks him for some information regarding the high school entrance exam that he was about to enter. Before visiting him, he had versed himself well in the writings and poetry of the great man, having read everything that he had written, and was totally prepared. “It was not like today’s press interview, when they come up to you and ask: “Tell us about yourself?”. I did nothing like that. And that’s why they wouldn’t reject me”. At a later date, while still a high school student, he went to Mithat Cemal Kuntay to invite him to take part in a literature event at his school, to celebrate Namık Kemal’s day. He is well-prepared, as ever. He talks about Namık Kemal; and quotes from Kuntay’s letters, his novels, poetry and essays and mentions that he has read his newspaper articles. After hearing all this, Kuntay agrees to take part in the event, and indeed does participate. “I realised,” says the writer, “That if you really show them what you know, they will cooperate”. He meets the poet-translator Behçet Necatigil at a very tender age. One day he goes to visit Necatigil, who was teaching literature in Kabataş High School at the time. Arriving at the gates of the school, dapperly dressed in bowler hat, double-breasted coat and cravat, more like an inspector than a student, he requests the gatekeeper: “Take me to Behçet Bey, my man!”. He arrives at the teacher’s room, where a little embarrassed and ashamed, he says to Necatigil, “You appeared so unassuming and humble, Sir, that for a moment I thought I was the teacher and you the student”. This was the beginning of a long friendship between the two. Again, while still at high school, with the support of his family, he was allowed to

attend classes at university on Turkish Poetry with Mehmet Kaplan, whom he got to know. Writer-critic Konur Ertop was a childhood friend of his, later attending the Turcology department (of Istanbul University), in the same class as Kemal Özer ve Adnan Özyalçınır. Mehmet Kaplan (Turcologist) had I.K. who was in a different department, take his classes for two weeks on the İkinci Yeni. Friendships sprouted friendships, “Oktay Akbal took an interest, we became close. Melih Cevdet Anday also took interest, so did Kemal Tahir and Orhan Kemal. I used to visit Kemal Tahir often.”

He published his first article in the journal the *Forum*, while still 17 years old. This was his first step as a writer into the world of literature. This was followed by other pieces, which he published in a number of journals, including *a Dergisi*, *Türk Dili Dergisi* and *Dönemeç*. Later he both wrote for and edited the arts section of various dailies, took on the role of editor in chief, wrote daily columns, and published books.

The writer G.K. grew up living in the city in winter and the country during summer. During winter she went to school, and spent the summer months totally on her own in “endless, silent nature”. She had an older and a younger sibling, but “few friends”. She would spend her time observing people, both in the city and in the country. Both were completely different types of people, but she loved both. She had the urge to read and write at a very early age. When she was a child, she wanted to remember everything that she had experienced. “I had to write about this, I had to write about that, and the other.” As she read more and more, she realised that she needed to write more. She describes her reading habits as random.”When I was a child, I read everything, totally at random. You know, you should read this first, then that...That’s not how it happened. I just read whatever I could find, even serialised novels. Stories, folk tales, poetry....all mixed up. Whatever I could lay my hands on. But something was egging me on. ‘So they’ve written this, its been written about... And it was as if the

novels were from outer space. Where did the writers come from? They cannot have been of our world!?”

She reads the novels serialised in daily newspapers. “I’ll never forget. Felatun Bey ve Rakım Efendi, I’m reading serials, and hopping up and down with delight”. The newspapers weren’t delivered regularly in the village. Even in the city sometimes they didn’t arrive on time. Sometimes a weeks worth or fifteen days worth of newspapers arrived three or five days at a time. Occasionally, apart from serialised novels, she read her sister’s novels, for which she charged five kuruş a night. Her oldest sister preferred more popular novels. She also followed the radio magazines, which came out in the 1940’s, and which carried popular celebrity news and gossip, alongside information about the radio schedule and programmes. Her younger sister preferred more serious literature. She read Emile Zola’s *Nana*; was surprised and scared by *Dangerous Liasons*, she wonders, all of a sudden, how vast the world is, how different people are, how they live. “Of course, I cant really understand all of it but I can see that there are some really different things there. That’s what amazed me. Both amazed and, of course, inspired me. Learn more, find out more, what others are saying...” This collection of ‘miscellaneous’ literature to be found in G.K.’s home was what later served to guide her to find her own reading.

Her Middle School Turkish teacher was a poetry lover, and, “of course, poetry was extra-curricular”. One day she read Orhan Veli’s poem *Anlatamıyorum*. When she finished she read it again, and again, and again. After reading it three or four times, the class started to snigger. The teacher does nothing in response. She then reads the poem once again, and says: “Ssh! Everyone felt the poetry”. Teachers regularly reading the journal *Varlık* began to read foreign poets to their students.

G.K. becomes the member of a group of highly literate and prolific friends at school. One of the group was the playwright Vasfi Öngören, who was responsible for bringing Epic theatre to

Turkey. The members of the group criticised what each other wrote. G.K. also wrote material, but “did not share” what she had written. This was due in part to her shyness, and feeling apart from the rest of the group, but also her tendency towards introversion.

After some time, she began to discover herself and to become recognised through her writings which at first, she was unable to place in a particular category, but later realised to be a form of free verse. “Because you begin to think better as you write. You can go deeper. And then you begin to not only understand yourself better, but other things too.” The group engaged in literary debate. “It was a very dynamic group. And this was a small place, there was only one bookshop. Nowhere to get distracted”

G.K. finished her last year of school in Istanbul. She had assumed that her classmates there would be better informed than her, and that she was “going to be effected by that”. However, when she arrived in school, she realised that no-one was as well informed about literature as herself. “When I got here, things were different. Evidently I had had more time. Especially in the summer months in the country, where there was nothing else to do but read. So that’s what I spent my time doing, reading more and more. While the kids in the city had plenty to distract them. So they hadn’t paid any attention to literature”. There were good teachers at her high school too. Among them Melahat Babacan who was also Cemal Süreya’s teacher. And just like the middle school teacher Timuçin Bey, she was influential on G.K.’s involvement with poetry. Her philosophy and physics teachers were also good. “No matter what branch they were in, good teachers were most influential in broadening the mind. And there was inevitably some cross-over to literature, in terms of how the brain functioned of course...”

Her mother and father had moved to Diyarbakir, to be with her elder sister when she was assigned to a post there. G.K. was, at that time, staying with her uncle and aunt in Istanbul. Her aunt and uncle had studied at the Faculty of Letters in Istanbul, and had been the

students of Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar. Sait Faik was her friend, Refik Halit Karay her neighbour. Many writers came and went to her house. Although even that was not necessary, as the conversation of his aunt and uncle was influential enough. Particularly the long Sunday breakfasts were informative. There was also a good library in the house and her aunt, from time to time, would bring G.K. ‘large albums’ from her own art history library.

When her mother and father returned to Istanbul some time later, they went back to their own home. From there, she continued to follow the journals, and to read voraciously. “That was not something that could stop”. While G.K. was in her final year at university, TRT Radio put out a call for applications to join the radio by examination in 1964. This exam attracted her attention; “an independent broadcasting panel and something really new, a brand new broadcasting initiative, based on the BBC model. Attendance at the exam was high in Istanbul and Ankara. In Istanbul alone, G.K. recalls, there were 900 entrants. The numbers dwindled to 30 after the exam. Since there was no communications faculty at the time, the best writers, journalists, legal experts, sociologists were their teachers. They took one exam after another. After a time, applied exams were also held. Programs were set up for these. Then came the finals. Those who completed these started work in 1965. They had undergone such intense training that “there was no-one who did not deserve their diploma”. Due to the preference for literature, the first program requested was a literature program. There was a library at the radio. A very good one which was constantly being augmented with new books. “Just what I wanted”. Hence, G.K. was able to create many good literary programs and invited many literary figures to take part in them:

“Our office, Cultural Broadcasts, was full and overflowing. Writers would first take part in the program in the studio, then come back to the office, and join the conversation. Colleagues who were curious about these activities would also join us, the room would fill up, and the conversation went on, and on until it finished. Many

writers, from Kemal Tahir...The actors from downstairs were hard at it. The serial players, radio actors were very busy. All those teams, and their writers....You were right in the thick of it” (G.K., 2017, Istanbul).

The writer M.S.’s parents were illiterate. Although there were books in their home. Books such as Yunus Emre’s mystical poems, folk tales were among those his family acquired, and M.S.’s older brothers and sisters read them aloud at home, while the adults listened. M.S.’s mother gave him money specifically to buy books, and always encouraged their children to read, and to go to the cinema and the theatre, saying “that’s an education, too”. Although M.S.’s mother was herself illiterate, she was extremely articulate. “She had a rich repertoire of sayings and proverbs. And a rich descriptive language when telling stories”.

M.S. was influenced by his mother. His brother was also very interested in reading, and kept a chest of books in the attic, which he also began to read. His father was a shopkeeper, who used newspapers to wrap goods in his shop. M.S. read these papers, as well as satirical and caricaturist magazines. As he read the poems of Karacaoğlu and Yunus Emre from the books in the house, he began to write poetry inspired by the Karacaoğlu stories. He began to notice someone selling books on the mosque wall opposite his school. And never could pass by without glancing at the books. “ Their covers, their titles; I can still remember their names now”. Although his primary teachers did not attempt to guide him in any direction, they commented on his interest in literature in his evaluation, remarking “This child will become a writer”, as that became increasingly clear. That was the first time that he had heard the word literature. M.S., through his own resources, read the works of Orhan Kemal - *Murtaza*, Yaşar Kemal - *İnce Memed*, Reşat Nuri Güntekin - *Çalılıkıuşu*. These were titles that his peers were reading in fifth grade. “I would leave school, run straight home, and carry on reading the novel from where I’d left off. That’s how keen I was.”

The writer, M.S. mentions that there were 10 bookshops and 10 local newspapers in the city where he lived during the 1960's, and that it was a city with many literate inhabitants, many writers among them. Adults regarded a reading child 'with much fondness'. He speaks of a generation that brought up their children very well. And comments that during the 1940's and 1950's, a great many good teachers who moved to the city left their mark on Turkish literature, among them the poet Arif Nihat Asya, and another poet Vasfi Mahir Kocatürk. He himself was not taught by these teachers, but "his brothers and sisters were, and they each emerged with a fine pen". However, he also remarks that since the municipality was of a different political persuasion from the governmental party of the day, there had been no investment in the city for a decade.

By the time the writer, M.S. reached high school, he was more informed than his teachers. A new literature graduate teacher was appointed to his high school. One day; "such a cheek, I was talking to my friend during literature class". The teacher asked his friend what they were talking about. And when the reply came that he was talking about Reşat Nuri's works, the teacher asked him to explain to the class. After listening to him, the teacher accused him of making it up, and asked where did he get all this from. By way of reply, M.S. explained that he read it in journals and followed contemporary poets. Then the teacher asked him which poets he followed. "İkinci Yeni", I replied. And the teacher's repost was: What next! İkinci Yeni? Üçüncü Yeni, is there such a thing? The teacher did not know about contemporary literature" (M.S. 2017, İstanbul).

In 1968, while still in high school, M.S. entered a competition opened by a literary journal for university students, and won first prize. "What happened after that was meant to be." First, his stories were published in that journal. He began to regard himself as a story writer; he learned more about the history of stories, and began to write more stories. His pieces were published in local dailies and journals. He 'much admired' Fikret Otyam's

interviews, and wanted to conduct his own interviews like his. He was so successful that he received positive feedback from Otyam himself. As a university student in Istanbul, he began to send stories to Istanbul journals, which he submitted hand-written, since he did not, at that point, own a typewriter. He sent one story to *Varlık* journal, thinking it would not even be read, being handwritten. “Later I learnt that at that journal, the only writer whose handwritten scripts they accepted was Sait Faik. He also handwrote his texts. Since he had such a disorganised lifestyle, he would write whenever and wherever inspiration struck” (M.S., 2017, İstanbul). When some of M.S.’s stories were accepted by a Kadıköy-based journal, they appeared in a special issue on Turkish Stories put out by that journal. “This edition was read by all and sundry. And as a result, after the publication of that first story, people began to take me seriously as a writer. Another story was published, and I acquired a place in the community of writers (M.S., 2017, İstanbul).

M.S. began to work during his university years. The poet-writer Hulki Aktunç told him that there was a vacancy for an editor at the advertising agency where he worked, and advised him to apply for it. In fact, he wrote his application for him, and it was also he who was to read it... Apparently, he said: “This young man has something about him. Lets hire him” (M.S., 2017, Istanbul). So he began to earn a living already during his university years. In 1973, the owner of the journal, who was also himself a poet, told M.S. that now he had already published 5-6 stories in the journal, if he wrote a few more, he would consider publishing them together in one volume. The writer, M.S., who at first, had not dreamt of publishing a book up to then, only thinking that one day he might publish in book form, accepted the offer. The journal owner asked M.S. for 300 liras to purchase paper. M.S. sent him the student allowance his father had given him. “However, such a situation was generally considered inappropriate, in fact, undesirable. To ‘pay over’ to have one’s work published was thought of as a slight on the author. Later I found out from other author-colleagues that

such works were called ‘pay over print jobs’. (M.S., 2017, Istanbul). Hulki Aktunç warned M.S. that his book would never be published. That the owner had taken money for paper which he would spend on his own book”. Subsequently, the book was, of course, never published. Later, his first book was brought out by a different, newly formed publishers, and provoked much interest. A number of critical appraisals were written about it. He began to take his place in the world of literature, not only as a writer, but also as an editor.

Ş.F, a writer and poet, came from a family which highly valued books. His father, although a scientist, encouraged his children to read continuously. His ‘role model’ was his uncle, who had strong connections with literature, was himself a poet, and possessed a considerable library of his own. When the writer-poet Ş.F joined an association affiliated with a political movement, he also took an interest in art and cinema. His opportunity to enter the literary world arose when he was approached with the words “you are a cultured and literate person...why don’t you join a publishers”. *Konuk Yayınları*, which was run by Doğan Görsev, was an education for him. Here, he “studied a foreign language”. Although, in fact he had wanted to be a cinematographer, once Ş.F. started in the publishing area, he never left it.

“Once you are drawn into publishing, you can never leave it. Once you have got the taste for books, the press, smelt the printing ink, you are hooked.” It was 1978. His first piece was published in the new journal *Sanat Emeği*, which started taround that date. The piece was a book review, and was followed by other reviews. The *Sanat Emeği*, as Turgay Fişekçi comments in a piece he wrote for *Altüst Dergisi* on that journal, although publishing poetry and stories in every issue, was not only a literary journal, “but one which brought together a broad spectrum of the arts, from art to theatre, and music to cinema, and which endeavoured to address and examine the issues of each art form in allignment with the basic principles of a socialist perspective” (Fişekçi, 2014). Barış Pirhasan managed the journal, for which Turgay Fişekçi was editor-in-chief, and among whose writers were Ataol Behramoğlu, Asım Bezirci,

Ali Taygun, Orhan Taylan and A. Kadir. These names sufficed, in Ş.F.'s view, to illustrate the qualities of the journal. This was a publication which printed 6,000 copies, its circulation was good, and yet it had its troubles. In 1979, a state of emergency was declared, followed by the 12 September Coup d'Etat, after which the journal was shut down. Editor-in-chief Turgay Fişekçi describes how the shut-down took place, in his article about the journal:

“By the 1980's, the atmosphere of rising terrorism had begun to effect the life of the journal. Barış Pirhasan had to go into hiding due to repeated death threats. Almost all the work of producing it, including the financial management, was left totally in my hands. But still we managed to keep it in regular print. The final, 31st issue came out in September 1980. Following the Coup on 12 September, a total curfew was imposed, and on the morning of the day the curfew was lifted, when I arrived at the offices on the first floor of No. 38 Klodfarer Street on Divanyolu, I saw that the door had been barred and padlocked” (Sanat Emegi Dergisi).

Ş.F. was later to say that “we lost our jobs on 12 September”. But in fact, not much later, in November 1980, he started a new job in *Yazko*, which was under the management of Memet Fuat. Working as an associate writer in 1981, he contributed several pieces to the journal, and had joined the staff by 1982. According to Ş.F., at that time, and for a number of years, *Yazko* was to be considered the centre of literary journalism. The literary knowledge of the journal's leader, Memet Fuat, and his contribution to Turkish literature were outstanding and thought-provoking. He published his first book in 1982.

E.K., a critic born in Ankara, remained in that city until graduating from university. He commented on the fact that Turkish “youth of the time became automatically politicised”, having experienced the political events of the 1960's in their childhood, followed immediately by the events of their teenage years during the 1970's. Pointing out, however, that both he and all his peers were avid readers, as well as being regular readers of literary journals from a

relatively early age, “in a way not now common amongst such an age group”. He reflected that this was actually what directed him towards literature in the first place. Apart from that, he received little encouragement, or support, from his immediate environment.

He took his first steps towards the literary world immediately after the 12 September coup with a culture-arts and literature journal published in Ankara in 1981. Since the prohibitions imposed by the regime of the time forbade the publication of any openly political journals, this publication can be described as a literary journal with political sympathies. E.K. pointed out that publishing a journal in those days was much easier than it is today; that they were able to amass enough financial support from amongst their friends to keep it running for a while. He listed the publishing team members as Ali Cengizkan, Semih Gümüş, Akif Kurtuluş, Ömer Ateş Kızıltuğ and Ömer Türkeş. They all set to work in a crowded office to get the journal on the road, inviting anyone motivated enough to work with them, to join them working 24 hour days.

“As I said, we worked day in, day out. It was normal back then. Over time we had accumulated some small publishing experience in political journals – since first one had to complete and accumulate the pieces to go in the journal, then to focus on the technical publishing work. Namely, setting up printing operations, page layout, design and preparation of the cover and the inside pages, then sending the mock up to the printers, supervising printing on the press, collecting each issue from the printers; the finished object and distributing the journal far and wide throughout the country, channelling as many copies as possible towards the urban centres of each district and region. This was actually the work of a coordinated team, in which each member took equal responsibility. It was also essentially a voluntary activity,” (E.K., 2017, Istanbul).

As he describes his experiences in journalism, the writer-critic E.K. also demonstrates the contrast between the technological possibilities of the day and current technology. Nowadays, thanks to the computer and internet, it is much easier to publish a journal. In the 1980's everything was done by hand. As E.K. describes, a text was strung on by typesetters, page layout was done manually, and fixed into stereotypes or millimetric pre-cut page templates. Headers were hand-set from very expensive pre-cut letraset, and when complete, the pages were assembled and sent to the printers. Without modern technology, this was naturally a protracted process, requiring long hours of work. Once the journal arrived at the printers, E.K. recounts how, on many occasions, they also worked with the print setters during the last part of the process, sometimes working through the night to speed up the printing and prevent delays in the final production and distribution of an issue. The actual printing process itself was also largely manually-run.

“Once the journal was printed, the sheets would be sliced by hand and bound in quires, also manually. Then we would help with binding-in the cover. Once the cover was bound, we would trim it down by hand. Then bundle and package the copies. So we were working like voluntary workers alongside the printer staff. Just so that the journal could be distributed as soon as possible, without any delay.” (E.K, 2017, İstanbul).

Due to the prohibitions of the time, the sharp drop in the number of literary journals being published under the 12 September regime made this publication especially significant. For distribution, the journal relied on a voluntary trans-regional network of friends and colleagues. Other individuals who asked to contribute to the distribution also became part of the network. It was reaction to the political environment of the time that fuelled sensitivities against the oppressive regime, and essentially contributed to the expansion of this connective network.

The journal was in close liason with the best poets and writers of the period. During the 1980's, Ankara hosted literary groups and a literary environment of no little significance. E.K. stresses the support given by the older generation of literati. The journal offices were the hub of much activity in the relatively limited setting of the city of Ankara. Such literary activities were mostly centred around the district of Kizilay, where the journal offices were situated, and it was in Kizilay, in the beerhalls and coffee houses there that poets and writers regularly congregated to discuss literature and politics. E.K. continued as the journal's editor in chief until being called up for military service in 1985.

E.K. began his writing career with the journal *Yarın* in 1981, his first piece was published in *Yazko*, one of the most important journals of the time, after which he continued to contribute to a number of journals, including *Yarın*, *Bilim Sanat*, *Türkiye Yazıları* and others, moving to Istanbul in 1985. Here, he set up a publishing house, subsequently founding a new journal with a group of friends, encouraged by Atilla Birkiye. After 1985, E.K. entered a phase in which, as he later described, his writing took on a more serious, sustainable aspect. In 1991, he began to work for *Adam Yayınları* Publications, which set off what he considered the most important period of his writing career.

The poet-writer E.A., thanks to a literature teacher who inspired him and his high school peers to take an interest in literature during the 1970's, started publishing a poster-paper with some friends. For the paper, he and his friends followed the relevant journals and dailies to accumulate literary news items, and interviewed writers. Although this is common practice today, it was quite unusual at the time. He wrote his first poem for the wall-paper in 1975-6, and took his first step into the literary world in 1980 when his poems were published in the *Oluşum Dergisi* - journal. His first prose pieces were published the same year in the METU (ODTU) Literary club journal. The members of this club included notable contemporary poets

and authors, such as Özcan Karabulut, Metin Celâl and Haydar Ergülen who later brought out a literary journal together.

R.P., born in Istanbul, parents both literature teachers, and her father particularly active in literary circles, stated that inevitably “literature was her only world”. Notwithstanding her parent’s influence, she stressed that the lack of television in her childhood, and the chance to play in the streets with other children, for her was “her sole recourse”. Her grandmother was a story-teller, her mother read regularly to her at night, and her father told her his own imaginary tales. While still quite small, R.P. loved to chant nursery rhymes and wrote poetry. Being widely read, literature lessons were always easy for her; not only was she a reader, but also wrote herself. She was given first place in a literature competition while still in high school, although it was much later that she was to take her first serious steps into the literary world as a writer.

R.P., always a part of the literary scene thanks to her family’s influence, began to write her own stories some time later. These she shared with a family friend who was himself an important literary figure. He indicated to her that although the stories were not ‘brilliant’ they were certainly publishable. She showed the stories to another literary figure she happened to encounter around that time, who suggested she send them to *Can Yayınları*, since they were providing opportunities to new writers. R.P. gathered up her stories into a printed portfolio in 2003, and sent this by post to *Can Yayınları*’s founder Erdal Öz, together with an introductory letter. Two weeks later R.P. received a phone call from Erdal Öz, who also knew her family, saying that if he liked her stories he would publish them, and that he would let her know within two weeks. R.P. recounts that she spent the following two weeks ‘frought in anxious anticipation’. Two weeks later Erdal Öz phoned and invited the writer to his office. R.P. recounts the meeting and its outcome as follows:

“I did not know what his answer was until I got there. So there I went. He opened the portfolio, which was covered with his pencilled notes... the portfolio sat there on his desk... Of course I was mortified, ‘OK, this is over’, I thought. Grammer, repeated words, paragraphs, all topics I was an absolute stranger to then. He had really worked on them, taken them seriously. ‘No problem, we will publish straight away, he said. There was one story he did not like. ‘But its up to you’, he said. ‘I merely suggest, but I won’t interfere’ he said. And they were published within a few months,” (R.P., 2018, Istanbul).

The publishers’ doors were always open to R.P. thanks to hier wide range of acquaintances in literary circles. She didn’t find it at all difficult to apply to a publishers via those acquaintances. She mentions that this kind of relationship-forming is still prevelant today. “Still today, for example, when I’m sitting at the same table, next to a publisher and chatting, if I were to say: ‘You know I have a friend who is writing amazing pieces but he doesn’t have the courage to bring them out, although I really like them’ an editor or the General Manager of the publishers would reply: ‘Well lets take a look at them then’. These kind of relationships are still common, I believe. One can be like the go-between between the publishers and a fellow author.

The writer S.Ö was born in Istanbul, although he had to return to his village with his family at the age of one. There were no books in the village or in his own house, but at nights the old women of the village would gather around a gas lamp and tell tales. When he and his family returned to Istanbul later, they had no books in their home there either. This writer, keen to read from an early age, was forced to rely on newspapers he saw lying on the streets, billboards and school books for his earliest reading matter. His childhood years were those leading up to the 12 September coup. To get to and from primary school, which was just next to the Faculty of Letters of Istanbul University, the children had been warned to take the back

streets for fear of unrest. They still heard the sounds of protest and conflict. In fact, the author recalls his class getting under the desks at school to protect themselves from the flying bullets several times. According to TV, and the popular journals, books were included in the news items on terrorists, weapons and bullets. “Books were always being presented as evidence of crime.[.....] In Turkey literacy, literature and cultural topics were always seen as being affiliated with politics, in connection with the then current political environment.....” While at intermediate school, the children came in and out of school under the armed guard of the gendarmerie (military police). Everyone behaved fearfully and submissive, even the teachers.

A member of S.Ö’s family, a publisher by persuasion, used to bring S.Ö. copies of the books they had published, even though these were adult books, and not suitable for his age. But still, the young writer ‘read whatever he could find’; he spent what was left of his school money on books, which he swapped with his classmates. Rather than buying ‘expensive’ bound copies from the bookshops, he would buy cut-price books from book distributors such as *May Dağıtım* in Cağaloğlu. He became familiar with the world of publishing from an early age, since his father’s workplace was also close by in Cağaloğlu. During the 70’s and 80’s, all the dailies, such as *Cumhuriyet* gazetesı and *Milliyet* gazetesı had their headquarters there. As S.Ö. pointed out, they began to move away from that district in 1989.

One year, while on holiday with his family in their village, S.Ö. discovered the book collection belonging to one of his relatives in a cupboard of the house where they were staying. This particular family member had brought his book collection to the village in fear of possible repercussions regarding their content due to the political situation. With his avid interest in reading whatever he could lay his hands on, S.Ö. devoured these volumes even though still at a relatively early age. On discovering the National Library in Istanbul, this was to be another location where he could satisfy his unquenchable urge to read. It was here that he would discover *Varlık Yayınları* publications, and the MoNE (MEB) series of classics.

He read *Gösteri*, *Yazko*, *Milliyet Sanat*, *Mavera* and other journals, and kept a diary. He took an interest in politics, and, in his immediate family environment, he was surrounded by people of very different persuasions, whether right or left, nationalist, and those of both devout religious and atheist sentiment, amongst whom there was constant debate and disagreement. This ‘bombardment’ of ideas was the environment in which the writer grew up. His father would recount the views of the journalists who came in and out of his shop each day. There were daily TV programs on topical politics. In the midst of all this, while still an intermediate school pupil, S.Ö. decided that he wanted to be a newspaper columnist. So the first seeds of authorship were sown.

During his final year at high school, S.Ö. began to visit the Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medrese, a cafe-nargile dive favoured by university students, also frequented by poets of the 80’s. In this venue, which may be described as an art and culture club, S.Ö. met the poet Adnan Özer and his friends. Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medrese was known as the meeting place of those of heterodox political ideas from different backgrounds, including Kemal Sayar, poet, writer and specialist in psychiatry, sociologist Hüsamettin Çetinkaya, writer Mustafa Kutlu, cinema director Halit Refiğ, and the group of poets which formed around the *Şiir Atı* journal, Adnan Özer, Tuğrul Tanyol, Haydar Ergülen, Seyhan Erözçelik and Vural Bahadır Bayrıl, along with others such as Erkan Mumcu and Ahmet Davutoğlu, who later entered politics. S.Ö.’s own first steps into the literary world as a writer were taken in the Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medrese.

Among the Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medrese regulars were the publishers of various literary journals. One of these sent a story he had received from S.Ö. to *İkindi Yazıları*, the arts supplement of a newspaper called *Andırın Postası*, where it was published in 1989. The poet Adnan Özer took S.Ö. to see Enver Ercan, the head of *Varlık Dergisi*. They rang the bell, went in, Adnan Özer said, “I’ve brought you a young friend”, turned around and left him there. Subsequently, S.Ö. began to visit the *Varlık* offices regularly, and, sometime later, his

story was published in the journal. Another regular of the same cafe took his story to Selim İleri, who was running the journal *Argos*, and subsequently his story was printed there. So we see how, as a writer, S.Ö. was able to make progress in the literary world between 1989-1990 through his acquaintances. "What was not working was the regular way of operating, where a poem would be sent to a journal, or a young writer would submit his story. I have never sent anything to a journal by post. All of my pieces were taken by someone personally who had them published".

The Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medrese is still open today, although according to S.Ö., "has become a totally touristic location". This particular literary venue, which started to gain momentum in the 1980's, enjoyed its best years during the time coinciding with S.Ö.'s attendance. It had lost its edge by the beginning of the '90's, and the literary group disbanded before, leaving mostly academics, university staff, professors, assistants and students to frequent it on their own. They had come there in the past, but now did so without the literary..." (S.Ö., 2017, İstanbul).

S.Ö. began to work on a literary journal during the 1990s. The journal was bombarded by stories and poems almost by the sackful. Most of these were written in biro, and very often came attached with a cumbersome letter explaining the contents of the piece at great length. The numbers of stories and poems was so huge that it was impossible to answer them all. Only those who phoned in were answered. Just the pieces to be considered were piled in a corner and the rest were thrown out. The pieces that were chosen for publication were set aside, and eventually separated into story and poetry files, with the receipt date written on them. Later, when a piece was chosen for publication in an upcoming issue, it would be taken from that file. Some pieces remained in the file for an indefinite period, even though selected as publishable, only to be weeded out and thrown away at some later date. "You can only publish a limited number of new names. Journals had a set, regular readership, and

generally filled its pages with its regular contributors, a selected group of named writers and poets. Apart from that, there would generally only be room for a very few new names, so few that they constituted no more than 1% of all the contributors” (S.Ö., 2017, Istanbul). After having published a large number of stories in a series of different journals, S.Ö.’s first book was published in 1995. This was type-written. Immediately afterwards, the era of the floppy disc began.

S.R. was a writer who caught the attention of her literature teacher quite early in high school. Her teacher was to comment that here was a student who could become a writer in the future. She loved reading and writing (was highly literate), was often singled out to participate in literature competitions. However, at one point, S.R. lost her enthusiasm for literature. She was later to describe the 80’s as “the years when one tried to live as if anything could happen at any time”, particularly in 1984, the year of the coup, and the difficult, complicated years following it, S.R. explained, even though literature was an area she felt passionate about, the new restrictions being imposed by YÖK left one in a such a state of confusion, that one began “to somehow dislike literature”, since it introduced obligatory examination. This meant learning literature by rote, which for a student like me who loved literature so much, was a very serious dilemma “. However, around that time, the writer met Müge Sökmen, one of the founders of *Metis Yayınlar*, and members of the translating team of the publishers through mutual friends. At the time, *Defter* and *Metis Çeviri* journals were being published by *Metis Publications*. Meanwhile, S.R., although she had almost abandoned the idea of becoming a writer, once she had had a taste of the publishing world, and had begun to see the serious momentum at *Metis*, began to reconsider her decision. “One thing led to another. In fact, life is really a series of coincidences” said S.R. who before becoming better-known as a writer was a journalist for *Tempo*, and then for *Sokak Dergisi* and *Turkish Daily News*, through Müge Sökmen. From there she left journalism to become a teacher. Then realising that this

was her true metier. she remained a teacher for many years, and still teaches at university, where she runs creative writing workshops.

At the age of 18, S.R. had sent her stories to a journal and was told that they would be published. However, when they failed to appear in the journal, she turned up at the publishing offices to demand why they had not been published. The response she got was that they were “too emotional”. She left the journal in tears of disappointment, and perhaps because of this waited almost another 30 years before having them published. Meanwhile, again through an acquaintance, she manages to reach the Editor in chief of the journal *Varlık*, Enver Ercan. “When I first entered his office, Enver took no notice of me, whatsoever. And he often talks about that. Then later, things went better...”. In 1996, one of her stories was published in *Varlık* together with a second piece of writing. Subsequently, emboldened by the prize she had been awarded, she sent her stories to *İletişim Yayınları*, where they were published in 1998 as her first book.

As a writer, as she plunged into the world of literature, S.R. “acted with a childish curiosity and a child’s shyness” she later admitted. She questioned that if she had been a man, would she have waited 30 years to have her stories published. The world she was entering was predominantly gender-biased towards men, and this plainly had slowed her down. Her thesis on the work of women was to change S.R.’s perspective on women.

This development was significant because of the impact it had on her more recent books. “I realised the insufficiency of being just a strong feminist. Because I noticed that there were other issues, that being a woman in the third world created a different set of parameters.” According to S.R. the male gender bias of the literary world persists today. This is why she especially wants to support upcoming female writers, for the reasons she outlines in these lines:

“Because I know how slow, how clumsy, how cruel a process it can be... still nothing changes. That’s to say, the clumsiness of it doesn’t change. The masculine perspective doesn’t change. Writers still come to me, I read this author, or that author, and I liked them. (they say), And they are all men, for example. And they are telling me that. What they have to say is of course important, but there are things happening my side of the fence too,” (S.R., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer L.D.’s relationship with literature started with his reading, being “a keen reader” and sharing that interest within a group of book-loving, poetry-writing friends. While at university, the writer encountered a wider range of literature, from a variety of sources. Around the same time, he encountered people like himself, who read and wrote in the cafes he began to frequent. At the beginning of the 1980’s, the annual Book Fair began to take place. But no matter how many publishers and writers might meet there, the actual heart of the publishing word, or the writer’s path to success still remained in Cağaloğlu. Journals were another path into the literary world. This writer and their friends, however, preferred neither to send stories to the journals, nor to “chase after other writers, from table to table in a meyhanes” in order “to enter that world”. At least this is how L.D. chooses to define his peer group. All of the group were relatively highly educated, none of them wished to be part of any type of acquaintance or brotherhood relationship, or any type of network, nor did they wish to enter into a relationship of such a nature with an authority of any kind. And as such, were determined to follow their own route.

In 1992, L.D. had graduated from university and completed a post-graduate degree. Meanwhile he continued to write, occasionally sending pieces to competitions. “Competitions were critical then. They are still important but not so much”. Later he would gather his stories together and send them to a publishers. His first try was not successful, and the writer had to wait until 1999 to have his first piece published. However, after these first unsuccessful

attempts, L.D. and their friends decided to bring out a journal themselves. The writer claimed that their arrival in the world of literature, and developing their initial skills were connected with the journal experience.

The writer, G.B. was a child of book-loving parents, with a home full of books, for which he considered himself privileged. Furthermore, not only through books, but also through their father, who was an avid literature reader and had collected journals over a number of years, including *Varlık*, *Türk Dili*, *Yeni Ufuklar*, *Yeni Dergi* and *Milliyet Sanat*, which he had had bound together. These journals were arranged in his library alongside his books. As soon as he was able to read, G.B.'s parents began to buy him books. "Even if such was not the case for toys, at least when I asked for a book it was given straight away". Having a home where books were being read was a motivation in itself. Thus G.B.'s relationship with books began. His interest in writing began in his intermediary school years. His Turkish teacher, himself a poet who often submitted poetry to local journals, would give homework every week about the literary genre that he/she had taught that week. G.B. was impressed by the Turkish teacher's comments that if they worked at it, they could have a future in literature. He had just recently read Aziz Nesin's memoirs, from which he learnt that Aziz Nesin's own teacher in military school had said the same thing to him. Whereupon, he began to write stories without being assigned them as homework. He sent these to a local literary journal, in the second issue of which a small note appeared saying that either his story or a review of it would be published in the next issue. Seeing his name in print like this for the first time, G.B. "was ecstatic". Unfortunately, during the subsequent period, the events of 12 September meant that the next issue of the journal never appeared. Even though it was never published, that someone he didn't know had read his work in this way was motivating for G.B.

In 1985, International Youth Year, *Milliyet Sanat* announced that they were going to devote the first two pages of every issue to young, up-and-coming writers. G.B. submitted an

essay to a journal, and it was published in 1985. The following years, he had an article published in a daily paper. Around that time, he learnt that one of the literary journals he followed had an office in the city in which he was living, and he began to visit the offices regularly. He began to share his stories with an older peer who also frequented the offices, and with whom he had regular literary conversations. The criticism and advice he received from that source inspired him to write even more. Later, while in his final high school year, he sent a typewritten story to the journal *Varlık*. “During the summer (following graduation) I received a letter from Cengiz Gündoğdu, on *Varlık*’s headed paper. Of course, I was beside myself just to get such a letter at that point. But that’s another story. ‘We don’t evaluate single stories’, was the response. ‘To give you an assessment of your stories we would need at least five stories from you’ “ (G.B., 2018, İstanbul). G.B. added a fifth story to the four he had ready and sent them to *Varlık*. This time he got ‘a very long letter’ from Cengiz Gündoğdu by way of response. He had edited the texts of each story in great detail, correcting each page in ‘red pen’. G.B. revised his stories according to these corrections and resubmitted them to the journal. Even though he learnt the same summer that he had been accepted to study at İstanbul University, it was not the university acceptance so much as the fact that the faculty was in Beyazıt and the offices of *Varlık* were so close by, in Cağaloğlu. “I started at university one Monday morning, in October 1986, and two days later, on the Wednesday of the same week, I began to ask around “Where is Cağaloğlu” and having learnt how to get from Beyazıt to Cağaloğlu, I went there and knocked on their door. [...] And after that I started to visit *Varlık* regularly” (G.B., 2018, İstanbul).

A few months later his story was published in the journal. Having his work published in one of Turkey’s oldest and well-established journals was a great motivator for the writer. G.B., knowing that Kemal Özer and Cengiz Gündoğdu would be at the journal’s offices after 5 pm., whenever he wrote a new story or essay from time to time, he would call in at the

offices without an appointment, and come across other writers such as Özdemir İnce, Atilla Birkiye, Asım Bezirci, Afşar Timuçin and Enver Ercan. “No matter when I went over there, the place was never empty”. Although not a ready talker himself, he did take part in what were mostly literary discussions once there, getting to know his peers, other young writers and poets who had their work published in the journal. Although they never met outside the offices. He joined the university journal committee for culture and the arts, and published some of his stories in that outlet. Again, he joined the Literature Club of that institution, becoming close friends with a number of upcoming literary figures. He organised literary seminars and took part in panels via the club. “Other literary journals began to appear in towns and cities in Anatolia, among them *Kıyı* in Trabzon and *Yazıt* and *Karşı Edebiyat* in Ankara. As a writer whose stories had been previously printed in *Varlık*, when I sent stories there, they were also printed. So I became quite well-known within rather a narrow sphere”. (G.B., 2018, İstanbul).

The writer G.B. gets a mention in a competition organised by the Akademi bookshop. “That prize-giving was reported in *Cumhuriyet* daily, for example. So my name is mentioned. I saw myself in a tiny little group photo of the winning participants. Such things were motivating.” (G.B., 2018, İstanbul). Later, he begins to publish a new journal with Ömer Ateş and some other friends, after meeting them quite by chance in a bookshop in Kadıköy. This period he later describes as one in which he began to taste “both the trials and joys of journalism” as he had seen described in the biographies and memoirs of writers he read as a youth. When necessary, he had been known to carry paper for the journal himself, and suffered serious financial problems. The journal’s distribution in İstanbul was carried out by him personally, together with his girlfriend. The journal survived two years, having to close down at the end of the two-year period due to lack of funds. The journal also founded its own publishers, which is where G.B.’s first book of stories became published, along with a book of

poetry. The costs of these publishing activities were covered by the group who founded the journal, which also attempted to organise the book distribution themselves. However, book distribution is more complicated than that of the journal. Following the book publications and the journal's closure, G.B. completed his university career and went on to military service. In the intervening time, he concentrated more on reading than writing. In 1996 they decided to publish once again, hence G.B.'s second book of stories reached print. His stories also published in *Adam Öykü*, other journals put out by his friends and underground publications.

G.B. translated an article written in English on science fiction and took it to Bülent Somay, who was both director of the science fiction series published by *Metis Yayınları* and a member of the publishing committee at *Deftir* journal. Bülent Somay sent his story to another journal whom he thought might be interested in publishing it. When G.B. visits the journal to introduce himself, they become interested not only in his Sci-Fi piece, but in his other work too. So G.B. began to visit the offices of that journal regularly, and within time, became one of its editors himself. His close connection with the latter journal led G.B. to concentrate even more on reading and writing. He talked of this experience gained at the journal in the following words:

“It is rare in literary circles that one takes in a story, and the editor corrects it, there and then.....they don't usually pick out things as if they were giving a lesson. But when you're there, if you pay attention, things..... in the course of conversation For example, I had submitted a piece, they cut the last paragraph out. Why did you cut it out, I ask them. The story ends here, you drew it out unnecessarily, they reply. So somehow, in scraps of conversation, one learns,” (G.B., 2018, Istanbul).

G.B.'s colleagues at the journal encouraged him to send his stories to *İletişim Yayınları*. Even if a writer had already had two books published, to have a book published by *İletişim* is bound to be a huge motivation to concentrate on one's writing even more seriously.

The journal then started a publishers of its own, from which his books were published and the author began to edit the works of other writers.

The writer B.N. describes her parents as both very good speakers, and both her grandmothers as wonderful story-tellers. “It was just like the way people gathered round a fire. The actual fire was the words themselves, and the tradition of story-telling and the skill of the story-teller”. She describes this skill of story-telling, that was part of her family tradition, as being the oral equivalent of what she, as a writer, was doing in ‘more modern terms’. She herself began story-telling at a very early age, and when she learnt to read and write she was given a notebook as a gift; with which she presented herself as a ‘writer’ to her teachers. She wrote stories and poems. In fact, her mother sent one of her poems to the children’s literature supplement *Milliyet Kardeş*. In high school she was known as ‘the girl who wrote poetry’, and as a writer. On one occasion, a writer to whom she had given one of her poems criticised the poem in negative terms, quite rudely, in fact, while others were more sensitive, using words of encouragement, such as ‘keep going, young lady’. As B.N. comments, all of these were the reactions of the men around her, stressing that the literary world of the 90’s was predominantly male. After being educated in Izmir and Ankara, B.N. moved to Istanbul in 1994.

She takes her first steps into the literary world in 1994, with a story, by entering a writing competition held by *Varlık*. After learning that the journal was opening a competition for writers under the age of 30, she bought several issues and decided to submit her own story. B.N. expresses her thoughts at this point: “Thanks to *Varlık*, I became a young writer”. She began to frequent the journal’s offices, and visit Enver Ercan. She believed that being part of the journalistic tradition definitely contributed something to a writer. Once a writer’s piece of work, a story or review was published, there would be a review or critical piece to follow. When another writer made a reference to the author’s work, both writers would then make a

point of seeking out and getting to know one another. The journal “created connections between writers”. For a writer to attempt to ‘break the green screen and appear alone and unconnected in the litererary community ’ was, according the B.N. “Not only a very lonely, a very brittle existence, but also one in which the writer will become speedily exhausted, consumed, and remain always totally isolated” (B.N., 2018, Istanbul). B.N. sensed that there is a distinct difference between emerging from a generation, from the interactivity within a generational group, repeatedly nourished by the collective conceptual framework of that group, rather than alienating oneself altogether.

When she began to visit *Varlık* and meet Enver Ercan regularly, B.N. started to encounter writers there, among them Murat Yalçın and others with whom she discussed literature. At one point, a friend, who was also a screenwriter, thinking she was talented put her in touch with a producer. The producer in question introduced B.N. to a director, and the director’s assistant introduced her to Tomris Uyar. And so she began to widen her network through such connections. At one point, she began to submit stories to the journal *Adam Öykü*, “Knowing Semih Gümüş and his journal, the *Adam Öykü*, and having our stories published in that journal were both very important for us”. (B.N., 2018, Istanbul). So, having met Semih Gümüş, the author had the chance to meet other writers by continuing to frequent the journal.

After winning the story competition, a friend took her with Semih Gümüş to *Can Yayınları*, and opening the door to the offices announced: “Hey friends, look, I have brought you a writer”. “Thats how he introduced me to Erdal Bey. ‘Erdal Bey is a very good publisher’, he kept saying. [.....] And my text had red penmarks, editorial notes on every sentence”. This is how her first book was published with *Can Yayınları*.

2.2 Prominent Publishers: Then and Now

According to the writer M.S., certain publishers were notable for publishing literary works during the 1970's. *Cem Yayınları*, *Milliyet Yayınları*, which Tarık Dursun K. claimed to run, *Bilgi Yayınları in Ankara* and *Varlık Yayınları* in particular. *İnkılap* was also considered an important publisher in this respect, although “they had no editors, even now they still don't”. *Remzi Yayınları*, “this publishers has been operating since the 40's, perhaps even the 30's” and was also amongst the foremost literary publishers. M.S. recalls that when a new novel arrived at these publishers, it would first be read by their own writers who would then give their assessment of it. For example, according to M.S., Fakir Baykurt read incoming novels for *Remzi Yayınları*. Prior to the establishment of *Adam Yayınları*, apparently many publishers did not have in-house editors or permanent editing staff. Manuscripts were read by the publisher himself, and if he liked the work he published it, if not, he did not. After *Adam Yayınları* set up their own editing team, the writer comments, other publishers began to follow suite and hire in-house editors. He points to the influence of Memet Fuat, who had set up *Adam Yayınları* on the lines of *Oxford Publications*, which he travelled to the U.K. to see at first hand. Fuat's aim was to create a publishers along the lines of *Oxford* which claimed its publications were published globally without error. However, as M.S. comments, this was a difficult aim to achieve in Turkey. “Even for a publishers to train such a team....impossible to find the right technicians. Correction meant working with low wages. Everyone imagined they could do such a job. That its a simple task. So the publishers outsourced the work to redactors working for 5 kr. per page. That system is still going on.....” (M.S., 2017, İstanbul). Sometimes the writer themselves is required to do their own correcting and editing. This is what happened to M.S. during the publication of his first book. “Here, they say, here are the proofs, you read them, they say. Why would they employ an editor? Do it yourself they say”, (M.S., 2017, İstanbul).

Ş.F., poet and author, indicates the importance of *Cem Yayınevi* for the '80's, stressing that the owner of that publishers, Oğuz Akkan was himself the house's editor. He points out that *Varlık Yayınları*, founded by Yaşar Nabi Nayır, maintained an important place in the publishing world up to the 1980's, not least for its 'incredible' publishing record of 1100 titles, at a time when, as Ş.F. points out, the total figures for book publication in Turkey were no more than 3,000 or 4,000. "Yaşar Bey's contribution was immense". *Varlık Yayınları*'s world classics were an important contribution to the world of literature. We all read almost all the basic classics from *Varlık* in our youth". Tahsin Yücel was editor in chief, Sennur Sezer did pre-print text corrections there. *E Yayınları* had begun to lose ground in publishing, compared to its status in the previous decade. Some of the later publishing houses of note, founded in the 1980's were *Can Yayınları* (1981), *İletişim Yayınları* (1982) and *Metis Yayınları* (1982).

E.K., critic and writer, was of the opinion that *Adam Yayınları* was the most important publisher in Turkish publishing history. Among the reasons for this statement, E.K. cites its capacity and its ability to expand with alacrity. According to the writer, it was the publisher's size and capacity which made it influential in the publishing world. In fact, in E.K.'s view, *Adam Publications* changed the quality of publishing altogether. Firstly, this publisher gave priority to authors' rights to an extent previously unseen in Turkish publishing. Some of the basic rights of writers and translators were protected, payment of copyright and translators fees, execution of contracts etc. were established in unprecedented terms, in a framework considered "extremely advanced". The standard copyright fee at *Adam Yayınları*, even for any writer whatsoever, was at least 15%. I also received 15% for my first book. After 30 years, I don't receive that amount, it is lower now. "(E.K., 2017, Istanbul). The outstanding editing team, including Memet Fuat and Cevat Çapan'in was one factor that singled out this publishers, not to mention the graphics and design team, the persistent efforts of the

publishers to expand and augment their sales and distribution network, and to include noted innovations, and not least the attitude of considering the aesthetics of the product, which meant great care being taken from cover to cover, through to finished print edition. In total, these were turning points in publication. *Adam Yayınları* were one of the publishers who must be considered most influential in contributing to raising the quality of publishing in Turkey.

E.K. considers the most important publishers today to be *Can Yayınları*. This publishers, he points out, was established in 1981 as a totally independent enterprise, and grew without the support of any substantial source of capital or connection to a large capital group, and furthermore, maintained its integrity over the years by publishing exclusively literary material.

For poet and writer E.A., *Varlık Yayınları* was one of the most important publishers of the 1980's, particularly for its Turkish literature publications and its journal. Another being the *Türk Dili Dergisi*, published by the Turkish Language Institution (Türk Dil Kurumu). Although she mentions such Istanbul publishers as *Remzi* and *İnkılap*, she refers to them as “over institutionalised” and has little relations with them. [In 1982] the *Hürriyet* daily published the *Gösteri Dergisi* supplement, and founded a publishing house. The daily *Milliyet* began to publish the *Milliyet Sanat* supplement and founded *Milliyet Yayınları* Publishing. The Karacan group also published the journal *Sanat Olayı*, while a key moment was again the establishment of *Adam Yayınları* after 1980.

“*Adam Yayınları* was a modern publishing house, supported by significant capital. It had its own advertising agency. The owner, Nazar Bey, was himself in advertising, and owned one of the largest advertising firms in Turkey. They also published the Encyclopaedia Britannica simultaneously with literature. They had their own printers, which was considerably sizeable. Publishing poetry books was one of their more

notable activities, although there were other Turkish literary writers as well. Poetry remained their most important focus. They published the works of the İkinci Yeni group in their entirety, even long after they had previously been in print, realising that they were being sold and read” (E.A., 2017, İstanbul).

Can Yayınları follows on, then *Yazko*, which was known both as an effective book publishers and for their weekly journal containing literary, translated work and philosophical texts. E.A. refers particularly to changes following the 12 September 1980 Coup d’Etat. Apart from the institutionalised publishers namely *İnkılap*, *Altın*, *Remzi* or *Varlık Yayınları*, other publishers, especially those with political affiliations were closed down. In fact, the post-1980’s were a new event, with new publishers such as *Adam Yayınları*, *Can Yayınları*, *Yazko*, *Afa Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları* and *İletişim Yayınları* being founded as more professional, commercial enterprises, “signalling a new concept of publishing”.

The writer, S.R. indicated that the publishers of note during the 90’s were, in her view, *Can Yayınları*, *İletişim Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları*, *Ayrıntı Yayınları* and *Belge Yayınları*. She also commented on the somewhat later boost to publishing provided by *Doğan Kitap*, although she was not sure if it had existed as early as the 90’s. These, said the writer S.R., were serious publishers who had developed a conscious recognition of their reading public. They can be said to have been instrumental in bringing not only world fiction but non-fiction, in short, world literature to Turkey, thus giving the Turkish reading public the opportunity to broaden their conceptual horizons. The writer reflects on how, in her view, the efforts of such publishers to exert positive influence on all aspects of publishing, whether it be in editorial terms or cover design, resulted in the existence of what she refers to as a kind of influential publishers’ workshop, embracing all these aspects, including contractual relationships, respectful consideration for the writer on the one hand, and strategic title selection reflecting contemporary tastes on the other, that aimed ultimately to create a Turkish reader who was

both aware of local realities and embraced a global perspective. The task thus undertaken by such publishers, to educate their readership by raising the level of reader consciousness, was, according to the writer, an achievement on several levels that she found continuously stimulating; adding that there were other publishers today with similar aims. Those she mentions as important in the 90's were still among her 'favorites'. One new publishers she mentioned who appeared to be taking an "interesting line" was *Hep Kitap*'.

The writer L.D. lists *Can Yayınları*, *İletişim Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları* and *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* as the most important publishers of the 80's and 90's. He stresses *İletişim Yayınları* particularly for the list of important authors it published, including Oğuz Atay; *Metis Yayınları* for its important list of non-fiction titles; *Can Yayınları* for its comprehensive list of Turkish writers, alongside the almost complete works of Latin American authors; commending *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* for its publishing style, patronage of exhibitions and journals and the variety of series it published. "These were all. Not so many in fact". Although dropping in quality in the 90's, he also includes *Adam Yayınları* among his list of important publishers.

G.B., writer, could not recall any particular publishers of note from the 1980's, suggesting his priority was rather focusing on certain writers and books. He thought that this was somewhat connected to the fact that not all the work of his preferred writers was published by the same source. For example, while Uğur Kökden's essays came out of *De Yayınları*, his next book could be brought out by *Cem Yayınları* three years later, and the subsequent title by *Adam Yayınları*. Although one publisher he had tended to follow was *De Yayınları*. G.B. also referred to *Adam Yayınları* as "a phenomenon", stressing that "This was absolutely undeniable. It was a publishing house which changed one aspect of the face of publishing..." In his view, this publishers had accumulated great writers and published good authors and good translations. Those being mainly his university years, it was a time when he

accumulated most of his library, many books purchased from *Adam Yayınları* and *Can Yayınları*. But still stressing that had it been possible to search on internet for new publications in the 80's as you would today, he would have been searching by author. For example, even though G.B. was "not too enthusiastic" about *Bilgi Yayınları*, they were publishing Sait Faik Abasıyanık and Mahmut Şevket Esendal at the time.

The first books he bought with his first income were from *Can Yayınları*. Like most of his friends, he wished his first book would come out from that publisher because they were publishing Turkish authors at the time. By the millenium year, 2000, *İletişim Yayınları* and *Metis Yayınları* were the most prominent publishers, the author having no particular desire to send a manuscript to *Can Yayınları* by then. "There was a tremendous variety. Perhaps I am mixing the dates, but something happened there. Someone left *Can Yayınları*. I think I was tired of that unending conflict between Hasan Öztoprak and Aslı Erdoğan, but I cannot be sure of the dates" (G.B., 2018, Istanbul).

S.Ö. became a serious reader of literature during his high school years, when *Adam Yayınları* was, according to him, the best, with *Can Yayınları* a close second. *Bilgi Yayınları*, *Varlık Yayınları* he mentions for the works they published in the 70's, *Metis* for the *Defter* journal, and *İletişim Yayınları* was also among S.Ö.'s list of important publishers. "Although when it came to the best publishers with the best Turkish writers of good literature, *Adam* was at the forefront " as far as he was concerned. He also believed that *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* took their lead from *Adam*, and had started off with their initial team also from *Adam*.

Varlık Yayınları, *Cem Yayınevi* and *Adam Yayınları* were also key publishers in the 70's and 80's for R.P.. *Varlık Yayınları* gave him his first introduction to foreign literature during his childhood and youth, whilst he read many world classics from *Cem Yayınevi*, which for example, was the first Turkish publishers to publish Kafka, and it was from the same source that he read Erdal Öz's novel *Yaralısin*, and Yaşar Kemal. During the eighties,

he read Latin American literature via authors from *Can Yayınları*. Then there were the *Can Yayınları* children's books, and again he considered *Arkadaş Kitapları* from *Cem Yayınevi* important. During the Millenium years, R.P. was able to access the titles of some of his much loved authors via *Yapı Kredi Yayınları*. And for the current situation, the author commented: “there are so many publishers today of this quality, which one should I start with...”

The author B.N. considered the *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* to be particularly effective as a publishing house. He felt that Enis Batur's publishing style drew the reader closer to written culture. He believed that it rendered writings from afar more accessible, and commented how important it was that they embraced both past and present cultures.

2.3 Literati Meeting Places: Then and Now

I.K., writer and journalist recounts that the literati congregated around the Mavi Group were connected to Attilâ İlhan's *Mavi Dergi*, which met in Baylan Cafe in İstiklal Caddesi. Here they mingled with the 50's generation. Meanwhile, I.K., although himself from the 50's generation, generally frequented Kemal Bey's coffee house on the Yenikapı coast, where he would meet up with the publisher of *a dergisi*, known as Kemal Özer, whose real name was Özer Özler. They met there on a daily basis, and discussed their reading and writings. Kemal Özer, Adnan Özyalçın, Onat Kutlar and Doğan Hızlan were so ‘ensconced’ in that setting that I.K. had placed some chairs and other furniture in a space behind the coffee house to create a theatre, so that the actors Ali Poyrazoğlu and Müjdat Gezen could perform their first plays there. Sennur Sezer wrote a piece in the *Evrensel daily* about how it was forbidden to play backgammon in the coffee house, describing it as a true youth cultural centre. During the day, the group would work or read in a room with canaries, and in the evenings, on one of the two garden terraces would sit families, on the other the literati and artists. “On the other terrace, you could see the split between generations by the gaps between the tables. To be invited to sit at Behçet Necatigil's, Asım Bezirci's, Prof. Dr. İsmet Sungurbey's tables, at a

nod of the head, was a great honour” (Sezer, Evrensel, 2008). As I.K. relates, besides the literati, were actors such as Savaş Dinçel, Müjdat Gezen, Zeki Alasya, Metin Akpınar, Zihni Göktay, Aybert Çölok and Ayton Sert, as well as the bright young starlets of the silver screen - Yeşilçam’, In winter, solo monologues were performed there, while the literati:

“There being so many young writers attending this coffee house, at the end of each year Memet Fuat would give his annual literature review talk there. Everyday, there would be plans and designs for journals or poetic disputes at every table.... the matinee performer at the end of Mehmet Kaplan’s Poetry Analysis - Şiir Tahlilleri, Ayhan Kırdaş....Turgut Tan, who preferred to remain in the background, sound as a poet and quiet and gentle as a man..... Doğan Hızlan, striking character of well-balanced criticism, Demir Özlü, my artistic mentor who never failed to include me along with the sisters Sezer and Tezer,” (Sezer, Evrensel, 2008).

There were also the Taverna – meyhane – where writers met in the evenings. One such locale was the ‘still surviving’ Cumhuriyet Meyhanesi in Çiçek Pasajı. The German restaurant, Nil Lokantası in Asmalımescit was another, often visited by I.K., also frequented by Sina Akşin, Ömer Uluç, Ahmet Cemal, Demir Özlü, Doğan Hızlan, Sevim Burak and occasionally Abdülbâki Gölpınarlı. Refik, in Sofyali Sokak was also a literati meeting place. Refik’s assistant and relative Yakup was soon to open his own restaurant close by. Most people went to Refik during the day, and met up at Yakup at night. Degüstasyon was one of the other spots frequently favoured by I.K., which was to be immortalised in his poetry by the lines of Orhan Veli: “The Canan who never came to Degüstasyon, nor ever to Balıkpazarı”.

At the end of the university day, the place to go was Çınaraltı. “There were two groups congregating at Çınaraltı; intellectuals and grinds”. This location was important to them for two reasons: the first was “the now completely transformed Sahaflar Çarşısı – Bookseller’s Market; Here, one could find the booksellers who were devotees of the Cerrahî

mystic order, Muzaffer Ozak and Ali Erten, Arslan Kaynardağ, owner of Elif Bookshop who had been suspended from school for his socialist views, Şemsettin Yeşil and Raif Karadeniz, who specialised in religious books, and the renowned Râif Yelkenci, who only sold books to those he wished. The Sahaflar was the one address for anyone searching for books of all kinds. The second reason to frequent Çınaraltı was that it was close to the Beyazıt Library. In the midst of a dispute on one topic or another, to prove a point, or verify something - “wss it this or that”, the group might remove to the library nearby.

During the 60’s, the translator, story-writer and novelist Kâmuran Şipal, Ali Tanyeri, the “grand master teacher” of Divan poetry and the poet-translator Behçet Necatigil would meet at the Narlıkapı Gazino in Narlıkapı. I.K. would usually join them once a month. “One week, Behçet Hoca brought a poem he had just written. Ali would say ‘Hocam, but it doesn’t fit the Divan’. Şipal was calm... (I.K., 2018, Istanbul).

I.K. relates that there were certain prescheduled times when specific meetings were held there, but that he did not attend such meetings, preferring to visit literary figures at home, or to take part in small group gatherings at their homes. Among the leading figures he visited were Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Kemal Tahir, Tahir Alangu, Tomris Uyar, Turgut Uyar, Adalet Ağaoğlu and Behçet Necatigil. Haldun Taner’s favoured locale was Markiz, Onat Kutlar’s the Kalp Cafe in the garden of Park Hotel. The owner of *Altın Kitaplar* publisher, Dr. Turan Bozkurt would meet twice monthly with Hilmi Yavuz at the Divan. These places were almost all in the same neighborhood. “Nowadays there is decentralisation, no-one is concentrated around a specific neighborhood.”

I.K. describes how literary figures met and gathered during the 1970’s. He describes how they went to meyhanes– pubs, to restaurants, and met in the offices of journals. This habit began to gradually disappear during the 1980’s. After the 80’s, it was rare to see a writer in a specific cafe.”The last was Atilla İlhan, He was at Divan”. There were the meyhane-

pubs, for example, one went to Yakup, or to Nevizade or Cumhuriyet Meyhanesi where one was bound to come across someone of note, “Although, its nothing like the old days. Not in the least.”

Cağaloğlu was an obvious meeting place since all the publishers and newspapers were situated there. Writers going up the hill to Cağaloğlu would ‘make the rounds’. They would call in at Cumhuriyet daily, and the various publishers. In addition, “the city was smaller, traffic was more manageable,” (I.K., 2018, Istanbul). It was easier to get from one place to another. Today, I.K. meets up with his literary friends at the Divan, at the Pera Museum Cafe, and if they will come, at the Gezi Cafe.

The writer G.K.’s literary radio program, although not a true meeting place, was quite often a venue where literary figures could meet one another. “There was something happening there....There was an atmosphere....” Cevat Çapan, Tahsin Yücel would meet with Hilmi Yavuz and work something up together. The popular radio daily soap actors would join them, Behçet Necatigil would call in frequently, Necati Cumalı would also call in from time to time since his wife worked there. And whoever turned up would join the inevitable conversations, or writers who had come to take part in the program would be waylaid to join them to “chat, chat and chat”.

G.K. worked at Turkish TRT radio until her retirement in 1985. Following her retirement she continued to make programs for the network. She endeavoured to follow new writers, and invited almost all of them to her programs. TV channels were opened. For her *Okudukça* program on TRT 2, she built up an archive of stories which she assessed over three years. During that time she ‘became acquainted with’ very many people, although rarely joined a meyhane group. She was not against them, saying that in such places: “unusual things could happen. Certain undercurrents could emerge, and it was pleasant to see that, too”,

although such environs were not for G.K., she found them tedious and so rarely attended.

“Not that I never went, of course, but I was never a regular”.

So literary gatherings in the form of afternoon talks – matinees - took place during the 1940’s, the 50’s and partially during the 60’s. At such a gathering, a writer was invited to give a talk at a particular location. They were attended by a group of interested listeners who would direct questions to the speaker after his/her talk. Such writers as Orhan Duru, Muzafer Erdost or Cemal Süreya would be the kind of person that would be invited to speak at such literary gatherings. One such talk, attended by G.K., was given by Aziz Nesin.

Another locale of note during the 1960’s was the bookshop of Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca, between Aksaray and Beyazıt. Dağlarca would hang his poems to the door of his shop every morning, where people would congregate out of curiosity to read them. It was a place where many literary discussions and debates were held; naturally it became one of the key meeting places for a number of writers and literary figures. “Naturally, many topics are discussed at any literary gathering. Everyone gets to know each other better” (G.K., 2017, Istanbul). Poetry lovers, wannabe poets would come and read their work, Dağlarca would give them advice and comments.

Writer-poet Ş.F., talks of meeting at the offices of literary journals and publishers. *Yazko*, in particular, for example, was an ‘open house’ for writers, poets and readers alike. “But *Yazko* was that kind of place. Everyone turned up there.” Ş.F. mentions that in the 1980’s, many writers would bring their work from as far away as Mersin or Izmir “both to see Memet Fuat and Istanbul perhaps”. When their contributions began to be published in the journal in 1982-3 many would also turn up just to meet him. Most journals, including *Varlık*, operated in that way. *Cem Yayınevi*, in fact, was known as a place one could just ‘casually pop-in while passing’, without need of an appointment. A friend had taken the writer with him to visit Erdal Öz, the founder of *Can Yayınları*, in 1981. They found Erdal Öz creating a

layout, cutting tool in hand. Although Erdal Öz was no longer the literary conduit of former years after the 90's, Ş.F. continued to visit Öz at the journal once a month. After these meetings, Öz would carry on to Çiçek Arif.

Then there were the meyhane – bars that were frequented by members of the literary world. Yakup in Beyoğlu was one such place. Occasionally the meeting place for literary discussion was the beerhouse under the old Galata Bridge on the side facing the Golden Horn. This venue disappeared after the bridge was renewed. “I can remember the last time I went there; it was with Semih Gümüş and a few others, and that must have been the last time we went, around '88.” Another meeting place for writers and literati had been the Istanbul TÜYAP Book Fair. Particularly during the years when the fair was held below the Taksim Hotel, “that really was the occasion, the day, or the month of literary encounters” recalls Ş.F. Literary figures met in such places, and discussed the issues of the day. They discussed the work published in the journal, the political atmosphere and situation subsequent to the 80's, and talked of new poets and prose writers. “Culture, literature were the main focal points, but politics was discussed just as much, being a topic of critical importance in need of urgent discussion, just it is today”. However, as times changed, so did the locations for discussion. Following the 12 September coup, “the existing regime was against any kind of gathering” says Ş.F. “So don't meet anywhere....in fact.”

Yakup was one of the places where literati regularly met that “would not easily change”. It is still a venue which draws the literati and journalists. Galata Bridge is no more. Even if literary figures do go to the Medrese, it is no longer the meeting place it once was. Journals no longer have the ‘ambiance’ that made them into such good meeting places. “They are finished”. After the 90's, the publishing houses had moved from Cağaloğlu to İstiklal Caddesi, in Beyoğlu. But they are spread out in different locations. “They scattered all over... The Publishers were spread out...so were the journals...”. Some journals still carried on but

without their existence in a larger centre such as Cağaloğlu had once been, they were no longer attractive as places to meet and congregate. “Beyoğlu never became a Cağaloğlu”. Today, notes Ş.F., unless there is a special event, a cocktail or some such, the members of the literati very rarely meet. “It’s very rare that one meets with ...Selim İleri’, Adnan Özer’, Metin Celâl’, or Turgay Fişekçi these days”. Not like those gatherings in the past. Do such places exist these days. I don’t know. Perhaps....”

“Towards the end of the 80’s, places for the literary world to congregate, what could be described as the literary clubs as we knew them have disappeared. Perhaps some exist still in cafes, but the old literary clubs are no more. Maybe in Kadıköy, perhaps on the Asian side, there may be one or two places where a couple of writers and book lovers get together and talk. Its been tried, but when compared with the places of the 80’s and earlier, nothing comparable to the old clubs. After the 90’s there is nothing. Not only are we turning more individualistic but we are becoming more isolated, alienated. One thing after another....” Ş.F. 28 March 2017, Istanbul).

The writer M.S., talks of the meetings that were held in the homes of individuals in the past:- Nahit Hanım’s salons, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu’s “Friday (I think) gatherings...”, gatherings at Kemal Tahir’s house. But such events ended in the 70’s. “Life was more expensive. It was more difficult to entertain people and set a table”. Kemal Tahir’s sole income was what he earned from his writing; his wife was a seamstress. ‘Young writers would arrive at their house, the table would be set’. Later, the writer mentions similar meetings held in the house of the writer-poet Hulki Aktunç, which he hosted by his own humble means.”He had such gatherings often, although not regularly. Life became increasingly more expensive.” By the 70’s, he recalls that such meetings were no longer held in homes, but had removed to the meyhane - bars. For example, he mentions the Thursday group in Kadıköy - “Perşembeciler” meeting in the Mavi Tuna meyhane, on the first floor of a

wooden quayside house whose kitchen was on the floor below. Literate aficionado from everywhere in and around Kadıköy frequented this locale, according to the writer, including Yusuf Atılgan, Eray Canberk, Behzat Ay and Ercüment Uçar. “They were our elders. It was the beginning of the 70’s. The Perşembeciler group had started up around then. Then it carried on until the 2000’s. The poet Cemal Süreya would come to the Journalists Locale - Gazeteciler Cemiyeti – on Mondays, and settle at a log table, remaining there from 12.00 to 5 pm. “Cemal Süreya would be ensconced at his table on Mondays, ready to dispense fees, accept writings that someone might want to submit, and provide advice etc.. It was effectively like his day of petition. But everyone came, journalists, writers, publishers, Can Yücel came, for example. He was hilarious, he had us all in stitches with laughter” (M.S., 2017, Istanbul).

M.S. refers to the *Marmara Kiraathanesi* in *Çınaraltı* as a location where literati met. Before his time, what was known as the *Meserret Kiraathanesi* in Beyazıt had become *Küllük*. This, he recounts, was more an “ideological locale for politically active youth”, rather than for literati, who did not frequent it. They, on the other hand, preferred such places as the *Cumhuriyet Meyhanesi*, ‘Entelektüel Cavit’s place’ in Çiçek Pasajı, *Yakup, Refik; Kaptan Restaurant* on the Bosphorus, the *Mutfak* bar in Gezi Park where, under the great plane tree, Tomris Uyar, Edip Cansever and others met.

“There were so many places to meet...Certain writers frequented specific bars. There were some coffee houses. Such as the Halk Kiraathanesi on Bahariye Caddesi where we used to meet up with Şükran Kurdakul. There was the Marmara Kiraathanesi, literary persons would go there. It was in Beyazıt, opposite the university. There was Çınaraltı, that had a fair share of literati too. I would meet the most unexpected people there. Any time, literally any time at all...You just needed to walk down from Cağaloğlu and Çemberlitaş to Sirkeci and you would easily meet at least fifty literati.

And this is not an exaggeration. Because this is where all the publishers, the journals, the dailies were gathered. This was, inevitably, the place where human resources accumulated. People came and went through there, here you met each other and chatted. I remember distinctly, one day while walking fast down the Nuruosmaniye Caddesi towards Cağaloğlu, I passed through the Nuruosmaniye mosque courtyard. Someone threw his newspaper in front of me and stopped me. He'd read one of my stories. Kerim Korcan. In those days there were no pictures in the journal, it was the mechanical typesetting era. No-one was taking photos. He held the Cumhuriyet paper up, folded up eight times, in front of me. He was having his shoes polished at the time. Before I could say a word, he said: Look here, young man, is that any way to finish a story? I stopped. Kerim Abi I know what you mean. One of my new stories had appeared in Yansima, they'd read it' people do, ...That was our greatest opportunity, writers reading writers. Its nothing like that now. Writers reading other writers and giving them their opinion.. He just makes one passing remark, and that key phrase.....For example, one day I met Mustafa Hikmetçi. My interviews had started to appear in print in Cumhuriyet daily. He made another passing remark. 'You', he said, 'you have brought a literary flavour to reporting. That comment was... like a huge prize to me,' (M.S., 2017, Istanbul).

During the 70's, the literary group spent all of their time out in Cağaloğlu. As M.S. points out, the dailies and journals were situated in Cağaloğlu. And naturally, while walking through the streets one inevitably met and greeted many others; one might come across many who had read one's own book. M.S. mentioned a second literary influence, that of Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, owner of a booksellers in Şehzadebaşı. Dağlarca, as he recounts, was the poet who hung his latest poems on the door of his shop, and would read his poem to anyone

who passed by, while inside he would be reading his poem. “If you rang the bell of the shop. He would neither see nor hear you, but would be lost in his poetry”.

Publishing houses were places where writers and other literary figures could encounter each other regularly. “Someone looking for someone else, leaving a note for a third, a book for someone else. This is the kind of spaces they were....” You could even come across writers who didn’t usually socialise, were rarely seen in public, in places like that. The poet-writer Ahmet Muhip Dıranas was such a person, but one you would inevitably cross paths with in a publishers. M.S. for example, came across Dıranas at Altın Kitaplar. Behçet Necatigil is another reticent anti-social writer mentioned by M.S., who one might have seen at Cem Publications, or visiting his friends at Cumhuriyet. Similarly, Oktay Akbal, one might meet accidentally in the streets of Cağaloğlu. M.S. would not dare to approach these people, being anxious not to disturb them. Only to realise much later that they were actually quite unlike how they appeared at first sight.

M.S. reiterates that in earlier times, “every writer was also a publisher”, citing, by way of example, Vedat Günyol of *Çan Yayınları*, Yaşar Nabi Nayır of *Varlık Yayınları*, Aziz Nesin and Kemal Tahir who were partners in *Düşün Yayınları*, Ertem Eğilmez and Refik Erduran who founded *Çağlayan Yayınları* together. Bookshops also had a very strong relationship with writers. When Yahya Kemal Beyatlı died, all the bookshops in Cağaloğlu closed their doors and windows, putting up notices saying that “Today we are in mourning”. The writer also comments that there were bookshops in every neighborhood. “In the 70’s there were even bookshops in Zeytinburnu, a shantytown district. Of course there were many in Nişantaşı, even in the remotest parts of the neighborhood. There were also a number in Kadıköy; and in Üsküdar. Very many in Cağaloğlu and Fatih. I remember that...” , (M.S., 2017, Istanbul).

As a young writer, M.S. confides how much he gained by meeting and mingling with other writers, both from his own and from the previous generation. Those writers from his own generation were engaged, he relates, in bringing out their own first book or stories. For example, Selim İleri had just published his second book; Hulki Aktunç had not yet published his first. The most skilled of authors admitted that they had gained much from their fellow writers who, as he put it, themselves acquired a very good literary culture in the same way. He adds that he himself gained a lot from his friendship with Selim İleri and Kemal Tahir, whose house he frequently visited. That both were readers of literature long before him, and particularly Kemal Tahir who as his mentor, gave them excellent advice and guidance. In fact, that Kemal Tahir was responsible for sending his books to the publishers *Bilgi Yayınevi* and arranging their publication there. “When Kemal Tahir sent a book to Bilgi, it was inevitably printed”. He recounts also how he listened to other writers with astonishment: “There were some whose words “flowed like honey”. One such writer was Şükran Kurdakul, whom M.S. describes as one of those writers whom one could listen to indefinitely. They learnt much from such well-read, wise literary figures, in part, he felt, due to their own curious questioning, their deep interest in and pursuit of the subjects under discussion. Tarik Dursun K. was a master craftsman of the word, who had taught himself and learnt languages on his own. Cemal Süreya was a writer who never talked theory, or spoke about his own poetry, or engaged in self-praise, nor did he allow anyone to pay tribute to him with words of praise at the same table.

E.K., critic and writer, did not see himself as someone who was open to meeting other writers, or talking to other literary figures. He states that he rarely met anyone. “In that sense, not being a social person, I did not go out regularly at least” (E.K. 2017, Istanbul). However, during in the 1990’s, he relates, it was easier to visit a publishers, to ring the bell and just walk in and talk to the people there. If one visited *Adam Yayınları*, particularly to see Cevat

Çapan, at first there would be writers and poets of the same generation there, with whom later one would go on to other locations, perhaps to a meyhanе-bar. According to E.K., such relationships were more common then than now; today, one could not say that such relationships with publishing houses exist anymore. E.K. remarks how few literary friends he still sees, that there is no longer any point in meeting, coming together to chat regularly.....in his view, when one can find things out through reading; “These are things one can learn from books, why go to the effort of meeting...there’s no need to learn them from each other in my view. I mean, I never personally felt that need. And I would not have anyone feel that need about me.” (E.K., 2017, Istanbul). E.K. stresses that he was involved with many things related to publishing, and that he worked in that area because he loved it, and that it was the only thing he wanted to do. “No-one has the time, any more [...] I don’t have the time,” (E.K., 2017, Istanbul).

E.K. comments that there are certain journals etc. surrounded by and publishing keen young writers, even serious writers, that have creative writing workshops or reading groups connected to them which somewhat replaced the relationships one had over past years. But he asks: “who’s missing from those places?”, answering his own question with: “These are not places where the foremost writers of the day congregate. They don’t meet any more. Here, one finds readers or would-be writers.”

While still at university, the writer, poet and publisher E.A. recalls the favored venues of his youth as Çınaraltı in Beyazıt, Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medrese and the tea gardens of Sultanahmet. One other location he mentions was the garden of the Archaeology Museum, a place where students could enter “free of charge.” While Sultanahmet and Çınaraltı in Beyazıt were the main locations, Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medresesi would later become the favoured location for a number of literati to congregate:

“One day we started meeting in Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medresesi. It began to turn into a sort of club. A great number of poets, writers, philosophers emerged from there. Adnan Özer, Tuğrul Tanyol, Mehmet Müfit, Haydar Ergülen and Seyhan Erözçelik among them. And not only as one-time visitors. For example, a friend arrived from Ankara one day, let's say Akif Kurtuluş, He would go there to find us. And since there were no phones....We went there regularly in the afternoon, on a daily basis,” (E.A., 2017, İstanbul).

The poet and writer E.A. refers to Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medresesi as a club. Where journals were published, and publishing took place, but most essentially, where there was conversation about poetry, literature and philosophy. It was frequented by Istanbul University students, teachers and researchers. Although it was not the rule, mostly the topic of conversation was related to literature, culture and the arts. “For example, we never talked about football. The men would talk a lot” Someone would bring a poem they had written. And read it to the group, and it would be criticised and revised. In addition, the devotees of this locale were heterodox; leftist, rightist, Islamicist, those of all manner of political persuasion. It was a nargile den. But despite the coffee house atmosphere, no-one played cards or backgammon. It was “a very pleasant place”, with a courtyard and pool, and open and covered sections. It had the casual atmosphere of a place where one could easily take part in the conversation at the next table. It was also a place where one might encounter many well-known personalities from the world of literature and politics.

“I met many friends (associates) there, such as Mehmet Ocaktan and İhsan Deniz, who later became ministers, and Erkan Mumcu. It was an interesting place.....I seem to remember that we frequented it every day for four or five years. Then we would leave there at dusk, going back to Kadıköy in a group. In passing we would call in at *Varlık* journal, or *Gösteri*. Mainly we went to *Varlık*, Kemal Özer would be there, running

everything. Occasionally, from there to their publishers.....Then afterwards we would take the ferry across to Kadıköy and continue on to the Merkez Kırathanesi, if you had some funds you could drink a beer, or on Friday nights, Cemal Süreya would be at Hatay. You could join that group. Those were our rounds, venue to venue.

For example, we were close friends with Sabahattin Kudret Aksal. The chance to visit Cemal Süreya and chat..... Dağlarca would be there; you would argue with him, he being a difficult man. There were many others from that era Can Yücel, Ece Ayhan also frequented the same places, that was how we met them,” (E.A., 2017, Istanbul).

Anyone who wanted to meet Attilâ İlhan would go to the place he frequented on a daily basis. That was the Set Kafetarya in Kızılay, Ankara in a place known as Gökdelen, and in Istanbul that would first have been the Cafe Bulvar in Gezi Park, Taksim, later the Divan Cafe. Attilâ İlhan would visit the Divan cafe every day between 10.00 and 12.00 am, and could be seen there at specific times chatting with whoever, whether students or not, he didn't discriminate. Attilâ İlhan would meet there with Hilmi Yavuz, who was an academic at the Fine Arts Academy of the time, or Ismet Özel, to chat. He would also go to Cağaloğlu, where one might also come across the group, and join their conversation. “The atmosphere was so informal. Nowadays you can't reach somebody you might want to see, so easily,” (E.A., 2017, Istanbul).

During the 1980's, according to the poet-writer E.A., there was a 'neglected' tea garden in Kalamış frequented by literary figures, politicians, artists and singers. Among the more renowned of its customers were such names as Orhan Alkaya, Taner Ay, Yılmaz Öner, Fehmi Yaşar and Cezmi Ersöz. There was also the Bomonti Tea Garden in Moda, where the writer met such poets as Orhan Kahyaoğlu and Seyhan Erözçelik. It was during that decade that the poet began to be included in certain groups, and to develop his own creative milieu.

“It began to be rumoured that poets and writers congregated at Merkez Kiraathanesi in Kadıköy. You hear this and go there in the early evening. You look around and see Cemal Süreya at one table and Dağlarca at another. You pluck up the courage, go over and talk to them, and show them your poems. It was such a relaxed environment”. E.A. would also frequent the coffee houses, but still being a university student could not afford to visit the bars – meyhane.

E.A. also mentions a tea-stand in Ankara in Zafer Çarşısı, which was where all the book shops were during his student years, where one drank tea standing at the counter. It was frequented not only by the poets and writers of Ankara, but by urban youth. E.A. mentions the following names among the poets he met at this location. Ahmet Erhan, Akif Kurtuluş, Adnan Azar, Ahmet Telli and Behçet Aysan. He comments that today, there are very few people one got together with. He continues: “There is nowhere you can meet and talk. That’s over for a start. There is no longer enough time to settle into a discussion. Its more... you go to Cavit, in Asmalımescit, we sit, how are you, what are you up to, hows your family, politics....But literature, I read this, or that book, that’s missing”. Although he does mention a few writers who still congregate in such places. On Thursdays in Bostancı Tea Garden, and Kadıköy; one group he mentions which has been meeting for a very long time in Beyoğlu is the Friday group of Fethi Naci and Cevat Çapan. “But I’ve no idea what they talk about. The average age of the group is eighty. I dont know if there is a place where young people congregate”.

E.A. indicated that it was quite rare just to meet someone by chance. Perhaps one could encounter new faces only at book fairs or poetry-literary festivals. And the first introductions might take place via social media – mainly through Facebook. “Facebook is widely used.” When someone wants to meet him they send a message via Facebook, and put in a friend request. Later they send their poems or book or “if they are braver” request a meeting. E.A. stresses that face to face relationships are easier. When someone sends a

message via Facebook, they complain about not being able to put their problem across to the other person, and begin to claim that the other person has not really understood them. If they were only to speak directly, they could “explain in five minutes“ exactly what it was they wanted to say, whereas over social media, you have to persist for three hours back and forth to understand the issue. E.A. sees this as a real problem, adding that it is only too easy for people to misunderstand each other. Bearing in mind the generation gap and certain innate characteristics of the language itself, it is sometimes difficult to tell whether what is written is ironic, true praise, or just plain language” (E.A., 2017, Istanbul).

The witer S.R. believes that human relationships were more friendly and urbane in the past. Pointing out that being the younger generation of writers, at the time, they met with others such as Sema Kaygusuz, Leyla Ruhan Okyay, Nalan Barbarosoğlu, Hürriyet Yaşar, İnsan Çetin, and Müge İplikçi and talked about their new stories, discussed their faults and offered their own suggestions for alternatives to what they had written. Although S.R. stopped going to these meetings after four or five sessions, the group continued to meet for some time. Nowthe writer mentions that they sometimes meet in other locations, like Baylan. “We have all dispersed in different directions”.

L.D. mentions two cafes where writers and artists met in 1984. The first was Çello which opened in Beşiktaş in the early 1980’s, and was known as the first ‘so-called’ intellectual cafe in the neighborhood. Although the writer could not suggest the name of a similar type of location in Moda for those years, recalls the standard coffee houses and tea gardens of Cihangir. There was also the legendary Ali Baba Kahvesi in Hisar, where ”the whole set of literati” met. It is quite a primitive place, not even providing a saucer. It was frequented by high school and university students of every kind, and was an address frequented by many an alternative group. Those attending read books, or discussed literature or philosophy, but the groups they formed were instantaneous. Çello was different again.

Situated in a back street in Beşiktaş, this small, windowless, cafe had its own unusual decoration, and a panel where poems, writings and various notices were posted.”It was the first of what we now regard as a typical cafe, as far as I know the first of its kind in Istanbul. (L.D., 2017, Istanbul). More a student locale, the panel in Çello would often feature the poems of Küçük İskender. It was in such locations that “all communication and social media networking” took place. “Everyone turned up there, what are you up to, did you publish in that journal, have you submitted there, what happened here...”

The beginning of the 1980’s, was a time when cultural activity in Istanbul was considered curtailed (meagre, weak). If a concert was held, everyone would know about it and would attend. Cinema Festivals and Book Fairs were just emerging on the cultural horizon. L.D. attended the Book Fair in the twin salons below the Etap Marmara in Taksim for the first time in 1984. Although publishers and writers were well represented at that fair, the centre of operations was still Cağaloğlu. “To become a writer one had first to pass through Cağaloğlu. After all, all the publishers were there”.

The writer, L.D. pursues his relationship with literature via the theatre. And it is through this channel that he was to meet Atilla İlhan. The latter frequented Pandora first, later turning to the Divan Hotel Cafe where he met frequently. L.D. first met with him as he wanted to convert a poem of his into a play. However, L.D. in light of his first meetings, realised how much meeting with him could broaden one’s scope, and began to seek him out later to chat on various occasions on ‘one pretext or another’. Atilla İlhan had a regular routine. He would walk from his house to the Divan at a specific hour. Drink his coffee there, meet by appointment with whoever. Then go and write his piece. Such encounters were meaningful for L.D. as he could see his ‘stance as a writer’, his professional discipline, as exemplary, and learn from it. Besides, getting to know writers as individuals prevented one from mystifying them. “You think that a poet is like that, probably writes from inspiration...

you think it is as in the films, whereas its nothing like that. Those artists have a totally disciplined lifestyle, which can even be boring.” (L.D., 2017, Istanbul)

L.D. mentioned the meyhane –bars as another way to become familiar with publishers and journal editors. Although for L.D. these locations were neither about submitting a story to a journal, nor about tracking down writers in bars. “One must find a new voice, what one writes must be fresh” said L.D. who with his friends, believing that they needed to seek out new environments, create new settings in order to express themselves, began to publish a new journal. Occasionally, they also considered the value in coming together with like-minded people. “This creates a kind of space, a place to house one’s ideas. You don’t need to go to a coffee house for that, or to chase after someone else, but you do need to frame that setting. There was no other possible way.” Says L.D. In addition, they didn’t need to find a publishers in order to bring out the journal. The opportunity to become a publisher oneself arose with the first computer and all its applications. The spread of the photocopier meant that young writers could print copies of their work more easily. Such developments run directly parallel to “the changes in technology”. Just as the “novel as genre developed with the event of the printing press”, as the journal was published, it grew in popularity, pieces began to arrive. L.D. began to meet people one by one, and writers, among them Elif Şafak and Ayfer Tunç. The journal creates a postbox address to receive all the postal applications. But when it came to meeting, the chosen venue was his own house.

“In a sense, my own house was like a club. It was a kind of satellite centre. Our friends, mainly writers would congregate here two or three nights every week, there would be plenty of discussion. What we thought of as the atmosphere of the old salon. Of course, ours was a tiny apartment, not the huge mansions of the past. But it was as if a friendship group was growing. Centred more around the home than the coffee house.... As it was, it was mainly at home that one worked at the computer. This

journal story began in '92, and carried on until 2002. It fulfilled a need. To create something inspired by the writings and writers of the past. We needed a space, where we could share our own ideas,” (L.D., 2017, Istanbul).

So they created their own journal, their own media. This was followed by a radio program, and on the arrival of the internet after 1995, the journal's own website. In 2000, they created their own e-publishers, thus forming an interconnected series of networks around the journal. After 2000, house gatherings stopped, 'leaving a vacuum' in L.D.'s life'. “ I was so used to working with so many people to bring out the journal, since you read a piece, then someone says lets do it that way, another says dont' do it that way, do it this way, or whatever, ...you're creating ideas.” So as a result, from 2003 onwards, L.D. opens a creative writing workshop, baased on past experiences. The journalist recalled that from 2000 onwards such writing workshops became places where literature was created, discussed and talked about. Such creative workshops, along with novel-writing seminars and independent reading groups were also known as places where the literate public could hone their reading skills to a professional level. Reading groups were of particular value for the literate level of dialogue they generated between reader and writer, remarks L.D. Apart from these occasions, regularly meeting other writers or members of the literary field, coming together for literary discussions was out of the question:

“For me, the most meaningful thing was to come together with a group in my own environment to create something through the journal. The radio program connected to the journal, the culture around it and the journal itself were what bound us together, they were our connection, our space. The cafe was not a real space. What took its place for others in the millenium years, I have no idea. I can't see anything other than the workshops we mentioned. Apart from the reading groups and these workshops we have been discussing, that there would be that kind of centre, where writers meet and

so on....Writers dont see each other anyway [...] In other words, lets get together with certain other writers on a regular basis. Lets chat with each other and see what happens, lets exchange information, there's no such thing; but when you meet at fairs, or come across writers at a dinner during one of those fairs, if you are already there, then maybe. But this is not real, its socialisation within the sector," (L.D. 27 August 2017, Istanbul).

The writer G.B. indicates the importance of book fairs. When G.B. was a student in the 1980's, the TÜYAP Istanbul Kitap Fuarı was held in Tepebaşı. The writer would be there every day. Many writers attended the fair. There was no need to go up to them and introduce oneself, notes the writer. Most writers were signing their books anyway. "That week was one of my happiest times. To be able to buy cut price books, to see and meet writers. That was another source of pleasure. It was like a festival, a celebration," (G.B., 2018, Istanbul). When the TÜYAP Istanbul Book Fair moved out to Beylikdüzü, the writer no longer went so frequently, although it was his sole opportunity to see some of his author friends or meet new people from the sector, from one fair to the next. Book-signing days and literary panels were also opportunities to make contact with their readers.

For G.B., even though he did not himself frequent the Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medrese in Çemberlitaş, that place was the venue of a 'special' literary group during his student years. His own group of friends preferred the tea stands of Süleymaniye, and weather permitting, Köprüaltı. Writers and artists would get together towards evening, when G.B. would normally go home. Although he mentions *Vagon* in Kadıköy as a locale frequented by Cemal Süreya and Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, even if he saw them there he could hardly pluck up enough courage to go up to them and introduce himself. "I made do with seeing them from a distance". (G.B., 2018, Istanbul).

While producing their journal, the writer G.B. met many literary figures. It was brought out in Istanbul, with separate distribution for Ankara. G.B. would travel frequently to Ankara for this, and while so doing, would meet there with a literary group, which included such names as Hasan Ali Toptaş, Cemil Kavukçu, Şükrü Erbaş and Salih Bolat. Since he had connections with the *Yazıt* journal, when in Ankara he would call İzzet Kılıçlı, who “would say, we’re going to meet up in the Geological Engineers Chambers on Saturday afternoon; I’m going there. We sit and talk,” (G.B., 2018, İstanbul). He mentions that he knew more literary figures in Ankara than in Istanbul at the time.

G.B. reports that over the years he had acquired a literary group of friends, mainly writers from his own generation, and that he met them at various official gatherings and in Kadıköy. During the journal years, they would meet up outside the office, and generally gather in one another’s houses. Although they did not meet regularly, they would send their stories to each other, and share critical opinion. Beginning with the idea of recording some of the conversations they had with some colleagues, writers who visited from time to time from other cities, they also formed an e-mail literary conversation group, which material was later turned into a book. Nowadays, a small core group of three to five writer-friends meets once every month or six weeks. When two of those at the table are literary critics, one is a poet and the other a story writer, “naturally the main topics of conversation are literature, as well as politics, human relations, and family life”. Although he admits that they meet only very infrequently. “Everyone is busy with their own lives.” (G.B., 2018, İstanbul). Occasionally, some young writers might find him on social media and request a meeting, to get to know him.

For G.B., social media has been a part of his daily life since 2007-8, although he is not a very active user. For G.B. social media is a way in which writers can get acquainted with other writers, can correspond with them, greet, chat and occasionally carry out discussions. So

even though he does not find the “public’ nature of discussion and communication to his liking, he does utilise it. He shares information about his own books via this media, although with reservation. His readers can reach him via the same social media channels. Although considered an alternative news channel since Gezi, occasionally his readers will contact him via Twitter, asking to get to know him and to meet. One young reader first encountered him at Mephisto bookshop in Kadıköy, where he introduced himself, later contacting him via Twitter, as a result of which they met and had a conversation.

Most often, he is approached via these organs by many for a critical assessment of their work. These he does not answer, since “that is a very time and energy-consuming activity”. The author also receives requests via Facebook to sign his books, from many different places....eg. “I am from x district of Isparta, I am a teacher, impossible for me to find your book. Please send a signed copy,...” If he has a copy, sometimes he will send it. Also via social media and e-mail he receives invitations to attend various functions in other cities, and give talks.

The writer S.Ö. spent his early years in and around Cağaloğlu, first since his father’s workplace was there, later attending Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medresesi, and from there going on to journalism. While telling his own story, he actually gives a clear view of the literary environment of the time:

“Bilge Karasu comes to Istanbul and stays with Füsun Akatlı in her house in Maltepe. One day he comes to Cağaloğlu, and we meet at the *Varlık* journal. I give him a copy of the issue that’s just come out. Come on take me to Doğan, he says....Doğan Hızlan. We go up to *Hürriyet*. To the building that is now a carpet shop. We ring his bell. They hug each other. I’m watching to one side. Then I leave, leaving the two of them alone together, deep in conversation. You leave *Hürriyet* and go into the building next door. The side door leads to Sıhhiye Apartmanı. You go in, Erdal Öz is on the third

floor. Its *Can Yayınları* there. Ülker İnce, and Özdemir İnce are sitting there. They are editing translations. There are only three or four of them. You go one floor up. There are Atıl Ant and his wife, Füsun Ant, writers, Kürşat Başar'lar...who works in *Hürriyet*. Afa is bringing his first story book out. That's where *Gösteri* is printed too. Everything is interlinked. You go down the next street. There's *Simavi Yayınları*-publications. Adnan Özyalçiner, Atıf Behramoğlu and Konur Ertop are editing and correcting there. Doğan Hızlan is editor in chief supervising, Enver Ercan is revising and correcting. Leave there, go across into another road. There's *Varlık Yayınları*, all so intermingled like that. I arrive there, Adnan Özer is busy producing journals, music journals – pop music [.....] Upstairs the *1000'e Doğru* journal is on the table. We see Cemal Süreya there. He's in and out all the time. Asım Bezirci is further down, he comes and goes. His publishers is right there. With his briefcase. I lean out of the window and see Sezai Karakoç passing by with his young Moslem poet friends. Everywhere you look....and you know that he's trying to catch the boat. That they will go first to the journalists' locale - Gazeteciler Cemiyeti – in the evening and from there carry on to who knows where. That you know for sure. Take Cemal Süreya and Muzaffer Buyrukçu for example. We know more or less where they all are and what they are doing. Where they will go and who they will meet up with next. Who they will sit with etc. You are all part of it you see. Don't know how to explain....that's all gone. The spaces have totally disappeared. The newspapers gone, the literary figures from those papers scattered far and wide. They grew up, and left. We used to visit the *Milliyet* daily. Ahmet Oktay would be there. He had a daily column [.....] When you got there there would be Bülent Erkinler and Zeynep Oral right at the next desk. *Milliyet Sanat* supplement was produced there too. Every daily had its own culture and arts supplement.....” (S.Ö., 2017, İstanbul).

The writer S.Ö. thought it was important that the journalists, literary figures, theatre actors, artists and film producers were all situated within such close proximity of one another. Being so close together constituted a form of cultural diversity. The writer felt that today's literati were too literature-focused, and cinematographers too focused on film. That such exponents of the various branches of the arts had become too introspective, too unaware of the names and achievements of those in other fields. Poets, novelists, academics, even though in related fields had little knowledge of one another.

R.P. stresses how active and influential the Turkish Language Institute - Türk Dil Kurumu, was, particularly before 1980, reminding us that some of the most important writers and poets of the time, among them milestones in Turkish literature, such as Cahit Külebi, Sami Karaören, İlhan Berk, Behçet Necatigil attended meetings there, after which they would inevitably relocate to the neighboring bars to continue their literary discussions. R.P. claims that this habit continued into the present day via the TÜYAP fair. After book signings at the fair authors would go off together 'to have a drink'. But there were never more than "two or three writers" at any one time. "Small, isolated islets, of two, or three or four people. I'm not one for big gatherings, that's not for me", says R.P. who continues: "There was never a regular, let's get together all the writers, the literati approach. It was always casual, unplanned....Occasionally we went to Doğa Balık in Cihangir. Once or twice to each others houses. And to Çiçek Bar..." (R.P., 2018, Istanbul), although they did gather as an organised group of woman writers, infrequently if regularly. The group included Nursel Duruel, Jale Sancar, Sezer Ateş Ayvaz, Ayşe Sarısayın and Nemika Tuğcu. The writer stresses that it was difficult to get together with seven or eight, and certainly ten people. On the one hand, there was never time, and on the other the very organisation of such a gathering had to be undertaken by one member of the group. "It's become more and more difficult. I don't know

why, everyone is busy. So am I. I don't know how, I'm not doing anything but I'm totally busy.”

The writer B.N. stressed the importance of writers gathering together, being in proximity to each other, being mutually inspired, and interacting with one another. The writer saw the journals as a perfect vehicle for this. The relationship between writers did not just consist of the “ties of friendship” but was more a connection embracing “rivalries” and “competition” but at the same time the “interchange of ideas”. It was not just about finding out which book each had read, and exchanging what they liked about a book: it was also about “acquiring, appropriating ideas”. All things considered, for a writer to interact in this way for a period of time is an important phase in their development. Not in the sense of institutionalising relationships, but interacting, as writers, being able to connect with each other through a journal is a key feature in their development. Such was the relationship of İnan Çetin, Sema Kaygusuz, Nalan Barbarosoğlu and others, who formed the “Çarşamba Group” that met regularly on Wednesdays at 7pm., in a cafe in Beyoğlu. In fact, even if members of the press wanted to interview them, B.N. was against this on the grounds that the meetings were formally organised. The meetings went on for a year, or a year and a half during the early millenium years, and were the means for a series of discussions on “considerably serious” topics, such as literature, books, and the poesis of the narrative. “I worked very hard on these meetings. As it was, I could not stand idle chat. I would read extensively, take notes on new publications, because I needed to talk about literature. I missed that. In Istanbul I had spent a lot of time alone. Totally isolated for a long time. I recieved a prize alone. All of this I did alone...” (B.N., 2017, İstanbul). Unfortunately, some time later the author stopped taking part in those meetings. There had been some unfortunate issues “It turned into a relationship based on rivalry. And the focus on literature became a total disappointment” (B.N., 2017, Istanbul).

Even though the Wednesday group had disbanded, B.N. still needed places where she could satisfy her need for literary interaction, and began to join a Thursday supper group run by Hulki Aktunç. These suppers were attended mainly by artists. From there, she began to meet with Leyla Erbil and Tomris Uyar, from both of whom she comments how much she learnt. Still harbouring a great need for literary conversation, B.N. eventually forms her own group. She writes letters to all her favorite authors, calls them up. But sometime later distances herself altogether from Turkish literature. She begins to travel abroad after 2006. “And since I was hurt, when I received that prize, people’s attitudes, behavior, the way they looked at me changed. I had no patience left. So I stopped being with people from literary circles. Tomris died. .. Hulki Aktunç died. I had no one left....” (B.N., 2017, Istanbul). The attitudes of male literary writers were instrumental in all this. “It’s very difficult...as a woman...in the heat of the moment you don’t realise what is happening. If it happened now, there are things I wouldn’t have tolerated. But when you are young you put up with many things. Or you don’t comprehend exactly the true reason for what is going on.....Later I could no longer put up with all that.” (B.N., 2017, Istanbul).

The writer B.N. explains that she did not want any relationships with other writers. Even if invited she would never attend an event. “I am afraid”. B.N., claims that writers come together but not because they are all writers, but because they are alone. The political system pulls them together. They understand each other’s humour, and share a common language. She explains that the period of searching when she had a huge appetite for knowledge of many things is gone for her. “Then I was hungry. Not any more. (Communication is) either very hurtful or very eulogistic. Praise is also traumatic. People are putting me on a false pedestal, (raising me up to be more than I am). Relations are either based on admiration or dislike. For which reason I can no longer easily enter such environments (B.N., 2017, Istanbul).

B.N. mentions one group where academics and writers come together. “Sevengül Sönmez, Yalçın, Irmak Zileli, Birgün Oğuz, and the translator Alex Dawe for example”. One day she is invited to the house of Birgül Oğuz on Burgazada. Although there are individuals with whom she is in regular contact, whom she sees, speaks to on the phone, she is not attached to any particular regular groups.

The academic and writer F.G., suggests that the reason the literati regularly gathered together in certain locations in the past was in order to ‘communicate’. At the time, this was the only way to communicate. The only instantaneous means of communication. How else were you to see someone again unless you came together in the same place. “How else would you be able to find out what someone was doing, what he is writing, what is he thinking, ...?” (F.G., 2017, İstanbul). Nowadays, people can create a blog, and pile it full of things they are doing every minnute,” It is no longer necessary for people to meet in such an organised fashion, according to O.L. So that the literati can begin to meet with people they like, to talk about other things, if they want to. “But to talk about literature.....those blogs are overflowing anyway. Read them” (F.G., 2017, Istanbul).

2.4 Cities as Literary Hubs and their Centres

I.K., writer-journalist indicates that Istanbul is the literary artery of Turkey, since this is where the publishers are to be found. “Ankara had writers. Salim Şengil, whose wife was Nezihe Meriç, produced a journal. He also published books. There was *Bilgi Yayınevi*... Apart from whom there were no other publishers of any great note”. Beyoğlu had places of entertainment, and bookshops such as Hachette and the French-American bookshop. One went to these places of course, but the real heart of publishing and home of the press was still Cağaloğlu.

During the 80's and 90's, most of the dailies and publishers left Cağaloğlu. Either moving to Beyoğlu or setting up offices in some multi-story commercial centres. Nowadays, Beyoğlu is no longer a cultural centre, according to I.K. "There were certain specific locations. Meetings and the like would be held there. Now, other than award ceremonies in hotels, is there a single place in Beyoğlu where you would want to do anything? No". All that's left are municipal meeting halls. And who would want to discuss "the political situation, what should be said, or done...." in places like that (I.K., 2018, Istanbul).

"Istanbul is still the capital of everything"

Today, the literary heart of Turkey is indisputably in Istanbul, according to I.K. "Istanbul is still the capital of everything. This the writer ties in with its cosmopolitan character. Not only is it the centre of literature, but also of music. The strains of Byzantium, then over them the Ottomans". However, the writer feels that the Republic was unable to place its stamp on Istanbul. The architecture is still from the old times. The Republic produced nothing of note other than the Opera (AKM). No concert hall. Istanbul became cultural capital but nothing got built. A few concerts were held. That sort of thing," (I.K., 2018, Istanbul).

Istanbul is more of a centre. Naturally, It is more crowded."

The writer, G.K. states that during the second half of the 1960's, the literary centre in Turkey was split between Ankara and Istanbul. In Ankara, the resident writers' line-up included Adalet Ağaoğlu, Sevgi Soysal, Füsun Akatlı, at one point Nezihe Meriç, and if one went back to a previous decade, Cevdet Kudret and Sabahattin Ali. "Gülten Akın, Sezai Karakoç, Ece Ayhan, these were the political writers. Orhan Duru was studying veterinary science during the same years. The Erdost brothers and a host of others in Ankara. (G.K., 2017, İstanbul). While saying that it is "probably just the same today", G.K. stresses that there

is now no single centre to speak of. “Anyone and everyone can take part, can join from anywhere, its more widely distributed”. Today there are book fairs not only in Istanbul but in other cities, including Bursa, İzmir, Adana and Samsun. These fairs are important because not only did they provide greater Access to books, but allowed the reader the opportunity to meet authors, to see them side by side. The location of the publishers was also important since the answer to the question “Where can I find people together in one place?” was the publishing houses and the journals. “A writer might send his work to a journal. Whether he himself follows up by visiting the publishers or not is another matter, but at very least, when he (gets a book) he sees (the writer), he looks through his work, perhaps makes contact.” Even though most of the publishers are in Istanbul there is no longer any need for a writer or would-be writers to be there too. They can reach a publishers via the internet, and make a connection that way. “But where are the publishers? Here, not there. There there are papers, newspaper offices....And urban broadsheets and local dailies, of course” (G.K., 2017, İstanbul). Both local newspapers and television channels are both influential and dynamic according to G.K., who also comments on the existence of a number of good literary journals in a number of regions in Anatolia. Although commenting that the centre of literary activity still remains in Istanbul. “There are, nevertheless, good dailies and journals. I still get the *Afrodisyas Dergisi*. In Eskişehir, for example, there is a journal of stories, and another journal in Söke, which I still get. These are mainly post-millennium journals. Then there’s a Karadeniz journal, I just got the latest issue the other day. Its very good. In other words, there are many, but still the centre is mainly Istanbul. Its quite understandable. Its more crowded (G.K., 2017, İstanbul). However, one can no longer refer to literary centres in Istanbul.

“If one were to ask where is the centre in Istanbul, could one be singled out or not?

What is central in Istanbul? No there is none. Where is the centre?.. Before it was the journals and publishers. There were no book fairs, or anything like that, just the

publishers and the journals. In a dynamic city like Istanbul, a city that is constantly changing, unfortunately For example, there were certain book shops, Sander in Şişli'. It was an extremely prolific bookshop There were three bookshops just on the same street. One was owned by I think a writer and architect, who was always there. The others you know about in Beyoğlu. Now what is left? (G.K., 2017, İstanbul).

Istanbul....as it always was...

The writer ad academic F.G. indicates that Istanbul was the heart of literature, “*as it always was*”. Although there had been a lively period in Ankara in the 1940’s. Orhan Veli, Oktay Rifat and Melih Cevdet Anday started a journal in Ankara while still attending school there. Even though the group later scattered, they came together again in Ankara . The ‘*Garip*’ movement emerged from Ankara. One of the meeting places of the intellegensia was the renowned Kürdün Meyhanesi. (Ankara) was smaller and more compact than Istanbul, and so it was easier to meet up there, it being not so spread-out. “Thats why when you say meyhane - bar, everyone frequented the same place, more or less,” (F.G., 2017, İstanbul). The Sanatsevenler Kulübü founded in the 1960’s, became a centre of sorts, but according to F.G. more an ‘elite’ venue, frequented more by ‘artist afficionados’ rather than art lovers, per se. There was the *Seçilmiş Hikâyeler* journal published by Nezihe Meriç and his wife Salim Şengil. Later, Dost Publishers were founded, and the *Dost* journal began to appear. This became a centre over time. Bilge Karasu, Vüs’at O. Bener, were among the literary figures frequenting *Dost*. Can Yücel was in Ankara for a time. In other words, a number of writers spent time in Ankara over the years. ” (F.G., 2017, İstanbul). But still the heart of literature remained Istanbul. “For one thing, it was always more crowded. It waas a question of ratio. In Istanbul, the intellectual vibrance and diversity was greater than elsewhere.”

Ankara, in any case, was a city of bureaucrats. It always had an inquiring, literate environment, but this generally remained a single environment ,” (F.G., 2017, İstanbul). The

dynamics of Istanbul were more complicated. For example, the press was there. The media never said, “Ankara is the capital, lets move there”. In parallel with the existence of the media, Istanbul had a prolific intellectual lifestyle. Similarly with the publishing houses. The literary centre of Istanbul was Babiali. “As it always was.”

“The pulse of literature was always Istanbul, the capital of literature.”

According to the writer M.S. the pulse of literature beats through Istanbul. During the 1970's the centre was Babiali in Cağaloğlu. While there was some movement in the area of literature in other cities, and a number of literary figures in various places, none of them, saw themselves as literary centres, as such. M.S. reflects that while interviewing a group of colleagues, realised that those from Izmir and Ankara regarded themselves as provincial. Whereas there was considerable literary activity in Ankara. Türk Dil Kurumu, *Bilgi Yayınevi* were animators. There were a large number of bookshops. And bureaucrat-writers in Ankara. But still the true centre was Istanbul. “Istanbul, capital of culture” (M.S., 2017, İstanbul). And the reason for this was that the majority of publishers, press, and printers were in Istanbul.

Izmir has its dailies. “Still today there is a daily press. The generations carry on but the writers and literati from there always considered themselves provincial”. M.S. addresses the issue of provincialism in one of their interviews. In the interview, they attempted to try and understand what it meant to see oneself as provincial, by talking to writers, poets who had lived in ‘provincial towns and cities’ all their lives, but had tried to “keep up with the trends” in Istanbul; had sent poems – essays - stories to that city, they tried to ascertain the opinions of those who had remained in the provinces and yet tried to achieve something, and tried to understand and share their feelings with others, “But believe me, you can barely even establish a dialogue.” (M.S., 2017, İstanbul). There was a member of a well-known Diyarbakır family that the writer had wanted to interview. They had long written dialogues discussing the aim of the interview before starting. And finally “I gave up; decided that this

must be provincialism. If I asked anyone from here to take part in an interview on this or that subject, they would understand me. We would know what the other meant”. (M.S., 2017, Istanbul).

The meyhanes of Istanbul were places where every conversation was like a seminar. “The things that were discussed in those places,” (M.S. 2017, Istanbul). Reflecting that he learnt a lot in such places. And the friendship bonds formed there were strong. M.S. relates that a group of friends sent Sait Faik Abasıyanık to Paris for treatment. This group of friends met in Çiçek Pasajı and pledged to raise their glasses to Sait Faik. A great crowd assembles. They all raise glasses. Everyone is thinking about Sait Faik; “Now he must be in such and such, He must have reached Italy”. But later that evening Sait Faik appears in the doorway. He had got out in Çanakkale, got in a taxi and returned to Istanbul: “I couldn’t do it” . “How could I just leave you all behind?”

The central offices of literary journals and publishers, which were like literary clubs, were to be found in Istanbul. M.S. comments that Memet Fuat’s *Yeni Dergi* offices were like a hallowed gathering place to the youth of the day. He himself did not “see that time”, but recalls other similar hubs, such as Cemal Süreya’s journal, *Papirüs*, and *Varlık* which he never himself visited, but whose writers he described as “more mature, more established”; these, along with Vedat Günyol’s *Yeni Ufuklar* journal were the ‘literary shrines’ of the 70’s. The owners of *Cem Yayınları* would gather all their writers together at dinner once a week. The offices of these journals were meeting places, like literary clubs. Vedat Günyol’s journal and *Çan Yayınları* were like that. Additionally, once a week, Vedat Günyol would hold court in his own house. “Vedat Günyol’s students, friends and admirers still meet annually,” (M.S., 2017, Istanbul). One of the publishers often frequented by the literati was *Adam Yayınları*. So highly frequented was it that the owner of the publishers commented: “This is like your regular market place. Everybody is here. Should we say ‘don’t come’. Some come for a

reason, others are just passing by, some that have business [.....] Everything was up for discussion. From private life to literature. What have you written, what have you been up to". (M.S., 2017, Istanbul). M,S, comments that the visitors were predominantly men, which was the norm up to the 1980's. Later women writers began to attend, which led one older (male) writer to complain that Turkish literature was becoming 'feminised', M.S. recalled: "A few new women writers were there. Sevgi Soysal, it was her golden years, but she died in the 70's. Leyla Erbil was there. She had been in literary circles since the 40's. Cahit Uçuk would not go to every publishers, or every daily. He was very discriminating about who he met with. Peride Celal went nowhere at all. She would write her pieces on the typewriter and send in the file.

Literary gatherings in Istanbul were also held regularly in certain houses. In the house of Şair Nigar Hanım in Rumelihisarı for example, or Nahit Hanım's house to which the writer M.S. was taken by Cemal Süreya in 1988-89, and the house of Peride Celal, who lived in Nişantaşı, but whom she had never seen, even thinking that "She probably doesn't go out", although then reading that the literati gathered at her home. Today she no longer meets regularly with any literary figures. "Nothing, nothing, nothing.....There was an environment here. When I came to Moda, for example, there was a group of journalists, writers, cartoonists. One of the writers died: Tarık Dursun. There was an older journalist. He died. We are gradually becoming isolated. Like Cahit Sıtkı says in his poem.... (M.S., 2017, Istanbul).

M.S. mentioned that in the Literature Faculties of the 1970's, literature days would be regularly held to celebrate literature. The writer Behçet Necatigil, and his students would organise literature day at what is now Marmara University and then a Teacher Training College. M.S. points out that Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, then as now, also hosted regular literature days. Special days to commemorate writers would be regularly held in teacher centres. Authors book-signing days were not widespread in the 70's. But were held in specific locations for 'celebrity writers', like Aziz Nesin, Rıfat Ilgaz and Kerim Korcan for example,

such as the Gençlik Kitabevi in Kadıköy, and the Akademi Kitabevi in Nişantaşı. The Cumhuriyet Book Club in Beyoğlu organised book-signing events. There were regular, daily ‘meet the author’ events in Beyoğlu, introduced by the owner of Vakko, and organised jointly by the Beyoğlu Enhancement Society (Güzelleştirme Derneği) and the Cumhuriyet Book Club, hosting a different group of writers on a daily basis. Although he himself did not attend them, the writer mentions regular meetings at the Writers’ Society (Edebiyatçılar Derneği) during the 1960’s, to which well-known authors were invited. Such venues provided opportunities for writers and readers to meet.

“Istanbul, without a doubt.....That was always the case. Throughout history...”

The writer-poet Ş.F. claims that the ‘pulse’ of literature was always, “indisputably” in Istanbul. Ankara is important for the new era of the Republic. Journals published in Ankara during the 70’s and 80’s, including *Yarın ve Bilim Sanat*, hosted important literary figures. But still, the pulse of literature remained in Istanbul. *“That was always the case. Throughout the past...”*. He gives the journal *Varlık* as an example: First published in Ankara, the journal later moves to Istanbul, under some duress. According to Ş.F. Istanbul had everything: the established journals, dailies, printers....but not only in a physical sense, “the city was also endowed with the soul of literature”. The writers lived here: “Tevfik Fikret, Yahya Kemal, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar. All lived there.. Şeyh Galip Was from Istanbul...” In the past, particularly in the case of journals, it was key to be from Istanbul as a writer. Journals published in a number of cities, hosted a certain number of trully great writers, but relatively few. “When you look at the current situation, we have fragmented into a number of fronts, peripheral they say, but still the emphasis is on Istanbul.”

One of the literary centres in Istanbul is the *Yazko* journal. The editor in chief, Memet Fuat, is not only a very well-informed literary figure, but also a very good editor. When the writer-poet Ş.F. met Memet Fuat, his ‘hairs stood on end’ as he was meeting with someone

who had known Nazım Hikmet. Mehmet Fuat described the meeting: “This was an encounter I could not forget, one which left a lasting mark (on me)”. Mehmet Fuat was “very polite, totally humble, a true Istanbulu”. He had a sense of aesthetics. “Perhaps assessing him as a literary figure now is another matter, but all things considered, he has done much for Turkish literature. (Ş.F., 2017, Istanbul). This is where he first encountered Attilâ İlhan, “I adore Attilâ İlhan, for example, that’s something that excites me very much”. He encountered Selim Ileri and a number of other literary figures through *Yazko*. On 12 September the journal was a true literary centre.” The Çorlulu Ali Paşa Medresesi could be described as the locale where the young 80’s generation gathered, according to Ş.F., while Cağaloğlu was also inevitably a centre, although it lost its literary connections after the 90’s. Where was there after that date? ‘Beyoğlu never really replaced Cağaloğlu as a centre’. Finally, even though literary connotations no longer apply to the old spaces after the 90’s, Ş.F. still believes that ‘the pulse of literature is in Istanbul’.

“The spirit of history, it reverberates. That is the key rational. This, you can never erase. It is simply not possible. This is one such city. It is the most important factor. The Istanbul factor. Primarily and despite all, it is an intensely animated city. All of these things, its past....its future....So ensconced in its own long existence is this city, that this makes a centre of it even now. It is a question of deep roots. Not simply a matter of saying it.....a place of long shared tradition, etc. . Beyond that, there is the deep accumulation of history, traditions, texts existing before texts, the influence of the fabric, the impact of that long heritage; and, in my view, in addition, there is the most resilient spirit of history itself here,” (Ş.F., 28 March 2017, Istanbul).

“Naturally it is Istanbul. This is indisputable [...] Istanbul on the one hand, Turkey on the other”

According to the writer-critic E.K., the pulse of literature is “Naturally in Istanbul. Its indisputable”, He adds, “it was so in the past and is so now”. “On the one hand is Istanbul, and on the other Turkey”. E.K. points to a distinct cultural identity emerging in everyday lifestyles, ways of thinking, human behavior, everything. Istanbul has long been a centre of existence throughout history. It is here that culture, in a sense, repeatedly evolved, it is an outcome of its own evolution through centuries of accumulated tradition. For E.K., Ankara is just the nominal capital, but never became the true centre.

According to E.K., the centres within Istanbul were primarily Beyoğlu, and then to a certain degree, Kadıköy. Beyoğlu has a long history as a cultural focus point. Certainly prior to the 1980's, and continued to be so in later decades. When the publishers began to move to Beyoğlu from an increasingly ‘metal-fatigued’ Cağaloğlu, Beyoğlu being at a low point in its existence, was regenerated by the incoming publishers who swept up buildings, buying and renting at attractive rates. The trail-blazers were *Can Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları* and *Çınar Yayınları*, followed in later years by *Adam Yayınları*, which also bought up and moved to Beyoğlu. The district slowly regenerated into a cultural hub, building on its long-existing cultures. E.K. believes that the existence of the publishing houses and bookshops had considerable influence on this process, since there was not a single bookshop remaining prior to that time in Beyoğlu. Slowly book stalls began to appear, followed by a few new bookshops and a speedy transformation then ensued with Beyoğlu transforming into the “hub we all knew until relatively recently”, basically “one of the most vivid focal points of Istanbul” now no longer in existence. E.K. reflects that Beyoğlu began to lose the qualities of a place where social life could carry on, regardless, after the Gezi incidents. “Beyoğlu has, at the present time, begun to be abandoned by a certain section of the population”. The current centre is Kadıköy, as far as E.K. is concerned.

“Istanbul does not change. There is no pulse remaining in other locations. Nothing left.”

The poet and writer E.A. claims that the pulse of literature can still be felt in Istanbul. Ankara was “very active during the 80’s”, but this activity somewhat failed to persist in later years. A number of significant literary journals continue to be published there, if not in the quantity being published in Istanbul, such as the *Türk Dili Dergisi*, *Türkiye Yazıları*, *Oluşum* and *Yarın Dergisi*, while there are still a large number of publishers centred there, although there are very few other than *Bilgi Yayınevi* that have survived since that decade. Ankara was an important literary centre in the 80’s, even though not as important as Istanbul. E.A. suggests that Istanbul remained the true centre due to the critical numbers of publishers, journals, poets and writers, printers, “everything” to be found there. “Even if you are a publisher in Ankara, you come to Istanbul to have your book printed”. During the 80’s, according to E.A., the literary centres of Istanbul were primarily Cağaloğlu, then Beyazıt and Kadıköy. Cağaloğlu, for publishers and bookshops. “You went there even to buy books.” Beyazıt was the address for the university and its coffee houses, while in Kadıköy one found bars, cafes and Hatay restaurant. Even today, E.A. believes, the literary pulse is in Istanbul. “It doesn’t change. There is no pulse left elsewhere. Not any more.” He believes that Istanbul being the media hub was an important factor in this. Anyone publishing poetry in a journal from any district or neighborhood in any part of Anatolia, does not consider themselves a true poet before their poetry has ‘finally been republished in an equivalent Istanbul journal’.

“Thinking it won’t be seen (otherwise).”

For R.P. the pulse of literature is “unfortunately always in Istanbul”. “Turkey on the one hand, Istanbul on the other”. Istanbul is almost another country, for which there are many reasons. In contrast, she suggests that Ankara, during the 60’s and perhaps the 70’s was more effective, possibly due to the positive influence of the *Türk Dil Kurumu* - Turkish Language

Institution – and its members, on the quality of language. The writer points out that during those years the leading, most progressive writers, journalists, intellectuals of the time were members of the Türk Dil Kurumu. According to R.P., the question of which city held the pulse of literature is directly connected to where the publishers were located. And the response to why “unfortunately”, is, in her view, the tendency for literati living outside of Istanbul, even those from Izmir, to decry themselves as ‘somewhat provincial’; ‘We are provincial. We never get a chance’. The system is rigged that way, and this is the response people have. This is very unfortunate, hence the comment. From their attitude, their looks, you would think that we were with the publishers every minute here in Istanbul,” (R.P., 2018, Istanbul).

In the view of the writer S.R., the ‘literary pulse’ was evident in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, (where) there was an enthusiastic readership potential among the public during the 1990’s. Although the public and the potential for one still exists in Anatolia, “the source of such potential has actually been cut off”. Publishers are predominantly clustered around Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, largely due to the size of population in those major cities. The author, S.R. believes however, that a “higher population does not guarantee a larger reading public”, recalling literary festivals, fairs, huge gatherings being held in such towns as Diyarbakir, Trabzon and Ordu, which she found exciting. If such events are held in the metropoli or places like writers’ locales exist there, “that’s good, but it doesn’t surprise us. I want to be startled. Before, there were events such as Short Story Days, they were organised all over the place. They still are being organised, I suppose, but I never know. I’m not invited.” “The pulse”, says S.R. flows through here, but it is something that you feel right through your body.”. This feeling belonged to the 90’s. “There is no pulse left now”, says the author. Although at a later point, S.R. comments that the pulse of literature flowed through Istanbul, and that Ankara and Izmir were also important cities in that respect.

“Its because I live in Istanbul that things appear like that I suppose, I’m not sure. I hadn’t really thought about that. But I’m sure that I had once thought about what this distribution meant because I was, at that point, receiving invitations from many places in Anatolia. Was it because I was a new writer, I dont know. Somehow I don’t think that had much to do with it. Because some of the greatest writers would also turn up [...] There are not so many of these (occasions) any more. Lets say, Istanbul-Ankara-Izmir, then spreading throughout Anatolia from there,” (S.R., 17 July, 2017, Istanbul).

The Literary pulse today “probably” runs through Istanbul and Izmir as far as S.R. is concerned. “I’m not so sure about whether it is so strong in Ankara”. The writer mentions that she visited Ankara just recently, to talk at a university, and it had appeared to her like just any other city.

The cultural centre of Istanbul during the 1990’s was İstiklal Caddesi. I hope that İstiklal Caddesi remains as an entity for a few more years (S.R., 2017, Istanbul). The author comments that the fact that it is no longer a centre is related to “the removal of social life” from that location. “Nowadays, İstiklal Caddesi hosts strange baklava and borek sellers, even stranger Arab tourists..... Not that I’m against that, but in the past the venue for all that was Aksaray. That is where we used to take the Arab tourists. The other day, I went there, and thought “this is how to kill a place.” (S.R., 2017, Istanbul). In conclusion, according to S.R., at present there is no centre. “Thre is not. If there were one, I would probably know about it. I would go there to take a look. No. We are all scattered about”.

The writer L.D. is of the opinion that the pulse of literature in the 90’s was in Istanbul. Even though the likes of Bilge Karasu brought Ankara to the fore, or there were worthy individual writers emerging in a number of cities, it was still Istanbul that tended to be the heart of literature and publishing. And in Istanbul, the centre of the publishing world was Cağaloğlu. Although if one were to view the situation in terms of cultural life, Beyoğlu was

the centre. In the 90's and the millenium years, the main street in Beyoğlu from Taksim all the way to Tünel, and all the little parallel streets were largely where the coffee shops and bars – meyhane –cinemas and book shops were accumulated; that is where youth congregated and mingled with a diverse population of all types and class. The writer, L.D. likens Taksim and Beyoğlu to a century-long frontline of cultural warfare:

“Since its foundation, Pera has been ‘the other side’. Old Istanbul was the seat of the Ottoman empire – Der saadet, the bridge seperated them. It was as if a balance had been forged between East and West. Then things changed. Towards the Republic, this area became even more a totally non-Moslem neighborhood, A place inhabited by Levantines, minorities, Italians, and others; the repository of trading capital, and home of cultural capital. Although, later, following the 6-7 September Coup, the retreat of the minorities from the neighborhood, the total abandonment of Tarlabası by its inhabitants, to be replaced by immigrants of a much lower class, turned the back streets into a dark and shadowy den of crime. The neighborhood was at its worst during the 70's. And what of Beyoğlu, meanwhile. During the 70's it became the venue for cinemas just showing sex films, and the population that was basically the mass. Taksim was different, of course, Taksim square had a distinct atmosphere of its own. That was another thing altogether. But what happened after the 80's? The gentrification project. The gentrification of Beyoğlu,” (L.D., 2017, Istanbul).

For L.D., ‘the gentrification of Beyoğlu’, during the 90's in particular, meant that a young woman alone could safely meet there and sit with friends in a bar-meyhane. During the 90's, professionals working in sectors that valued cultural capital, such as advertising, journalism and private media-TV during the day, also liked to spend their evenings immersed in street life. Thus Beyoğlu life peaked during the 90's. During the millenium decade, after one point, there were other kinds of skirmishes taking place in Beyoğlu. As a result of the

Gezi event (2013), Taksim and Beyoğlu unfortunately entirely lost their attraction. “They were totally destroyed along with Gezi itself”.

Today, one may talk of Moda and Beşiktaş as hubs. But they were more places of entertainment. For example, why did Beyoğlu become a cultural centre? “Because here are the bookshops, cinemas, theatres, the cafes and bars.” These days, bookshops and cinemas are mainly to be found in shopping centres. “Every centre has at least one big bookstore (D&R or similar), at least 5-10 cinemas, you know what I mean? Things are spread out all over. So the concept of a place as a cultural centre is no longer relevant”. (L.D., 2017, İstanbul). Even though Tunel and Karakoy could be defined in some ways as cultural centres, according to L.D., they are “more like compressed segments” Whereas Beyoğlu now includes the middle-to lower echelons of the population, this being one of the most important characteristics to make it a cultural centre. In fact, L.D. includes Şişli with Beyoğlu, an area where there were multiple bookshops and cinemas in his youth.

For the writer, L.D. the literary pulse is still in Istanbul. He suggests that this can be measured by the number of awards that are still held in the metropolis. The top ten or twenty publishers are also still in Istanbul. There may be some publishers in Ankara and Izmir who aspire to that position, but it is not simply a question of financial resources, but also the availability of editors, translators, and all those who are essential components of the resource team. Additionally, apart from the availability of a high level of cultural capital, by which he primarily means academic resources, mainly universities, and secondly a creative arts environment, he also stresses the importance of its diversity, deep-rootedness, and historical continuity. And, of course, there must be a demand for all these elements. Diversity is particularly important, since we are talking about an environment which embraces a population of different cultural, ethic and socio-economic (class) backgrounds, all able to contribute in some way to the life of the city, says L.D. Deep-rootedness and historical

continuity both contribute to cultural tradition. In other words: “Even if people should suddenly find a lot of money, and open bookshops and exhibition halls, or set up a university, this is not enough. There also has to be historical continuity. Culture doesn’t suddenly emerge. Things don’t work like that.” (L.D., 2017, Istanbul).

For the writer G.B., Istanbul is the source of the pulse of literature. While commenting that one might also look to Ankara in that respect. Two Ankara writers G.B. considers to be particularly important for the millenium years were Hasan Ali Toptaş and Cemil Kavukçu. He considers Ankara to have been particularly significant as a literary venue in the 1970’s and 80’s, with a formidable list of writers living there, including Vüs’at O. Bener, Turgut Uyar, Bilge Karasu, Nezihe Meriç, Füsun Akatlı and Metin Altıok. Although not so outstanding as a literary environment in the 90’s as during the 70’s, there was still a literary community of note: “I don’t think Ankara was quite the same literary environment during the 80’s and 90’s as in the 70’s, but still there was something to Ankara even then.... “ For example, when I was a student in Istanbul, I saw few writers and artists, but every time I went to Ankara, I would see Ahmet Erhan or Şükrü Erbaş in Sakarya. There was a palpable pulse there in the 80’s. (G.B., 2018, Istanbul). The predominance of publishers, journalists and writers in Istanbul tells us that it is here that the pulse of literature beats. Istanbul is still the centre of the publishing industry. Ankara, he reports, has a community of story-tellers. Particularly after Levent Cantek became editor in chief at *İletişim Yayınları*, Ankara literature emerged as a “genre”. All of which, in G.B.’s view, makes Ankara a node of literature.

In the 1990’s, the writer G.B. points to the Ataturk Library and *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* cultural centre in Galatasary, both of which he attended as centres, participating in a number of cultural events there. Even if he himself did not attend, he also mentions Bilar, created by Özgür University, as a serious contender during the 1990’s. and where Bülent Somay, Orhan Koçak and İskender Savaşır taught. G.B. was unable to attend these activities due to

economic restraints, reminding us that there was a charge for courses there, and that today he did not follow the courses as much as he had done during the 90's when he was in his twenties.

According to G.B., the centre had moved from Cağaloğlu to Beyoğlu during the 90's. Although Beyoğlu itself had now changed, as new places opened in Karaköy. G.B. indicates the economic impossibility of businesses engaged in cultural affairs remaining in Beyoğlu, due to the much inflated rents. Nevertheless, places such as Refik and Yakup still kept their doors open. "Who goes there? Is it still a place for aficionados of culture and art, or are the white-collar workers there for a nostalgic dinner, I don't know," (G.B., 2018, Istanbul). Adding that after the closure of the journal and publishing house in particular, there was little reason for G.B. to visit Beyoğlu, and that after 2010, for G.B., Beyoğlu became somewhere one only passed through "once in a while".

"Always in Istanbul..."

According to S.Ö., the literary centre was "always Istanbul". Although at one point, particularly in the 70's, Ankara also was considered a centre. The writer, however, comments that it was generally ex-Ankarites who tended to say this. But when we look at things from the point of view of publishing and journals, Ankara was "truly" a centre during the 60's and 70's. The literary clubs were outstanding, writers, poets, and literary figures gathered in their own homes, and yet, according to S.Ö., these places could still not "be called centres, that would be impossible". Being a centre was, for S.Ö. a broad issue with a serious past. He points out that Ankara began to become the centre of art and culture during the 30's, following the declaration of the Republic. Ankara is a city that was consciously formulated, with a culture that was also consciously constructed.

“The state constantly applied all its resources to Ankara, attracting all the foremost people there at the universities. Many from Istanbul also went to Ankara during the 40’s. People like Orhan Veli and Sabahattin Ali were all in Ankara. Sabahattin Eyüboğlu too. There were the newspapers in Istanbul, but in Ankara was State sponsored publishing, culture, art....the literati were appointed by the state to important burocratic positions. It was a question of earning a living. And the status of being a member of parliament. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Behçet Kemal Çağlar...how many others.... were members of the national assembly,” (S.Ö., 2017, Istanbul).

Despite Ankara’s repeated attempts at cultural dominance, the sheer scale of Istanbul meant that the cultural centre was always seated there. This is the home of publishing, Babiali, printing, booksellers. Today, however, S.Ö. feels that the literary pulse is no longer the provenance of a single urban centre. “I don’t think there is just one city nowadays”. Rivalry between the two cities, Istanbul and Ankara was no longer an issue after 2000. Place had no value, it was no longer relevant, he believes.

The fact that Istanbul is the centre of the literary pulse, according to B.N., is related to his view of Istanbul as being a ‘true’ city. “Izmir is not a city. It is provincial. As is Ankara. For the 50’s generation, Ankara was a literary city. For me this is Istanbul”. The publishers, journals, fairs are all there, in that metropolis. This activity makes for a lively, dynamic literary environment. Even though there are fairs in other cities, the Istanbul fair has created a significant readership. Now this is spreading to other places. “In fact, they are trying to spread literature” (B.N., 2017, Istanbul).

According to the writer B.N., the pulse of literature is still focused on Istanbul today. Provincial writers come to Istanbul at the first opportunity. “Why did they come? What business have they here?” one asks. Here, (in Istanbul) they feel comfortable, they no longer feel alone, they find each other, they come because they can talk literature here. The writer

repeats his thoughts on this subject, that had every artist lived in Istanbul, rather than in the provinces, he believed everything would have been different.

During the 1990's, the cultural centre of Istanbul was Beyoğlu, as far as B.N. was concerned. However, during the last eight years, since the Gezi events, it has no longer been a cultural centre. During the last three years, "it has undergone extensive re-engineering" she indicates. While there has been some action in Karakoy, B.N. sees that neighborhood as more of a Bebek. She points to a place where cafe's opened, cinema artists and cinematographers meet, and writers have begin to congregate, Bomonti, she sees as having the potential to become a perfect cultural centre. Kadıköy, according to her, is a cultural centre. "It has book sellers, theatres, parks where there is much social community activity. There is a cultural movement there." (B.N., 2017, Istanbul).

2.5 Changes within time

The writer G.K. states that the greatest form of change has been "decentralisation". New technologies have caused decentralisation. Someone can live in Urfa, for example, can write regularly for a journal, and be affiliated to a specific publishers. G.K. points to the same phenomenon of decentralisation having occurred throughout society. "There is no neighborhood, no sense of neighborliness. People, individuals, search for other individuals, that's something else too. It's a general cultural phenomenon, globally relevant." (G.K., 2017, Istanbul). He sees his own failure to follow the internet as seriously negative on his part. G.K. is an integral part of the written-printed culture, and sees it as a huge time issue. Yet he did make an effort to follow certain sites, but "lost interest after some time. "I was bored. I got bored of the gossip. But no doubt there were very good (sources)...." (G.K., 2017, Istanbul).

The writer M.S. comments that in the changes between generations there is a form of erosion. "When one generation passes away, the new generations do not recognise the old...."

(M.S., 2017, Istanbul). He feels that he has come along with his relatives, and that the ‘warmth’ of former times is lost. During the 1970’s, for example, writers took an interest in each other’s problems. When a writer was without work, and they told this to another writer-friend, they would try and find work for them. He stresses that Tarik Dursun was particularly sensitive on that subject. “He would not rest, he would make phone calls for that person, he would share information about them”. The writer points to a deculturalised “banality”, a shallowness that increasingly characterised post-1990’s literature. “Those deep, culturally profound individuals with whom conversation was an endless pleasure are gone. Our immediate predecessors were equally well-informed. Yakup Kadri, Halide Edip, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar and the like. They too were wise.....” (M.S., 2017, Istanbul). The latest generation of writers have no “literary culture” according to M.S. Coffee houses have been superseded by the cafe, meyhanes by bars; beerhalls have proliferated. “What should a literate man do in a beerhall?” Publishing houses and journals have become commercially institutionalised. The brotherly camaraderie is no more. “Journal directors You go there, Yaşar Nabi, bearing his years on his shoulders, doesn’t raise his head from his work, but still you could chat. You ask his advice, he gives you his opinion. He would make time for you whether or not he liked your work, regardless of whether he printed it or not.” (M.S., 2017, Istanbul)

Relationships between writer and publisher, according to M.S., have “deteriorated”, “turned into something more brutal.” Publishers no longer behaved like ‘men of culture’, they were trying to profit at the expense of the author. “For example, They had to pay the printer. They couldn’t defray the costs of paper and avoid other similar expenses of that sort. The only thing they could avoid paying was the writer’s copyright.” (M.S., 2017, Istanbul). He claims that the old publishers were ‘more’ sensitive to such issues. Ultimately, this meant that writers ‘were obliged’ to create their own publishing houses. The writer Demirtaş Ceyhun, having

‘had enough’ of publishers, founded his own *Sis Çanı Yayınları* to publish his own books. “He rented offices in a back street in Beyoğlu. It was cold, he had no stove, but what else could he do? He set up there. Organised his own distribution. There was a book signing somewhere on the Thracian side. He packed his books up and took them there as well, himself. The boxes were heavy of course. He hurt his back, and then he got ill. He didn’t have a car. You need to have a vehicle if you are going to be a publisher” (M.S., 2017, Istanbul).

After 1980, M.S. claims that the written Turkish language deteriorated, that the language began to lack grammatical discipline, and that this was a great loss for the younger generation of writers. We, at least had the older generation of linguistic masters as our models. The closure of the Türk Dil Kurumu was undoubtedly a major factor, since that organisation had aimed to instill a linguistic discipline into writing, and had offered literary awards focusing on language quality in categories such as the essay, translation, the novel, the story, poetry and non-fiction (M.S. 1917, Istanbul).

During the 1980’s the numbers of women writers increased, and publishers also proliferated. Dailies, bought out by new owners with no connection to journalism, “were drawn off into other directions.”, “Let’s say that I’m publishing my own books. I’ve founded a big publishing house myself, I can’t enter the chain. Not every book can enter a bookstore chain”, says the writer, pointing to the monopolising (of distribution), but also stressing that with the onset of the internet, and the easy availability of e-novels, we are now looking at the potential for a major transformation. Face-to-face relations with publishers have become, he stresses, no longer relevant.

“Human relations are down to zero. Whose in charge, I don’t know, who are the editors, I have no idea. How can I make contact. Is it my problem I don’t know. They don’t make contact with anyone. They only read it, or not as the case may be, if you send (a piece) by mail, no-one knows who their editors are, or their names or addresses. They are

anonymous. In Babiali there were people you could just call in on, unannounced. They were all renowned authors themselves. Like Erdal Öz, Tarık Dursun, Ülkü Tamer, Yaşar Nabi, Memet Fuat and Hüsametdin Bozok. These were the owners of the publishing houses we used to just ‘pop-in’ to visit, in passing. Why did you come, I haven’t got time for you. Nothing like that ever happened. In fact, if you didn’t call in for a while, I couldn’t visit Erdal Öz for some time, he saw me on the street, well son, of course, now you’re a Türk Dil Kurumu award-winner, you won’t be coming to visit us. Such style. At one point I was penniless. I couldn’t take part in Cemal Süreya’s Monday raki lunch. I was just back from military service, I was jobless, I had no money, One day walking through Sirkeci, I met Cemal Süreya and Muzaffer Buyrukçu coming down. He literally interrogated me. Why aren’t you coming, he said, crossing his brows. And I had to admit I had no money. Even if you don’t, maybe we do, he said. And I knew that he didn’t always have money either. If he got some copyright fee then he had money. Maybe we have some. Come anyway, definitely come. I mean, I went out of embarrassment,” (M.S. 2017, Istanbul).

The writer M.S. claims that there is now more opportunity for the writer and his reader to meet. He recalls that as a child, he would have recognised the author of a book he was reading from the photograph on the back sleeve, which was a tiny passport sized photo. So if the writer came to Istanbul, he would have recognised his face on the streets of Cağaloğlu. Nowadays, writers were invited to schools; children got the chance to ask them questions, they see them face to face, even have their photo taken together. Such events are more frequent in Istanbul. “Invitations to places in Anatolia were a little more problematic. School children in Istanbul have the opportunity to get to know writers better. They can ask them things they are curious about. They buy the author’s book, read it. Can touch the writer.” (M.S. 2017, Istanbul)

M.S. points out that writers today don't write about topical issues. Have you ever 'read' in a novel or story about women being murdered, a topic very relevant to Turkey, or the credit card-related scandals and suicides of the last 15 years. "Why do such subjects not capture the attention of today's novelists?" The writer now is writing as though he no longer has his feet firmly on the ground, as though he is no longer part of this geography. The break is a true severance from society. He has no issues to address for g... sake ." While saying all this, the writer points to a gradual erosion since the 80's, but stresses that since that erosion is still on-going in our lives, we cannot yet see the full effect.

M.S. is of the opinion that book promotion and book-related advertising is "out of control". Mentioning that there was very little promotion during the 1970's. He comments that when a writer mentioned other writers in the press, or in literary journals, it resonated. There were "a handful of serious critics". When critics and writers like Fethi Naci, Rauf Mutluay and Atilla Özkırımlı wrote about books, people trusted their words, and bought the book. He adds that critical pieces in journals were definitely taken seriously, but that nowadays, "no-one reads journals, and there is no-one to write that kind of text". When, for example, a writer publishes a book these days, and he is invited to feature in a mainline TV news program, even though this may appear to be "good for literature", M.S. points out that it actually represents an "incredibly unfair competition". "(The writer) gets himself invited onto a mainline news program. There he talks about his book" (M.S., 2017, Istanbul). M.S. criticises another author for posting billboards and posters on which the author is photographed "reclining on a couch like Cleopatra", referring to such advertisement ironically as an insult to literature. Yet another writer's book promotional poster is posted as billboard on the publisher's distribution vehicle. Such advertising "leaves no room for competition by the writers trying to pursue literature in a normal way". That's what sells books. Even Nazim Hikmet can't compete with that. (M.S. 2017, Istanbul). The Turkish literati no longer knows

Turkish literature, he complains. “This is what I claim. Today, the writers who think they are creating literature, the poets and story-writers. When he looked into their past, there was not much of a base there. We’re talking about a generation that lacks a past. Since the millenium. For example, there are story-writers who have never read any of my books”. (M.S. 2017 Istanbul)

The poet-writer Ş.F., defines literature’s “transformation into a commodity, or the tendency towards that” as the most significant change in literature. Publishing houses are commercial enterprises, although for Ş.F., the change is that commercialism is viewed as the primary element, the sole aim of literature. The writer stresses the contrast between this approach and his own concept of publishing. He comments that almost everyone founded their own publishing houses during the 1980’s. But that these were young writers who had been immersed in literature, who had learnt their trade at the journals, and “gained the approval of the masters”. When their books were published, they themselves were on the publishing committees of the journals, *Varlık* and *Yazko*. “Almost everyone who was anyone had founded their own publishing house.”

“At first, the idea of opening your own publishers was nothing to do with commercialism, in fact. That came later. Because you were the one who was hoisting the paper on your own back and carrying it yourself to the printers. That was some enthusiasm. You were carrying the packets of books to the distributors. The idea was to make sure that the print was good, and the final work was the best. That the text showed up to its best. Was something different....the primary idea was to create something new. Now of course, publishing is a matter of commercialism. I don’t really understand it...” (Ş.F. 28 March, 2017, Istanbul).

The new ‘measure of value’ is to sell more copies. So the writer’s work begins to be aimed at ‘money and fame’. As a result, the ‘best-selling author’s’ relationship with the publisher has changed. An author who sells well is always considered an asset by any publisher”. If the author sells a great number of books, neither the editors nor the publishers ‘have a handle over the author’. Ş.F. regards this as a poor relationship. There were writers who sold extremely well in the past, but the editor-publisher, for example Memet Fuat, maintained a consistent (disciplined) attitude towards the author “whether it sells more, or less”. In so saying, he emphasises that he was not against a book selling well, nor was he against popular literature. For Ş.F., it was important to distinguish between popular and mainstream literature. There is an author like Bilge Karasu and then there is Tomris Uyar. Do you see what I mean? Then it doesn’t work ...”

Compared to the writer today, during the 80’s the author was more personally involved with the process of publication itself, according to (Ş.F.). He feels that one of the reasons for the disappearance of those literary centres could be the technology ‘issue’. To have his work published, the writer no longer needs to go to the publishers or to the journal himself. On the one hand this gains them a lot of time. They have more time to read. “They can write something “that would have taken three hours in half an hour”. They can take a copy and proof it, and so produce a more finished text. (Ş.F., 2017, Istanbul)

On the other hand, both the writer’s relationship with the publishers and his role in the publishing process had changed. In the 1980’s, the writer would read the proofs of a book that was under publication, and make his corrections. To do so he would come to the publishers. The typesetter would then re-set the corrected text, make new proofs, which the writer would check again. “As you check the proofs, he sets the lead type, as it has to be re-set, he could make a mistake,” (Ş.F., 2017, Istanbul). After so much effort there is “nothing as good” as going to the printers to collect the first edition, even though, even then you are still looking

for mistakes, “Your heart racing”. Ş.F., quotes Bekir Yıldız: “but (was this so) after the 90’s, or was it the year 2000 I’m not sure. Lets say it happened before the millenium. The publisher and the writer were climbing the same mountain, roped together”. But, the writer stresses, he is not sure if that was the case after the millenium.

Structural changes took place in publishing at the end of the 80’s, and during the 90’s. Prior to the 80’s, there were publisher-editors. As M.S. pointed out earlier, the owner or manager of the publishing house was generally also the editor for that publisher. It was during the 90’s that editors, translators and sub-editors became a regular part of publishing house staff, technology came into regular use, and there were serials, each with its own editor. These were positive developments in Ş.F.’s view. Meanwhile, although the institutionalisation of publishing is seen as a positive development on the one hand, particularly after the 80’s one sees a new kind of authorship emerging, notably in Orhan Pamuk, Mehmet Eroğlu and Latife Tekin. In earlier eras, journal writers who made their writing reputation with stories and pieces from other genres in the journal would then publish a book of stories or move on to a novel. ”You would see him in the journal, read his story. Some never went on to write novels. Tomris Uyar, for example, was a dedicated short story-writer (Ş.F., 2017, Istanbul). But now there is a new “type of writer emerging” who starts straight into a novel without tipping their hat towards the journal at all as a writer. “Being a writer has become something quite other than it once was.” Ş.F. felt that this had a lot to do with editing being an integral factor in the publishing process. And the literary journal having since lost credence. “To be honest I’m not sure of the reasons for this, but one can see it. We can see the new identity of authorship” Latife Tekin is one of those writers who went personally to the publishers, taking her novel directly to Memet Fuat. “The fig tree breaks the rock. You know, it pushes up in unexpected places. Latife was like a flower or a bud opening, or like a snowdrop. There it is in its natural

habitat. Unexpected. And yet all of a sudden we see it. Latife, though, had an accumulation of literature behind her" (Ş.F., 2017, Istanbul).

Although lacking the gravitas of former years, journals still existed. One in particular, *Notos* is still important for story writers. The journal later publishes the stories it prints in book form by author. Although, for Ş.F., the ‘educational aspect’ of the journal was possibly superceded after the millenium by the creative writing workshops. Ş.F. expresses nostalgia for the now lost literary club aspect of the journals.

“If only there were journals where we could meet. But there aren’t. And there is no point in wishing for them. I do miss them. I miss the journal, the editors, the editors-in-chief because they especially, for example Memet Fuat, were true mentors. Some of our elders, we criticised them and all, but Asım Bezirci, Aziz Çalışlar, Onat Kutlar,....would recommend we read this or that work in various fields. For example, I remember Sadık Hidayet introduced a great many of my peers to Onat Kutlar. Necatigil translated Kör Baykuş.....Of course I miss such relationships now. There was always a point to them,” (Ş.F. 28 March 2017, Istanbul).

The writer-critic E.K., who emerged as a writer in 1981, or immediately after the 12 Sept. Coup brought to the fore by his prolific writing, places himself politically among the generation of ’78 writers. He points out that their relationship with the previous generation was very close, adding that the older generation of writers was very supportive of his own. However, he believes that inter-generational relations as he knew them ended with his own age group. And this he relates to changes in lifestyle. E.K. believes that there is no connection between this, literature and the writers themselves. Life, particularly economically, had become more difficult, as a result people had begun to live more individualised lives. Today this tendency is even more noticable than during the 1990’s.

Consequently, there are no longer groups gathering around certain journals, nor do people congregate in specific cafes and meyhanes any more.

“There are no longer groups of writers sharing certain views who come together. So that kind of journal is no longer published. The reason for this, in my view, is the same. Life, ideas have totally changed fragmented, we are all thinking and living our own lives in isolation from others.....Before, one would meet with like-minded people, similar groups, and put out journals together. There would be an array of different journals That’s just not the case today, and I have serious doubts that it could ever be possible at this point,” (E.K., 2017, Istanbul).

Writers would get together in groups, although these tend to be smaller, more intimate friendship groups, or reading groups, rather than the kind of groups relevant to the literary world. According to E.K., in 1980, after the 12 September, a new life had begun. Again, the same writer claims that the essential cultural, social and economic changes became prevalent after the 1990’s. “It was after that point that everyone began to live in their own little island, in a way”.

Following the millenium, the older generations tended to take the back seat, while the younger generations began to dominate the scene. We notice a proliferation of younger writers, and the spread of literature amongst the younger generations. The variety of story-types expanded within the genre. Both readership and authorship for stories increased. ‘A very different kind of vitality ensued’ (for the genre). Although it was more poetry being submitted to journals prior to the 1980’s, these days both poetry and stories are being submitted in equal measure. This, according to E.K. is an important change, since story is a prose genre, and while the Turkish interest in prose is traditionally weak, for such a transformation to be taking place is a positive indication in itself. He points out that the novel has always been popular as a genre, and is the product of popular readership demand.

The writer-critic E.K. stresses that the very concept of publishing and its methods have changed, just as life itself, and the modern concept of human relationships. For one thing, where there were 100 writers before, there are now a thousand. The key change is the ‘market’. He states that in the realm of literature, there was no such thing as a ‘market’ in the past, the book was a work presented to the cultural world. Whereas now, it is what is popular, popular culture, popular literature, the market, these are the dominant terms representing the culture that is ‘thrust’ upon us nowadays:

“The reality of such a culture is that no-one is concerned in the least with anyone else. And neither do we listen to one another, but carry on along our own way. In other words, in the past it was expressed thus: let’s say that way back in the past, during the era of the previous generations, long before our time, there was Nurullah Ataç. Even the greatest poets and writers of the age were in fear of Nurullah Ataç. That he might make a comment about something they had written. He was a great authority..... Then, let’s say, at a later date it seems that it was Fethi Naci that took on that role; you would take notice of what he said as a critic, and also, quite frankly, everyone would be influenced by what he said about a piece. If either Nurullah Ataç or Fethi Naci were to turn up today, and bang their fist on the table, no-one would take the slightest bit of notice. I mean, that is the most important indication of what’s changed. The conditions to support an authority in this sense are no longer available to us,” (E.K., 2017, Istanbul).

While stressing the changes that have taken place to the concept of literature, E.K. expresses the opinion that this notion of so many publishing houses, so many books issued, so many readers, so many writers is largely due to literature being mainly regarded as a commercial commodity. He points out that when *Can Yayınları* was founded in 1981, there

were 100 publishing houses, whereas now there are 2,000, and that were *Can Yayınları* to be founded today, it would never have the chance to grow as it did.

E.A. states that it is ‘no longer possible’ for one to visit journals and publishers. As a poet, when he himself published his first poem in *Oluşum Dergisi*, he describes how he made the connection, and also makes a comparison. The poet, then living in Ankara close to the journal offices, takes his poem there personally. Stressing that at that time it was easy to visit journals and publishers. “you could just knock on the door and go in,” The journal was being produced by the poet and artist Fahrünnisa Kadıbeşegil. And the journal’s head offices were in her own house. Going back and forth to the journal, E.A. begins to assist Kadıbeşegil, and to witness the discussions that went on there. Now, says E.A. it is very difficult to enter a publishers. “You have to make an appointment, they have to accept.....and since there was no email, this had to be done by regular post, or if you were in the same city, you could deliver the request by hand. That was the way things were done,” (E.A., 2017, Istanbul). Places that you could previously access ‘at the drop of a hat’, where the door was always open, now had someone at the door to say: “The boss is in a meeting just let me see if its possible., well, that means that, by then, there would be no point in pursuing it Whereas in 1983-4, when *Can Yayınları* was first founded and when it was still in Cağaloğlu, they visit Erdal Öz early one evening. “Erdal Öz offers them whatever he himself was drinking”. E.R. ties this to the institutionalisation of publishing houses and journals. He reflects on how the structure of relationships changed after the 1990’s, to the extent that, if you saw the man sitting at a table, it would be extremely difficult to go up to him” (E.A. 2017. Istanbul)

Cağaloğlu, centre for all the dailies, weeklies, journals, publishers, printers and bookshops and so the hub of literati, changes drastically after the 1990’s, when first the dailies, then the printers, later the publishers begin to move out. “Once the papers had left, then the intellectual base of Cağaloğlu effectively left with them, says E.A.. That being the

case, there was less and less reason to ‘visit’ Cağaloğlu. “The publishers moved, first to Beyoğlu, then some of them moved to Kadıköy. Everybody went somewhere else”. Cağaloğlu was disbanded; the coffee houses and cafes lost their clientele and atmosphere. The upcoming generation of poets and writers from the 90’s were ‘anti-social’, according to E.A. This was the generation that had been children during the 1970’s and 80’s, growing up when Istanbul was becoming a mega-city. Where children no longer went out onto the streets. “We used to leave home in the morning and come back at night. Our mother would call for us. Everyone in the neighborhood knew us. But they had no such chance. Theirs was the first generation of apartment block children”. Consequently, according to E.A., “this generation had no real concept of friendship”. They could not easily get together. “We used to get together very easily, because, as children, you formed a football team. Then you got together and brought out a journal. When the 90’s generation poets and writers came together to create a journal, “three minutes later they all began to reveal their egos, would start to argue and before long would split up and leave”. E.A. defines this as a socialisation problem. On the other hand, the professionalisation of the publishing sector meant that those who wanted to visit journals and publishers could not do so as easily as before. “As I said, they could not get past the door.” In addition to all this, with the event of the internet, we witness a total severance of relations. The entire generation of young writers and artists became totally introverted. They don’t go to coffee shops, or to pubs, being anti-social they have no friends. They are, as it were, confined within an individualistic structure,” (E.A. 2017 Istanbul)

The spread of the internet has effected relationship-forming in the literary world, as it has in every area of human endeavour. The poet – writer E.A. explains that poets first formed “yahoo groups” that facilitated the spread of poetry. Then, based on this, art and culture themed websites initially featured poetry as an easily shareable option, since in those “yahoo groups” it was mainly poets that communicated with one another, rather than story-writers or

novelists. However, rather than becoming friends, poets ‘meeting’ each other in that medium began to argue with one another. E.A. comments that it is much easier to fight with one another when you can’t see the other person. “The egotistical character of the 90’s generation encouraged the sudden escalation of such disputes. I see the importance of face to face relationships in all this. You might write something that you would not say face to face to someone. And from the 90’s onwards, face-to-face relationships disappear.” However, there were some positive aspects to the internet, E.A. admits. Not only can you reach more people, a person who has been unable to publish their poetry by traditional means through a journal or similar outlet can make themselves known, and have acquired various ways to do so via the internet, through Google groups or websites. “A new media emerged.”

Not only do publishers become more professional, and the concept of publishing changes radically, the writer profile also changes. Commercialism has become more dominant. E.A. believes that the precursors to that trend were *Adam Yayınları*, who were the first to utilise the media, advertising and book launching campaigns to promote their products. Later, other publishers followed suite. “ And it became clear that Turkish authors could sell books and make a profit, and that the writer could earn copyright fees. The professionalisation of the publishing houses also transforms the relationship between writer and publisher, which becomes more professional. As a genre, the ‘selling power’ of poetry and stories was relatively low, while novels sold much better, which meant that the numbers of novel writers increased. E.A. explains that there was an explosion in novel publishing. “ While novels were being published at a rate of 40 a year, this became 100, 300, 500, 700, up to 1000. And these were first novels....” This explosion made it very difficult to follow new publications, it became difficult not only to read every new novel, but even to follow what had been published. Orhan Pamuk explains in his recent talks. “I used to follow everything. I used to read at least half of every novel that came out, and the rest I would know about. Now that’s

not possible, (E.A. 2017 Istanbul). These days it is not enough to promote a book, but only the very-well promoted books are widely known about. One of the negative aspects of this, according to E.A. is that an unknown writer whose work may have literary merit may be more likely to be discouraged, to stop writing altogether, or for his discovery to be delayed. While in 1990, there were 8,000 types of book being printed, this figure is now closer to 60,000. When the booksellers puts a book out, where is he to display it?.. Most of the time you can't even see the book. That's the situation we are in".

The writer-publisher relationship has also changed book publishing approaches. A potential author, in the past, would first have submitted work to a journal regularly for some time, and perhaps, after several years, would collect their writings into a book and present it to a publishers. Whereas, today, writers don't see things 'that way', remarks E.A. They think, "I will take it directly to a publishers. If my book is good, the publishers will publish it , and sell it, and I will get copyright. The mechanism has changed..." And the writer who makes direct contact like this with a publishers, naturally will not seek out literary groups, friends or such like; they won't try to have their contributions published in journals. The poet E.A. mentions that in the millenium decade it became much easier to set up a publisher, so in fact, adversely, there was a huge expansion in the publication of journals, which he links to the relative ease of publication. He points to the existence of one or two literary journals in almost every district in Turkey during those years. Another factor was that every journal was still being published in 'hard copy'. It had been thought that, with the introduction of the internet, there would be a greater move across to digital publishing. But that proved to be far from the case. "The first websites were created, but that did not really have the anticipated impact. Blogging started, but still nothing changed. Everyone wanted to see what they had written in book format". E.A. gives Wattpad writers as an illustration. Writers using the internet as the chosen setting for their work, who were widely read in that medium, where they also became

widely known, inevitably would also go on having their work ‘published in book form’. In contrast to earlier eras, publication had become much easier. “Before that, you couldn’t just publish but now you could publish yourself if you wished, you could do your own printing, or you could publish over the internet in a matter of seconds,” (E.A. 2017, Istanbul).

E.A. mentions an increase in the number of women involved in publishing. Women had been relatively scarce, not only in the world of publishing but also in the literary groups of previous decades. The phenomenon of women entering the publishing world coincided with an increasing professionalisation in publishing in general after the 80’s. E.A. reports that after the death of Cengiz Tuncer, owner of *E Yayınları*, his wife carried on the business. They were saying “A woman has arrived in Cagaloglu. It was just like on a ship, there were taboos, a woman couldn’t enter a printers.....”. Whereas, nowadays, E.A. comments that the number of women working in publishing has outnumbered men. “There are many women working in the sector. The number of woman writers has also increased. There was a particularly high number of women story-writers after the 80’s relatively speaking, for example. There were also more woman poets and novelists. This was somewhat related to the societal structure....”

The greatest change was the commercialisation of literature, as it became a part of the culture industry. “What do we mean by the culture industry? Easily consumed commodities. These being film, music and book, the products of the industries. If the novel is a “highly consumed” product, this means that, today, the novel becomes equated with (the idea of) literature. “The novel is profitable. Poetry has become almost totally disregarded. And the story.....since there are few best-seller story-writers.....but literature means the novel. This is the case globally,” (E.A., 2017, Istanbul).

S.R. points out that publishing houses were very active at the beginning of the 90’s. Books were valued and read for their own sake. Even at the book fairs, this was the approach. The book has now become a commodity both for the writer and the reader, as far as S.R. is

concerned. Best-sellers existed, but the best-seller storm was seen as ‘another form of self-expression’ then. Such books did exist, and were being read, but were not really considered literature. Nowadays, according to S.R., everything is jumbled up. “As with all things everywhere.” She considers that the changes she refers to began during the 1980’s. “I think that the commercialisation of the book began during those years, Even of ideas...” She points out that the book fairs were effected by this attitude. From being events whose attraction and piquance depended on an acknowledgement of books and writers for what they were, ‘books and writers’, they began to harbour quite a different sort of tension. Instead of creating an intellectual platform, they became one which was a conduit for thoughtlessness. She also stresses the enforced state of isolation in which this left the writer. This isolation is not related to whether or not a writer’s books were being read, but more to the severance of communication between the writer and his reader, as far as S.R. was concerned. Yes, for every writer, isolation - solitude was inevitable. That is something different. During the process of writing, you place the bottle in the water and let it go. But later in the process you wish to meet, to meet”. Throughout the 90’s there was just no reaction whatsoever. Book signings, panels, etc., these did help, obviously. But nowadays...no, I don’t see any of that happening”. The writer, referring to the events that do take place today, seems, by touching on the sparcity of panels, to be questioning the value of what is discussed at the events that are still held today, and how far they can be regarded as contributing to literature. S.R. clearly does not regard them as genuine. And in fact, “the excitement, the joy and anticipation” with which the writer went out in search of the *Radikal Kitap* supplement during the 90’s is a case in point. Now, this is merely a daily supplement, it is not even a book journal.

In the age of the ‘blogger’, when communication is done via a tweet, S.R. admits that she is incapable of sending a tweet. For that writer, thinking is a chain-like process, during which a thought is carried from one point to another, and the point at which it arrives can

only be expressed in, at very least, several pages, a process that could only be expressed in no less than 3,500 characters, is even then not enough for her. “I learnt to adjust myself to 3,500 characters with considerable difficulty. I mean is it possible to express oneself in five-six pages? Just as is the case for one person to understand another. How could I know a person who tweets? Not to mention how could I answer them? Its not possible and yet that is how things work these days. When I say I don’t have a readership, perhaps I mean with this lack of communication, I appear to (have readers) but really don’t, due to the lack of communication”. The writer focuses specifically on the notion of thought, and the formulation of thought as a process:

“A society of individuals that is under the delusion that with a single tweet they can shake the world. For me, thought is like sediment. It spreads over the years and tussles with time. Its not something sudden. That is the greatest misconception under which literature finds itself at present. As though it must give people the feeling of living for the moment. Literature is something that can confront life. This is what we should remember. It reaches out towards infinity. Of course it describes the present, but within that process, it touches on the universal. These days I’m not sure who is aware of the universal, and to what extent,” (S.R. 2017, Istanbul).

S.R., relates that during her creative writing seminars, would-be writers come up to her and their second sentence is: “I want to sell well. Would you bear that in mind as you read my novel?”. “How can someone who comes forward and says ‘what I write should be read as much as possible’, be a writer? This is one of the most important problems of our time”. The writer remarks that the same issue is also relevant to publishing houses. “Will this book sell, or not? They think about that too. There is another change according to (how things were in} the 80’s. For example, if a book is expected to sell well, then they print 50,000 copies, if the publishers think it will sell few copies then they print only 1,000. This is actually the biggest

change: “Will this book sell?” and in line with that we see a different type of writer emerging, the would-be author who thinks they “have become a writer in three days”, and says “I am so creative and what I write is very good”.

The writer L.D. explains that when, in the past, one talked of the literary world, one meant an environment where everyone knew everyone else, an environment consisting predominantly of writers, critics and publishers, as well as readers, and, of course, an interactive relationship between them. This chain is now broken. There is no longer a Cağaloğlu where, as in the past, almost all the publishers could be found. In any case there are many more publishers now. And so many writers that it would not be possible for all of them to know and follow each other. In 1936, Tanpınar said: This year was a good year, seven or eight copyright works were published. Maybe ten. Now, if I read all ten of those, I could still say something about the literature of that year. And now 1,000 books are published (on an annual basis).” L.D. observes that there are now so many writers and books that each individual writer has a particular readership circle of their own, created from a blend of different readership circles. Murat Menteş has a particular kind of readership, while Emrah Serbes’ readers are different, and Orhan Pamuk’s is yet another type, a more general readership. L.D.’s own readership is different again, and all may be distinguished by culture or class. In the past there was not so much fragmentation, as they were all from the same environment. It is a much bigger world today. “It is difficult to call it a single world.....since it is impossible to refer to it as a world or an environment when people do not know each other. Its not an environment any more. Nor is it a club, or a centre. It simply is not.”

The writer G.B. speaks of diversity in the world of literature. “It is very cosmopolitan. This wasn’t the case in the past; and certainly not in earlier eras. However, he stresses compartmentalism as an issue. There is, he says, one guru, a series of gurus side by side, not following each other, unaware of one another. Poets, minimalist story-writers, historical story-

writers, those for whom language is the sole focus.....” He mentions the existence of a certain interaction despite the compartmentalisation, stressing his belief that where there is ‘healthy’ interaction, “better things could emerge from this diversity”. Books published abroad are being translated to Turkish simultaneously. This, foreign writers find astonishing, but they point out that it indicates a form of enrichment in Turkey. “But, of course, there is also cacophony”. Literature requires some solitude, he proposes, saying that those who are able to find quiet amongst the cacophony ‘are likely to produce works of somewhat better quality’. Competition is inevitable, and while this can have a positive effect up to a point, it can also be destructive. “Leads to jealousy, slander and the like”. However, when the writer went back to his memoirs, he recalled real skirmishes and intolerances in earlier, much closer encounters. “It certainly is an interesting period. And very difficult to generalise. Other than to say that diversity is the distinct characteristic of the times. I am not pessimistic about it.” (G.B. 2018, Istanbul).

The writer G.B. indicates that story-writing came into its own as a genre after 1995. Story-based journals were published. Story days are organised and publishers become less “reluctant” to publish books of stories than they had been at the beginning of the 80’s and 90’s. G.B. claims that there was a growing need for print books, in parallel to the growth of the publishing industry. Consequently, since more and more books of stories were being submitted, publishers were ‘forced’ to publish them. “This was to raise turn-over”. G.B. comments that an attitude of “whatever I print will sell” tended to be prevalent among publishers as well. As the sector grew, book supplements appeared, TV art and culture programs.....For the larger publishers, nothing they printed caused a loss. At the very least, a book issue of 1,000 copies would see 500 on the market, which meant returns for costs. There was that margin”. (G.B. 2018, Istanbul). While in the past, if a publishers could not sell two books, this effected their financial balance, today, there is such huge investment in publishing

that if the publisher failed to sell twenty books, it would have no adverse effect. Big banks, major companies became involved in publishing. Publishing houses grew, and their turn-over grew. (G.B. 2018, Istanbul). Undoubtedly, from another aspect, G.B. felt that the explosion in story-writing was partially due to young writers feeling that they had a story to tell. And therefore changing genre from poetry to prose. Today, meanwhile, although the story was largely superceded by the novel after the year 2000, story books continue to be published.

“Many stories were written, and many published. Among those published were some works that were truly of high quality. [.....] some are still quality.[.....]I’m thinking that last year, four or five big publishers each published three, four or five books of first stories. That’s not something to be undertaken lightly. And why did they attempt to do so? I could not see any negative intent in that. There were certain points I was not happy with, but in the final analysis, had I been an editor, there was nothing that I would not have published. Maybe certain details that I would have discussed with the authors, and have them work on a little more, but none of them were really poor books, none that were unpublishable,” (G.B. 2018, Istanbul).

There were, according to G.B., also changes to the process through which a would-be writer would publish their work. For the generation of writers that he describes himself as being part of, in the end, it meant first publishing their stories in journals to gain public credence, becoming known, then later publishing in book form. Nowadays, young writers usually set out saying: “I’m going to start by writing a book.” This situation indicates that journals have lost importance, having been directly superceded by publishers. Other factors include both the expansion of the publishing world and the increasing technical ease of publishing. “The other day I saw somewhere, bring your book to us, we will publish it. A huge place in Kadıköy. So, all in all, gaining visibility via the journals was no longer necessary. In place of a thousand readers seeing their name and signature in a journal, the new

priority is to how to impress four thousand followers on Twitter. In addition, it is possible that the sources of motivation for a young author to write and publish a book may also have changed, according to G.B.:

“I don’t wish to incriminate anyone, but it seems as if the motivating factors for a writer deciding to write and then how to write are not the same as they were twenty or thirty years ago. I myself, for example, do not follow any of the popular journals, such as *Ot*, *Kafa* and others. I have no idea what sort of things are written in them, or what’s going on. I do follow *Notos* regularly. And the journals *Kitaplık* and *Varlık* from Yapı Kredi, even if I don’t buy every issue; if there are one or two pieces that interest me I will buy them, that’s to say I’ll take a look once a month or so. Since I’m from that generation of journal readers, I keep the tradition (of journal reading) going,” (G.B., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer S.Ö. points to social media as the biggest transformation to have taken place. Social media has changed the relationship between writer and publisher, and between reader and book; journalism and publishing houses were influential in determining the criteria for the publication of books. S.Ö., for example, explaining the relationship he had with journals as a story writer, also describes what forming a relationship means for today’s would-be writers. If he, as a writer, were planning to publish a story in a journal, he would follow every issue of the journal, learn the journal’s descriptor off by heart, find out who were the members of the publishing committee, and even what books each of those members had written; He would be so well-informed about the journal that he would know which forms of literature the committee were sympathetic towards, who would like (his story) most and be most likely to take an interest when he sent it in. Nowadays, he points out, not only did no-one go to such lengths to familiarise themselves with a journal, but also if their work, poems or stories were published there, they would not be aware of it since they did not read or follow

the journal in which it had been published. “I submitted a poem. When- three months ago, says the writer. Your poem was in the last issue. - Oh, so its been published, he says. He doesn’t follow the journal. Could you find that issue and send it to me, he says”. S. Ö. points out that that sort of thing would have been unthinkable for his own generation. And that its readers knew everything about a journal, including its title and credit pages. Now, I’m describing this as a case study, although its really is not just a case study, it is actually normal practice. And it is this I find quite disturbing. I am sure that the young writers of today would find my point of view strange, and if we were to meet face to face, I am sure they would be surprised, and ask why I am exaggerating so much.”

On the relationship between publishers and writer, S.Ö.’s observations illustrate the changes that have taken place in that aspect of the sector. For example, he points out that the physical location of a publishing house or journal, whether it be in Istanbul or wherever in Turkey, is currently of absolutely no consequence. Previously, a creative writer or artist was bound to be familiar with where the publishers was situated, since they would have to go there themselves, ring the bell and deliver their own manuscript personally, face to face. By mail, there is no such thing as “knocking on the door, sitting face to face, sipping tea together....” The writer also points to changes in the relationship between reader and book. Previously, a reader could say that they had read all the *Varlık Yayınları* publications, and even if they had never been in Istanbul, he knew the publisher’s address, even the actual building. As readers they would focus on a book a month, absorbing each page completely and thoroughly, taking in the publisher’s engrained logo on the cover-page and sleeve notes, even every character of script, becoming so accustomed to the layout and typeface of that particular publishers that they would complain about the choice of typescript and size of characters of other publishing houses. “That was the level of habitual expectation that singled out the aficionado. Such a

relationship no longer exists, the writer points out,. “One’s relationship with the book has changed both in format and scale”.

For a publisher, the impact a would-be writer can have on social media can be a criteria for whether they publish his book or not. For S.Ö., when he himself as a would-be writer took his manuscript to a publishers, the criteria was whether he had had any stories or a poem previously published in a literary journal, while today the main criteria can be the number of followers the writer has and hits on Facebook. The reason for this, he sees as a public perception of social media nurtured by promotional activity. If the submitted manuscript is not too poor, in fact, even if it is a little poor, it could still be publishable once it had passed through capable editing hands. Subsequently “once the cover was dealt with, the book would already have a ready readership”. Then with the book fairs, the author’s days in municipal festivals, and the influence of social media “somehow it works.” Whereas, according to S.Ö., for someone who has written something to be able to say “I have become a writer” there were some steps that he had to go through. The approval of the editorial committees of a journal, and of the critics was a prerequisite for would-be writers wanting to publish their work. This was the test. Once a reliable publishers had published something of his, or a prominent critic had written a piece on him, the writer finally ‘existed’. Whether they were considered good or not could be debatable, but at least they were ‘on the map’, and could be considered important.

If your name was not among the recognised writing elite, it was considered a serious hiatus. Whether you were popular or not was another matter. You were valid. Now there is no longer the system to create such a position”. Once, when literary criticism was the yardstick, a negative review could drive a writer to decide to stop writing altogether, or a translator to give up translating. Nowadays, neither the journal nor the critic is the deciding factor in a writer’s

“degree”, since “no-one has influence over the other any more. Everyone is concerned with themselves. Only if they allow it will it be.”

Journals are also sold out over social media before being published. For example, a poet will share a poem that he plans to publish first over Facebook or Twitter, and garner all the criticism and comments via the same media, so it is no longer necessary to buy the journal. Before such media tools existed, the poet would be able to access criticism and comments about their work only after it was published in the journal, and then only in a later issue of the same journal. Even if this could be construed as a positive thing for the poet, S.Ö. comments that journals had reached such a point that: “by showing an extract it was as if one had seen the whole film and as a consequence had lost enthusiasm for seeing the film at all. That extract is repeated so much that one loses interest in the film.” According to the writer S.Ö., the magic and tension of literature had gone”.

“The new system is one which is based on being visible. If you are visible you exist”

According to the writer R.P., the greatest change is the rise in the number of publishers. “‘Visibility’ is the important thing, and the popularisation of literature. Being visible becomes so crucially important that, according to R.P, the individual himself has become more prominent than the work. By contrast, R.P. makes comparison with the past, referring to her writer interviews, particularly of the 1970’s and 1980’s. During the 60’s and 70’s, when someone was preparing to interview a writer about her work, they would never turn up without working on the interview questions prior to the visit. “Without reading, planning, analysing the content and format of the questions she wished to ask...”. These days, an interview consists of something along the lines of the interviewer saying: “Well, why don’t you talk about yourself”. This form of visibility, says R.P., is the provenance of writers who resist being visible, although they, she adds, fearing that if they are too rigid they run the risk of being entirely invisible, may, from time to time, behave (towards the interviewer) with a

certain degree of tolerance. In the past, if a poet was asked how many books she has, this was an indicator that the poet would not go on to the second question.”At that point do I focus solely on avoiding hurting the feelings of the person facing me, or do I fear that if I behave like that I run the risk of appearing totally invisible, I don’t know. Right now I am talking to myself.....this new system has impacted everyone, more or less.” The result is the popularisation of the world of literature.

R.P. reminds us that in the past, even the writer’s photograph was never to be seen in their books. These days, however, that photograph is not sufficient. It seems to me that we are required to be visible in every way, physically and otherwise. This is, in short, popularisation.....” And she wonders how long the writer can resist this. There are some who like being visible, and others who definitely do not; although R.P. feels that everyone will have to adapt to this in one way or another, as otherwise it will be very difficult for a writer to attain visibility with “three lines of script”. In addition, it has become a requirement for a writer to produce a book a year if they do not want to be forgotten. R.P. speaks of the ‘shelf life’ of a book once on the booksellers’ shelf, along with a number of other issues.

“Now it seems the approach is to be seen from time to time, for at least a few days a year, and you have to bring out at least one book a year. The publishers are saying the same thing. Or one writer is saying to another, its been three years, how can that be. Three years, thats a big gap. That gap is not good, you were producing some work, why have you left a gap, thats not ok; you haven’t been seen around. Show yourself now. Many people are saying such things. Many say I have to produce a book a year. Being productive is something else.....So it seems there is this pressure. Perhaps the publishers are doing it, I dont know.....” (R.P. 2018, Istanbul).

That she feels less pressure herself, she relates to not being a ‘best-seller’. That kind of writer, the best-sellers, contributing much as they do to the publisher’s turn-over by selling more books, “probably feel the pressure more”.

“This new world, really....what’s it coming to....I’m trying not to get confused. I try not to judge. I try not to react. Because really.. thats the way things are going.”

On the subject of popularisation, R.P. recounts that two years ago when she was in Trabzon for an event, in a school where a popular book series was being sold, she recalled seeing a girl totally distraught because one of the books in the series had finished, and again at the Adana book fair in 2018, she saw ‘sultan tent-like’ pavilions being set up. In such a context, the writer questions how far a reader with an interest in literature, someone who wanted to read and write literature could be appropriately guided, adding: “It’s truly difficult. I feel sorry for these children. These young people. One the one hand there is this example, and on the other there is someone who has written something, which five people have read, there is that example. Precious, yes, very precious. Its difficult, truly difficult. Such chasms did not exist before.” Such an exaggerated move towards popularisation must be connected to the proliferation of popular tools. “There was nothing but written media. What more could Kerime Nadir do to become more popular? There wasn’t even TV.” R.P. points out that it is now much more difficult to resist popularisation.

2.6 Literature and Sectorisation

The writer-poet Ş.F. stresses that where once there would have been 4,000 or 5,000 titles in print at any one time, today this figure is over 50,000. Today, in Turkey, “a much greater amount of money has flooded into the sector, compared to the past”. However the writer points out, that as publishing and the literary world become part of this huge, commercialised sector and “capitalist relationships” begin to take over, it’s as if such

developments were killing off the soul of literature handed down to us by Halit Ziya, Tanpınar, Sabahattin Ali, Nazım Hikmet, and the like.” This is why, Ş.F. points out, that when we look at the big picture you can’t see anything very positive. “I don’t find complaining about it very meaningful but I’m thinking how much has changed, and that I personally am not greatly enamoured of these changes. But there is nothing to do, except strike out. We have to swim in these waters.”

The writer S.Ö. points out that the literary world acquired the identity of a sector, becoming more professionalised after the 1990’s. One of the reasons for this, being the commercial expansion and capital investment in the sector, although he also points to the effect of the rise in population. When one considers that there are 20 million young people in Turkey, and that in schools two books are being officially read annually, the resulting portrait is demonstrative. ‘What cannot be achieved in quality is reached in number’.

The poet-writer E.A. stresses the sectorisation of publishing, pointing out that ‘a great deal of money’ was being made through that sector. That writing has become a ‘money-making business’, that there were now professional writers, and that members of the profession had reached the stage of being idealised like pop singers or film actors. And as a result of all this, literature had become a component of the culture industry.

R.P. mentions that publishing became a sector during the 1990’s. That a large number of journals and dailies had been forced to close during the 1980’s, due to pressure, but, according to that source, that new ones opened, the literary world shrugged its shoulders and a new phase, a new system began. R.P. claims a role for globalisation in this process, adding that while first indications for sectorisation of the industry were to be seen during the millenium years, its actual commencement was in the 1990’s.

In the view of the writer S.R., who describes herself as living through literature, “If it were not for literature in my life, I myself would not exist”, the literary world was not a sector. Which is why she did not go into places like D&R media stores, saying: “I want to keep those scents in my imagination. A place that did not harbour such scents was, in any case, hardly one that harboured literature”, but adding “I’m taking the Romantic view....”.

The writer G.B. expresses the opinion that today, particularly the larger publishers were institutionalised and run accordingly. The publishers of a previous generation were “more or less’ run by people coming from literature themselves. And that these people spent more time with writers and artists - the literary intelligentsia, evolving ideas into projects in the course of their discussions, but that this was no longer the case. And yet, he admits that institutionalisation has led to some advantageous changes for the writer. For example, authors and translators may not generally have problems with the institutionalised companies on the subject of copyright fees.

2.7 The “Positive” and “Negative” Aspects of the Perceived Changes

The writer and journalist I.K. suggests that digitalisation resulting from the onset of the internet has had a cultural levelling effect and that “perhaps if we look at the situation optimistically, this has allowed everyone to learn something”. Technology has also “encouraged people to diversify, and has led to us developing a form of instantaneous thought.” Another effect has been that while it was relatively easy to have a book printed before, now it is too easy. Although somewhat less frequently encountered, there was one other issue carried over from the past, and that was that “You hand over the fee, and your book is printed.” Since there are now so many titles being published, finding the ‘good’ books from amongst them requires some effort. Only the best sellers managed to stay in the window. Once a book drops from the best-seller list, it’s pulled from the window. This is not only in Turkey, but world-wide. The reader profile has changed too, according to L.K.. “People tend

to read somewhat lightweight things because serious works....being a reader also requires effort. The reader no longer wants to make that effort”.

Although E-books were predicted to bring about significant changes, both globally and in Turkey, they did not fulfill expectations. He himself also bought “readers, kindles, etc.” but cannot use them. “I still open a book and read it. There is a tactile aspect to a book. The paper itself....Its script. Its something else. But the e-versions didn’t take on as well as anticipated globally. There is still this need to handle it.” Similarly, at one point “bloggers” were so popular, now no-one reads them. The writer-journalist I.K. also points to changes related to cultural activities around booksellers now having shifted to the shopping centre. In the old days, one went to Haschette or the German Book Shop to find foreign language books , “now there is no such thing”. Apart from the internet, every shopping centre has a book store. Life has been reduced to a form of collective existence. This has in turn removed the pleasure in detail, in diversity. People have the internet, they can find anything they need at the shopping centre. whether it be books, culture, cinema. Apart from all that, on the way home they buy food. They can park their cars there”. According to I.K., people tend to choose comfort, but a comfort that removes the savour, the aesthetic from life”.

The writer G.K., mentions that as the numbers of writers expanded, the rise in international relations and instantaneous access to translation broadened their minds, which resulted in a diversification of topics. Multiple new sources of inspiration became available to them via translated works; equally, academic work in the area supported the writer’s conceptual development. As G.K. claims, access to a range of analytical approaches and critical opinions reflects directly on the writer’s craft. “There was a kind of enrichment taking place, from which some benefited, and others claimed they were going to get rich”. The writer comments that towards the end of the millenium decade, writers emerged who “were more

concerned with being seen than with writing”. “Some writers followed that trend. So I’ll be famous straight away. Whatever that meant....”

The rise of the women’s movement in the 1970’s led to a sudden increase in women writers. Although, as G.K. points out, there were always relatively few woman poets, there was a relatively sizeable increase in their numbers during the millenium years. There were more women story-writers, and more poets. The gender distribution between writers oscillated between the sexes, but remained stable overall. “One year we noticed there were more men than women in some competitions, and more women than men in others. Of course this is not a measure”. But it was clear that overall, there were more writers and more variety in their work. “It was really something different....for example, one by the name of İhsan Oktay Anar surprised us. Such surprises became more frequent. And other writers like that. too”.

At the beginning of the millenium, G.K. observed some Turkish language problems particularly among the participants of story/novel competitions. Several years on, just when he had begun to think things had improved, he found the language of participants in 2017 to be much worse, in fact “extremely bad”. There were some good ideas, but their use of language was poor. There was high use of Ottoman (Turkish) vocabulary, but the words were being used inappropriately. Even simple connecting suffixes –‘de’’da’ weren’t seperated correctly. “I can say this. There was less effort being put into the language” The use of Ottoman Turkish was a trend that started around the Millenium. As an attitude towards / reaction against the use of more modern language, of ‘pure’ Turkish.... Yes perhaps that was difficult. They did contribute much, but the language issue became exaggerated, made things more difficult. There was a reaction to that. Certain well-known writers attempted to solve the situation by resorting overmuch to use of Ottoman Turkish”.

E.K., the critic and writer, explains that the understandings prevelant in the literary world prior to the 1980’s were shattered along with attempts to inhabit the new post 80’s

culture. And regards this as an important, positive development that led to the generation of multi-perspective approaches in the literary world in general, and in particular more versatility among young writers. Since the founding of the Turkish Republic and beyond, up to the 1970's, the dominant literary understanding had been based on the concepts of ultra-collectivism and on generating ultra-social responsibility somewhat to the detriment of innovation. While this understanding proved useful in a conceptual sense during the early Republican period, and up to the end of the 70's, it was also restrictive. Once such restrictions were removed, the literary world and its writers began to open up to new ideas, and to search for divergent approaches. However, E.K. does not think that this divergency was of any particular quality, although no-one felt under pressure to write in a certain way, no-one thought about it. There were no authority figures." All this said, the critic stresses that it did demonstrate very clearly the end of a literary era.

The writer L.D. indicates that the critical world has been divested of its authority. Its authority has been destroyed. "There is no such thing as a critic". At present, one can still talk of academic criticism, says the writer, whose exponents are still followed through their own books and articles. "While there no longer remains that type of critic who wielded the authority to decide whether or not a writer would be deemed worthy of the title of author", he refers to this as the disappearance of "a kind of monopoly". This sector is now ruled by the marketplace, whose key current indicators are sales graphs. He gives two examples to clarify the importance awards and the words of the critics had in the past. The writer Sevim Burak refused to publish anything for seventeen years having once failed to win the Sait Faik Award; Leyla Erbil, having once failed to receive the award, swore over Sait Faik's grave that she would never enter any award again. Critics and awards "were key, important enough to determine your very existence. They were the passport... That's gone, destroyed."

The writer points to this diminution of the critic's influence, its replacement by commercial criteria and the consequent dethronement of criticism in favour of promotional literature. Adding that such work was mainly 'funded', one way or another, directly by the publishing houses. Even though promotional literature did impact sales to some extent, he stresses that the best form of promotion was still by word of mouth, through individual recommendation. "On balance, I think that rather than having that strict form of authority that could end with seventeen years of a writer's embitterment, I would prefer the free market with all its faults". The conditions of the free market having removed the necessity for the stamp of critical expert appraisal, what emerged was no less than "an inclusive public space". There was no longer the threat of obstruction facing the would-be writer. However, the negative aspect of this was the loss of the comparative faculties inherent in sources of critical appraisal. L.D. suggests that it was still preferable, since it was perfectly feasible that the readership or other literate professionals would 'at very least' eventually manage to distinguish good from bad, and identify work with more or less value. L.D. felt that the internet had replaced many elements in the equation. For example, if he wanted to write something, rather than thinking about where he could get it published, he would post it on his own blog, and it would reach large numbers of people within the same day. It was now possible for the writer to connect with the reader directly via the internet. Through 'Google alert' you would know immediately when something was written about you. Hence "I haven't seen it, I didn't hear about it' is over". Besides, it is easier to find out about any topic over the internet. "Let's say that I am preparing a story that takes place in 1988. I wonder what happened in May, 1988? To find out, I used to go to our library. I would open up the newspaper archives, and look it up on microfilm. Now, I can find out in minutes". The negative side of all this is that with all the pace of this new world: "People are hyper-agitated trying to keep up to speed with all the communication. It's like an insatiable stove. You want to continuously feed it to keep the

room warm”. And yet, says L.D., people have a specific productive capacity. They need time to think and ponder on what they have found out in order to absorb and produce something from it. Besides, you can not be sure whether something that’s shared is real, or fabricated, while having to squeeze your reactions and thoughts into tweet format is, according to L.D. somewhat dangerous. All this notwithstanding, “the internet is a new medium, and brings with it new opportunities.” “These opportunities are going to be seized by brand new individuals, who will make use of them in so many different ways.” In fact, just as the novel emerged as a genre, as a result of the invention of the printing press, it is even possible that this innovation will lead to the invention of entirely new genres.

The writer G.B. suggests that our relationship with the written word is predominant. Although we might use emojis while writing messages or communicating over Whatsapp, we try to express ideas mainly through writing. The writer recalls that in his youth, he would communicate via letter, although very few of his friends were letter writers. Whereas among today’s youth, there are very few who do not use e-mail or communicate with each other via various apps. Whether blogs evolve into vlogs and people try to avoid writing, preferring emojis to text, technology and computers have entered every single home, everyone’s pocket, encouraging them to think in written format.

According to G.B., Our relationship with writing has changed. It is now possible to publish many more books, to write many more books, thanks to the possibilities provided by technology. Just as when he was young, having a typewriter was a source of motivation, for today’s young people, writing something at home and printing copy or being able to upload it onto their own blog is motivating. Again, the negative side is that editing is almost non-existent on the web. However, G.B., rather than complaining or delighting in a trend over which one has no control, simply looks upon it as a ‘situation’, stressing that one can only encourage positive use of it. For example, when a literature teacher gives their students

homework today, they have to employ “a strategy quite different from that of their own time.” The homework has to take current realities into consideration. Meanwhile, so many new young story writers emerging is an indicator that many people are still reading and writing books. But still, the writer points to a decline in quality, giving wattpad writers as an example. While carrying out an activity in a school in Antakya, the writer is introduced to a student as a writer “who has published” on wattpad:

“How many followers do you have, I asked. 7,000 he said. I said you’re more famous than I am, you talk. My books are published in editions of 1,000, or 2,000. He laughed, was embarrassed.... I asked do you read books, I do, he said. I asked him which authors he read. Being enthusiastic enough to start writing on wattpad does not necessarily mean that someone would have lost touch with ‘the other world’, but I realised those long queues (at the book fairs) were not so much to do with the books as with the phenomenalisation of writers. A good looking young man, an attractive young woman get a slightly higher rating,” (G.B. 2018, Istanbul).

G.B. mentions that a writer who works with the larger publishers has more chance of visibility for his book, and that this is less likely for small publishers. G.B. believes that this has led to publishers ‘paying more attention’ to their best-seller writers. “This is a condition of capitalism; if the publishers are making more profit from that writer, they will be more attentive to them”. What G.B. is most interested in is whether or not this situation actually effects the creative process itself. In other words, he asks, if a writer is not making money from the books he writes, does he then become incapable of writing, or does this incite him further. Some writers write their book, but may or may not be interested in the process of its publication. While saying that this may be a situation that varies from one individual to another, the writer also stresses that commercial concerns appear to be the dominant issue.

For instance, works of criticism do not “sell”; “if they are not likely to make money from a book, albeit the product of a writer’s greatest efforts, people simply do not get involved in it”. It has become much harder to envisage a situation where an independent critical journal that gives ‘more or less’ equal space to small publishers alongside the larger ones could exist and publish independently, without any support from an outside financial institution”. “The publishing world has become squeezed between the pages of book supplements, which give more space to anyone who buys advertising...” (G.B. 2018, Istanbul). But if there are no independent critical journals, there are blogs, although the writer comments that he does not know their effect, nor is he sure about how manipulated they may have been.” He questions what kind of network of relationships it could be where some books are talked about while others are ignored. The internet creates universal opportunity for writing, and for individual voices to be heard. This has provided a form of democracy. But, according to G.B., it has a negative aspect to it: “If one person says this book is bad, after sending three-four tweets, I am afraid that that could suddenly turn into general opinion, since the person who has said it does not feel that they have to explain at great length why that might be the case. Similarly, the person who says it is good does not feel an obligation to explain themselves. It’s that sort of thing... A sort of chaos,” (G.B. 2018, Istanbul).

In connection to the internet, the writer S.Ö. comments that today’s youth is much more ‘cultured’, knows a lot more, knows far more writers. “But did they read them, that I’m not sure; I’m not sure how much they have read of any author; nor do I know the nature of their knowledge.” He comments that the number of writers who know a foreign language has risen. “We had to rely on certain works being translated.” He points out that writers today know more about the world, that they are more comfortable/easygoing. And while there are some disadvantages to that, with regard to relationships being comfortable does have some positive sides to it.” Unlike himself, says S.Ö., they do not feel the need to pursue everyone,

nor to devote the greater part of their lives to the few writers they know and love, but have a wider area of interest. Although, he adds, “they may have a wider circle of acquaintances but I suspect that their relationships are more shallow”. He thinks that they have little patience and short attention. Whereas for him, “this (writing)” is a matter of patience. Having a book published is not important; what’s important is devoting one’s whole life (to the business of writing). The younger generation’s goals are small; their only goal is to get a book published, or to get something published in a journal. While according to S.Ö., a young person should have goals like “becoming a cultural figure like Tanpınar”.

S.Ö. talks about the writers or would-be writers of the day having created a relational network. That they achieve this by forming relationships around academics, journals or other groups. Literary opinion, the reading public, the dailies, the journals will all automatically fall into line behind a good writer. Academics will want to organise symposia about them, journalists will want to create files on them. But it should not be the writer himself doing this says S.Ö.. “Now (writers) create their own networks, and work their relationships from within that network”.

“Now these are personal things., and this could be one way of doing things but what I observe is that true men of literature do not do this. They do genuinely write and try to publish. Their environment, the literary group, and journalists take him forward. I compare it with this: You have a car, and I have a car. My car is working fine, you have to push yours. Your car isn’t carrying you, you are carrying the car. What I mean to say is that if you have a car, if there is writing of quality it should carry you,” (S.Ö., 2017, Istanbul)

S.Ö. believes that there is a tendency now towards extreme social isolation. And corroborates this from what he has observed as painful exposure on social media. Even if he accepts the necessity for social media, the writer observed the creation of persona, of representational characters in the media. He has personally seen people he knew create a different persona, witnessed them “performing some sort of play”. On social media, sensible, mature people he personally knew turned into individuals who were foul-mouthed, abusive and downright rude in their reactions. We are living in an era when everything is accessible to everyone at any time and no-one feels the need for anyone else, says S.Ö.. Whereas, in the past there was a sense of hardship. For example, reproductions being expensive, someone would bring them from abroad. Then everyone would gather in the coffee house to look at them. Every evening, someone would take them home in turn. “So one way or another, people needed each other. They needed that relationship”. These days there is no need to know someone to get information. One can find every kind of information via the internet. For example, thirty years ago, if S.Ö. wanted to know what kind of picture a writer was describing in a book he was reading, and which books or museum he should look for to find out more, he would have to ask someone. Whereas now, that information is available via internet “as you are reading it”. Is this a positive, or a negative thing for S.Ö.? the writer claims that the ease of access to information, the removal of the process of research, the speed with which we are able to acquire a relationship with that particular cultural artefact alters its profundity. What is more, there is no way of knowing whether the image that comes up on the screen is the original or not. S.Ö. believes that people of different disciplines who in the past would have been able to create great relationships are now isolated, unaware of each other and suffering due to the lack of a mutual space. Is this an advantage or a disadvantage, that’s an unknown, says S.Ö. And despite all this, he admits that he himself is avoiding (socialising), not seeing anyone, nor wanting to. Even if he is invited to an award ceremony, for example,

where once he would have gone, now he prefers not to. "I don't want to see them. Its always the same. One gets tired of it".

Easy access to information, easy ways to communicate, these are the positive aspects of today's changes, according to R.P. Everyone has the chance to communicate with anyone right now, so even if that isn't about waiting in a hotel or journal to meet other people, thinking that everyone is like themselves, they try not to leave any of the emails they receive unanswered. Stressing this is a different kind of opportunity, he points out that he also has met people in this way. Children are particularly capable of risk taking when it comes to communicating: "These are positive things too. That system could compensate for what has been lost. I believe it is still early days to see what it will evolve into and to decide whether the positive or negative aspects dominate in the final instance. Things are disturbed, some things do not appear to have settled. Maybe these things will all evolve into something positive, or perhaps something frightening. That I don't know."

Additionally, the writer points out the potential advantages of e-mail. For someone who wants to meet a very important person, a big name, but is too timid or fearful, and does not know how to talk to them, on meeting will not be able to ask everything they want to ask, the internet can provide them with some leeway. The person in question can write for as long as they wish, can ask their questions. "Of course being face to face, touching is something else but for the first connection it could be an advantage". Although sometimes, he points out, not being face to face can result in an incredibly sharp and brutal attitude. "Even in the simplest things, not even literature or poetry, Plus everyone thinks they are a master writer in that environment. Just writing one sentence, they give themselves such airs. There are some interesting brawls there".

The writer S.R.'s response to the question what are the positive and negative sides to change in the world of literature was "Everything will be fine." When asked "Shall I really

write that?” her response was “Write it, write it. We were in Baylan and we said this as we sipped tea. After all that has been said and done. Everything will be fine, Tülin”. “There is always hope. Otherwise we couldn’t carry on living. After I leave you, I am going to go and carry on writing my new book. That sort of thing...”

B.N., the writer, says that social media has made literature recognizable. There could be some negative sides to this. “It’s better than nothing at all...” Social media has a field for information. There is also disinformation, but ‘at least’ that can be eliminated.

The writer B.N. claims that for women writers this is a theoretical question which has however changed. Recalling that she had taken part in a T.V. program the day before, and she had gone wearing a ‘revealing’ blouse. “Ten years ago I would have worn clothes that fastened up to here”. In real life we go around dressed on one way, and then for the viewer when on screen “who inculcated us with this code of dress? Was it women, or men?” she asks rhetorically. And for her, the response is both women and men. She claims that her generation has changed this attitude. Could Mine Söğüt, for example, be a writer type? Crazy, frivolous, even dressed in costume in some cases. Then I think everyone has their own surroundings. “Especially the men of her generation she feels are very sensitive to feminist values. The previous generation “They were a really male-dominant group, with a feudal mindset”. Yes there are cultural codes, and though these may continue, she feels that in her generation feminist values are slowly embedding in “the intellectual community”.

B.N., who holds creative writing workshops claims that such workshops are one of the most important dynamics in literature. Explaining that many writers have begun to hold such workshops, as it is also a ‘source of income’. Among those attending such workshops can also be writers who already have books published. B.N. points out that for the trainer, creative writing workshops can be inspiring, up to a point, but if you carry on doing them for a long time, they can become tiring.”

3. THE LITERARY WORLD OF THE MILLENIUM YEARS: THE 2000's:

“A GENERATION IN SEARCH OF A LITERATURE, OR A NEW VOICE?”

In his article, “Edebiyatımı Arayan Kuşak” (A generation in Search of a Literature) the writer Murat Yalçın states that every generation seeks writers and poets of their own, and that literature must provide a response to that search. Yalçın also claims that literature is moving towards becoming a “technical issue”. “One almost wants to express this as cover novels, remix stories, rap poetry, DJ writers etc.” (Yalçın, K24, 2016). The writer’s claims are important as they show the significance of the changes underway. In his view, writers of the younger generation appear “extremely cultured, well-informed, knowledgeable, aware, attitudinal, and extremely clever and oppositional”. He stresses: “Appear’ being the operative word. There is a misleading situation here, in the form of a kind of social media intellectualism based on an over-informative internet”, Yalçın, K24, 2016).

To the writer, modern literature appears somewhat like a “full buffet breakfast”:

“Playful, tricky, smart, oscillating between cartoon and irony, employing criticism based exclusively on joke and ridicule, tending towards experimental forms, inspired by music and cinema, embracing a casual approach to life, using largely unnecessary detail, unable to shed elements of violence and comedy, tendencies towards historical, and science fiction; a little bit of everything like a ‘full buffet breakfast’; a literature that gives the impression of having been written with overt awareness of its own effect. I try to understand it and analyse it, both out of a reader’s curiosity and from a professional standpoint, but find the negative word-thought imbalance in this form of literature somewhat less than satisfactory,” (Yalçın, K24, 2016).

The writer J.V. identifies the 2000’s as the time when technology arrived in publishing. Publishing and printing books became much easier. Book sales grew, as did the

variety of books. As titles began to be sold in issues of 50,000, and 100,000, authorship, particularly novel-writing, began to prove itself a viable financial option as a profession. Journals, broadsheets, poetry and story journals began to proliferate, especially after the millenium. Not only did technology facilitate printing technically, the internet, and, from the mid-2000's, social media impacted the literary world, both in terms of content and of relationships. As Murat Yalçın says: "The computer, the internet, social media, the new communications technology dominated everything, the book-notebook-pen triad gave way to the computer. Writers and poets of this age living in the multiple dimensions of visuality served up by digital means, found themselves spinning forward with confusing speed towards a universal language, just as in music, cinema and the visual arts," (Yalçın, K24, 2016).

The positive aspects of technology may be considered to be that it facilitated printing, increased the number of publishers, created an almost tool-free space for the writer-media-reader relationship to flourish via social media and presented the tools for new ways of writing, which will probably result in the emergence of a new literary genre. Although, there are some who do not consider the expansion in the number of books and publishers to be necessarily positive. Hasan Bülent Kahraman states that in literature, a "stunting, blinkered (approach)" dominated (Kahraman, Sabah Gazetesi, 2018), for example, according to Kahraman, literature had capitulated to consumer society:

"Its a sort of glut. So much so that you could call it 'le grande bouffe'. Yes, the big gluttony. We simply snack, stuff ourselves, and swallow without ever being able to appreciate the taste. Or then we go on a strict diet. No-one reaches over the banquet table. No-one goes near it. One keeps to an environment where less is enough, But the quality is higher," (Kahraman, Sabah Gazetesi, 2018).

Now, as we approach the end of the second decade of the 21st century, it still does not seem possible to understand fully the changes that have taken place in the world of literature. However, we can catch a glimpse of the situation by tracing those changes throughout the first millenium decade. We can see what was going on through the eyes of writers who were beginning to create literary works around the millenium. In this section, we present the data garnered from interviews with nine literary figures (to this end).

3.1 First Steps into the World of Literature, First Trials: First relationships with books and writing

In the writer Y.F.'s house, one would hear the incessant sound of the typewriter, since it was his mother's main writing tool, as a translator and journalist. Y.F. liked the sound of the typewriter, it became a sort of rythm to him. Whenever his mother took a break in her writing, he would sit at the typewriter himself and write something, "just for fun really". So Y.F.'s relationship with writing began very early. In fact, everything came "very naturally" to him. From a very early age he had begun to imagine things, and make up stories. During the video cassette storm he said that the first films he watched inspired him towards further flights of imagination. At the age of five or six he began to make up stories similar to those he had watched on video. And as soon as he went to primary school and started to read, he began to write those stories down. He was influenced by cartoon storybooks and illustrated stories that he bought with his own pocket money, or which his mother bought him as a reward for passing tests. Y.F. puts his school success down to this "reward system". Later, among the first books he read were Jules Verne's novels, which he said "changed his life." He tried to write stories like the ones he was reading. "My mother tells me that I used to write things, just a couple of lines, in each of the spaces in my notebooks or at the end of each section in my text books in primary school, In other words, my writing developed parallel to my reading" (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul).

During his intermediate and high school years, Y.F. became a “good writer” known for his talent with the pen. He wrote short sketches and staged them in the theatre. An American teacher liked the stories he wrote in English and encouraged him to write in Turkish too. During his high school years he became editor of the school magazine, where many of his stories and articles are still being printed. That was when he wrote his first story. When it was printed in the school magazine it attracted attention and comment throughout the school. “When I say attention, it was actually the brief comments of 15-20 of my school-mates and friends, such as, ‘I liked what you wrote’, but they were so precious to me” (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul). He was pleased to have other reactions to his story, because in fact, he explains, “one’s core motivation for writing “ is isolation, and the intended targets for one’s stories and other forms of writing are actually the people in one’s own imagination:

“Nuri Bilge Ceylan has a wonderful phrase. I heard him use it in an interview recently. He says the scenarios I write are actually letters I’m sending to my sibling souls. Its true. I was a bit like that as a child. I was trying to reach the people in my imagination. And for my story to get a response like that always pleased me, such things were always a motivation,” (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul).

Y.F. continued to write while at university. His stories were printed on photocopied broadsheets. He explains that he took his first steps into literature as a story writer via these broadsheets. Later, in 1996, he takes part in a story competition, but not only does he fail to get an award, he doesn’t even get a mention. Y.F. explains that this spurred him on and the following year he entered the same competition with another of his stories, and this time got the award. He stresses how important this contest was for him because “many well-known writers today, such as Sema Kaygusuz, were first noticed at “that story competition”. “That made me very happy. The idea that some day I might write a book first settled with me when I won that prize.,” (Y.F., 2018. Istanbul). He enters a science fiction competition, where he is

awarded a mention. The jury included such names as Giovanni Scognamillo, Müfit Özdeş and Bülent Somay, in whom Y.F. placed great value, which gave this award extra importance for him.

With the stories he submitted to these competitions, Y.F. gathered others to create a portfolio of twelve stories altogether. At that point, since he was living in Izmir, Y.F. began to go back and forth to Istanbul to take his portfolio to various publishers. “Those were the most interesting, most camera-worthy moments in my writing adventures, because I was only going from Izmir to Istanbul to deliver my stories. I couldn’t have sent my portfolio by post; I believed I had to get to know the publisher, to see their offices” (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul). He starts to present his portfolio of stories to the publishing houses. “like Turkish folk singers carrying around their demo tapes; they used to go to Unkapani in those days.....”. His mother, (journalist, writer and translator) suggested that he take his stories to whichever publisher carried the work of other writers he liked. But his favorite authors were science fiction, thriller and adventure story writers, the likes of Stephen King, Lovecraft and Jules Verne, and they were all published (in translation) by different publishers, none of whom Y.F. “really liked much”. So he decided to “start from the very top” and apply to *Can Yayınları*, who had published some of his other favorite authors such as Dino Buzzati, Italo Calvino and Paul Auster:

“I went to Istanbul. I remember so clearly just looking for *Can Yayınları*. I found the address from the title pages of their books. They were in Beyoğlu... I went there and knocked on the door. There was a woman at the reception, I have a story portfolio I said, leave it here she said. I left it there. There were other portfolios there, hundreds of them, I left mine and left the office. It wasn’t a question of being introduced by a go-between. After all I was from Izmir... Then I waited a month to get an answer from

them. Longer than a month...two or three months. Then finally a refusal came by letter,” (Y.F. 2018, Istanbul).

Subsequently Y.F. sent the same portfolio by post to *İletişim Yayınları* and delivered it by hand to *Metis Yayınları*. My reaction to the publishers’ recommendations about my portfolio. “I was very young. In my adolescent state, no I don’t accept this, I won’t give up”... he thought they were just sending him refusals and carried on searching for other publishers. *6.45 Yayınları* responded with a refusal too, saying that they did not print Turkish fantasy fiction. The Publisher that was already publishing Y.F.’s work in their journal in 2000 took an interest in the portfolio, saying that they wished to publish it. Since it was the first full length book to be published by them, there was not much editing done. Only the sequence of stories was changed, and the collection was printed with minimal corrections. The publishers did no promotion work, meanwhile the journal for which Y.F. was writing closed. There was no way that the readers of that journal could know about the publication of the book, or be able to buy it. The fact that they did no promotion whatsoever, and the publishers’ subsequent unprofessional attitude towards the author’s contract and copyright made Y.F. angry, he withdrew his book and had it published by another publishers a year later, in 2001. There, despite a lack of promotion once again, the book caused more of a stir. Meanwhile the author had just finished his first novel.

The writer Y.F. indicates that he made his way up through competitions and personal visits to publishers. Although he sent his manuscripts to the journals *Varlık* and *Adam Öykü*, neither published them. But *Varlık*, although not publishing, their editor of the month did write some comments. “I think they had problems with the language. That was why they didn’t publish. My language was plainer, still is. They were expecting something like high literature. Plus the fantasy elements, of course. For *Varlık* in particular at that time, being old school they didn’t like it,” (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul).

Following the publication of his first book of stories in 2000, the writer's first novel came out in 2002. For the second novel to emerge there would have to be a wait of nine years. In the meanwhile Y.F. wrote film scenarios, completed military service and worked in a screenplay company. But in Y.F.'s words, "these were not very strong excuses. This was a huge gap for me. When I look back on it I realise that I should not have left such a huge gap," (Y.F. 2018 Istanbul). He refers to the period between 2007 and 2009, in particular, as 'a little dark' for him. "Those were years when I was fed up with everything. And when I lost my enthusiasm for writing...." But when some positive critical comments about him appear in a literary supplement, he becomes re-motivated and takes up writing once more.

The writer A.E. grew up in a story-telling household. His grandparents regularly told him tales. One of his favorite childhood occupations was to lie on his back and gaze at the sky, finding shapes from the clouds and launching into imaginary stories about them. "And so, even as a child, I had already begun to tell tales to others". His relationship with literature started rather late, his mother tongue being Kurdish. he began to read novels and stories only in his first year at university. He remembers the first book he read very clearly: *Les Miserables*. "And after that, once a relationship with books had begun, I can say that I started reading religiously". (A.E., 2018. Istanbul). After reading intensively for a while, in his second year he began to write himself. A.E. describes himself as "someone who likes to talk about himself". He wrote letters to friends who were far away, in which he described what was going on in his life, his world, the place he was in. Some time later, he realised that these letters had begun to turn into stories. "I mean I was writing stories by the second or third year at university".

He sent his stories to a journal in Adana via a friend. They are published in that journal but he never saw it. At the time he also sent his stories by post to another journal which he read regularly. Some time later, in 1999 or 2000, he saw that his story had been published. He

regards this story as his first step into the literary world, since he never saw the Adana journal. “I was a regular reader of this journal. It was one of my favorites. For one of my stories to be published there. That was a form of feedback. Yes, that was my first step towards becoming a writer. I finally knew I could write stories. And that is what I decided I had done. The fact that someone had published it proved that it must be the first step towards being a writer,” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). Several awards followed this first step; Gençlik Kitabevi Story Competition, Yaşar Nabi Nayır Story Award and others; he wins several of them. His stories appear regularly in journals like *Adam Öykü*, *Kitaplık* and *Notos Öykü*. Later his first collection of stories is published as a result of meeting Adnan Özer through a friend.

“At that time I would follow events, whoever gave me an award, I would send work to them,” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). For the writer, awards were a kind of evaluation criteria. Getting an award was also a form of confirmation of one’s work. The members of the jury had an impact on this process. For example, the Yaşar Nabi Nayır Story Award panel included writers A.E. was familiar with, whom he followed. For him it was enough even for the panel to read his work. “Because it meant here was someone I could ask for advice, any time.... I mean, for example, even if you are in a room talking to someone, you sometimes feel the need to repeat yourself, thinking maybe they didn’t hear you. That’s why sometimes I had doubts about my writing. Did it work or not? [....]. Awards were, in a sense, like sending your work in to someone, sharing it with someone...” (AE. 2018, Istanbul).

Since A.E. lived outside Istanbul, and the publishers of his first book were in Istanbul, the publishing process was carried out via post. Once the publisher’s editors had read the manuscript, it was sent back with editor’s notes to A.E. by cargo. Then the page layout and book cover were prepared, a book title was chosen and the book was printed. Throughout the whole process A.E. does not go to the publishers once. And there is no problem about payment of author’s copyright. A.E. believed that Adnan Özer was the reason for that. “My

greatest chance in life, my break as a writer, was that my first editor was so skilled, so successful, such a literature aficionado. I still say that meeting him was the greatest thing to have happened to me in my entire life.” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). However, in 2005, he sent his next manuscript to another publishers, since Adnan Özer thought that he should be working with a larger house, like *Can Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları*, *Doğan Kitap* or *İletişim Yayınları*. Thinking that he had been rejected by Adnan Özer, A.E. sends his manuscript to *Can Yayınları*, but gets a rejection note by e-mail. After that he doesn’t send the manuscript anywhere else. “To be rejected again.....That’s would not be pleasant...” He decides to wait, but meanwhile is encouraged by a friend to take part in the Haldun Taner story writing competition, and when he wins that, his search for a publisher is over. This time the process of publication of his second book takes place via e-mail.

During her childhood, the writer J.V. recalls that there was a bookcase at home. Although it was not as big as the library currently in the writer’s possession, or that of her younger nephew, she recalls that since her father was an archivist, the contents of the bookshelves were mainly journals, the work of humourists, and titles dating from his parents youth which were more works of critical acclaim than popular. Her interest in books begins with “browsing” through the shelves of this library out of curiosity. Whereas she only begins to become a “serious reader”, learns how to read for meaning, and to search for the sub-plot in a work of fiction during her university years. “I learnt from my friends, I learnt while discussing books with them,. Beyond that, it was mainly about immersing oneself in a seperate world, it was like a sort of short cut, a ticket to another world. (J.V., 2018, Istanbul). These books were followed by journals. She was a subscriber to the journals *Bilim ve Teknik* and *Atlas*. And was a regular reader of literary journals, including humourist magazines, such as *Leman*, *Lemanyak* and *Öküz*, also following the literary supplements of *Dünya* and *Cumhuriyet* dailies. In those days it was “no easy matter to access anything”; so becoming a

subscriber to these periodicals and journals made it much easier to access them. She encounters writing during her early youth, while searching for ways to express herself she chose the word as her primary medium. I realised that while trying to express myself I wasn't painting a picture, I didn't have an image in my head, nor was I doing anything that might later be turned into a film, but rather paying close attention to the words, which I tended to select very carefully. In other words, I am trying to express myself through the written word. (J.V., 2018, Istanbul). And so, aside from reading copiously, she also began to keep journals and to fill various notebooks.

During her teenage years, J.V. had developed an interest in poetry, which turned into writing poetry as a university student. Since she had no e-mail, towards the end of the 90's and the beginning of the millenium, she submitted her poems to journals via regular post, and to find out whether they had been published or not, she would buy every issue of those journals. "It was never clear if they would be published or not. Sometimes they were, sometimes not. Some never appeared in print". She considered her initial step into the literary world to have been when she first published a poem, and that is when she began to think that she might have a place in that world. "how should I explain, its as if you were inside an enchanted novel and you desire to enter that world. Then you take the first step. It seems like magic," (J.V. 2018, Istanbul). She wonders what readers of her poems thought about them, that thought also excites her. While today readers can directly access a writer or poet, in those days it was not so easy. Finally, when her poem was published, the poet began to think that she had something to say, that there were those who wanted to make her heard, and that there were others ready to hear what she had to say.

On finishing university, J.V. began to work in an office, where she finally realises that what she really wanted to do was to work in writing-graphics or books. "Once I'd made that decision, actually that was when I began to work towards that goal". So with the help of

acquaintances, “just as in the old days, word of mouth, there was someone you knew, go here and there” she begins to write as an outside contributor for a journal she frequently visited. And so tumbles into the literary world. Her first step as a writer was to edit the book of an author friend. When her friend tells her own publishers about J.V.’s portfolio, they ask to see it when it is completed. So J.V. presents her portfolio directly to that publisher. Hence, the writer explains, “I didn’t have to go from one publisher to the other with my manuscript under my arm. That was a huge advantage for me.” Having formed a relationship with the publishers beforehand, and with the editing experience she already had, she participated in every step of the publication process, from the choice of character to the rear cover text. She worked together with the director of publishing. Thanks to the “close relationships between writer and publishers it becomes a friendly collaboration based on mutual familiarity”. One thing which facilitated this was the fact that the publishing team remained unchanged throughout the process. The editor, the publications manager, (or planning manager) remained with the journal for a long time, which inspired trust for this writer, as for others.

Meanwhile, the institutional nature of the publishers, even though this could be a disadvantage for both its employees and the writers, meant that work was executed in an extremely professional manner. This “made the writer’s job much easier” and meant fewer nightmares for him. In an institutional setting, things also ran much more smoothly at a technical level, with improved communications and feedback. It meant there was someone in charge of each aspect of the work, including marketing and accounting. “There was person in charge as in smaller proprietorial publishing houses, but that person was not everything”. If the writer wanted to talk about book sales, she would approach a designated manager, not the editor. For J.V., this was very important because, even if, as a writer, she asked few questions, when she had to she wanted to be able to contact the right person and not bother others. “I’d like to know who to go to if I did have any questions, that would take a weight off my mind, I

don't want to bother anyone unnecessarily" said J.V.. Besides, she pointed out, disagreements were more frequent in proprietorial publishers. For example if one writer is invited to a dinner but not another, whatever the reason, this could cause friction.

The writer T.L. claims that there was no one particular factor pushing him towards the literary world. He did not have a large library in his home, nor was there anyone in his family who was a reader. He, himself did not read right up to his university years. When he entered university at the age of seventeen, he met some radicals. "I had never before met anyone who read so many books, or argued so much. (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). He begins to read to gain acceptance among them, and to get invited into their group. These radicals published poster-papers and journals. T.L. undertakes various tasks for them, and so realises that he has a talent for telling and writing stories. After finishing university he decides to become a journalist to be able to tell more stories and disseminate information among the general public. So he decides to do a post-graduate diploma in the Faculty of Communication. Meanwhile he learns, through a friend, that the arts and culture magazine, *Hayvan*, is looking for a reporter. He decides to try his hand at this, even though he had no prior experience in this area. So he goes directly to the magazine without an appointment, knocks on the door, which is opened by Metin Üstündağ. There he asks Üstündağ to give him a chance, even though he had no experience as a reporter, nor had he previously prepared any files for a journal, or interviewed writers, and was not even familiar with the 'f' keyboard. "They gave me a chance. I was very grateful. That was what launched me, and it is still important to me. The year...2002." (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

So thanks to his university associates, T.L. discovers his talents and turned towards writing and literature. He met and had the opportunity to work with such figures as Metin Üstündağ, Hatice Meryem, Yaşar Kemal, Ahmet Ümit, Sezen Aksu and Aysel Gürel at the *Hayvan* journal, and from these personalities learnt the techniques needed for a writer or an

artist to understand and interpret the world. For this 22 year old, T.L., being around figures of such stature was a privilege. He started as a reporter at the journal, interviewed writers, prepared files. Then later, he began to write pieces himself and ended up as the journal's editor. But, T.L. gained most of all from contact with the writers and poets coming and going to the journal on a daily basis:

“There were people coming and going to the journal. Suddenly Oruç Aruoba and Latife Tekin would turn up [...] you sit beside them then they begin to talk about things, they ask you something and you give your views. I mean, writers, poets, people you have admired from afar up to now are sitting right next to you, and you are drinking and eating with them at the same table. That's something special. Not only do you admire them, but you become their friend. Or you leave the journal together with Yaşar Kemal. You are on *İstiklal*, Yaşar Kemal just came out of *Yapı Kredi*. You meet on the street. As it is, he's like a mountain, a giant of a man. Just to walk alongside him sometimes was joy enough. I'm working at *Hayvan* you say. Ahh yes! He remembers. Hows it going, he says. You talk. All the way down *İstiklal*, about literature, about art, about the journal, about the country. Or Aysel Gürel turns up, colorful, like a painted bird. She comes through the door, pinches your cheek. You get embarrassed...As a twenty-two year old child. She had such a naive air and such a jolly laugh, but when you interviewed her, when you sat and chatted, you realised just how profound and layered her thinking was. That colourful woman carried such a huge world within.... and you became a great admirer. And you learn much more than admiration. Yaşar Kemal, Aysel Gürel, Ahmet Ümit, Ragıp Duran, Ahmet Erhan and Enis Batur...you learn their ways of thinking, how they write, how they view the world, you learn and celebrate,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

When the *Hayvan* journal closed down in 2005, he began to work in another culture and arts magazine until it also closed down, when he went off to military service, and after returning from there he enters ‘an entirely new world’, an institutional world. “I dropped literature altogether, did absolutely nothing related to it, nothing at all. I dropped everything. For five years, from 2006 to 2011....I did nothing. Not even read. I fell out with literature,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). Being from a middle class family and thinking he should earn a living, he works for a firm as a salesman, as a teller in a bank, as a sales representative for a drugs firm, and in a gift shop. He tries to find work in journals, newspapers and on T.V., but without success. He is convinced that his life will continue like this. There is the shock of many of his friends publishing books. “That period was awful.” Having left one job he is without work for several months. This was the worst experience of his life. He is unemployed. His father is bankrupt. The family is in dire straits; besides which, all your friends have become authors, and are well-known. He sees no-one. “You are in a room alone, and you have no other recourse than to write”. So he begins to write, to free himself from the pressure of his own feelings, from the burden of his family, from the social pressure to find a steady job with insurance, from the burden of his father, his mother, and the feeling of lack of fulfilment as a writer, his book emerges and is published in 2011. This book, says the writer, “was the scream of pain” of his life experience. It received positive acclaim as soon as it was published, and the writer realised that its almost immediate reprint was a sign that his generation felt the same burden.

T.L. gathered up his stories into a single file and contacted Metin Üstündağ. Üstündağ liked his work. Later he made two copies and took them personally by appointment to two publishers where he had contacts through Üstündağ and Hatice Meryem. From the first, he gets a refusal; the second publishers call him two weeks later telling him they are going to publish his manuscript. They sign a contract, after which their editor reads the script, and

makes one or two suggestions. T.L. is given several alternative covers to choose from, and chooses one. The whole process is carried out in complete agreement between the publishers and the writer. “The cover was finished, the text completed. The last proof arrived in PDF format. Is that okay, they said.; okay I replied, then it was printed. Once it was printed they called me and I got the first book” from the printers. (T.L. , 2018, Istanbul).

The writer R.C. grew up in a predominantly unhappy household. That is why she always had a room she could escape to, something to invent. “I think at that time I discovered that I loved paper, pen, all kinds of stationary, cutting, glueing, painting etc., everything that could be done at the table all by myself,” (R.C., 2018, Istanbul) . This escape would continue with books. “In other words it was a way I learnt to be alone with myself and to stand on my own feet.” Before I learnt to read and write I would pick up a book and pretend to read it., and underline the sentences. Later when she started primary school she came across a teacher who was to change her life. That teacher encouraged the children to read things that were not required by the curriculum, told them stories, and on some days dropped the lesson plan altogether and just talked to them. This inspired the children to create their own worlds. “That’s how I discovered something awesome right then; there were things called books in the world, and endless numbers of them. You could finish one and go on to the next.” R.C. not only reads books but also journals. At the beginning of every month she gets some money from her mother, goes to the newspaper agent and buys *Doğan Kardeş* magazine. That day is “full of excitement” for R.C. She writes letters to the members of her family. Hence she becomes very familiar, from a very early age, with the tools, paper, pen, letters, reading and writing, which, for her, were ways to express herself. R.C. reads anything and everything she could find. Even if she could not understand them, she read the poetry books and her mother’s magazines she found at home. Her newly discovered “readership career” carries on at a cracking pace. In intermediary school she manages to continue reading authors beyond the

curriculum. When she is given a summer reading list and asked to do book reports for homework, she does ten more books than required. She enjoys discussing her work during Turkish Composition classes in school. “Having something that I’d written be presented to others and, if I’m lucky, the chance to discuss it. I was very shy as a child.... But perhaps this was the only thing I wasn’t shy about”.

She read things that were considered too old for her but believes that she did justice to everything she read. Although her parents were not great readers, they did try to keep up with current literary trends to a degree. She chose her friends “I think they were all from those bookworm groups”. “We had an incredible book exchange going on between us.” In high school, she begins to attend the book fairs in Tepebaşı with her friends. “.....I was always part of that sort of world. Books were a place I escaped to. There was another thing that took up as much space in her life as books, and that was the habit R.C. cultivated of keeping notebooks. All those diaries that came out at New Year, and promotional notebooks somehow found their way to her. So she started to keep a diary. At first, the entries were in the form of a factual report of the day’s events. But later, particularly during her high school years, she began to write about her feelings.

The writer says that she kept many diaries during that period, and in them she would write her secret thoughts, confessions, and feelings. The idea of ‘writing’ began there; “how can I express it, It began to occur to me that somethings could also be written (for the) outside (world) as well”. The *Atlas* was one of the journals she read while at university. She decided that she wanted to send a piece to the journal she’d written about a trip she took at the age of seventeen, Although she doesn’t manage to send it failing to identify the right channels to do so, she at least learnt that it was possible to get something you had written published. One day sometime later, she sends an e-mail from an internet cafe to another photography and culture journal she was following, and in fact subscribed to. “What are you doing? I’m one of your

readers. I was wondering how I could be of assistance to you. Do you have a space for me there? Before her time is up in the internet cafe, an answer arrives from the publishers. They invite her to the office. First she organised their library for this little journal which was being published by two young men. Then she began to conduct interviews and write pieces for it. A group of individuals from this journal were later to start their own journal, *Altyazi*, for which she also wrote a few pieces. After finishing university she went abroad. She took her notebooks with her. And continued to write, to keep a journal. She sent the interviews she made abroad back to the journal. Some of her pieces come out in a journal published by ex-patriot Turks abroad; after returning to Turkey a number of her pieces appear in various journals, and she works for several journals. Later, her book criticisms begin to appear in *Radikal Kitap*, *Birgün*, *Sabit Fiki*..

” Since I was never a literary person, in that I was not a graduate of literature nor did I consider myself equipped to talk about a book from the point of view of the discipline of literature, I always tried to write something about a book from my own personal perspective”. (R.C. 2018, Istanbul)

Around this time, she creates her own blog. During 2009-2010 she has no regular job, but freelances here and there. “Those were years when I was feeling confused, a time when I was blown first in one direction then another.” At first, the blogs read like a journal, but in time begin to evolve into texts worthy of publication. One of these pieces are, in fact, published in her next book. Even though she herself does not initially write these pieces with the idea that they would be published, when they read them, her editor colleagues particularly commented that “they were not just little pieces, but had become real stories”. And hearing this, the writer began to have the same idea. She then gathers all the entries together and comments that while she was developing her readership skills through the critical pieces she wrote for book supplements, she was also developing her writing skills. She closes her blog

“because I didn’t want to share things there that I was going to publish. There are books like that. I mean someone keeps on blogging, then gathers all the entries together in a book format.” She gathers all her work together, saves it on the computer and begins to work on it. Meanwhile, she begins to work in a newspaper. R.C. becomes assistant to a journalist who both writes for the newspaper, runs a T.V. program and is a publishing author, which gives her an entry into journalism, the world of books, and the T.V. media studios. Through this she meets writers and publishing editors, and takes part in events. Meanwhile, she continues to write, covertly, without sharing her work with the journalist for whom she is working as an assistant. Later the journalist “got cross with me. Well he didn’t get cross but said something like: I’m a writer and you are writing something too. Why didn’t you share your stuff with me? Whereas I didn’t share it because I was too embarrassed, not wishing to pass judgement on his writing skills, So as not to say. Look you are writing but I am writing too. But that’s what they felt. Don’t you like my writing, because you didn’t ask my advice. I didn’t ask him. I showed my portfolio to others. (R.C., 2018, Istanbul).

Therefore R.C. leaves her assistant job in order to do other things. She has accumulated a portfolio of 10-11 stories. Even if her stories aren’t ready (for publication), she believes that they are good enough to show the editors she can reach via acquaintances, so they would be able to give her advice on developing her craft. So she explains this via e-mail to a friend who is working in the PR section of a large publishers, asking him if he thought the editor of that publishers would be interested in seeing her portfolio. And he said “Of course, why don’t you come over here. These sorts of interviews don’t take long anyway. I’ll ask for you. And you can talk about yourself for a couple of minutes”. I might say that I used my own network. Because normally such things would not be so easy. You have to go to the publishers, you have to get to the editor’s office” (R.C., 2018, Istanbul). So he goes to the publishers, meets the editor, who is excited when he sees the name on the portfolio, and is

interested in the title. “And of course, I’m happy with this too, but then his desk is piled high with manuscripts.” The editor takes the manuscript, telling her that he will get back to her. And actually, an answer does come in a very short time. When she goes to the journal, she sees that the editor is working on her manuscript. However much he had liked it, the answer she gets is: “Yes, there is something. You have got something there. You have discovered something, and you have worked up a language for it, however, in my view, this all needs a little more thought”. The manuscript had also been put past the publishing committee which had decided not to publish. R.C., felt that the fact that she had even been called to the publishers, that her manuscript had even been considered, that it had been read by two important editors in the field of Turkish literature “was fantastic as far as I was concerned, I was very happy”, and so she was not disappointed by the rejection.

So although she thinks her manuscript is not so bad, even in its present state, the writer does agree that it needs some work. She takes the opportunity to spend two or three months away from Istanbul just to work on this manuscript, without a single interruption. When she returns to Istanbul, she speaks to the editor of another publishing house whom she knew, one who had previously critiqued her portfolio. When a writer who she had got to know by interviewing him found out about R.C.’s manuscript, he tells her that one of the big publishers wanted to publish a new book of short stories and mentions R.C. to the editor at that publishers. The editor suggested that the manuscript needed some revision. “I considered his points, but somehow I felt that the manuscript in its current state...s” and so he doesn’t send it to either of the three publishers. Then, one day, while sitting at home, she sends a tweet “DM” to a publisher she is following, and who follows her, saying that she has a manuscript and wondering if they might be interested in it. The publisher, who “is a very nice person, not at all arrogant,” responds “I would love to (see it).” The publisher and their editor read the

manuscript and decide to publish. This is also a little unexpected because this publisher prints very little Turkish literature. The book comes out in a rush in 2014.

The publication process is run via e-mail. R.C. never sits down with the editors and discusses the book. This could be construed partly as the writer's preference. "I preferred to communicate over the internet. And so did they, I think". She develops a good relationship with the publisher; she thinks that they understand her and she is not intimidated by them at all. As a matter of fact, the writer mentions a major publishers, meaning the one to which she previously submitted her manuscript, as being very large, with so many writers that it can be a place where people could get lost, and as such being a frightening place for R.C. Whereas, her current publisher, who had printed her book were, for her, like part of her family, so she felt the moment she entered the building that she was not just a house writer, but a member of a team.

The writer C.D. describes her relationship with books as "a little love-hate". Her older sister is a very good reader, and in her family, reading is much encouraged. So much so, in fact, that the entire household is organised around their reading habits. The writer, however, never 'read' as a child. That was a reaction on my part, because I never had anyone to play with. Everyone was always reading. My father was reading, my sister; that's why....I mean I don't mean children's books so much, there weren't many, but play" (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). Later, one summer about the age of 13, she doesn't quite remember how it happened, but she settled down and read the entire works of Shakespeare and the Ku'ran-i Kerim. And that was the beginning of her reading adventure. And since the books she read were from her sister's library, who was three years older than her, she started with books three years ahead of her age.

Ç.D. takes her first steps into the world of literature with poetry, during her university years her interest in poetry, theatre and cinema led her to write plays and film scripts. During

that time she began to send her poems by e-mail to poetry-biased journals, including the most widely-read, *Varlık*, *Patika* and *Kibele*, and in 2006-2007 her first poem is published in *Patika*. She finds out only when she buys the issue it is published in. “That’s a weird feeling...” “That out of the tens of poems being sent to the journal they should have picked one of mine to be the ‘one’ that is chosen to be published. Its a ‘great’ feeling”. However, in later years, she came to understand that whether a poem or story was published or not was not the criteria, since the person who selects the poem has their own literary preferences, and only if the poem being submitted shares those preferences “will it already be in his line of vision. ” But even if it is not, if it is good.... I mean not being published does not mean that it isn’t good. The opposite is also possible. If it is published because of his literary preferences,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). This feeling ‘of well-being’ is accompanied by curiosity. “And that is a feeling that is never satisfied. It impossible to find out. Even if you ask the person in question, words would be the worst form of communication. Nothing they say will suffice (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). Other poems by Ç.D. are later published in *Sözcükler* and *Kitaplık*, and around the same time the writer begins to work as an editor in a publishers.

Between 2007-2008, Ç.D. begins to publish stories. Although she had always written short stories, she previously only considered working up her poetry and plays of sufficient literary worth for publication. But producing a short story journal, becoming “more closely connected to stories” inspires her to publish stories:

“And more poems perhaps.....I mean, for someone to continue writing poetry they must create a depth in themselves. Was it that which became difficult, I don’t know. I didn’t completely sever my connection with poetry, but my reading took another direction. Where once I would be a keen follower of poetry, now I began to follow story-writing, I became more of an aficionado of that genre. And gradually, that

began to determine the nature of the product. I began to write stories,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

Her stories are published in the journals *Özgür Edebiyat*, *Notos*, *Sıcak Nal*, *Yumuşak*, and *G Öyküleri*. By 2009, Ç.D. had accumulated enough stories to publish in book form. “It coincided with a difficult phase.” She receives a rejection from the one or two publishers she sent stories to. It coincided with a phase when her interest in publishing was gradually waning, when she had begun to distance herself altogether from the world of publishing. So she sent her manuscript to a publishers with whom she was in continuous oncontact, and to whom she had already submitted work for their story compilations, and her book was published in 2010. In answer to the question of when she took her first steps into literature, Ç.D., whose poems and stories had been published in journals, and who had worked for publishers and story journals herself, replied that the deciding criteria could vary:

“There are specific criteria for that. I was writing in high school for the school magazine, if you know what I mean. Maybe that had as many readers as *Patika*. I dont know... Who is our target group? Which journal does it have to be published in to count as a first step? Does it have to be a book that’s published? And let’s say *Yitik Ülke* publishes your book. Or the same book comes out with *Can Yayınları*. If it’s published by *Yitik Ülke*, you get one review, whereas if its published by *Can Yayınları*, you get eleven reviews, critical or not, because it is more visible. So what’s the criteria? Is it visibility. For it to be in print, in one form or another? To be read by a certain number of people? In which case, is an e-book format sufficient? I don’t know,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer Ç.D. quits her editing career just at a time of economic crisis. Although she does put in a couple of applications for an editing job elsewhere, “it was not a time when anyone would be inclined to hire a new editör”. Besides which, despite her love of editorship,

the long hours, short annual breaks were not perhaps the most appropriate for her at this age. “Perhaps I would think differently today” she adds. And so Ç.D. decides to continue writing but remain outside the literary world. While she also wanted to do things with international connections. Ç.D. continues to write and publish stories in various journals on the one hand and undertake professional roles in an entirely different context.

The writer Ö.A. already has an affinity for books in primary school, but it is really in the second or third year of intermediary school, a time he recalls as: “not just to read whatever others were reading, but the urge to read beyond, exploring other things, new things”, which is when he forges a trully serious, special connection with books and reading, after that he enters a phase when he begins to read compulsively, and with great alacrity “seeking diversity, curious, as if driven from one book to the next”. The quality of the school curriculum and the presence of foreign teachers who encouraged extra-curricular reading were other contributory factors in the process. Although his teachers, naturally, did not suggest what the extra-curricular reading should consist of, the writer had already acquired an understanding of reading strategies in the classroom, so that he had begun to recognise and understand metaphore, simile, structural changes to the text, character development and stereotypic plot elements. He became a regular at bookshops where he would search for titles his friends were discussing, or others he was curious about. “There was no internet then, in any case, so we weren’t reading opinions via dedicated blogs or other social media,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Neither his teachers nor his family went particularly out of their way to encourage him to read. His family did have the habit of reading, but mainly non-fiction books. Ö.A.’s relationship with books began and developed in an entirely personal way. And as he read, he began to build his own reading group. He and his book-reading friends would meet informally as a group to discuss books and swop book recommendations.

“Naturally, the more you read, the more you want to write” comments Ö.A., who begins to build a connection with writing in his high school years. His English teachers, in particular, were a great influence, both on his acquisition of the reading habit and his growing urge to write. Even the short note written by a teacher at the end of Ö.A.’s classwork text, suggesting it could be story material was a small encouragement. It encouraged Ö.A. to think that he could write stories. Apart from this small motivation, there was neither encouragement nor example regarding writing either from Ö.A.’s family or his peers. “Everything happened naturally, mainly in line with my curiosity.”

Ö.A., makes a point about education, and how the teachers’ attitudes effect student behaviour. He observes that while in English classes, the teacher is more concerned with his language and style, in Turkish it was mainly the content that was under scrutiny. For example, he gets a low grade in Turkish composition for a piece of fiction in story-format, because it was pessimistic. Instead of promoting the standard distinction between good and bad, with the didactic emphasise on ‘good’, on positive behaviour, this piece had been written in a more unusual style, with emphasise on darker tones. In English classes at his school, if a student was able to defend his argument, it was considered unimportant if he did not deliver exactly what was intended. And in Turkish classes, it was the exact opposite. “So I said to myself, lets not get carried away here, and I would get grade after grade, and scoop up the prizes for writing about 29 October, 23 April etc.” Whereas, it was in the classes where he was given real space that he found he was able to grow.” Had he been faced with a different kind of curriculum, he might not have been so curious, he says, but when reading English books, there was an analytical approach (to the material). Interpretation was encouraged, everyone’s views were heard. In Turkish literature, however, the standard: ‘What did the writer wish to convey to us here?’ question was the type of approach. “If that had been all here was, I might

not have loved it so much. And in fact, I think that is why most people don't like literature and look upon books with the familiar, standard prejudices" (Ö.A., Istanbul, 2018).

Ö.A. begins to read literary journals in second or third year high school. He used to go up to Taksim with his friends to look at the new issues when they came out. They got the alternative press, magazines, broadsheets from a sort of book cellar below a cinema in Beyoğlu. One of the journals was *Hayalet Gemi*, which could not be found anywhere else. He likes the topics and writers in that journal. He writes a story on one of his favorite topics in his third year in high school and sends it to the journal. His story doesn't get published in the journal, however, the publishing committee had debated considerably whether or not to publish it, and since the committee was equally divided over the issue, they send him their critical evaluation. Thinking that "It just missed it," Ö.A. writes another story for the next issue. The story, which Ö.A. wrote at just the age of eighteen, was published in that issue. Eventually, he published several stories in the same journal, which he describes as having "a distinct literary character". Two other journals he followed were *Varlık* and *Adam Öykü*, although he had not yet sent stories to either of them at that point.

When *Hayalet Gemi* closed, a group of people from within this journal set up an alternative e-journal *altZine* in 1998, to which he begins to submit work. "Because, one way or another, you are searching for a place, a cause." The internet is still new. People are still wondering if literature is going to change or not, whether texts would change or not. *AltZine*, being an on-line platform, presented alternative writing possibilities. Ö.A. departs from classical text, and tries to add visuals and interactive elements to his stories. For example, he includes a photograph showing four people, each of the four characters has a different story, each of which can be accessed by clicking on the different figures in the picture. So that the reader could decide whose story to read first. Its very difficult to do this on paper. The writer has to decide on a certain sequence, which means basically, his making the choice. "It's much

more rigid.” In the alternative version, as a reader, I can, for example, click on the man with the moustache, you might choose to click on the woman in the picture, someone else might click on the child, etc. Which means that we are all reading it in a different way. My way is different, yours is also different”, (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

So, this way he tried to produce more experimental texts that could be read in various alternative ways. To write differently, without distinguishing clearly between the beginning and end of the story. Since there were no beginnings and ending in on-line publishing,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Eventually he begins to think that way, so one’s mind is always on some aspect, some type of game, some part of the story. The texts were short, since there was “no place to write long texts”. He stresses that he was not a writer of long stories, and that this tendency was also possibly effected by writing on-line. For three years, if not regularly on a monthly basis, but at least frequently throughout the year he wrote for *altZine*. “So I was writing short phrases, not too extended, just enough to give a sense, a feeling of something, then shying off, or putting a sentence down, then pulling back, leaving it to speak for itself. It became an almost distinctive habit, to frame things like that, using such phrases, such experiences...I believe that was what shaped things, It certainly had a role, I think.” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). The writer shares the thought that had it not been for *altZine*, he most probably would have written in a different way. “You become formed by the place you are writing for”.

Having a book published during the early Millenium years proved a difficult process. Even so the writer persisted regularly for a time “every month insistantly” trying to get his stories in print, and sends his stories to *Varlık* and *Adam Öykü*. When he got a rejection from them, since he already had an outlet that he trusted, he gives up sending stories to journals. “Or perhaps I would have pressed them harder, I said, I am writing. And I am able to publish what I write, in one way or another. I’m quite comfortable with that. So I didn’t try to find a

different alternative,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). He carried on writing with *altZine*, just as *altkitap*, the first e-publishers in Turkey was being founded. The publishing committee included Murat Gülsoy, Yekta Kopan and Adnan Kurt. When Yekta Kopan asked him if he wanted to publish the stories he’d put out with *altZine* as an e-book, Ö.A. answered in the affirmative and his first on-line book is published in 2000-2001. “It wasn’t something I was actively seeking. In fact, I had been asked, that made me pleased. That’s something else. I was flattered. But Nothing.... nothing much actually changed. (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

Following the publication of his e-book, *altZine* closed after 2004. Due to a busy work schedule, private projects, etc. the years between 2004 and 2010 were a time when the writer dropped everything, including writing. The closure of the journals he was involved with also removed the necessity for and therefore the habit of writing regularly every month. In the intervening period he read copiously, although writing very little, if at all. He had become distanced from writing. In fact had begun to question why he was writing, and had lost both motivation and conviction:

“Amongst all this, I lost my motivation. In a way, I mean, I sort of felt there was no point. It wasn’t about enjoyment..... or even self-fulfillment, but even worse, if I don’t /can’t... You build yourself up to it. Treat it as important...I mean, what’s important. You sit and write....Its all a form of intellectual masturbation actually. Meaningless, self-satisfaction, As if we are saying to ourselves, oooh look at that, how good it is, and it looks at me, how good I am. And maybe inside, neither are saying that, I don’t know. I felt as if it was all just part of the show, even when I wasn’t doing it,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

This four-five year period ends with a phone call from Yekra Kopan to say that *altZine* was going back on line with a new team, and that if Ö.A. wanted to be part of it he would give him the team details. Ö.A. contacts the rest of the team by e-mail, and when they ask him to write something for the journal he writes a story and sends it. “That’s how I got back into writing.” If intermittently, at first, he has begun to write again. Slowly, “I began to work up to it, and get into the old habit” then he begins to write more material. Meanwhile he starts to meet regularly with a novelist friend, and they share their work with each other, which for Ö.A. was another form of motivation.

Ö.A. never felt the ‘need’ to publish books, for him the important thing was “I write my story, and whatever the readership may be, send it somewhere to be published. But the stories began to pile up, and thanks to *altZine* he had acquired a group of writer-followers online, who were beginning to ask if he had a file for a book. In addition, all the writers at *altZine* had already had a book published. On top of all this, the insistence of his friends creates a kind of “social pressure” which drives the writer to ‘seriously consider’ publishing his own book. “To publish a book means....I think, it must be a kind of symbol of acceptance. As I said, you might have stories published in a hundred journals, but when you bring out a book....people see that as something different. (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). He adds a few new stories to those he already has, and works them up until his file is complete.

During 2012-13, when he first opens a Twitter account, the director of a publishing house begins to follow him. That person knew Ö.A.’ from *Hayatle Gemi* and followed his work. With this relationship behind him, when Ö.A. sought his advice about a friend’s work, the publishing director invited them both to visit his publishing house. Hence, although the “first point of contact had been Twitter”, they meet face to face. And three-four years later, by the time he had prepared his own file, he chose that publisher to work with. He asks the director who to send his file to, and sends it. The assigned editor calls him two or three

months later. They meet, after which the file is put before the publishing committee. The news that it has been accepted for publishing arrives five-six months later. A contract is signed and the actual publication takes another year and a half. “They did say it would take some time, that they had a full calendar, but it was really a long time” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). A few people who had had their portfolios accepted received ‘cancellation’ notices at around the same time. Even so, the writer does not seek out the publishers for information. “One doesn’t want to be constantly asking ‘What’s happening? What are you doing? I wrote a note perhaps twice a year, Is there anything that needs doing? that’s all. But after the publishing committee there was a long gap. It was almost one and a half years. Then finally it was published in June, 2017”. (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer H.E. indicates that there was no-one in particular, neither teacher nor family member who advised or encouraged him, nor was there anything specific that inspired him to be part of this world. His family were not readers, as such, although there was a collection of religious texts in his home. One of these was a life of the prophet, which caught H.E.’s attention, and which he read frequently. He stresses that he had no particular interest in literature while at primary school, “Although, I took real pleasure in arranging those books according to colour, and dusting them; I probably thought of them as toys”. In intermediary school, although he was not a particularly outstanding or assertive student, he had one conservative teacher who liked and ‘encouraged’ him, and introduced him to writers such as Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and Sezai Karakoç. So H.E. began to read these writers with the teacher’s encouragement. He continued what he had started in intermediary school while in high school. Obviously, when you start something, the rest follows automatically. There has to be someone to encourage, to show you the way, but you read Sezai Karakoç for example, and from there move on to another writer...and another....” Even though there is always the danger of going down the wrong routes, it’s all experience, according to H.E. He had a sort of

long-term silent relationship with the poet İsmet Özel whom he discovered while at high school. And even though the poet was totally unaware of his admirer, it was a relationship H.R. describes as “up and down”. While in high school, H.R. tries to find his own way around the public library. He starts by reading Sartre, simply because he had heard of him; somehow arrives at Dostoyevski, and from there to Tolstoy and Goncharov, who were his entry into Russian literature. Even though he understands very little, H.R. forces himself to read the Russian writers. Alongside these were works on Islamic history and historical novels. He becomes so engrossed in a work of Abdullah Ziya Kozanoğlu that he cannot even get up to answer the door while reading it. He relates that it was as he began to read works of Russian, French and English literature that: “Was the moment of change in my own life. The moment when I broke away from the conservatism around me and made the conscious effort to become an independent individual”.

Once at university, in Ankara, he continues to read at the same pace. This time there are also books his friends recommended. H.E. lives a solitary life at university with not many people around him. When he could afford it, he would buy books at the bookstore. He meets a novelist in the tea house he frequents and where he read books, who first encourages him to read his books, then recommended many others. “He was an interesting man. At that time he was an atheist; I was still under a lot of influences which I had not got beyond. I wasn’t religious, but I could not call myself atheist either. He would try his propaganda quite insistently on me.” H.E. indicates that he learnt a great many things from that novelist. Many years later, that writer had become Islamicist, while H.E. had turned to atheism.

After graduating from university, H.E. moves to Istanbul after his family. He works in cramming courses for a while, but realises that this work was not for him. He decides that he could get involved in publishing, that this way “at least he would be around books”, and begins to search the job pages. Although he has just turned twenty-one, and was not an editor,

when he saw an advert for a Turkish editor “I went. The bravery of the innocent”, and starts to work in this Islamicist publishers who were printing textbooks. He describes the next two years working there as “awful”. It was very tiring, said H.E., who was beginning to lose interest in reading books. However, he continuously watches films. “That’s when my interest in the cinema began”. He realised that the job he was in, where he was continuously writing test questions, preparing tests or editing questions submitted by others was not what he wanted, and left without searching for a job elsewhere. “Later I did begin to look for work, but now I know only too well, finding a job in cultural publications is not at all easy. You can’t do it through job adverts. That doesn’t work. Everyone knows one another. Everyone calls somebody, finds out if they have an acquaintance. It was impossible for H.E., an ex-Islamicist from Sivas, to find a job there. So I remained jobless.” (H.E. 2018, Istanbul). For a while, H.E. works as a night watchman in his brother’s car park, washes rugs and cars. But then he decides to try to find work in publication again, and starts to ‘cold knock’ on publishers’ doors. He goes round a lot of small publishers in Cağaloğlu saying he can edit, that he knows Ottoman Turkish, and that his English is good. Until one small publisher says “You won’t be able to get a job here. We don’t give anyone a job. As it is, we are just managing with a couple of staff,” but advises him to go to the bigger publishers who have sizeable book sales, and more staff. H.E. follows this advice, and goes to one of the big publishers. “There, I was lucky”, he explains. Usually in such places there is someone, a receptionist at the entrance stopping you from going in without an appointment. But when H.E. arrives there. There is no-one at the reception. So he walks straight through without being stopped, and goes up to the office. “Well actually, I learnt later that there was someone, but it was so chaotic at that point,...book sales, boxes. trucks, etc.” He arrives at the publications director’s front desk, having learnt his name beforehand, and tells his assistant that he is there to see the general manager about an application for a job. He has no CV. Or

appointment. “I remember I was wearing a black Dream Theatre tee-shirt. I was sooo tired of it all at that point, if they threw me out on all fours I wouldn’t have cared.” The general director’s assistant gives H.E. an essay and asks him to bring it back edited. “Naturally, I read it in one or two days”. He took it back to the publishers and waited for the response. After some time, a second text appears for editing. H.E. does that one too and hands it back to the publishers. Only this time, there is no response. Upon which he rings them, only to learn that the assistant is on leave, but they connect him directly to the publications director. “Ahh, I thought, good. This time I’m lucky again”. So he begins to work freelance for the publishers. For two years, he survives on the income from that work. “But, of course, I was working like the deranged”. For H.E., getting into the publishing world, getting to know editors, writers, publishing directors was a different kind of approach. At first, the writer admits that he found it hard, and often questioned whether he belonged there or not. It was a great advantage to be working with the general publishing director, H.E. realised, even though he did struggle, and had some tricky moments, although at the time he had difficulty in identifying them:

“I felt, on the one hand, extremely ignorant, I felt very oppressed.. How and what to do. Where to put myself. These were people I didn’t recognise. This was a different world. And in another sense, I was secretly pretty arrogant really. I didn’t appreciate things easily. The director of publications quite enjoyed this attitude of mine, he began to mentor me, guiding me and explaining my mistakes to me in a pleasant manner.. He unpacked things for me. He introduced me to other new writers, Selim Ileri first of all,” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul).

As the writer H.E. describes his first steps into the literary world, he also shares his observations of that world, and the characters within it. He explains that he had never before come across those urban characters that one reads about in the literature of the 40’s and after.

“I’d never encountered people like those in Tomris Uyar’s stories, and hadn’t been able to establish any interaction with them.” H.E. saw himself as a provincial, someone from one of those gritty, challenging neighborhoods like Bağcılar or Güngören, and they, the others who were born in the city or who had migrated and settled much earlier, adapting to urban culture, as natives of Istanbul. Such people tended to live in Şişli or Cihangir. When he started work at the publishers, he got the chance to meet people like that for the first time. “It’s not that I didn’t know about them. I think I am a very good observer. I did extract some things from wherever I went and whatever I read. But to meet them in the flesh was interesting,” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul).

Next, he worked for a year for a rightist publishers. Here he met İskender Pala, and Beşir Ayvazoğlu, a writer whose books he had read since childhood. The latter writer, H.E. found “inspiring”. I wasn’t able to have as many chats with him as I did with Selim. He was an introspective person, but I read his books more intensely, and studied them closely”. Soon afterwards he left that publishers as the wages were so low. And returned to working freelance for his previous publishers.

H.E. enters the world of publishing in 2008, which is when his relationship with writing also began. Even though he had produced a magazine while he was still at school, and his poems were published there, “I never thought about that up to now. They didn’t really count”. He writes neither poetry nor prose during his university years; just one story three years later as he is finishing university. “I enjoyed that. It felt good.” He sends this to his friends, and they like it. So then, he shares this story on the blog that he established in 2007-2008, where he had published extracts from books and films. Strangers wrote comments. H.E. thought; “So it works, it’s stirred something in somebody,” and continued to write. At around that time, an acquaintance who was publishing a journal in another city meets up with him when he comes to Istanbul. And seeing that H.E. had no circle of friends, that he was

alone, introduces him to some literary acquaintances publishing the journal *Yumuşak G*, and encourages him to meet them. H.E., even though he had reservations about such ‘third-hand friendships’, does meet them, and they are interested in his work. So finally, his first work was published in a journal in 2009. Seeing something of his in print did not overly excite H.E. since, as he pointed out, he had published some film criticism in a Daily in 2007. Only eight pieces of his came out in this journal, before he was forced to take a break, being called up for military service. He does mention though, that when his first piece was published in the newspaper, he went around all the newspaper stalls in Aksaray looking for a copy of the daily, and when he did find it he bought two copies. That is when he experienced that first excitement. *Yumuşak G* continued to print his stories. Even when the journal closed in 2011-2012, other journals had begun to take an interest in the writer, and to publish him. Two of his stories were published in *Natama*.

Then “Gezi intervened”. Relationships became redefined according to the ‘sides’ that some writers, poets and literary figures chose to take. F.E. is conservative, and breaks off relationships with a friend who had declared allegiance to ‘the other side’, while remaining friends with the group he was “with during Gezi”. He receives requests for stories from the journals *İzafi*, *Nepal Fanzin* and *Çün*. H.E. admits that unless he was under pressure, or unless he was asked directly, he didn’t write. “There are many things in my head that I want to write about, but I think I find it difficult to focus since there is so much to do at work.” After publishing stories in journals and broadsheets, his first book is brought out by the publishers he was working for. So he finally gained a place in the literary world as a writer, aside from his publishing experience.

The writer M.G., by saying “I have been writing things for as long as I can remember”, points to a connection with writing from an early age, and that he always had the “urge to make things up”. In intermediary school a love of cinema also began to emerge, and

rather than thinking of getting work published, they imagine that they will one day make a film. M.G.'s relationship with writing coincides with a period around the millenium that M.G. refers to as "the popularisation of the internet". At the beginning of the millenium decade, while still 13 years of age, he takes part in an internet competition organised by İş Bankası. Ten stories are chosen by the jury to be uploaded onto the internet, where readers voted for the winner. M.G.'s story is selected among the top ten. "Then, I said, I am actually writing stories, I believed I could....." He continues to write throughout his high school years, although without showing his work to anyone, or publishing it anywhere. While at university, his relationship with literature becomes "confined to that of a reader," due to a growing interest in the cinema. It was making a connection with Turkish literature that brought M.G. back to writing. M.G. describes his Turkish literature classes in high school as causing an utter dislike for the subject, while at university he decides that this was a 'stupid' attitude, and begins to read Turkish literature once more. But he concentrates more on the classics. "I didn't read anything written in the last fifteen to twenty years. Not so much a choice, as that I wanted to start further back," (M.G. 2018, Istanbul). In his last year at university, he begins to read people who had split off from the *İletişim Yayınları* group from Ankara such as Barış Bıçakçı and Emrah Serbes, the *İletişim* generation. Through this reading regime, his relationship with literature begins to get up to speed and just as he is beginning to think of cinema as "something I probably could not do", he thinks that he could turn to writing again. A story he writes in his final year gets accepted and is published in *Altzine*. This being the first step into literature for M.G:

"If we don't count the on-line publication of the story competition in high school, yes, in terms of visibility in the literary community, the first story to be 'seen' was probably that one. Another writer whose story had been printed then read my story and got in touch. I can't remember in which form of social media he contacted me, but via

internet, He wrote something like I liked your story very much, congratulations. He was one of the journal's regular followers and had work published there," (M.G. 2008. Istanbul).

The writer, M.G. comes to Istanbul to study at post-graduate level. So changing over from being a periodical visitor to the city, to being an inhabitant. "I'm making a brand new discovery, and this inspired me to write something about this place." Towards the end of 2011 he began to write; this was a somewhat introspective year for the writer, who changed lodgings repeatedly and shared living space with 'interesting' people throughout the year. "I would go to school, come home, and write some things..." When he completed his post-graduate courses, he started working. The writer says that the first three months after he started work could be the most productive months of his career. I would go to work, and then I had to spend many hours doing something basically extremely meaningless. So I thought I had to spend the remainder of my day as productively as possible....but it took three months. After that it was never repeated," (M.G., 2018, Istanbul). During those three months, M.G. explains that he completed all the stories he had been working on, and also finished the first version of the book that was to be published later as a novel. And while writing it, he began to form a powerful connection with the city. In one sense, for the writer, Istanbul was like a number of different cities merged into one. It had a European atmosphere to it, and at the same time was a completely different city. "You can find everything there, and that's a little disorienting. As someone who started living in Istanbul at the age of twenty-three, he defines the experience as somewhat like 'exploring the city from scratch'. The process of discovery, of learning, is intriguing for M.G. He spent hours just walking the streets, no aim in mind. "I haven't been down there, you say, so you enter a new street. I'm supposed to be going there, but I go the other way round, and come out here...." This physical exploration spurs the writer on so he returns home and starts writing something:

“I was going back and forth to Istanbul regularly, but you notice something while living here, and it’s a little strange. Perhaps it’s a little naive to say so but this really is an extraordinarily beautiful city, and it could be much more so, but that didn’t happen. For which you are very sorry. (As a citizen), this is quite normal, its quite a common feeling and yet very powerful. This too impacted me quite a lot...It pushed me towards literature, because that was what I could do....I could sit down and write about it in the moment. You could film it, you could write a song about it.....That’s art, in inverted commas... something like that, but I thought about what I could do, and because I could sit down at the computer and start to write, there and then, that is what I did. That’s how I began to write, And it was a fast-moving period,” (M.G. 2018, Istanbul).

The author drops off the first draft of his book of stories at the Ankara office of his publishers, on a visit to the capital. Before going there, he writes to one of the editors there whom he knew previously, telling him that he had a portfolio of stories which he would like to bring with him. He had known the editor from his university years, when they had co-produced an essentially apolitical magazine together, mainly publishing culture and literature although also giving space to anyone wishing to write about politics. One of the reasons M.G. had for going to him was that the books produced by that publishing house were titles mainly in the field of social sciences, that both he and his friends followed. “Not to mention the fact that the editor had his own group of followers in Ankara”. When they decide to bring out their own journal, they go to him, and he shows them a draft copy of a youth magazine that he had prepared himself. “They brought out a magazine like this, and we wanted to do something like that...” So with that friendly exchange behind them, when his portfolio was ready, he sends it directly to that editor, who passes it on to the editor in charge of literature, that not being his area.

M.G. says that since he knew the editor in question, he deliberately did not go to him. “I was going to Ankara anyway, I thought I’d just ask him, That’s where we take things, isn’t it. Then it was something like, while I’m there why don’t we see each other...” Whereas, he had, in fact, checked the publisher’s website where it indicated where to send portfolio material. M.G. also looked at other publishers’ websites, and noticed that not all of them gave that information. He had decided to send his file particularly to this publishers, and only this one, and so does not send it anywhere else. “Normally, they get back to you within six months, but they definitely get back..” Seven months after submitting his file, while M.G. is on holiday outside the city, on the second day of the Id, he receives an e-mail while sitting in his hotel. Its from the editor, He said, can you send me your phone number. We want to call you.” No sooner has he sent his number when the editor calls, telling him they are going to publish his manuscript and tells him what needs to be done in terms of editorial work. He also apologises for going over the six month limit before replying. “I said, Oh thats no problem. Oh yes, but it is, he replied.” After that the whole process goes very quickly, says M.G. When he learnt that the book was going to print “It felt quite weird. You feel a kind of euphoria.” He explains that he was very pleased, although adding that the whole process happened so quickly that he couldn’t quite remember what he felt. “There are so many feelings. Conflicting thoughts...” And so, M.G’s first book was published in 2014.

M.G. does not visit the publishers during the publishing process at all. When there was urgent business they phoned him a few times. Other than that the editorial process was entirely in the hands of the editors and carried out over e-mail. Even after it is published, the author does not go to the publishers at all. “There was no need. And when the book came out they sent me my copies.”

3.2 Significant Publishers: Then and Now

The writer A.E. claims that in the millenium years, the best publisher was the one with the most books on their shelves. And that was *Can Yayınları*, followed by *Yapı Kredi Yayınları*, *İletişim Yayınları*, *Doğan Kitap*, *Ayrıntı Yayınları* ve *Metis Yayınları*. These were also the publishers that the writer would consider in order to publish their book. Their importance lay in the range of fields covered by their publications, the inclusion of writers from other countries, the range and depth of their catalogue. Today, in terms of size, and publishing strength, it is still *Can Yayınları*, *Doğan Kitap*, *İletişim Yayınları*, *Yapı Kredi Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları* and *Ayrıntı Yayınları*, with the addition of *Sel Yayınları* and *Everest Yayınları*. Publishers the writer follows without misgivings are *Domingo Yayınları*, *Siren Yayınları* and *Jaguar Yayınları*. Somehow, when you have read a few books from the same publihsers, you start to feel a sense of trust towards them or its something like they are printing the kind of book I like to read, my kind of book. Its like when you go to one of your favorite cafes, you know. And they see you and say, will it be the same as usual? And bring you your coffee. Something like that.." (A.E. 2018, Istanbul). ‘Boutique’ publishers like that, ‘generally’ publish translated works. The writer comments that there is a need for reliable publishers of this type printing local authors, and stresses that this is one of the most noticable gaps in publishing, the absence of medium-sized publishers. According to A.E., people are squeezed between “a few large publishing corporations” which have very different priorities, and not much space for new writers. And he feels that rather than being concentrated in a few places, the publishing world would benefit from a wider distribution and broader representation.

The writer J.V., before listing the publishers he considers prominent during the millenium, makes the point that at that time a number of new best-selling publishers opened, who made a good profit publishing and selling best-sellers. The example he gives is *Goa*

Yayınları, who published *The Man Who Sold his Ferrari*. “They printed a book that sold a million. Everyone knew that. There was no-one who hadn’t heard about the book. As J.V. comments, every era has its own trends, and for the millenium it was conspiracy theory books like *Metal Storm* and personal development titles that exploded more than ever. While in the last four-five years, religious self-development titles have become more popular. For the writer, the most prominent publishers are those with reasonably significant publication figures, namely *Yapı Kredi Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları*, *Everest* directed by Osman Akınhay, *İş Kültür Yayınları*, *İletişim Yayınları* and *Can Yayınları*. Others, such as *Nokta Kitap*, *Goa*, and *Güncel Yayıncılık* are also in publishing but he points out “For such publishers, the situation is like this: Once people realised there was money in publishing, they were looking to choose the right book – and by that I don’t mean books whose content is wonderful, - the right books were the sellers, which they did, made money and left. Preferring not to stay in publishing. Some of them crashed”. (J.V., 2018, İstanbul). The ones that remain are *Can Yayınları*, *Everest*, *İş Kültür Yayınları*, *İletişim Yayınları* and *Metis Yayınları*.

J.V. stresses that publishing is not a short-term enterprise. Its like the seed you sow today; waiting for it to grow, gathering the fruits takes a while. If they are not idealists, or do not have a background, a past in publishing, “being resilient, waiting, needs patience”. *Can Yayınları*, for example, is a publishers with its own tradition, its not going to “pull down the shutters”. *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* and *İş Kültür Yayınları* have the corporate banks behind them so they are more cushioned than other publishers. “But why doesn’t Metis close? Because it has an idealist approach to publishing”. As does *İletişim Yayınları*, according to J.V. Whenever an area of enterprise turns into a sector, anyone thinking that there is “money” in that sector can set up business. And “there’s no harm in that” says J.V. They might survive, or not, or they might decide not to stay in the sector. For example, someone who thinks there is money in the health sector might want to found a hospital. But that hospital could close after a

few years, while someone with an enterprise who comes from a family of health specialists might carry on for generations. As in any area”. For J.V., coming from a publishing tradition is as important as having an idealist approach:

“Launching a good book requires serious effort and funds. And ensuring that this is sustainable is very difficult in publishing. I mean, it is very difficult to establish a publishing profile. Yes, you may have found one title that sells well, but if there are no ideals, publishing, presenting a book to the public. I’ve launched that one, now let me present the other, without ideals you can’t do that. You wouldn’t want to,” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

For the millenium years, J.V. mentions the bigger publishers who handle the great writers like Selim İleri and Atilla İlhan, such as *Bilgi Yayınevi*, to which he adds *Altın Kitaplar* and *İnkılap*. He points out the changes that took place over the years in the publishing industry as new faces began to enter the sector alongside those who came from a publishing tradition, and as a new generation moved into place. Some publishers emerged trying to adopt a more popular image, and the face of ‘ambitious youth’. J.V. stresses that this was the overriding feature of the millenium years. *April Yayıncılık*, who grew on the strength of the title *Olasılıksız* was one of those publishers. *Kırmızı Kedi Yayınları* was one of the last publishers of the millenium decade to latch onto that trend. It was a time of diversity, both in terms of writers and publishing. “Perhaps that was inevitable, considering the direction in which the world was going. Every sector is changing, is developing.”

As for today, J.V. sees that in place of the big giants, small ‘boutique’ publishers have come forward. Although he does feel an obligation to include *Can Yayınları*, which has continued in its own tradition even though its founders are no longer alive; and *Altın Kitaplar* and *İnkılap*, which are still publishing, even though the content has much changed. “To have survived this long tells us something in terms of tradition, although content may not always be

something to focus on. It is not always possible for a book to be significant. That's something that changes from one reader to another.” (J.V., 1918, Istanbul). These are risk-taking publishers who publish work from personal preference, targeting a very specific segment. Among them are names like Siren, Jaguar and, taking into account certain best-sellers, Domingo, today's boutique publishers. İthaki Yayınları publishing the works of Suat Derviş today is also important.”Who should be better to publish him other than İthaki?” The writer also stresses Selim İleri as a key author being re-launched, as it were, with new covers, by Everest. In children's literature, J.V. mentions RedhouseKidz, Günışığı Kitaplığı, Kırçiceği as foremost publishers. “One cannot stress enough the beauty of what Asli has done. The effort, the hard work...” . As far as J.V. is concerned, one cannot be totally negative or totally positive about any one publishers:

“The publication of Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* in Turkish was incredible. Just for this I will always remember *Yapı Kredi Yayınları*. Some authors, some worlds we get to know through the publishers. How to express it? No single publishers can either be heartily criticised from start to finish, or be entirely praised. From within what was available, I took this from here, and that from there; its good that they published that; well, anyway, its good that that title came out at that point, that was a service, even if they did nothing else, I would say. So what of what came next, I could say. As a reader, such would be my opinions...” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer Y.F. chose three publishers *Can Yayınları*, *İletişim Yayınları* and *Metis Yayınları*. as they all carried the work of writers he liked. It was to these publishers he submitted his own collection of stories. *Metis Yayınları* was also important to him for the science fiction series they published during the 1990's, which had appealed to the literary 'nerds' of his generation, including him. Y.F. points out that science fiction was, at that time, a special culture “appealing mainly to nerds”. He points out that, as far as he recalled,

although the books in the series were well translated, and the covers attractive, the series did not sell well.

For T.L., who entered the literary world in 2002, the most significant publishers were, in fact, the same as today. Since he was part of the publishing world, he felt that he was a little more fortunate in that respect as he knew more or less which publishers were good. *İletişim Yayınları*, *Sel Yayınları*, *Can Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları*, *Ayrıntı Yayınlar* are for him the most outstanding publishers for the quality of their books. The writer comments that for the Turkish publishers, it is the reader's choice 'that counts. The writer is also important, but it is the publisher who decides. So, if a book is published by *İletişim Yayınları* or *Metis Yayınları*' that's good. As T.L. points out, as literate individuals, this is written into our cultural code. It's a perception that has been created by the publishers mentioned here, and the discovery of new writers has also begun to depend on the climate fostered by those publishers. For example, if a new writer emerges from *İletişim Yayınları*, they are given the benefit of the doubt, but if they are published by a smaller, unknown publishers they have no chance. Naturally, the writer, themselves being part of the literary world, but also as a regular reader, is very aware of this situation, and so, as a writer, they will tend to choose the publishers we mentioned. Monokl, Kolektif Kitap, Jaguar Kitap and Notos Kitap are some of the small 'boutique' publishers that have emerged. "They publish good titles, and my impression about them is that they publish good books, and publish writers who may have been neglected or undervalued," (T.L. 2018, Istanbul).

For the writer R.C., the most significant publishers have not much changed since around the start of this decade (2010), "apart from *İletişim*". She lists *Can Yayınları*, *Sel Yayıncılık*, *İletişim Yayınları* and *Everest Yayınları* among them, also mentioning *Doğan Kitap*, although adding that the only author she reads from there is Hakan Günday. These are publishers with a consistent publishing policy, who have remained largely stable in terms of

their approach. They do not publish every portfolio that is submitted, points out the writer, who wonders, however, how some of the new titles coming out of *İletişim Yayınları* could have passed the publishing process. But still, *İletişim Yayınları* house lists are an important reference for the writer. She stresses the reliability of the publishing houses she mentions. “At very least, when you visit these publishers, you will come across an editor who knows what they are doing, or if you are buying a title from that publisher you know that it is probably going to be a good choice.” (R.C., 2018, Istanbul). For contemporary publishers the writer adds *Jaguar Kitap* and *Alef Yayınevi*. “There will definitely be some I cannot remember.”

For the writer Ö.A., the significant publishers of the 2000’s were *Yapı Kredi Yayınları*, *Can Yayınları*, *Ayrıntı Yayınları*, *İletişim Yayınları*, *Sel Yayınları* and *Metis Yayınları*. Foremost among them for the writer, were *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* and *Can Yayınları*, since they published his favorite authors, used quality translations, and their writer list interested him. While focusing mainly on specific writers and books, he recognises that these publishers have cultivated an attractive collection of authors and works within his field of interest. *İletişim Yayınları*, in particular, began to attract his attention from the millenium onwards, in terms of local literature, with such names as Orhan Pamuk and İhsan Oktay Anar. So much so that “it became the thing... one day I hope my book is published there; at Can, or YKY, they were top of the list in that respect.”. Later, however, he claims that *İletişim Yayınları* “lowered the bar” in Turkish literature, “seriously limiting their scope”. Ö.A., has a similar opinion of *Ayrıntı Yayınları*, whose authors were among his favorites at the beginning of the millenium, “those Fowle’s, Tournier’s, so many, it’s impossible to count them all’.” “Ayrıntı has lost its old momentum”, he felt.

The writer explains that he followed *Metis Yayınları*’s literature series in the early 2000’s with great pleasure. Although today the same publishers has moved on to areas other than literature. *Sel Yayınları* is another publishers that he no longer followed with the same

pleasure as in the previous decade. With regard to ‘new’ publishers, he considered Jaguar the most important. “I could almost buy every title without a thought, I love them so much.” (Ö.A., 2018, İstanbul). Even if they produce a limited number of volumes, they cover a wide geographical range, and the quality of their translations are good. Another publisher that he appreciates in that respect is Siren Yayinevi, who publish quality translations and have a good list of titles, although since the titles from American and English literature tend to be somewhat similar, he tends not to follow them too closely. He likes the modern classics series of Everest Yayınları, which has a wide range of titles and publishes best-sellers. But from his point of view, “I wouldn’t think of putting them too high on the list, next to publishers like *Can Yayınları* and YKY”. As far as the writer Ö.A. is concerned, the quality of translation is now a particularly major focus. “Basically, before, we tended to read whatever we could find. As it was, the number of books being printed was much fewer. Now these numbers have gone way up.... “The range of titles has increased in parallel with this. In the past, there would be translations of titles from America or Europe, whereas now, titles are being translated and published from Japanese and Korean literature. “Discovering the diversity of genre, lesser-known works, not meaning anything negative of course, but well ..I like discovering these little known gems (Ö.A., 2018, İstanbul).

The writer Ç.D., was choosing her reading matter off the bookshelves of her older sister, who was an avid reader, at the beginning of the millenium. “How we chose books, that really was interesting.” At that age, she admits that she did not know what the criteria for making a choice should be. To chose a book, she would go to a booksellers, look at the back cover and read a few pages, or even sometimes she would select it by design. Her preferred publishers were most likely to be those she saw in her older sister’s library, or those she chose by design. At the time, she was a good follower of *Metis*, who, for her was a publisher she “could rely on, even if she wasn’t at all familiar with any writers”, and there was 6:45,

İletişim and *Ayrıntı*, and Dost's drama series, connected with the "Kaybedenler Kulübü", which the writer defines as the reason she was "not left sleepwalking three nights a week". Realising that there were serious problems with the 6.45 translations, she took more care when choosing from them. *Ayrıntı* also had translation problems at one point, but according to Ç.D. they realised this some time later and revised them. As far as Ç.D. is concerned, "if you decide you just want a good read, then you don't choose the publisher, you choose the writer". But when there are problems with the translation, then, this forces you to choose the translator, not the publisher.

"So now, I've got to the stage where, beyond the publishers, I follow the translator. I mean, I really have to know the translator. And I realised that, for example, even if I didn't know about a certain book, if it was translated by Seda Ersavcı it's should be looked into. And I know its going to be worth reading because it seems to me that she doesn't take on every book that's proposed. She translates books that are spot-on, pleasing books. For me that's a reference, beyond the publishers, if Seda has translated it it must be worth reading. I'm not even mentioning Ayşe Nihal Akbulut and Cevat Çapan. You buy the book because of their translation. The translation is as valuable as the writer, in their case, particularly," (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

For Ç.D., *Can Yayınları* titles are mainly the books that she wants to "read when she grows up", but adds, "for some titles, you have to go to Can". If a reader wants to read Gabriel Garcia Marquez or Isabelle Allende that's where they would find them. "But apart from that, its not a publishers I would make for, unless I knew the specific writer. The writer you know...." But all in all, for Ç.D., *Can Yayınları* or *Yapı Kredi Yayınları (YKY)* were publishers one trusted, and ones of which you would never say 'I'm not following'. Besides, as far as Ç.D. is concerned, the choice of publishers matters in terms of the reader's choice. For example, hundreds of publishers bring out the same global classics; but while one

publisher ‘ruins the translation’ to bring a set out for university students that ‘destroys their urge to read,’ the other takes the utmost care with translation. According to Ç.D., the key publishers she mentioned still emit that ‘element of trust’. “And you are familiar with the writer, that makes these safe waters”. In contemporary terms, besides *Can*, *YKY* and *Metis*, the writer cites *Aylak Adam* and *Norgunk* as good references whose books she would not question. Of Everest Yayınları, she also comments that even though it is not a publisher she follows regularly, recently she has come across some surprisingly good works from there, some very good translations of a number of writers she likes.

The writer H.E., cited *Can Yayınları*, *İletişim Yayınları*, *Metis Yayınları* and *Yapı Kredi Yayınevi* as primary publishers of good literature. according to the writer’s excel book inventory, for a considerable time the *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* books in his personal library were more numerous than those of other publishers. More recently, he would add Kitap Yayınevi to the list of select publishers. He believed that they were publishing such good books that he would like to buy all of their titles. *Metis Yayınları*, he considered, although still important, to have “lost its old sheen somehow, as if they were less productive than they had once been”. *Can Yayınları* remained “good, in spite of everything”, he believed. *İletişim Yayınları* was no longer necessarily a publishers whose book lists he would check and buy from every month. *Yapı Kredi Yayınları* “I am not sure about, in terms of adding new titles to the list....”. Although he likes the İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları historical series, he is critical of their publishing policy for non-copyright titles. This is a policy that may not be such a problem for the larger publishers, he points out, but for the small houses, created serious issues. He feels that İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları could invest in culture just as Yapı Kredi Bankası has done.

The writer M.G. counts *İletişim Yayınları*, *Can Yayınları*, *Yapı Kredi Yayınları*, *Ayrıntı Yayınları*, *Adam Yayınları*, *Payel Yayınları* and *Metis Yayınları* among the most important publishers of the Millenium years. He recalls that most of the books he was reading

at the time were from *Adam Yayınları*, even though he is not sure whether they were still active in publishing at that point. For M.G., what's important is which writers these publishers are publishing; for example, when he found Adorno's books, which he wanted to read, in *Metis Yayınları* he thinks "so that must be a good publishers". But when it comes to reading the world classics, if one considers the translations, *İletişim Yayınları* is good.

Apart from literature, books in the field of social sciences are also important. For example; *Payel* publishes works in that field that "are somewhat dismissive of certain issues". He reads almost all the non-fiction works from *Ayrıntı*, which publishes the kind of social science titles that those who share the writer's scientific view will read. *İletişim* and *Metis* are also prominent in this respect. Apart from this, M.G. points out how important the publisher's founders, the team that follows on from them, and the heritage line of the house can be. *Can Yayınları* and *İletişim Yayınları* dominate there. Murat Belge, the founder of *Can Yayınları* and Erdal Öz, founder of *İletişim Yayınları* "contribute to this feeling one has". Having people like Tanıl Bora of *İletişim* on their team, who share "pretty much similar" views with the writer, gives a solid reason to follow them". The situation is similar for Bülent Somay at *Metis Yayınları*. These days there is no *Adam Yayınları*. *Payel* just has books. İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları stands out, particularly for their publication of oriental literature, and the titles in their Hasan Âli Yücel series. From the new publishers, Jaguar is bringing out "good, modern" titles, Encore has published some titles he likes, and there are others producing "special, 'niche', specific" titles.

3.3 Where literati meet: Then and Now

“Our lives are more individualist these days. But I find this very negative. In the old days, it was always the conversations over raki and meze These feel like empty, lifeless times to me.”

Y.F.

“Writers now have digital spaces.”

T.L.

The writer Y.F. comments that he was never part of a literary group, nor did he go to places frequented by the literati, places where they met and gathered. He did often visit the Atılğan (book)shop run by Metin Demirhan in Atlas Pasajı, Beyoğlu, although he mostly came across those of his peers who were more interested in cinema personalities like Giovanni Scognamiglio or people from the world of music. “I never had the urge to, you know, sit down and drink a beer with a writer. As it is I never drink beer, I don’t like it. I mean,...the bars, meyhane....not my scene. I don’t like them. Once in a blue moon, I might go together with one of my friends, just to get the latest news (Y.F. 2018, Istanbul).

By contrast, Y.F. talks of the current Istanbul International Literature Festival, which has been held since 2009, as a useful organisation through which he has met, got to know and founded “good relationships” with many local and international writers. One of the writers he met at that festival, in fact, included a quote from him on the back cover of the second edition of his book. Meanwhile, he mentions the “Artists’ Football Club Ayazma”, formed with Emrah Serbes, Doğu Yücel and Barış Bıçakçı, as an offshoot of the festival, and also mentions how his relationships with some other writers such as Faruk Duman, Hakan Yel and Ender Özkahraman developed through it. Occasionally he would meet writers during newspaper photoshoots, for example he met Tuna Kiremitçi, with whom they later became

friends – during a photoshoot for Hürriyet Daily, and sometimes in the line of work – he met Serap Şahiner, with whom he was to become close friends, through film script work at the production company where she worked; occasionally at literary festivals – which is where he met the writer, Nermin Yıldırım, also later to become a close friend; in a private gathering at the Tanpınar Literature Festival; and from time to time he would come across writers at culture and arts events, for example he met Hakan Bıçakçı at a film-cinema event. As a founding member of the Association for the Arts of Fantasia and Science Fiction (Fantazya ve Bilimkurgu Sanatları Derneği), and during their events, he had occasion to meet many writers (Y.F. 2018, İstanbul).

He also occasionally meets with writer friends on an individual basis. He mentions that the day before he met his close friend Onat Bahadır, that they went to the cinema together and later sat for three hours in Kadıköy talking about literature. He also mentions that whenever Nermin Yıldırım comes back from Barcelona, no matter how often that might be, they always meet, and that they have a small group consisting of Seray Şahiner, Doğu Yücel and Hakan Bıçakçı, who meet to chat either in a cafe or a small grill.

During the book fairs, writers usually get together at dinner events in the evenings. Other events where they would meet up as a group would be those monthly Freya Days organised by the Fantasy and science Fiction Arts Society either in Kadıköy or Maçka Park or similar open-air location. “Apart from that, those meetings like the ones in Woody Allen’s films where all the writers in Paris would meet in famous cafes during the 50’s and 60’s just don’t happen. [...] Thats it really. at literary events, on the astro pitch, at concerts...” (Y.F., 2018, İstanbul).

A.E. doesn’t know of any place in Istanbul where writers met in 2004, the year his first book was published. He does mention that after literary events, writers used to carry on to Yakup in Beyoğlu, and at that time there would be a lot of writers there. “There has never

been a place in my life where I could say ‘If I go there I will see these friends, or those writers frequent that place.’ (A.E., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer A.E. does not consider himself really a part of the literary world, in one sense. He comments that he always remained in the provinces, working as a teacher. “Writing was never my career. I may have a life as a writer but my career has always been teaching.” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). After he has his book published, he continues with his usual circle of friends. Meeting writers, getting together with them will happen much later. “Some of them were writers .I grew up with, and we knew each other when my first book was published. That’s Murat Özyaşar, Seyhan Kömürcü, Seray Şahiner....(A.E. 2018, Istanbul). But he accepted them into his life as friends only much later. Although he appeared in a program together with those writers...”that was all. Afterwards I always preferred to spend time with my own friends.” Following the publication of his second book in 2006, he still did not see himself as part of the world of literature. When he came to Istanbul for the book fair, he met and chatted with the other writers at the publisher’s booth. But once he’d left, he did not keep up a relationship with them. He still does not consider himself to be a real part of that world, “Because to be part of the literary world, there has to be a space for sharing. Somewhere to carry on socialising after the main event. And you have to have shared memories, There are no memories, no common space, no shared feelings...” (A.E. 2018, Istanbul).

A.E., who has now moved to Istanbul, points out that today there are no such places left in the city. He explains that when he wants to see someone, first he would call them. And when he does see someone, its as a friend, not as a writer, adding that there is no regularity to this socialising, Sometimes he will meet people every day for a week, sometimes only once a month. “It’s got to do with the way we live, the speed of things, the fact that we are rushing around so much, but there are many friends I enjoy meeting, and look forward to seeing again,” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). He believes that writers don’t meet because they have a

common purpose, that they are more introverted and that it is more difficult for them to be and work together. I have, in fact always had the idea to collaborate, [...] but many of my friends don't have the strength, or the energy to be part of a group, to work together towards a common goal, nor do they feel the need to do so," (A.E. 2018, Istanbul)

As far as he is concerned, writers will mainly meet at fairs and literary events. He cites the opening of Edebiyat Evi (Literature House) and Kırathane among the most recent events he attended, mentioning that he met and got to know other writers at book launches during the Istanbul International Literature Festival. A.E., adds that writers also get together at events such as film festivals, cocktails and publishers' anniversary celebrations, in other words all kinds of activities in the literary and art world, but points out that writers don't congregate for the sake of being together, but because they are interested in the event, and that meeting happens within that.

The writer J.V. mentions that in the 2000's she would encounter 'relatively' more writers and literary figures in Beyoğlu or Cağaloğlu. For example, when she went to Adam Kitapevi, she would see Enis Batur. Even if she didn't know him, it would give her "pleasure" just to come across him. Adding that she could talk to him if she wanted to. J.V. did not frequent bars during her teenage years but she was aware that if one did they would come across writers and literary figures there. She began to meet writers in an official capacity when she started to work in a journal. in her twenties. But while she had entered the writers' world through the journal, she was not aware of them having regular meetings. But in order to maintain relationships with their writers, as journal editors they would occasionally meet with some of the most respected and well-loved figures of Turkish literature at Yakup or Cavit in Beyoğlu. The annual gatherings of Radikal Kitap were another venue that brought literary figures together. "Orhan Pamuk would be there; Yaşar Kemal might turn up. Adalet Ağaoğlu would come. As did Selim İleri and Ahmet Ümit, Elif Şafak, Murat Uyrakulak and Tuna

Kiremitçi. Journalists and publishers would attend, as would graphic artists, printers, and advertisers from the dailies,” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul). This event brought together almost the entire publishing sector annually for eleven years. Istanbul Book fairs were another venue where writers were to be seen around the year 2000. Around that time, poets also held readings in certain bars. J.V. recalls that Küçük İskender was one of the most popular.

When referring to her own generation, J.V. mentions that during the last decade (the 2000’s) there was no particular place where they would meet as young readers or would-be writers in their twenties and young writers whose work was later published. “There never was such a place”. And today, “because I have made friends from literary circles over the years” she does meet with certain writer friends, sometimes once a month, occasionally twice a month; and regularly meets up with a group of editors, friends from the journal. Besides that she does occasionally meet with individual editors, as personal friends. “I still cannot say that I have social encounters exclusively connected to literature”. When she wants to see other writers, she attends various events and festival openings, pointing out that these are not what they once were, due to economic reasons. It was, according to the writer, prior to 2010 when writers got together more often:

“In the years before 2010 [...] we gathered together more often. Maybe the events weren’t so professional. After 2010, everything became more professionally showcased, called ‘events’ or launches. But, for example, today I got a message about a book launch somewhere for Murat Menteş’s new novel. Such events of course are not held for everyone. But they do exist.

If a person wants to meet up with writers, literati, artists, there are still places one can go to, in fact, reminds the writer. Although it’s not like the old Babali days. Nor is it like the times when Selim İleri would meet up with Ahmet Oktay in the Haydarpaşa Gar Lokantası, but more an ‘encounter in passing’, a casual ‘Hi, how are you doing,

what's up? type of newsy-chat exchange. Award ceremonies..... Erdal Öz Literary

Award ceremony, [...], the Zeynep Cemali Literature Day organised by Günışığı.

Actually, at such events, it is mainly publishers meeting writers. If there are no special friendships involved," (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer, T.L., indicated that he did not meet his friends regularly, and "as far as he was concerned", that he didn't meet writers in specific places. When working for *Hayvan* journal in 2002 he used to go to a bar with Metin Üstündağ. "I would go with them, but was it regular or not, I don't know. They would meet up. [...] Metin (Abi) would talk. There was the Porte, there was a bar, for example, they used to meet up there, apparently. As far as I know, from what I can recall, in 2002 there was no such place," (T.L. 2018, Istanbul). "We started to meet in cyberspace, over the web, instead of in real space. That's where we gathered," (T.L., 2018, İstanbul). The writer T.L. comments that in 2011- 2012 particularly there was an 'explosion' in social media, especially Facebook and Twitter. There was no place where the writers of his generation would meet regularly and come across different writers every time they went. When you think about it, Attilâ İlhan used to be in the Divan Hotel; while I would be thinking, I'll find that friend on Facebook, and that's exactly where they would be (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). He met many new writers through social media. They read each other's books, and sent messages to each other via Facebook and Twitter. "Whether we were in Istanbul, Ankara or Izmir, we would get together at the first opportunity, and later became friends. [...] We first made contact via social media then met in real life." (T.L. 2018, Istanbul). Stressing that the form of communication had changed, T.L. comments that they don't meet in Cumhuriyet Meyhanesi every Friday like the old literati, but did carry on systematic dialogue through social media. The biggest difference between them and the previous generation of literary figures was that they had passed over from 'physical contact'

into ‘cyber space’. Writers now had digital space. Some were popular on Facebook, others on Twitter and yet others on instagram, so to find them, one went to these spaces.

The writer R.C. describes herself as a little unfriendly, remote. Even though they don’t meet up face to face, she stresses that she has a circle of friends with whom she meets, communicates and write each other comments when they post photographs. This group includes her own peers, but also members of younger and older generations. “So, yes, in fact, I do feel part of something.... a kind of world....”. R.C. comments that there is a lot of meeting up, too, although she doesn’t take part in that sort of thing. There are some writers, says R.C., who don’t need to wait for an event to meet up with any close friends, who may also be writers, but that she doesn’t have such close friends, just acquaintances, she keeps her relationships at a certain distance. “I do have a circle of close friends, but they aren’t precisely my intimates.” She mentions *Müşterek* in Beyoğlu as the place she will go to if she is meeting someone, and that whenever she goes there she is bound to see people. She is not one who often goes out in the evenings, but does mention that on the last night of the book fair, they would go to *Müşterek*, as a group from the same publishers.

Literary figures did not seem to agree on any one place as the venue for meetings, she comments. She notices that there are some writers who have begun to live in Gümüşlük and Kaş, that has caught her attention. “Sometimes I feel as if everyone is there.” She says that these writers are sharing photographs on social media, and that everyone refers to those places as ‘the village’, even though they are actually coastal towns. “I sometimes find it a little unreal, because it’s the fashion these days to live like that.” Once, these were places one went to during the summer months, but now people tend to come and go to such places more frequently. In fact, they have almost become a second home. Moda in Istanbul could be an example. As the population goes up, this will become a place to ‘be’. For R.C., even if Beyoğlu loses its attraction, Cihangir will never do so:

“In Cihangir, whenever you go out, you go to Kaktüs. Özgür Mumcu will be there. Or perhaps Murat Menteş. Even if Beyoğlu loses its charm, Cihangir doesn’t, in my view. I’m always seeing famous people in the streets. Most of them are actors, but I do see literary figures, and journalists (today too? Yes). For example, I see Necmiye Alpay a lot. Perhaps they are carrying on meeting there and socialising in their own little world (....) No doubt they also live there,” (R.C., 2018, Istanbul).

According to R.C., the Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar Literary Festival (ITEF) is one of the platforms where writers meet. ITEF, she feels, is currently the favoured meeting place for the majority of people in the literary world, being the largest single event bringing together so many people, both writers and readers. Everyone attends the opening party. Apart from that single event, she terms books fairs as “places of insanity” where it is difficult to exchange “a few words” with anyone.

Ö.A. began to write for the online journal *altZine* at the beginning of the millenium, without ever coming face to face with the other writers on the team. The team members only communicated through one person who coordinated their e-mail traffic, and who they saw only on a very few occasions. “That was the only person I actually knew at the time from amongst my writing acquaintances. There was no-one else. No social environment, no group or literary hub, nothing of the kind,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Everyone knew each other by name, but there were no “individual, social encounters”. If there was an author’s book-signing or a talk, he would chat briefly with Yekta Kopan or Murat Gülsoy whom he already knew.

The writer Ö.A. indicates that he never tried to become part of a social environment. “At least, I didn’t make any extra effort” he said. He believes that when some people attended such a book-signing event, they inevitably met people, and opened up opportunities for themselves. “Of course, even if I didn’t participate fully, or at least turn up myself physically, I am sure there were two or three groups of that sort,” Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). The *Hayalet*

Gemi team was one such group., which included writers and literary figures such as Derya Erkenci, Murat Gülsoy, Yekta Kopan and Ayfer Tunç, as well as renowned photographers such as Orhan Cem Çetin. These names were mainly already friends, as it was. Ö.A. comments that although he was just in his early twenties, and as a writer was ‘hard put’ to be counted among the group, he did manage to get accepted. “If one had forced doors, and had systematically insisted, it might have been possible to create opportunities there. That was a possible focus, I think”, says the writer. (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

He attended the talks at TÜYAP book fair as a listener, just like everyone else. At that point, although his stories were being published on-line, he didn’t insist on referring to himself as a writer, and made no effort to try and get to know other writers. Then “I would go, listen, and return home,” he says. (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Ö.A. states that between 2000-2004, there were no places where writers met, apart from the fairs. There were no such spaces. Non that I could go to,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). He heard about writers having regular meetings in people’s homes, but said that he knew of no locale like Attilâ İlhan’s Baylan Cafe or Sartre’s Café de Flore.

When the writer Ö.A. begins to write for *altZine* again, the numbers of people trying to reach him via Facebook or Twitter increases. So then he begins to get to know many people over social media. The figures increase exponentially, particularly after 2014. Through this he begins to meet authors. For example, a writer who had read his book and liked it reached out to him over social media, and they wrote to each other, becoming friends, again over social media. But Ö.A. never came face to face with this writer. Despite this, says the writer, if I ever meet them, I’m going to say “Hi how are you doing, because I’m going to know them and they will know me”. (Ö.A., 2018, İstanbul). He points out, if there had been no social media, no chance of getting to know one another that way, means he’s just a writer with a book, and I’m just a writer with a book” and when we went any place, he would sit

somewhere, and I would sit somewhere. Then he would leave, and I would leave. Most likely neither of us would have had any idea about each other's existence.” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

Ö.A. believes that people form a kind of friendship over social media, a kind of relationship, or at very least they create a social connection:

“For example, you acquire a friend on Facebook as they say, but you don't sit and talk every day, every evening. That's not what it's about. I mean, it's just a touch, a connection, like a first introduction. Even if there's no real, physical connection, a sort of bond, a kind of link is forged. But it's not the same feeling as you get with friendship, or it's not like sitting and talking, or meeting every day,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

For his generation, meeting and getting to know one's peers over social media, creating a circle of friends does not mean that they are forming opinion groups, although he points out that social media does facilitate relationship-forming and project development.

He gives *altZine* as an example. Even if he doesn't know someone, he can find their e-mail or if they are on Twitter he can reach him and ask “There's this project. Would you join us?”, with great ease. If there are fifteen regular contributors to the magazine, most of them will never have met the others face to face. But they know each other from social media, and by way of writing for the same journal, in fact, by creating that journal ‘a kind of literary environment has been formed indirectly,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). A writer, for example, contacted Ö.A. via e-mail, and asked him if he would like to participate in a collective book project. To which he replied positively. “We did say, repeatedly, let's get together, but we never could manage to physically meet. But, for example, despite not having actually met them, I took part in a project. [...] If I add up my true friends, I'm sure it would only be five or six people from the literary world, that I actually see and physically meet up with,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

To illustrate the impact of social media, the writer suggests that looking back at his use of it in the early 2000's, had he used it in the same way today, he would have received a much greater response, created a much greater impact in terms of numbers of "acquaintances". In the sense of the response to a piece he had written or an experimental activity would be very different " then if ten people would have sent me a message, now it would be 150 or 200 messages," (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Had readers, writers and would-be writers who realised this been able to reach Ö.A. as easily as they could today there would be more mutual interaction, it would have been easier for them to follow each other. Ö.A. gives an example of something that happened to him at a book fair. He comes across someone while in the book fair. They both feel that they know each other but can't figure out from where. Later, Ö.A. realises that he knew this person from Twitter, and that he was, in fact, an academician he was following.

The writer Ö.A. points out that socialising, making connections, "physically being present" was something that existed in the past, but much less so today. For example, he is not aware if there are writers visiting publishers today but says that he personally has never done so. If he were to, he is aware that everyone at the publisher would act pleasantly towards him, but comments that it would still not be a social visit since people would be working, they would be busy. "We are busy, they are busy too. It seems such environments are less common today. As far as I have read about the old book fairs, people's memoirs, these meetings in bars, social visits to publishers, there are all more physical, a need perhaps but right now, I don't think anyone is doing that," (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

Writers meet at fairs, interviews, award ceremonies in a physical sense. Ö.A. meets both writers and award winners at the *altkitap* award ceremony, even continues to see them as friends. He also develops a relationship with the members of the *altZine* team, as they write to each other, and they too become friends. He also has some friends he meets with regularly,

but they don't meet simply because they are from the literary world,. but because they are friends. Apart from conversations about literature or about various projects, they may talk about anything on any subject. "In the final analysis, my circle of friends is predominantly from the literary world, and is interested in literature, but if you add them all up there can't be more than six-seven people. But I don't meet up with all of them at the same time. I have two or three separate relationships," (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). One of the places they meet regularly as a group is the house of a friend. They prefer to meet up in and around Cihangir or Taksim because of the convenience. But there is no other place they go to frequently. "There isn't a place we can say 'This is our cafe', Nor can we say there are places we always eat in, then wander around in," (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

Ö.A. refers to another situation where writers gather: that's at Creative Writing Workshops. Ö.A does have friends who "emerged" from such workshops although he himself never went to one. He mentions that some of those who met at such workshops and became friends later formed a literature appreciation group. Some of the members of that group had published their own books, others did not yet have a book to their name. He comments that sometimes, the members of such groups can be partisan about their group. "Its like a clan, if you ask me. They have a more closed system, they are more supportive of one another," (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). The reason he has for defining it as a clan is "perhaps because they have a specific leader, some are higher ranked than others. That's what I meant by clan. There is a kind of hierarchy," (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Even though they may not have been a group that could form a literary movement, they do connect, they promote their books, they go round together, they go to bars and dinner together.

The writer Ç.D., meets literary figures through the literary journal she works for. She wants to get to know some of the the writers, literary figures and poets that visit the journal, but feeling that it would be like invading their 'personal space', she doesn't attempt to do so.

“They don’t know you, you don’t know them. Just because you know their writing very well doesn’t mean that they have to know you. A person is a little wary of that.” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). The type of relationship she would like to have with the writers would be more than just a personal connection, it would be more a relationship through their writings. For example, all the work she does in preparation for an interview with Gülten Akin, reading all her books, is a productive endeavour for Ç.D.. The fact that Gülten Akin responds to the questions she sends her in a typewritten text is a very meaningful form of communication to Ç.D., who however, feels that she has no need to know people beyond their texts, nor does she wish to know more.

The author Ç.D., mentions that literary figures would at one time meet in Çiçek Pasajı, and that she used to go to Asmaaltı in Beyoğlu with İnan Çetin, where they would come across other literati. According to Ç.D., İnan Çetin, Faruk Duman and Sema Kaygusuz used to meet regularly between 2000 and 2008. She defines these gatherings as social occasions. “Drinking there was part of the friendship. But I don’t think these were relationships that had a name to them”. She stresses that the main venues for socialising were the book fairs. Especially those taking place outside of Istanbul. “Because when you go to a fair elsewhere, you devote all your time 7/24 to it.” The publishers organise every minute of your day. Book-signings and talks at the fair, followed by dinners. And you can meet writers from other publishers too. What happens in Istanbul? You go to an author’s book-signing for an hour. If you are not an editor, or you are not working for a publishers, its just an hour of signatures, and maybe an hour of socialising...”. Today, according to Ç.D., there are many such places where writers meet and socialise, but she herself has ‘stopped’ attending them. “I don’t have that social side. I mean, to call a writer who is a friend and suggest we go out somewhere...where shall we go.....to Asmaaltı? No, I don’t have any idea about that, not that kind of relationship”. Having said which, she relates something that happened in a

booksellers she visits. This is a place she normally shops on line with, but when she goes there she meets one of the partners. When they start to chat she learns that one of the partners is a writer. At that point, another writer turns up, then one or two poets “And all of a sudden the atmosphere in the booksellers changed into something quite different. Beers arrive, nibbles get passed around, Conversation-chat. This must be their regular agenda, you begin to think. So, well, that’s what we did last week. These chats.....”. As a result of these conversations, Ç.D. realises that there is a writer’s group that meets there once a day, or once a week. “That’s nice, too,” she says. Ç.D. doesn’t have a specific writer friend or writers that she sees regularly. She does see Yazar Yalçın Tosun often, but that this was a personal friendship, since they had met before she had her first book of stories published. There are no other writers she sees regularly, she explained.

The writer Ç.D., although personally preferring to avoid places where writers might get together, commented that she had heard that some writers see more of each other. Referring to previous generations, she comments “such relationships do continue.” “Those rakı tables... such things do still exist. And an empathy with your drinking companion, and, inevitably, an instinctive mutually protective feeling towards one another.” Ç.D. claims that even if such encounters and gatherings don’t necessarily evolve into a literary strain, one can see that various groups are emerging from them. According to her, one of the reasons for a writer to be “subject to blows from anyone and everyone” is not being included in such a group.

The writer H.E. used to visit the publishers for whom he was an associate writer in 2008 twice or three times a week, to get or deliver work, or sometimes to collect fees. While there he would get to know other writers. One of the writers he was to meet there was Selim Ileri, with whom he developed a close friendship and who was to become very influential on him, in terms of his craft; guiding him through both Turkish and world literature. On the days

they worked together, they would often carry on together to a meyhane in the evenings. Even if they were not collaborating directly on some writing project, they continued to meet socially. At first, they used to go to Yakup's in Beyoğlu, but since Selim Ileri no longer likes that place much, these days they meet at Vira Vira in Arnavutköy. Selim Ileri "goes there every evening".

In terms of places where writers gather, he mentions cocktails, and although few, book launches, annual celebrations and book fairs. Particularly in the book fairs outside of Istanbul, writers "form a small group". All the publishers attending the Izmir Book Fair, for example, inevitably take the same flight. "So much so that, God forbid, if that plane were to go down, literature would crash in Turkey." H.E. comments that since all the larger publishers are in competition with each other, wherever the biggest hotel is, they all stay there, eat at the same restaurants, and so on. Sometimes tables are joined, so writers and publishing staff merge together at the same table. "I get a chance to see that crowd better when we are out of Istanbul, or the publishers, to be more precise." The fairs in Samsun, Adana, Bursa and other cities have the same effect. On the last day of the fairs in Istanbul, generally on Saturday, there are usually banquets where writers and publishers meet and mingle. Another opportunity for members of the literary world to meet is during the opening and closing cocktails of the Istanbul International Literature Festival. The writer also mentions Mephisto Bookshop in Beyoğlu as a place currently much frequented by "writers and artists" in their thirties. "We don't exchange many words, mainly just cross paths..."

Here he might meet people he knew from journals, or some he had met in Gezi. He mentions that it was mainly the younger group, including poets, writers, critics, etc. that came to Mephisto, among them were poets and writers who knew each other from certain social media groups, and would meet here for the first time. Bars and pubs (meyhane) were another sort of venue where they could meet. For example, one can still see members of the literary

world in Beyoğlu, in the pub still known as *Artizler Kahvesi*, although its name has actually changed, *Absürt*, *Bova* in Mis Sokak and *Kırmızı*, opposite that. “Murat Uyurkulak is always in *Kırmızı*. He could be at the next table. Although I haven’t actually met her, I know that Seray Şahiner comes and goes there. Friday and Saturday nights, plenty of writers...” *Yakup* and *Cavit* are among the bars where you may see writers. H.E. points out that such bars are short lived, since they tend to close every three-four years “its not like it used to be” he points out.

H.E. comments that there are certain writers that he sees, or meets up with, but would not describe them as a group. “We don’t have an awful lot in common in terms of literary approach. When they do meet, they generally chat; the topics: “have you seen so and so’s tweet, have you heard what this one has been saying about that one, look what they wrote now” and similar “harmless gossip”, and the journalists naturally discuss politics at length whenever they meet, says the writer. Even though the conversation is sometimes ‘idle chat’, they do actually find out quite a lot about what is happening around them; they get updated on many topics, H.E. claims. He feels nourished as a writer. H.E. describes the occasional opportunity arising to meet and talk to new people at tables of ten-fifteen people in bars or at Mephisto, which for H.R. is also a place for members of the literary world to meet. Although H.E. does stress that he does not have ‘writer friends’ but that ‘some of his friends are writers’. “We are not a writers’ group. We are just people who get on quite well, who have come together by coincidence, and amongst whom there are some who write stories and poems”. (H.E., 2018, İstanbul). Besides these places, H.E. mentions that they meet in each other’s houses very frequently. They are people who drink a lot, and since they can “no longer afford to go out” on a regular basis, they meet in one or two group members’ houses, especially in Şişli, ‘not because they are writers and poets’, but as friends, some of whom also happen to be writers and poets.

Apart from relationships with friends, the writer H.E. also mentions relationships formed around what writers refer to as ‘significant readers’. As the notion of publishing undergoes change, book sales figures have become important with regard to whether or not a writer exists. As a writer, even though one whose work may be valued as literature, “if your book doesn’t sell, then you have no chance, anymore.” H.E. points out that writers now have that kind of relationship with each other, and that the gossip pot is continuously ‘horrendously’ on the boil:

“As I said, since there isn’t much around to spare, the reader means money, I’m being a little brutal, I know. But that’s a term of expression that comes from publishing, not from writing. [...] Every writer knows his own segment, I mean what section of that segment he can hope to capture, he knows his own portion and he doesn’t want to come out with other similar writers from the same section. For example, both writers A and B appeal to the same readership, to a similar reader; if A’s book comes out in January, and B’s book is due to be launched in February, they will put the launch date back by two months. Such things can happen, That’s not too bad. I mean it gives the reader a little break too...in a way...not everyone can afford...First they sell one writer’s book, then the other’s. Although sometimes this kind of situation can get very exaggerated between writers. I cannot give too many details about that, right now. Since A and B, both address the same readership, they don’t like each other. They are, in a way, stealing readers from each other. At least, thats how they see each other,” (H.E., 2018, İstanbul).

Such a situation has not ‘yet’ arisen for his generation, since they do not have a readership to share, as it were. “We buy each other’s books anyway. As a bunch of people in their thirties, we get along just fine”. But points out that he remains ‘distanced’, and that neither he nor those around him consider themselves part of anything that could be described

as a ‘clique’, or ‘group’, and regard those sorts of things with distrust, as something like “a form of gang”.

The writer M.G. indicated that he does not know many people from the literary world, regarding himself as an ‘outsider’. “I really don’t know too many people. Neither critics nor writers nor editors....I really know very few people.” When his first book was published, a detail in his biographical note attracted the attention of another writer, whose own book of stories had been brought out by the same publishing house. That writer had reached out to M.G. via e-mail. As a result they had got to know one another, and eventually became friends. Probably that is the only ‘writer friend’ I have”. He does have acquaintances at *Agos* or those working in culture and the arts for the press. Although these are not people he knows for being writers. Apart from the few people he met through his own publishers, he knows very few writers from other publishing houses.

M.G. doesn’t go to book fairs.”I think a book-signing day is quite a strange idea”. Even if he thinks the idea of meeting the reader is good, he considers himself “a novice” when it comes to things like signing books. “My friends want to do it; I even get stressed when I watch them signing books”. He comments that as a reader he did not visit the book fairs very much. Since he came to Istanbul in 2011 up to 2018, he went no more than three times. One of the reasons for that being the “remote” location of the fair. He remains outside the literary world, this being a conscious stance he maintains. “I stay out of the world of literature, totally. I’m not saying that it’s a polluted, grimy world, although I can say that I never felt motivated to enter the community, the world of literature.”

3.4 Meeting the Reader

The writer Y.F. indicates that his relationships with the reader are close, perhaps closer than they should be.” When his readers reach him via Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or e-mail, sometimes they want to meet the writer. He will sometimes respond positively to such

requests, depending how they have approached him. “In one hundred cases, such encounters go very well; perhaps in one case you might sometimes go on a stupid ego trip...” (Y.F. 2018, Istanbul). Although Y.F. defines himself as an approachable person, he mentions that there are some cases where “the intimacy implied by such friendliness can be exploited by others”. For this reason, the writer thinks it would be a little more healthy to keep a distance between reader and writer. Thanks to the internet, and the potential of its tools, the younger generation is able to reach whoever they want with great ease. Whereas in his time, anyone wishing to reach a writer or literary figure that he admired would have to make a huge effort:

“In our day things were different. There was a graphic artist called Can Barslan. I was a huge fan of his, especially during one period. For example, to get to meet him once, I waited in a long book-signing queue. He was writing in *Leman*. At one point I had submitted my stories there. Then later, I tried to make contact, phoned, wrote letters. Its different today. They are tap tap tapping messages, phone in hand. When there is no longer the need for any effort, you become less valuable to them. Just as someone its hard to reach is more valuable to you, being reached so easily...” (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul).

Apart from face to face with readers who have reached him on social media platforms or via internet, Y.F. also meets readers via book-signing days, various events and through reading groups. He comments that he finds the conversations held during reading groups to be particularly enjoyable. He recalls going to Malatya to take part in just such a conversation. When an event in Ankara planned by the same group of readers was cancelled, the writer found an alternative space for it, put it out on his social media platforms and held the event anyway. In the Izmir Book Fair, apart from book-signings and talks, he again invites his readers via social media to meet in a pre-designated green space, where he meets and has a

conversation with them. Besides that, book-signings in booksellers are another occasion for the writer to meet his readers.

The writer A.E., meets his readers at fairs and talks. But doesn't 'like' fairs because, "our idea of a fair is actually a market. You know, you go to the wholesalers, the tomatoes are all laid out, potatoes, apples, come on, buy, buy, sort of thing... even the display on stall... I mean, our fairs are a little focused on selling, (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). Let to talk to some writers, Not to mention that you can't get near some writers to talk to them, while for others 'business is closed'.

The writer J.V. mentions that as a reader, she had never met a writer. She never attended book-signings at the book fairs, and back then there were no writer's visits to schools. But after her first book was published in 2011, she herself, as a writer, visited schools. Although, prior to that date, some schools were organising author-related events, in the 'last four years' such activities had become "almost a regular sector". For a writer, you can reach the same sales record in two months with two school visits as you would via a booksellers a year beyond publishing. This is both good and bad, according to J.V., since the one place where children and young people can meet and get to know a writer is 'unfortunately' in school, in the process she felt that the "intrinsic authenticity of the writer can be lost", that the whole thing can become a sort of "hollow show." "Perhaps", says J.V., "when Turkey reaches a different level of culture, perhaps we will be meeting in bookshops." (J.V. 2018, Istanbul). She also mentions shopping centres and fairs as places where the writer can meet their public. J.V. is not sure if there are others or not:

"While sitting in [.....] some people come up to Selim İleri and chat with him, but are they just Selim İleri readers? The true Selim İleri readers? No. They come up and say hello because they recognise him, because they have read a few of his books. I mean I don't know of such a place where people meet like that. In any case, I don't think

people form such relationships nowadays. They follow their favorite writer via Facebook. That is, they meet via Facebook or Instagram,” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer T.L. meets his readers after the publication of his first book in 2011 in various booksellers. He visits universities and high schools where author’s book-signing days are organised. He also takes part in book-signings in corporate companies. He attends book fairs, especially after the launch of his first book, particularly those in Istanbul and Izmir, but he also goes to book-signings in Ankara and Adana. In 2015, journals begin to co-organise book-signings. While participating in a book-signing day in the annual book fair co-organised with the journal *Ot*, he was to travel around Turkey five or six times a year with other writers, such as Nermin Yıldırım and Seray Şahiner, participating in book-signings. Readers would come to these book-signings, bringing copies of the writer’s published books. Apart from being a channel to connect a writer with his readers, “our popularity rose through the journals. Social media, yes, that was also a good channel but then the opportunity to become popular through the journals arose, and for example, many of my readers learnt about my books after they read my piece in the journal,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer R.C. meets her readers mainly during book-signing days. When her first book came out she participated in book-signings organised by the publisher, but particularly in the Istanbul and Izmir book fairs. She attended literary club events at universities as a speaker, and participated in panels, also reaching her readers through these activities. Apart from such events, “There is something called Instagram in our lives now”. She said that on Instagram the readers are like siblings. It is not possible to answer every single person, but she describes what her readers write to her, what they send, and the things they tag as “very emotional”. She describes “an Instagram explosion,” although bearing in mind that not all of these may be genuine. “You think that someone you know, who has read your book, is stimulating, inspiring you. No-one could love you that much.” R.C. comments that Instagram

is a strange place. It is a place where everything has been redefined, that has changed the shape of all relationships, and even interferes with them. But Instagram is closest to the readers. “They can build a totally recognisable relationship. They can say everything just like that. It’s a strange place... It could be through a personal message, or they could be sending me something by tagging me in a post in their own account. But... I don’t know...it seems to me that you only write with such clarity, and with such emotion to a member of your own closest family. Its a place that’s over-full of emotions,” (R.C. 2018, Istanbul)

R.C. comments on how relationships created over Instagram can be very different from personal, face to face relationships. Even though one might be involved with a very friendly, intimate relationship on Instagram, when the parties meet, face to face, you may find that it is impossible to sustain “the same level of intimacy”. R.C. feels that on Instagram, people tend to be a little more daring, and that it enables them to express their emotions more courageously. Even when we share our own child’s photo, we act as if we really love them more in that medium. Its a very weird place....” According to R.C., people can write much too much detail about their own lives on Instagram. The fact that they cannot see one another can encourage a person to behave more openly. In their own home, a person can write whatever they like and does not have to answer to anyone. Yet, in real life, “when you meet, thats entirely something else. As if it was not that person who wrote all those things and they carry on as if everything was normal.” She reflects that, if she were to look back, she ‘definitely’ must have shared some things on Instagram at some point, although stressing that she does not really like to share her private life. As far as she is concerned, sharing something from her own life on Instagram is like showing off. Even if for something negative, it is a form of “affectation” to expect sympathy so much from the correspondent. Apart from Instagram, I have a sort of “nominal presence” (hardly a presence) on Twitter, where my posts are

exclusively about books. She doesn't have a Facebook account. Readers who contact her via e-mail will ask for advice, request her guidance.

The writer Ö.A. mentions that his readers follow him via their social media accounts. "People I assume to be readers will contact me," (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Of all the social media platforms, it is through Instagram that he gets the most contact with his readers. When one of his readers shares a 'story' and the writer 'tags' it, the other side knows it has been read. If the writer's book had come out fifteen years earlier, the only way he would have of knowing whether it had been read or not would be if a new edition was printed. Ö.A. mentions another tool that can give an indication of whether a book has been read or not, that being the "Goodreads" platform where readers' share their views on books they have read, and which rates the books according to 'likes'. But meanwhile, he comments that his "female friends" especially, are exposed to a level of abuse that almost amounts to harrassment on social media. " 'What you write is very nice... I can write too.' This is the more polite end. There are others, more blunt, more aggressive. Don't get too familiar.....this social media....its too blatantly intimate," (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Even if those kinds of followers emerge from time to time, as a writer, its difficult to "block them", "because maybe they are really literature aficionados. It's impossible to know."

The writer Ç.D., says that almost the only place where she encounters her reading public are the fairs. She has given lectures and participated in group discussions with readers in the past, but "didn't think" she would continue to do these things. Not because she had become disappointed or angry, but being bipolar, she is normally depressive, or it could coincide with one of her attacks, in which case she might find herself saying things that she would not normally say, or at such times it could turn out to be the "most lethargic conversation" of all time. She also thinks that group discussions of this kind can trigger attacks. "The stress about facing people at these events starts a week, ten days before.....until

it becomes no longer worth it, as far as I am concerned,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). In addition, she finds the relationships formed in group talks “hierarchical”, the writer sitting up on a platform, while others sit and listen. “I don’t feel that there is much meaning to me giving so much of myself to continue this form of relationship” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). So, apart from coming together for a discussion about a new book or project, she prefers not to participate in “standard” writer discussions. Ç.D. also mentions a strange development:

“They share their impressions of your discussion directly on social media.... in literature, I think in all the arts, as far as turning you into a witch – a womam has a witching age, as LeGuin says – they usually don’t let go until you’re branded a witch. Up until you reach the age when your femininity is hauled off into the background and your intellectual self can emerge front centre, you can face all manner of criticism, no matter how absurd., And if this comes at you at a specific moment, I mean, normally you may not bother with it, but if you are already in a sensitive space, it could push you over in your personal life. Of course, these relationships are what we choose. You could also simply choose not to enter them. Naturally, you cannot choose what is written or said about you on social media, but there is no need to give them any more material. For example, the ‘we went to see exactly what their game was ‘ attitude, and the like...” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer M.G., said that he preferred not to do book-signing days as he found them ‘strange’. He recounts an invitation to a discussion group he attended after his second book was published. He describes the event as a mutual sharing of information or experiences. “It was a strange shared liason in that space, and that was really good.” He attended one or two other meetings of this kind. They were all small, private groups. He never participated in panels or symposiums. His readers are mainly first and second level acquaintances. There are also readers who contact him via e-mail or Facebook. Specifically, he has received more e-

mails than anything else, but also quite a few messages via Facebook. For example, one person who reached him on Facebook had said he was a student, but couldn't buy his book because he didn't have any money, and so asked him if he could send him a copy. He had already had a very strange exchange with this person before, when the student had sent him a booklist including writers such as Umberto Eco and Dostoyevski, asking M.G. to send them to him. From time to time he also received e-mails from indirect acquaintances, or even sometimes people he did not know at all, asking him for his advice on how they could have a book published.

3.5 Promotion

According to the writer Y.F., you could have a “heavily marketed launch” for a film, but for a book “you don't really have too much choice, actually”. He points out that there are fewer culture-art programs on TV channels, especially in recent years. When his novel came out in 2011, he was a guest on numerous TV programs, and even appeared on the main news bulletins. In 2011, he points out, there were book programs and culture and arts programs, but these had all been closed down in the intervening period. His own five minute clip, that had been part of a program on TRT Children's channel was closed down during Gezi. Y.F. reminds us of many similar examples:

“Before, there were plenty of programs for a writer to appear on. [...] There was a culture and arts program on NTV presented by Kadir Çöpdemir and Beyaz. There would be five or six people there, then, in between, there would be celebrity slots, with perhaps a writer among them. Or writers might appear on some of Okan Bayülgen's programs. Nowadays, there is no place for a writer to appear on TV. For example, I once appeared on Sevim Gözay's program on channel 360. Occasionally we would see writers on CNN's Sunday AM. Program [...] But look at the situation now, not just for

me; if you're not Ahmet Ümit or Elif Şafak you have no chance whatsoever of appearing on a TV program," (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul).

According to Y.F., the inability of writers to find a place for themselves on TV is, in his view, related to the notion that, as talk show guests, writers can be classed as possible dissident voices, as was the case during the Gezi events. He believed that actors were apolitical, and that musicians, too, took an apolitical stance in order not to miss (work in) municipal concerts, whereas 90% of writers were oppositional. This is a situation not unique to Turkey. It could be said of any country during any period. (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul). So even though the culture-art programs have almost disappeared, and very little space is being allocated to culture-art news, the writer feels that social media—Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are very effective as promotional tools. The culture-arts journals started by *Ot* are, in the writer's view, also important.

When his book was published in 2004, the writer A.E. participated in open public literary discussions in Diyarbakır and Batman, and interviews with him were published in magazines. One or two articles about the book appeared in literary journals. He took part in book-signing days at the Istanbul book fair, although this event passed largely unnoticed. When he received an award, the news was featured on CNN Türk and NTV TV channels. Again he participated in interviews about the book on the mainline TV channels CNN Türk, NTV, TRT and others. He gave interviews to a number of major dailies, including *Radikal* and *Milliyet*. He stresses that the publishers ran a powerful promotion campaign.

The decline in the effectivity of the press and visual media, or in the words of the writer, the reduced, barren nature of the culture-arts programs that do exist, led to a rise in the preference for the use of social media for promotional purposes. Both writers and publishers now prefer to use social media platforms, namely Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, to share news about both the publishers themselves and their new books. So much so, that publishers

seek to recruit social media experts onto their teams. A.E. stresses that for writers and others, their social media accounts are like a personal website. He too follows newly published books via social media.

The writer J.V. says that book launches and cocktails took off after 2007-2008. “It was also mainly around that time that alternative methods began to inform choices for book promotion. Video clips, launches, cocktails, at the publishers or the writer’s home....with press invited....” She feels that the culture and arts press expanded during that era. The use of alternative methods for book promotion also sparked off a debate. As, along with other advertising material, the use of video clips to promote books begins to spread in Turkey, just as in Europe and the USA, it triggers a long-running controversial debate on whether this is commodifying literature or not, and whether it is ethical or not. J.V. thinks this is a ‘nonsense’ discussion, since it is a time of change, and book promotion can be done in alternative ways. She points out that these days no-one is cutting out coupons from book supplements and presenting them to the publishers to be exchanged for books. Instead, you have a ‘post’ on Instagram. She feels that that period was also transitional. One can also question the notion of writers like Tuna Kiremitçi and Elif Şafak being featured in promotional clips. “You may or may not share this opinion, but there was obviously some resistance towards the book becoming a popular commodity. Perhaps that is the case in every field,” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

During the millenium years, there were culture and arts programs on TV, the writer stresses, such as “Karalama Defteri” with Yekta Kopan and Doğan Hızlan, and Selim İleri and Atilla İlhan’s book programs that carried on into those years on TRT. The culture channel, TRT2, hosted many writers, and covered many books and literature. A number of dailies began to publish book supplements, taking their lead from Cumhuriyet Kitap and Radikal Kitap. Such supplements were not purely a ‘product of idealism’, but as J.V.

suggests, “There was a functional side to them. If they thought that money was to be made from them, then they would publish”:

“You’re making a culture and arts program; you think that it has an audience, so you are presenting something for that segment. You have a specific customer, when they place an advert there they are happy. They have presented their product to someone. These are, as I said, there is always a need. This satisfies that one, and that the other and so on. Plus. they are making money in the meanwhile.. In any case, there was a need for culture and the arts at the beginning of the millenium,” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer T.L.’s opinion was that, in 2002, the preferred promotional tools were the journals and dailies. And that “only major ” writers would appear on TV. “We would see the new books of Orhan Pamuk or Yaşar Kemal on culture and arts programs. (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). T.L. appears as a guest on NTV’s Gece Gündüz program himself, when his new book comes out in 2011. “Yekta Kopan was running the program, and he was someone who followed young writers; the editors of that program were very young too”. He points out that it would have been hard to imagine a young writer of thirty or so, whose first book had just been published, being given the chance to appear on NTV during the 70’s and 80’s. He comments that he doesn’t see any young writers on any TV chaneln these days. Which, he believes to be related to the political climate, given that there are no culture and arts programs anymore. “The political climate is not just about preventing dissidence, it actually transforms the culture. The culture and arts agenda changes, TV progams on arts and culture begin to disappear, the quality of the Daily press goes down. In general, as social standards drop, the result is an impact in the form of banality in the arts and culture,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). From 2011 onwards, apart from the TV, journals and dailies, there is also social media as a promotional platform. With the onset of platforms like Facebook and Twitter, the writer no longer “needs” the publisher for promotion. Apart from the author himself, now the

reader can also promote both writer and book. T.L. reiterates that today social media plays a major role in book promotion. He holds that social media “determines” everything, and that it has changed the “advertising environment”:

“There is a readership group of five hundred people. Lets say: If this group just reads your book once, thats a single edition. This is what the publishers want. Now, let’s say, those five hundred readers all share. If they each have their own group of followers of a hundred people, immediately you are talking figures of five thousand, fifty thousand. Even if you advertise in Varlik, how many people do you think that would reach? Now this way, its going to be more profitable for the publishers. So you don’t advertise in Varlik, but put it on social media instead,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer R.C., remarked that her publisher did not pursue an aggressive promotional campaign after the publication of her first book. Before advertising anywhere, the publishers reviewed their relationships with promotional channels. They opted to advertise only with their own agents and those whom they supported. “They were discrete with their advertising”. R.C. comments that she was not a writer who would welcome billboard exposure, in any case, and that the publishers did not regard her as a ‘promotional feature’. They had published her when they had gathered the right portfolio of work. “They weren’t concerned about top sales with her book. In fact, I don’t think that was their attitude towards any book. They were more concerned with the work itself.”. After her first book is published, R.C. promotes it on social media herself. Thanks to the efforts of a journalist friend with a wide circle of friends, interviews with the author appear in multiple dailies, from *Akşam* to *Posta*, on the arts and culture pages in *Birgün* and *Evrensel*, and in *Notos* and *Milliyet Sanat*. She does not appear on TV at all.

These days, the relationship between book supplements and publishers has literally taken on a ‘transactional’ approach. R.C. is of the opinion that even though there was always

a sense of mutual interest, it was never as “clear-cut” as it is today. Now, the publishers can be approached ‘directly’ (by the journals) saying that they are thinking of publishing a piece on a book the publishers are bringing out that month, and asking whether they (the publishers) would like to collaborate in terms of advertising slots. And if there is no advertisement, they will publish neither news nor interviews. Both the publishing house owners and the writer would find this attitude ‘inappropriate’. R.C. finds it “honest”, since the journal has to fill those advertising slots, although commenting that “it does tend to turn the journal into a form of promotional bulletin, rather than an agent of literary criticism,” (R.C. 2018, Istanbul). That is why, the writer explains, she preferred to create her own channels. “What a good job there is something called social media” (R.C. 2018, Istanbul). It’s now turned into a sort of ‘do your own advertising’ says the writer, who adds that, however, via social media promotion, one can gain as much visibility as if one had been posted on billboards. For example, if the popular actor Mert Firat, who has so many followers, or the writer Yekta Kopan were to have the book, it would be extremely effective. “This may be advertising, but at least it is proper exposure by the right people”. I never called and asked him to have a go at this book’. So it has value”. (R.C. 2018, Istanbul). R.C.’s book is promoted by a chain of reader recommendations to others, and not by way of a planned campaign. There was no need for the writer to turn up for book signings in shopping centres or D&R. One reason for this being that her readers prefer not to visit such places, another that since no one would turn up it would be pointless anyway. The writer’s second book “is going just fine all on its own. We’re not pushing.” (R.C. 2018, Istanbul).

The writer R.C. indicates that book supplements were very important for her, especially in 2010, the year she entered the literary world with the publishing of her first book. For example, she never missed *Cumhuriyet Kitap* or *Radikal Kitap*, as a reader, because whenever she started reading it, she felt the need to buy the books that were mentioned in the

week's publication reviews. The writer trusts the editing team of those particular supplements to make the right selection of books for her, believing that they chose only books they valued to recommend. And this is why book supplements were important for her. However, she recalls, after 2010, "things changed somewhat". In fact, she remembers long TV programs to which writers would be invited and could talk extensively. The situation at the journals was similar, she recalls. "These journals, even if they still exist, are still on paper, and I have no idea what's in them. Or which books dominate that periodical? Or who is their reader? I have no idea. It may be surviving as a journal but what are they doing there. I honestly don't think they can be engaging in the kind of quality publishing, book publishing as one saw in 2010." (R.C. 2018, Istanbul). Now there are the book channels on Youtube, where people are talking about books like bloggers. Or there are 'crazy book promotions' on Instagram, or phenomena bookworms. There may be some good books among those they recommend, but, R.C. comments, if she had read twenty books in one week, she would be wondering why she had read at least fifteen of them. So, says R.C., there are no expert opinions left that one can truly rely on, no critics that can be said to be true opinion leaders. "Burcu Aktaş used to write very good reviews, I remember, but there is nowhere left to write such pieces anymore." So that means I don't know what Burcu is reading, and what she would recommend me to read this week. I am curious but what can she do.....there are just no such figures of guidance in the book sector any more." (R.C. 2018, Istanbul). She admits that she has no idea whose voice is currently being heard in this way. Ultimately, there is now a situation where the 'product', the book has to find its own way or not as the case may be.

The writer Ö.A. explained that when his book came out neither he, himself, nor the publishers made any "extra effort" to promote it. In 2017, when it was about to be published, he was invited to the publishers by their PR person, who asked him to sign a copy of his book for their protocol list. "There were around a hundred names. I must have signed seventy or

eighty of them. [...] There was no other name I wished to add to the list. Basically because I didn't know anyone." (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). A press release was given out, but as far as the writer was aware, there was no advertising. Those whose names were on the protocol list wrote about the book. As far as TV was concerned, then as now, only the major writers, Orhan Pamuk, Elif Şafak, Ahmet Ümit ever got exposure there.

Social media is very effective as a promotional tool. Ö.A. describes two categories of text-based marketing. The first consisted of advertising, articles, very little critical writing, and mainly reviews. These he calls the "online gossip journal". The second was the online press. He believes that the *Hürriyet Kitap Sanat* supplement was mainly read online. The younger generation follows books on such platforms as blogs, vlogs, and instagram, says Ö.A.. Even though these platforms are not effective in the choice of books in his case, according to the writer they are very effective for the younger generation. When trusted figures, especially those with a literary reputation, share via their own accounts on Facebook or Twitter, this is effective in raising interest. "Sometimes Yekta Kopan gives space to *altZine* on his Twitter account, saying this issue is so and so, not every issue, but when he does, the download figures seriously soar". Whether the downloaders read them or not, that we don't know. But there are opinion leaders anyway, whose voice really matters. [Yekta Kopan] has a million followers or what...an incredible number of followers." (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Or, just as when a new book comes out it is sent to the editors of *Sabit Fikir* or *Cumhuriyet*, it is also sent to opinion leaders on Instagram in exactly the same way. Or contact is made in some form. However, Ö.A. believes that this effects very popular literature much more. With regard to the supplements, he feels that they were very effective in the past, compared to during the millenium, but have entirely lost that edge today:

"I think that once they were trully effective. A text I read there, or a commentary....There were people I would follow, they were really valuable. Now,

there aren't even proper books, so to speak. If we compare this with the situation in the 2000's, the contrast becomes quite clear. For the year 2000....Perhaps it has to do with me, it was something I valued very much. Now I value it a lot less, I think not many people value it. I would wait for it; For it to be Friday, or whatever day so that the journal would be out. Now....nothing, When I see it I take a quick look that's all," (Ö.A., 2018, İstanbul).

The writer Ç.D. indicates that social media is the 'tool of the new era'. In the olden days there were billboards, underground posters, whereas currently the main promotional tools are surely Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. But the writer comments, whether your promotion is by billboard, or via someone with 30,000 followers (on social media) "work that lacks substance or credibility will still be without credibility and substance." Even if sales do go up a little at promotional events, a book intrinsically lacking in quality will shake the readers' confidence in the publishers. The reader will begin to doubt the next book "even though it might, this time, really be worth what the promotion claims". "No-one is that naive" claims the writer. Ç.D., feels that people appreciate art and literature at an intellectual level as something they "elevate beyond the mundane". But to think in simple terms, for example, a textile product is advertised to saturation point on Instagram and at bus stops, until it is so ingrained in our minds that we select it automatically over other products. But if it falls apart at the second wash, then even if you tattoo it onto people's foreheads they would not buy the same product twice. (Ç.D., 2018, İstanbul). This might not be exactly what's going on with literature, but then, in any case, I don't think we are talking just about literature":

"We are talking about a huge amount of work here. There is the text, the editor, the reader, the book and cover designers, the marketing coordinator, the marketing staff, you see what I mean? The successful book reaches its reader as a result of this team's joint efforts. And what happens then, criticism, either positive or negative. One might

say the translator is very good but the editing, well, and the script, unreadable. You see what I mean? We're talking about a process that never ends, from the notes you make on the typewriter or in your notebook. One says, the cover separate, You see what I mean? There's a thousand things to think about. Where should I start? At the end of the day, if the product wasn't up to scratch, it will never be. Whatever you do to make it look better, it's still not be up to scratch. So they can do as much advertising as they like, via whatever channel as far as I am concerned," (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

Ç.D. thinks that it is "not entirely unreasonable" for promotion to be run through the accounts of Instagram phenomena, and for the publishers' to send books to such figures, or even for them to pay for such campaigns, since she does not believe that those promoting the book have to be from the literary world. What Ç.D. finds really strange is for a writer to "promote themselves". "Perhaps this is normal. Its just I who finds it strange."

The writer H.E. points out that well-known writers who have published their "third, fifth or tenth book" have a recognisable readership which is already following them and so would be aware of any new book they had published. For a young writer such as himself, however, to have the book he just published on the bookseller's shelves is effective as promotion. Some booksellers charge a fee to put the book on their shelves. The publisher is also an important factor. Books that come out from the larger, better known and more reliable publishers can attract reader attention simply by bearing the brand of the publisher. All forms of large scale public advertising, including billboards and metro panels are effective, but due to their high cost are only employed for books with an edition of over 10,000. Social media is another promotional channel where new books can be seen. "Social media has a considerable impact. Books get shared and promoted quite a lot via those channels. Its like... I mean... spreading via word of mouth: Its not just one to one, more like one in a hundred. It spreads according to how many followers they have. I think that may well may be the most effective

format,” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul). On the subject of promotion, H.E. points out that the writers themselves, especially if they are “best sellers” can be influential in this quarter. So much so, that some writers even have a clause in their contracts requiring that a specific percentage of the turn-over from their book be devoted to promotion. Some writers “lose faith” with their publishers if they do not carry out advertising. H.E. comments that most writers demand high print figures for their books for economic reasons. But then, he finds it curious that, later on, they behave as if it is only the publishers who are thinking about the commercial aspect. “We did this, and that, because the publishers wanted it. For them. But if you have so many copies printed, then you have to do book-signings somewhere, and contribute to the promotion somehow. You have to be the face of advertising. (H.E., 2018, Istanbul). H.E. points out that negotiations with the publishers were “brutal”.

When M.G.’s book was published in 2014, he received requests for interviews both directly and via the publishers. For most of the interviews the writer was asked to respond to written interview questions. A number of critical pieces were published in dailies, journals and book supplements as well as on the websites of *Edebiyat Haber*, *Arka Kapak* and *Okuryazar*.

The writer M.G. comments on an explosion in the number of journals being published during the last five or six years, as well as the rise in book sales for the writers contributing to those journals. Journals like *Ot* employed a more personal type of promotion. For example, when a writer with books previously launched by Dogan Kitap begins to write elsewhere, such as in a journal like *Ot*, his followers on Twitter can go up to 40 or 50,000. The same writer can also publish with lesser known publishers, who use “billboard” promotion. According to M.G., prior exposure in the journals creates more public recognition for the writer. Then he is able to reach out to this reader with his new book via the billboards.

Although aware that it may be personal prejudice, M.G. assumes that a book advertised via billboard must be "poor".

In fact, he sees an advantage to this, in that, even if he has no knowledge of the writer or book being advertised on billboard, he can comfortably say "I can ignore this book." Since there is no such thing as a literature association, centre or centres, "it seems to me that there are different relationships at play when working through publishers, through personal relations, through journals as I mentioned, and through the more structured (corporate) network." (M.G., 2018, Istanbul).

M.G. also questions whether newspaper supplements have any impact or not. He voices his general doubts about whether the daily press and particularly their book supplements are read or not, and whether they have a regular readership or not. Publishers generally aim to encourage their readers to buy their books through notices in book supplements and advertising. The supplements, according to M.G., obtain funds from the publishers "in one way or another" through advertising and notices. In this way the supplements are both able to "make a profit" and to supply their supplement to the reader. Although this looks like a 'win-win' situation, M.G. is not certain about this:

"Are both sides actually gaining from this? I'm not really sure, do people actually read them, because their readers.....What I'm really trying to say is that somehow I don't feel that someone who is really going to read a press supplement has any need of the book promotion texts they will read there in order to choose their next book. You are doing something aimed at true literature readers, but, in one sense, it seems that you are not actually channelling the content appropriate to the serious literature reader. Plus, we no longer need a Daily literature supplement to find out about the latest titles. Now there is the internet, and so on. [.....] It seems to me that they are of little use to

either side, especially to the publishers. Plus, I don't know, I'm not sure if the daily supplements are actually read or not," (M.G., 2018, Istanbul).

According to M.G., the power of Social Media was only realised in Turkey quite late. Following "Gezi", people began to develop an awareness towards it as they saw how social media could be used. And they began to realise how important it was. As a result, people began to realise that they could transfer their adverts to that platform, or that they could use social media for 'advertising' (in general). The innovative aspect was not creating advertising, "advertising was not new, but now everyone" could create their own adverts "for any purpose". Not every publisher would put a half-page advert in the daily press, especially for new writers, "as it is, we are only talking about quite moderate sales." So writers would tend to use publishers with an approach that is "more up to date", "more sales focused and corporate in style" who are capable of making use of these opportunities. The notion of demanding their picture on a billboard, and that their book be issued in 10,000 instead of 1,000 copies began to gain traction among writers. This is totally understandable since I too would like to be able to pay my rent just by writing novels. (M.G., 2018, Istanbul). But while saying this, M.G. also confides his belief that if he wrote what he really wants to write, it would not actually be the sort of thing that would be a really high seller. M.G. points out that as a reader, he too follows new titles as they emerge. And he does so by following the recommendations of trusted literary experts. The situation is difficult for the reader. He doesn't just buy any book that is recommended in the book supplements and journals saying "This one is good, I must read it." He goes round the bookshops and chooses for himself.

3.6 Cities that are the pulse of literature and their urban centres

“Always Istanbul....”

The writer Y.F. expressed the view that in 2000 the pulse of literature was, “and always was” in Istanbul, the reason for this being that all the publishers and dailies were there; one reads its praises “throughout Turkish literature”; one finds here its live voices and all its actions; the largest fair is organised here; most of Turkey’s well-known writers are from Istanbul or, en passant, have left their mark on the literary community here; all the known literary movements gathered here.

The writer recalls Cağaloğlu as a hub of literary activity, particularly during 1999 and 2000 when he arrived in the city. At that point the dailies were still in Cağaloğlu. He refers to it as a “busy” place. Beyoğlu, meanwhile, “was always important; many well-known writers lived there”. Kadıköy was also a centre, it was where *6.45 Yayınları* was to be found. As far as Y.F. is concerned, places where there are writers and publishers may always be counted as a centre.

For the writer, it is still Istanbul that holds the literary pulse today. What’s important, he says, is where the activities are, the population is, and where universities and job opportunities are. For those who want to write there are certain lines of work they can adopt, such as journalism, advertising, series writing or teaching, but the majority of jobs are to be found in Istanbul, as he says. Since most of the major advertising agencies, the Faculties of Arts, and the dailies are here, as is the largest book fair and related events, the writer feels that the pulse is still here. He himself works in an advertising agency, and had worked previously with a group of journals. And much as the writer wanted to move to Izmir, there were just no jobs available in the sector. The headquarters of journals and awards were mainly in Istanbul,

and the assumption was that participants were from the city too. As he recounts from a personal experience:

“You know I mentioned that I got a mention in a story competition, well, they rang me and told me that I was invited to the prize-giving ceremony. Well, that’s all very fine, but I can’t really attend very easily, since I live in Izmir. So I need to know if I will get a prize or not. And they said we couldn’t tell you. We can’t tell anyone. There’s no way we can reveal that now. But, I said, I live in Izmir. They were surprised. That I lived in Izmir, and that they didn’t have a plan for that. I mean, they had never thought that they could award a prize to someone who was not from Istanbul, but that they might have difficulty in coming to the award ceremony. And believe it or not, of the first three award winners and three runners up in that competition, only one, that was me, was from Izmir. Normally, I wouldn’t have gone to the award ceremony, but that day there was also a concert, by a group I really wanted to see, So I thought well I’m going to the concert, I might as well go to the ceremony too. Generally they don’t invite everyone. So I thought they must have awarded me something. This is a typical example...that type of competition, or journal are mainly centred in Istanbul, and they assume that everyone is from Istanbul,” (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer A.E. expresses it as “Just as the whole country of Turkey is administered politically from Ankara, the cultural centre is Istanbul. Not only are the majority of publishers, dailies and journals in Istanbul, but also the population is overwhelmingly more numerous than in any other city. “Think about it. How many publishers are there in other cities? Are there any in Trabzon? Or in Van? Or Erzurum? [...] No there aren’t. And the journals: Kitaplık is produced here. As is Adam Öykü, İnsancıl and Varlık. Notos too. Which other region produced a Daily that stayed there if it went national? (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). There is also the historical perspective to Istanbul’s status as a centre. It was Istanbul that was

the home of intellectuals. “Being a centre is something that occurs naturally”. Although the writer does remind us that in 2010, thanks to the *İletişim Yayınları* team in Ankara and their publications, the centre did relocate there at the time. Ankara writers began to appear on panels, and discussions about Ankara and Literature were held. In fact, there was also a movement in Diyarbakir, accompanied by festivals, literature days and publishing house openings, although neither movement was sustained, according to A.E. While he points that there were no comparable movements in the other regions of Turkey, A.E. does mention considerable activities in Trabzon, which were initiated by local writers. “But interviews, literary activities,...its never enough, never. Because the movement continuously loses strength. [...] A journal might come out in one of those places, but it can never become a (national) centre. A.E. ties this to the absence of a distribution chain from that location, and certain communicatio problems.

“Even if Istanbul is still the city that holds the pulse of literature, its not so strong as it once was. Centralisation is no longer dominant....”

So today, according to A.E., the literary pulse is not confined to Istanbul. Even though the publishing centre remains in Istanbul, writers are all living in different places these days. “We have lost our sense of space in some ways because wherever we go nowadays, we are only two hours away from wherever we want to be. Today there are many writers living in Izmir, Ankara, or Bursa, in Batman or Diyarbakır.” Which means that their works are written in different places. And so activities connected to their work began to increase. “For example, there are certain people in some cities, who are like saints. They try to do as many activities as they can. They group around small bookshops and carry out unusual activities. (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). A.E. points out however, that holding activities outside of Istanbul can be more expensive. It is impossible To pay a writer’s expenses from book sales if he is invited to one of those places is prohibitively expensive. Whereas it is not too expensive for an Istanbul

institution to invite an Istanbul writer to an activity to be held in that city, and if they do travel to other towns:

“Let’s say someone from Tarsus invited you there; first, they have to cover your flight; second, they will have to pay for one night’s lodgings; and third; they have to look after you while you are there. For example, I have a talk here (in Istanbul) on Thursday. I’m going to turn up fifteen minutes, half an hour before. There will be meets and greets, and when it’s over I will leave. They will need to devote, at most, two or three hours to me and the activity. But if it’s someone else, you will need to give two days of your time, and they will need to devote two days of theirs to you. So it’s more difficult to run activities,” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul).

A.E. comments that a wider body of writers is beginning to emerge, and that the number of books published is going up year on year. Thanks to the internet, purchasing books on line means access is easier. Again the TUYAP fairs in various provinces are also having an impact. “They are held in Adana, Diyarbakir, Izmir, Bursa, Ankara, Antalya and Samsun.” As a result there is a new readership growing in these cities. And according to A.E. this means that such activities are no longer centred exclusively in one place. Although the pulse in Istanbul is still strong. It is less so than before.

“Perhaps it looks like Istanbul?”

In reply to the question where was the pulse of literature during the millenium decade, the writer J.V. used the phrase “This is a serious question”. “I would like to say that it was Istanbul, but I wonder whether that would be unfair, or could there be something I am missing? (J.V., 2018, Istanbul). When you consider literature, it is always much easier to find activities, writers, books here. In terms of visibility it is always considered better to be in Istanbul, especially according to a writer in the provinces. I myself have heard, even the

writers of Izmir, occasionally complaining over the years". Izmir writers have often openly complained to publishers about what they consider an obvious situation. However, J.V. comments that the Daily Radikal book supplement has the highest readership in provincial Adana. She thinks that literature is followed more in the provinces, but that "its daily flow" is faster in Istanbul. So that perhaps one could say that "its pulse was in Istanbul".

In fact, J.V. believes that the centre of literature is the books themselves. In one sense it's being able to easily access the book that turns a place into a centre. For someone brought up in Istanbul like J.V., it's no task at all to leave the house in Levent, go up to Taksim, and find the book they read about in a journal, the same day or the next. While someone living in the provinces has to go to the "booksellers" or the "newsagent" (in the nearest city) and order it. The book will arrive four days later. J.V. observes, however, that with the onset of technology, today, this is less prevalent. Since, whether it be Istanbul, Ankara or Diyarbakir, wherever you may be, when you put in an internet order with any on-line booksellers the person who ordered the book could receive it the next day. This accessibility via internet, according to J.V., has somewhat decentralised things. "So, in terms of accessibility, the notion of a centre has been abolished. Everyone can access anything". And yet, for would-be writers, Istanbul retains that quality of being a centre. Which means that there are still nine or ten publishers in Beyoğlu or Cağaloğlu where a writer can take his manuscript to, knocking on doors with it under his arm. In Ankara that means a writer getting on the bus, and bringing his portfolio in, or sending it. It's the conglomeration of possibilities and publishers in Istanbul that makes it a literary centre. Were there no publishers in Ankara? Yes, there were. There was *Bilgi* and *İletişim*. But the majority were always in Istanbul, actually...." (J.V., 2018, Istanbul):

"So much accessibility through technology has weakened the position of the centre. I don't mean that it is weakened in terms of content, just that it is no longer so

important to be a centre. Today the literary news site that the whole of Turkey, or at least the book-reading public follows is managed from Ankara. You could be a writer living in a village or a columnist, once you mail in your piece you can become a writer for a high-circulation daily. You don't have to be there. You don't have to remind them about yourself. Technology actually has somewhat softened these centres, even if I can't quite say that it has removed them altogether. Someone who lives close to a metropolis, or is surrounded by opportunities always has a chance to show themselves more in every field. You are more likely to be considered when any opportunity arises. But technology has, to a great extent, broken this spell. We keep talking about freelance this last decade. There was the concept of the working day. We could work freelance before, but now its no problem to submit your text from home, to upload photos taken at home etc..." (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

Nowadays, particularly in the large provincial cities, there are more events taking place than previously, more book fairs being held. Even if "minimal," given the economic conditions, one does not have to be in Istanbul, according to J.V., who says that this is particularly true for the years following 2010. There are very few editors or publishing directors who wish to meet face to face with the writer. They prefer to manage the work via e-mail. The writer sends his script via e-mail, the editor acknowledges when he receives it, and communication continues through the same channel without the various parties meeting until a contract is signed. This speeds the process up considerably, not to mention the fact that it is relatively easy for a writer living, for example, in Muğla to deliver his file to the publishers this way. J.V. believes tht face to face relationships have finished. She gives an example from the time of Erdal Öz, founder of *Can Yayınları*, to illustrate her point that there was a different way of doing things:

“A writer sharing that he hadn’t been able to pay his water bill, or talking about his love life , that’s something else. That sort of thing turns a publishing establishment into something like a writers’ house, rather than a publishers. As it is, we know, or have heard or read in various books about them having frequent arguments. In other words, that kind of relationship was not only difficult but it was a real relationship. I’m not saying that today relationships aren’t real. But as with everything else, the lack of such transactions is a loss. It’s about the loss of sincerity. Perhaps it means that tasks can be speeded up, can be facilitated, but I cannot imagine these days a writer being able to say to his publishers ‘I’m a bit tight for cash right now, is there any chance of an advance’. How many writers can there be who feel comfortable enough with their publishers to ask that.” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

“Istanbul, and I think it will probably always be so”

According to the writer T.L., for 2002, the literary pulse was in Istanbul and, partially Ankara. Generally speaking, the reason for Istanbul being the centre was that the majority of journals and publishers were located there. “Ankara literature” had begun to emerge during those years. T.L. explains that some literary figures carried on the culture handed down to them by the previous generations. When a new writer emerged, it was they who decided everything about him, from whether and how to promote him to how important a writer he was. They also being the ones who determined the literary, cultural and artistic policies and agenda of the day; he adds that the literary pulse was also evident in the journals, and various other settings in the culture and arts world. He mentions Beyoğlu-İstiklal Caddesi, Cağaloğlu and Kadıköy as determinant locations in that sense. And publication directors in journals as other determinant characters.

Regarding literary centres in Istanbul in 2002, T.L. comments “Perhaps there were some, but I have no idea.” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). In 2011, according to this writer, the pulse is still in Istanbul, with some activity in Ankara. The publication policies of certain publishers, but especially *İletişim Yayınları*, were instrumental in putting Ankara writers and Ankara literature on the map. Diyarbakır also played a role in determining the direction literature was to take, since, according to T.L., the writers of that region had always represented a specific movement in literature. Particularly around 2010, “the emergence of Murat Özyaşarların and Yavuz Ekinçiler gave voice to the region”. In 2011, as far as T.L. is concerned, there was no such place in Istanbul, that could be called a literary centre. “There was nowhere in Istanbul. Not that I know of. (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer comments that today, the literary pulse is in “Istanbul, and I think it will probably always be so” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). Apart from the fact that the journals, the large publishers, the editors are all in Istanbul, the award competitions are all based in Istanbul. All the jury members for such competitions live in Istanbul, too. In 2010 and also 2011, a younger generation emerged, and with that the literary pulse began to remove from real life and relocate in the digital world of cyber space. By the time we reach 2017 and 2018, the pulse is re-establishing itself on cyber platforms, and, in some strange ways, continues to throb at journals like *Ot*, *Kafa* and *Tuhaf*. The cafes attached to these publishing houses have become places to meet. *Ot Cafe*, *Sokrates* and the cafe attached to *Kafa* journal are places where you might “meet someone. Not exactly of the caliber of Attilâ İlhan, but you could still coincide with somebody. But it could not be called a centre.” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

“Still, its here [Istanbul] where everything comes together. The printers are here, distribution works from here. We could regard it as a kind of heart.”

The writer R.C. felt that Istanbul still had the pulse of literature, and that it was always a leader in that respect, also commenting that there were not so many metropoli in Turkey.

Even if Ankara had a certain gravitas of its own, traditionally, it was Istanbul. There were physical reasons for this. For example, it had all the publishing houses were represented there, and many had their head offices there. If a literary activity is planned, inevitably it will be held in Istanbul. Or if someone is to be invited from abroad, they will be invited to Istanbul because “this is where our readers are”. There is a huge crowd at the fairs in Izmir and Antalya, but no fair is considered as important as the Istanbul Book Fair. In so many ways, all the events, the activities, everything that brings us together as readers, publishers and writers is definitely given more importance here, and has a greater impact. (R.C. 2018, Istanbul). As for today, the pulse is still here, in Istanbul. And the writer feels that “as long as Istanbul exists, we are probably going to carry on stirring the pot here, in very many ways.” (R.C. 2018, Istanbul). R.C. does not think that it would be at all easy for any other city to take the arts and culture mantle from Istanbul. Not only the publishers, but also newspapers and journals have their offices in Istanbul. A great number of writers live in Istanbul. And even if a writer lives in an another city, “there’s a system that connects/invites them to Istanbul”. I mean, you come here to see your editor, or to attend a book-signing. Again, I feel that it’s the city of Istanbul bringing everything together. The printers are here. Distribution runs from here. You could call it a kind of heart. (R.C. 2018, Istanbul).

In terms of literary centres in Istanbul, Beyoğlu was a little dominant in 2010. This was the foremost neighbourhood, then, especially as far as activities were concerned. R.C. thinks that a great percentage of writers lived within the “Cihangir, Beşiktaş, Cihangir triangle”, at least at that time, while the publishers’ offices were still on the historical peninsula. Today, she comments, they have moved over into the city, particularly the smaller publishers. She stresses the large numbers of cafes frequented by students in Beyoğlu, where one might encounter the literary intelligensia, and where one could take one’s books and read, mentioning *Kaktüs* and *Ada Müzik* by name, and one or two places around

Asmalımescit. “There must still be some places, I’m sure, although in general I believe that world has largely changed hands.” (R.C. 2018, Istanbul).

When we compare 2010 with today, it seems that “today it’s more fragmented”. It would seem that the “Beyoğlu atmosphere” that brought writers and artists together since the 1950’s has moved over to other neighborhoods. Pera is where the pulse of theatre, cinema and literature surges; but today Istanbul has divided into different centres. “We are living in such a huge city that today its as if a great number of different things are happening in a great number of locations, rather than in one place.” For example, there is a theatre in Ataşehir where one might come across literary convocations. From the point of view of culture and the arts, Kadıköy is one of the neighborhoods where such features are very lively. For example, if a writer is going to do book-signing in two locations, R.C. stresses that they will have a different signature for Beyoğlu as for Kadıköy. When the author organises a book-signing in Beyoğlu and it gets space on social media, he will be asked if he is coming to Kadıköy. “Why didn’t you come here, yet? Because, in essence.... I didn’t do the signing in Izmir,” (R.C. 2018, Istanbul). The inhabitants of Kadıköy have developed the attitude that everything must be drawn over there. There are also bookshops that have opened in Kadıköy, which express a tendency towards the atmosphere of a cafe bookshop. That were such places once in Beyoğlu, but, the writer points out, these are turning into something else. “Ultimately, it would seem that the baton is passing between three or four neighborhoods”, Beyoğlu, Kadıköy and Beşiktaş, because of the prevalence of universities there. Universities, especially those with literature departments do attract attention through symposia, and panels. One place where writers and literary figures meet is the publishing conference organised by Günışığı bookshop. The writer herself has attended this event, where, she explains, one may see every kind of person from the literary world, from writers to publishers, even paper suppliers.

According to the writer R.C., 2010 was a transitional year. “From the ‘90’s up to today, we see everything slowly dissolving, an Istanbul where many things were indistinct, lacking in clarity. Because from that year onwards, Istanbul changed into something completely different.” (R.C., 2018, Istanbul). Stressing that prior to 2010, Istanbul had been an entirely different place. She felt that the culture-arts and literature setting that was Beyoğlu changed at precisely that time. “It seems that there may have been a sort of retreat into the home.....” At that time there was a kind of cafe culture, people did meet out of doors, and visited exhibitions together. Having said that, she comments that as a result of her own life becoming a ‘retreat behind closed doors’, she may be uninformed about what is going on outside of those walls. Although in general terms she feels that as a writer she sensed there was a difference between the literary world as it was when she entered it and during the later period. “Although how this becomes a distinct difference I am not sure.” She is of the opinion that the dissolution, as it were, the period of transition, is due to the transfer of capital. In the popular neighborhoods, like Beyoğlu, “they”, the writers and readers who took pleasure not in ‘shopping’ but in sitting at a cafe, reading their newspaper or journal, were ousted, discriminated against by a new phenomenon. “Yes, I think that’s what it is. Because when I look at what was happening in 2010 and 2009, from where I stand now, I feel that I had quite a different lifestyle. (R.C., 2018, Istanbul):

“For example, we were doing a program on Habertürk in 2010. It was just that period, and how free we were, how strange it seems now, to have brought those people together on the channel, to have asked those questions, I mean...to be going out and meeting people in those settings... now when I think about it , it seems so remote and unlikely. This is, well, something that changed,..... in so many different ways. Capital changed hands, as a result the street changed, it evolved, our newspapers changed, the TV changed, people changed, the tourists visiting the city changed, and whether we

like it or not, since everything is interconnected, we lose our own arenas. That is why I say we may have retreated behind closed doors in the process. (Speaking of today). But then again I am saying all this from my own perspective. If we wanted to meet up with our own peers, I mean... we would not be able to think of a place to do so,” (R.C., 2018, Istanbul).

For Ö.A. the pulse of literature “If it’s anywhere, it’s in Istanbul” because it’s dynamic, productive, vibrant here. Istanbul is where the writers are, the literary activities and the publishing houses. “The fact that writers live here means that this is where they produce their work, this is where they publish their books.” According to Ö.A. where writers live makes that place the pulse of literature. “I think that when we say this is where the pulse is, it’s generally to do with where you live, that’s where people live, that is where they eat, that’s where they drink, that’s where they meet their friends, [...] that’s where they write or alternatively, that’s where some writers and publishers carry out their activities,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). As a writer, you create something out of your own experiences in the city where you live; you storify its spirit. “Myself for example, even if I don’t write about Istanbul directly, I am inevitably inspired by it when I write. Istanbul is not only much written about, it is also here that most activities take place. If there is an interview, it “usually, though not always”, takes place in Istanbul. If there is going to be a discussion about a book, or a panel is organised one evening, it will inevitably be in Istanbul. If there is going to be a meeting, it will be organised in Istanbul. There are so many literary events happening here in Istanbul, that both readers and writers can choose from. The publishers being here is also a factor, although more lately. So, for example, even if *Can Yayınları* is in Ankara, people will still send their work to that publishers.

The literary centre of Istanbul used to be around İstiklal Caddesi, but now it has expanded to include Taksim and Cihangir, even Karaköy and Galata. The writer thinks that in

the long term, a number of writers, publishers, literary intellectuals and publishers will emerge from Kadıköy. Some of the publishers have moved over there too. “I think we are going to hear a lot more from Kadıköy as a centre, we are going to feel the pulse more from there. In fact, it (the centre) could transfer entirely over there (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

“How many fields are there in Turkey whose pulse is not in Istanbul?”

According to the writer Ç.D., development in the literary world is focused around Istanbul because the pulse of publishing is felt here. Despite this, however, the writer comments that there has also always been an “eastern seam”, to which she observes, an “Ankara seam” has been added. Towards the end of the millenium decade, and the beginning of the last decade (2010 onwards) this ‘Ankara seam’ took form as Barış Bıçakçı gained “recognition as a literary figure”, and as other writers whose work fed on the same climate began to emerge. And yet, the writer believes that despite the emergence of the “Ankara seam” and “slight flakings from Istanbul” as she describes writers moving to other cities, this does not necessarily imply a “loss of blood” in Istanbul, nor will it cause the centre to move elsewhere. According to Ç.D., “it will be a while” before that happens; in fact, it may not ever happen: “What I call these “slight flakings”, When I talk of an Ankara seam, I don’t mean a 50-50 per cent split. I simply mean that while in the past it was a monopoly, now there is also the Ankara seam. (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

“How many fields are there in Turkey whose pulse is not in Istanbul?”

Ç.D. stresses that not only for the literary world but also as far as the visual arts are concerned, Istanbul is at the vanguard. Of course there are valuable initiatives and developments in Ankara and Eskişehir; but if you consider the visual arts, for example, production; and within that, everything from the space to choice of materials; from the daily consumption of the producers to exhibitions and product sales, every branch of activity is in

Istanbul. “The centre for textiles is also Istanbul. You see what I mean? Everything from production to the final point of sale are to be found in Istanbul. Perhaps better quality production might be happening elsewhere, but in the final analysis, the product will end up in Istanbul,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

Ç.D. says that it is Beyoğlu one thinks of first when talking about literary centres, especially Çiçek Pasajı, which was the setting for those “Friday Discussions”. And yet, having said that, “But I don’t know... I think that’s the beauty of literature, to be able to talk of such a centre... Yes, there are certain places where many things are centred,” but the writer is not sure if “this is enough to turn such a place exclusively into an monopolized centre”. The writer adds that the meetings between Ayfer Tunç, Murat Gülsoy and Yekta Kopan could be counted as a focus point; and that the creative writing workshops organised by *Notos* could mean that that location had also become a centre. As for today, she seriously considers the idea that Beyoğlu has moved over to Kadıköy, or more accurately, that Cihangir has moved to Kadıköy. Although she could not name any specific places, the writer commented that writers lived, or were to be found in those districts. When the writer Ç.D. moved from Cihangir to Kadıköy herself, she commented that she began to come across people whom she had known from Cihangir, in the streets of Kadıköy, and explains this ‘lateral relocation’ as the result of “the deliberate deconstruction of Taksim, extreme rent-hikes, safety anxiety, combined with the potential for broader freedoms available in Kadıköy”. According to Ç.D., Kadıköy is a “more homogenous place” and “is set to remain so no matter what.” No matter how many people you squeeze into it, it keeps its own clusters, its own black and white. In that respect, it’s a little like Ankara. For that very reason it could never be a Beyoğlu, in my view, but that’s another experience (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). As far as Ç.D. is concerned, Kadıköy is not a culture and arts centre.

She suggests that the reason for this is that what she defines as one of the most important elements in the making of a culture and arts centre, which is where the long-term resident “ex-pats” chose to take up residence. “Perhaps not so much for literature, but ultimately literature is also nourished by other branches of the arts. That centre was Beyoğlu. Kadıköy, even though it appears to embrace newcomers at first, keeps its “shell” intact, leaving little chance for a “deepening” of interpersonal relationships. Whereas in Beyoğlu, “since no-one has an identity”, no-one feels the need to form a group. “That is why it is able to absorb all comers.” Besides which, those who do come to Kadıköy are mainly tourists, who stay for six months or a year and live not only in Kadıköy but also in Nişantaşı and Teşvikiye, or on the very popular “islands”. (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). Its not just Kadıköy itself, but I can understand, in a way, that Kadıköy will never be a centre in its own right, because of this. Or those people would have settled there, somehow,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

And in answer to the question of whether or not contemporary literature has a centre, the writer replied: “Probably not, but as I said you are asking the least informed person about this”. For a writer who is not really in the thick of the literary world, the centre of literature is her own “study”.

“Istanbul has all the stories, all the drama...”

According to the writer H.E., the literary pulse always was and still is in Istanbul. The “simplest explanation” for this is that Istanbul is the density of the population. Everything in the country is here, and the country’s heart beats here. Industry, people, all the narratives, “all the drama” are in Istanbul, says H.E. adding that everything began in Istanbul, in Babiali, the Porte, and continues here:

“Its been like that since the 1830’s, in fact, even Divan poetry was centred here.

Always, always, always Istanbul....And so it is for literature, anything other would be

out of the question, At this point it is inconceivable. We even judge provincial literature by how it is seen from an Istanbul standpoint. The writer in the provinces shares this point of view. How does it look from Istanbul? With, or in spite of Istanbul. That is how the ball rolls for everything in Turkey,” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul).

H.E. reiterates that Ankara was strong in terms of writers and publishing at one point. And recalls that there were publishing houses in Ankara around that time. “Now there are almost non left”. There are a few publishers in Izmir; And there are quite a few writers living or starting to live in both Izmir and Bodrum. But still 80 or 90% of all writers live in Istanbul.

H.E. recalls that in earlier days, literary figures met at Refik’s in Beyoğlu for those Raki Fridays and Raki Saturdays, and confirms that the Friday meetings are carrying on today. But comments that even if the older generation could carry on such traditions, that is not possible for his own generation. “It’s not economically viable. Everyone is having difficulty making ends meet, and alcohol is very expensive”. Apart from economic reasons, he stresses the importance of the soul of place., commenting that there are no locations in Beyoğlu today that would be attractive to literary figures, that would draw them in, and be capable of hosting those attractively profound literary discussions. “Right next to you they are puffing on their hubbubbles. You can’t discuss Derrida in that case. Its not that easy, I mean... the space is extinguished”.

Although he points out that there aren’t any particular places where they could meet, that they are all scattered, and that like-minded people were unable to come together at all, he does feel that Beyoğlu, in spite of everything, had a dynamism about it. The same thing could be said for the journals; for example, he thinks that those who wrote for the same journal as himself all had different views on literature. “It was the same for the journals. They didn’t come across as the work of a homogenous group and never did. The same applies to the settings, the spaces. That is, we only meet in Beyoğlu, that’s all.” There are also places in

Cihangir where literati live and frequent. These days Kadıköy is very strong in that respect, according to H.E. , who adds that conservative writers have places where they meet frequently in Fatih and Üsküdar. But still, the cultural centre of Istanbul is Beyoğlu. Don't take any notice of my saying 'it's dying'. Don't worry, we will resuscitate it, bring it back to life". In relation to literary centres, H.R. comments that it is no longer possible for young writers to come together with more experienced authors. There is no chance to promote a master-apprentice approach, however desirable that may be. We can't even sit down together.

The writer, H.E. also mentions the Istanbul-provinces relationship. "There is a strange, unfathomable chasme between them." When he talks to writers in the provinces, corresponds with them or reads their texts, he realises that there is "trully a vast difference" between them. This difference is not related to the quality of the writing, it does not indicate any such thing. But according to H.E., in their texts, you can sense "the provincial feel, the aroma of provincialism." And he attributes that to the fact that the provincial writer is writing for Istanbul. "He writes in the provinces, but not genuinely, from the heart. His writing tries to project how Istanbul would like to see the provinces, its more an orientalist stance (H.E., 2018, Istanbul). Although he himself lived in the provinces until the age of sixteen, he came to Istanbul after finishing university in Ankara. Then even he was regarded in the provinces as a snob. When he first entered a publishers, he felt as if he was seeing the people there as if from another world. "Most probably people in the provinces see me like that". There is a distance between himself and the inhabitants of the place he came from, but he hasn't been able to figure out what it really is that sets them apart. While H.E. regards Izmir as something sui generis, and the Kurds as being politically closer to Istanbul, he comments on the persistent reactionism of writers from inner Anatolia or the Black Sea region, a reactionism beyond which they show little signs of progressing.

“Even if they change their minds, they still do not abandon their position. That is really strange. They prefer to be identified as conservative writers because they still live with that sense of oppression as part of their psyche. They prefer to say: ‘No, we will remain king in our own pond rather than beggars at your door’. This, in my view, is another form of provincialism. I can say this with impunity, being provincial myself...” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul).

H.E. thinks that writers in the provinces have more time and that therefore they read more than him. He sees this through Twitter. But, he comments, it’s as if there is some sort of wall, or cover over the provincial writer, from which he can never escape. Some writers may have moved to Istanbul from the provinces, he says, but Istanbul also has its own provinces. “Once in Istanbul, they carry on as before”.

According to the writer M.G., “The literary pulse always beat in Istanbul”; although he does mention certain literary movements that have emerged or are emerging in other cities. For example; the criticism that *İletişim Yayınları* “favoured Ankara” is a reference to the Ankara movement. M.G. points out that most of the authors who had their first book published between 2008 and 2018 by *İletişim Yayınları* were from Ankara, or were living in Ankara during that time. Emrah Serbes was from Ankara, Barış Bıçakçı and Hasan Ali Toptaş are still in Ankara. Although obviously, it’s ‘normal’ that there would be more writers in Istanbul, according to M.G., given the relative size of the population. Ankara is a large city, it is populous, and has a number of universities. What was formerly known as a “bureaucratic city”, a “serious” city, Ankara has an important literary world. Most writers have, , passed through Ankara. at one time or another. In particular, writers who served as officials of the state lived here at one point. For example, Cemal Süreya started to publish *Papirüs* in Ankara. “He brought out only one issue, then moved to Istanbul.”

M.G. compares literature to the cinema; its not possible, he says, the heart of cinema could be anywhere other than Istanbul. Some essential technical equipment is only available in Istanbul. Even though there are places in Ankara where one may lease a camera, to do so would be three times as expensive as in Istanbul. However, M.G. holds that literature can be created in any city. And yet, most writers are in Istanbul or have a physical connection to that city. Yaşar Kemal might have grown up in Çukurova, and it might be the place he wrote about, but “in the end, it was in Istanbul he arrived”. According to M.G., there is a general problem in the cultural policy in Turkey as a country. The thing is, that Bursa has a population of 3 million right now, which when you compare this with most of the cities in Europe, there a very few with a population of that size, and yet, says M.G., the culture and arts scene in Bursa is probably “worse” than that of a German town with 30,000 inhabitants. There is this perception that all cultural activities take place in Istanbul, and that anyone interested in culture or the arts has to somehow go to Istanbul, and that according to M.G., this is “actually true these days”:

“Is there not the odd event in Izmir or Ankara? Well, yes, there is, but Istanbul has been proclaimed the centre for everything in the contemporary arts to literature and the cinema. Why do people go to Istanbul? In a sense, the population increases in proportion to migration. There is more work, and as migration increases, the demand for work rises, which attracts more inhabitants.....and so on. But somehow we’ve lost the general plot in Turkey. Everyone may point to a particular cause, but its probable that we began to loose the way sometime in the 50’s, and everything shifted to Istanbul as a result. It seems that we failed to create either cultural centres or a market for culture in Anatolia; so this reflects in terms of everything from the relative number of books read, to the number of cinemas and theatres; there are, for example, no private theatres to speak of, some places have state-run theatres but there are only a

handful of private theatres in four or five cities, although amateur theatres are numerous. While its very difficult to put one's finger on the actual date it happened, its as if a number of initiatives misfired in the 50's, and that was when we began to lose the plot. Of course we could just as easily point to an earlier period as the root cause of everything, but..." (M.G., 2018, Istanbul).

One of the most important factors to effect the literary dynamics of a city is "the presence of concrete sources of human inspiration". As a high school student, the writer was passionate about cinema. "Significant" cultural activities were being organised by the municipality. Cultural centres emerged where one could watch art films not on general release. A cinema association is founded; the city hosted various festivals. Today, in the city where M.G. once lived, he comments that "there is nothing for a young person to do in relation to literature or cinema". Whereas, as far as the writer is concerned, those whose work is literature need to be surrounded by their readers, and to have access to a serious pool of cultural activities for inspiration. Even from this point of view alone Istanbul comes as "one of the highest-ranking cities". The existence of libraries, according to M.G., is also a factor contributing to a city's cultural and literary vitality. He recounts that the largest public library in the city of his birth and upbringing had been closed for renovation for many years. Adding that the public libraries in many cities are very poor, and that Istanbul is no exception. "There are many libraries", he comments, "There is the Atatürk Kütüphanesi, for example," but if it wasn't for the Salt library there would be a huge gap. Or there is the Koç University library for more academic research....." (M.G. 2018, Istanbul). The existence of such facilities, for whose services there is a demand, creates a mutually supportive environment claims the writer, pointing to Ankara as an example. Ankara has several universities such as Bilkent Üniversitesi, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara Üniversitesi, ODTÜ, which each has, according to his information, 30 – 40 thousand students, and yet, undoubtedly at the hand of the

municipality, they have managed to create a 'lifeless' city. "This inanimate and dreary city is doomed, not only for climatic reasons, but because all forms of transport cease at midnight...". This demise of cultural dynamism has led its inhabitants to be "more introverted", which, according to M.G. may, perhaps ironically, have been the cause of their devotion to literary endeavour.

M.G. compares Ankara with Istanbul, describing Ankara as: "a relatively smaller city, the capital of the country, city of the Republic". It possesses many theatres, he points out, and is the home of the National Theatre. "There are approximately "sixteen or seventeen theatres" here. Tickets are very hard to obtain. "You have to get up very early to buy them". He also comments that although there are several state theatre halls in Istanbul they are mostly housed in shopping centres. Similarly, "it is almost impossible" to obtain tickets for the opera in Ankara. There is still that culture. This must be the culture of a state beaurocracy, it still persists...."

The writer M.G. claims that Ankara has an urban planning problem which effects its inhabitants' lifestyle in terms of their access to cultural activities. For example, the Ankara metro closes at 23.30, and has limited routes. "This definitely effects the way people plan their daily life." During the rush hour, Ankara is every bit as crowded as Istanbul, but as the evening draws on, the crowds completely disappear. So an individual must think very carefully before participating in activities such as a festival, a play or a in evening film which starts at 9.30pm. Which means that people either withdrew into their own shell, or began to build a life within the confines of their own homes, by visiting each other rather than by engaging in activities in the public domain. "Such behaviour changes both the nature of entertainment and the notion of what is a cultural activity". M.G defines Istanbul is an amalgam of very many cities, a megapolis, and comments that "no matter what thir political views may be, the municipality had to keep certain things running". Transport networks are

one of those things. M.G. stresses that Ankara's 'inanimate' character was due to the intervention of urban planning.

M.G. stresses the importance of investment in culture and the arts. In Ankara, for example, he feels that there is "no policy for investment in culture and the arts." For a city of four million inhabitants, and opera only twice a week, do two thousand people go to the opera "twice a week". Is that all?.. Ankara has more private theatres than Istanbul. "Two people get together and form a company and put on a play, which can get full house, and theatre-goers keep on attending. There are more alternatives in Istanbul, the population being bigger; according to M.G. this is an interactive process." "People come here. Its here that culture and the arts was built. People in search of culture and the arts come here too. And as more and more people come, the demand for arts and culture seems to expand exponentially too." (M.G., 2018, İstanbul). There is more corporate sponsorship for culture and the arts in Istanbul, both from banks and "major organisations such as İKSV". Ankara doesn't have such possibilities. Ankara is a lifeless city, a city that was created by urban interventions to start with, which then seemed to turn into something that people didn't want. In other words, it looked as if the demand wasn't there....And yet, I still think that the city could be revitalised... Not only Ankara, I seriously believe that everywhere could be regenerated in proportion to its scale," (M.G., 2018, İstanbul).

M.G. thinks that the pulse of literature today is in Istanbul. "I think thats how it must be", the writer says. Even if all the writers don't live here, the publishers are all here. The journals and dailies come out in Istanbul. Someone interested in literature may not have to come to the metropolis. M.G. himself completed the entire publishing process, including all communications, via e-mail. The writer thinks that even if most writers live in Istanbul, in proportion to the population, writers who live in other urban centres can also advance themselves in a similar fashion. That could be from Antalya, or Artvin, Bitlis or Yozgat, and

there are such people making their way in literature. From time to time, really good literary works can emerge from those cities we call provincial (M.G., 2018, Istanbul). Although, he also points out that, obviously, there are fewer “quality literary works from other places in relation to Istanbul”. “In the final analysis, for every hundred files from within Istanbul, there might be one from Yozkgat, and that once in a blue moon”. Apart from that, literary events, meetings etc. are predominantly held in Istanbul. “As with most things, the centre of literature must, most probably, be in Istanbul”.

M.G. doesn't think that there is anywhere in Istanbul we could call the centre of literature. Since literature is something which he himself both produces and consumes, “as far as I am concerned, the centre of literature is my room.” Independent bookshops and booksellers have almost disappeared, he comments. Likewise for places that literary intellectuals and writers could meet. “At very best, I could go to a publishers. There might be someone there, who I would get to know. That's about all I can think of. Or if there are such places, I've no idea about them. (M.G. 2018, Istanbul). He does recall a couple of places from his university years in Ankara, one was Tavukçu Meyhanesi where writers and intellectuals met, and the other ‘Siyah Beyaz’ which writers frequented, but adding that he does not know of such places in Istanbul. Nor does he himself meet up with any other writers periodically or on a regular basis. “I never meet up with writers....” Although he does mention that he “knows” some writers who have a circle of friends. The writers for *Ot* journal, for example, meet up regularly as a group, with other writers in their circle. In fact, these writers promote each other's books via their social media accounts. He himself is not part of a writer's group of any kind, nor does he have any visibility as a writer in that medium. M.G. mostly follows activities on his Facebook account; “as a diary, it really does work”. His Instagram is quite a private account, which he uses to communicate with friends. He reads the news on Twitter,

where, rather than personal accounts, he follows more corporate accounts, such as publishers and journals, or foreign film critics, or articles on law or economics for general information.

He feels that the situation is not that all writers “are alone, or that they are always “all together”, or that there are some writers outside the group, or similar situations, although he does mention the existence of a few clusters and groups of writers. Other than that, M.G. feels that there is no particular literary centre, and that relationships are carried on through the publishers, journals or through individual relations, and that if we were to compare the literary world to a village, that village has no kahve. Which is why, says M.G., people don’t meet each other in the village square. In fact, M.G. somewhat likens the literary community to the scattered settlements of the Black Sea:

“Not like a (typical) village as such, but perhaps more like those sporadic settlements one sees in the Black Sea region, they are villages, but there is no kahve, they are scattered all over. A little like that.....And from one perspective I am wondering how necessary such a thing is anyway. Maybe there is no need for it. Sometimes when you try to come together.....the togetherness thing might happen, but there is no action, no movement. I feel that there should be a way to bring people together for a specific reason when necessary. I mean, is there any form of mechanism to bring writers together over an issue of importance [...] or if something should happen to a writer. Occasionally I get messages via mail groups, so there is something. But even they are via a publisher. There is this or that event. Writers are supporting it etc. if you wish to participate, e-mail this address. That sort of thing. Or petitions etc. Beyond that, no doubt it could be effective to have a platform where writers could get together on a regular basis, to talk, to discuss things, but in one sense, I’m not entirely sure if its so essential.” (M.G., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer suggests that while saying that having a platform where writers could get together might have a positive effect (on the community), however, he also feels that such connections might effect writers reactions and attitudes to each other's work, meaning that they might end up saying how much they like a piece even though they actually don't, just because they are friends with the writer, or that they might find themselves forced to promote another's work. The writer, M.G. while not exerting any particular effort to remain outside the literary world, neither takes any particular action to be part of it. He thinks this has to do with the relationship he has formed with his publishers as a writer. "I don't think our publisher pursues such things." For example, neither does he attend awards, nor does his publisher encourage their writers to do so.

3.7 Changes Taking Place over Time

"Everything is changing... Sectors are changing... A great many things are changing along with the internet." (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul). But according to Y.F., relationships in the literary world "remain the same. Human beings are always the same, throughout the world". According to Y.F., this change has effected the writer's writing and creative processes. Even the change-over from typewriter to computer has made a difference, actually. Y.F. describes himself as one of the last generation to use the typewriter; and reflects that the generation previous to his used paper and pen; then there was the process of typing up your hand-written draft. He recalls how tedious and time-taking that was, and because of that one tried very hard to write each sentence in the best possible form without mistakes. These days it is so very easy for a writer to shift a paragraph around, or change the form of a sentence on computer. "When you write directly on computer, this is what happens: I'm writing this paragraph just as it comes, thinking anyway I'm going to check it and correct it later. Of course this is quite a different form of Its the brain working in a different way altogether" (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul). In addition, one writes much faster on computer, and this too makes a difference, says the

writer. “The zeitgeist is changing... Everything is changing...even writing methods are changing”.

He comments that young people in particular leave what they write on computer in its raw state, whereas, while rewriting what they had drafted by hand, on computer or typewriter, they would try to revise what they had written, to redraft to improve on the text, and strive to create a more perfect piece. Something written directly on computer may seem good at first glance to the writer, and it’s at that point it gets left in its “raw state”, he adds. He himself tried writing stories while in Intermediary School and found that he just wasn’t satisfied with what he wrote. It was at that point that Muzaffer İzgü visited his school, who explained that when he wrote his stories he used pen and paper, that he rewrote each story multiple times, taking it through at least five complete drafts, and in order to do this had only five hours sleep a night. This was, a tipping point for the writer., Y.F. “As a matter of fact, all the books about the craft of writing say the same thing: that you should constantly revise, rewrite, revise, rewrite; polish, elaborate, extrapolate, then edit and hone down, reduce, streamline... These days, I notice that, for example, since most writers write on computer, they do very little reducing or streamlining. That’s one difference we can talk about,” (Y.F. 2018, Istanbul).

Y.F. mentions the Wattpad platform, but stresses that, in his view, the best way to share a piece is through the publishers. He exemplifies this with the case of the writer Stephen King, who, around the year 2000, revolted against publishers earning more than writers from their books, by deciding to publish his own book via his website, but proving unsuccessful in the attempt. By commenting that “No other writer could possibly succeed where Stephen King had failed in this”, the writer stresses the relative necessity for publishers. Just as in the music business, where the record company is an agent, the publisher is needed as an intermediary ‘conduit’ for literature”. He explains the increase in writers as being due to the value added to writing by social media: “Right now, those who are able to write well, with

flair and in their own style become (social media) phenomena, with hundreds of thousands of followers. And as a phenomenon, for example, a phenomenon on Twitter can get advertising and begins to make money. It wasn't like that in my day," (Y.F., 2018, Istanbul). Y.F. stresses that writing is more important, in fact (even) on whatsapp, it is important to write well.

According to the writer A.E., the first transformation to be experienced in the world of literature was the relative ease of contact created between writer and reader, from both points of view through social media. A.E., suggests that for a writer, for anyone, social media is like a personal website. He follows news and articles about writers and their work, their latest books via social media. He will buy their new books after reading about them on that platform. "For example, let's say that when I read your book, back in the day, if I then needed to find you, to casually meet you, or get an appointment to see you, to say I read your book, and well, there's this, or that, nowadays I can very easily find you and say all that via our social media accounts," (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). The reader too, no longer needs to attend a discussion about A.E.'s work, they can ask their questions via social media, and the writer will answer them.

The writer A.E., comments that in the past, the "perception" of literature was informed through journals, the daily press and cultural programs, whereas today, since the "media has merged into one body" it has less impact. "The power of the media has been broken, in a sense. Programs about culture and the arts are fewer, the culture and arts pages in the dailies have shrivelled to nothing and book supplements have lost their clout," (A.E. 2018, Istanbul). As written and visual media decline in impact, they have begun to be replaced, in A.E.'s view, by internet journalism. As a result of what the writer refers to as the "aridification" of the dailies and TV media, the publishers are left with (the social media platform) "as the sole conduit of information about themselves". That meant the publishers starting to work with social media experts. "Publishers are always saying: "There is no point in us putting adverts

in the papers, because no-one reads them. At the end of the day, a publisher wants to make their product visible. They want the reader to know about it. I believe they are more active over the internet these days.” (A.E. 2018, Istanbul). The writer makes a comparison with a German publishers, who while a very major bookseller, opened an instagram account last year, but was complaining “how weak” the results were, how “little attention” they were getting”. A.E. points out that the dailies in Germany devote a major amount of space to new books, and therefore “did not feel the need” for social media.

Another transformation in the literary world is, according to A.E., the increasing dominance of the quantative in book printing. “Were there such printing quantities back in the 90’s, I don’t know. [.....] The books I have that are 97, 99 editions have no mention of 100,000, 10,000 copies on the covers. [....] That’s like having a competition through numbers cover slogan. Look, the first 20 000 in print, 10,000 out; [....] ; now its 100,000, 250,000, 500,000, one million,” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). The reduction in criteria for criticism and evaluation, loss of the critic for example, “means that the stress tends to be on the quantative aspects of publication. Editions of 10,000, 100,000, 200,000.....and a promotion campaign approach begins to emerge to match these criteria.” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). The result being that the publishers are on the look out for books that will “sell”, are beginning to pursue best-sellers, and to approach popular writers from popular magazines to produce marketable books. It has come to the point of “Hello, do you want me to write you a book?”. Cinema celebrities, musicians with a couple of albums under their belt, Youtubers with thousands of followers are the new authors being published. Now I’m not saying anything about all this of cours. I simply watch in amazement. (A.E. 2-18, Istanbul). According to A.E., by providing this kind of written-to-order popular book, the publishers have habituated a popular readership to match. So even if this, in itself, may be a negative development, it does mean however, that publishers have been able to create an economic dynamic, a form of energy to turn the cogs of

publishing through the best-selling works of popular authors. Best-sellers are also a means by which struggling booksellers can remain in the game. But, all this aside, the writer believes that in the final analysis, it is literature that will keep the publishers alive and ensure the long-term survival of the book sector, for which reason, literature should never be considered within the same perimetres as popular writers and writing. “I actually don’t see ‘this kind of writing’ [...] as literature, at all,” says the writer. “Nor do I imagine they do...” “But I don’t know...” A.E. 2018, Istanbul). Another outcome of this trend is that the publishers have stopped encouraging and training new writers. “To train a writer takes time. One has to invest in the process. It’s not something that is going to happen in one or two days. It’s not a matter of a couple of books, but is a process over time,” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). But A.E. feels that the publisher, rather than make the effort to do this, prefers, in A.E.’s view, to go for the ‘ready-made’ authors. This situation has led to a form of drain on the literary world, as writers migrate over to the other side.

The writer, A.E. comments that during the 2000’s, literary journals, which he considered schools of literature, occupied a central role in his life, so much so that as a writer he says it was through them that he got his training. When one’s stories got printed, in a journal, one’s name and reputation as a writer spread. “Now those journals are gone. There are still some but they are relatively lightweight. There are very few that will give place to a new writer or a new piece,” (A.E. 2018, Istanbul). Nowadays, the names of many writers first become known when they publish their first book, since they no longer need to publish those stories in a journal beforehand. Although the need for a writer to publish work in a journal prior to their first book coming out has now disappeared, the writer A.E. believes that there is little change in the way a writer makes contact with a publisher. A.E. recalls that at the beginning of the 2000’s, a would-be writer would need ‘a contact’ a ‘mutual associate’ to

provide the necessary connection with the publishers, for him to be able to submit his work there. And the writer believes that such relationships are still run in the same way.

A.E. thinks that the journals, particularly story-based journals, are what kept the “story” genre “alive and healthy”. And he thinks that this is why, despite the rise of the novel in Turkey as throughout the world, publishers continue to publish story books. The same, however, cannot be said for poetry books. As the writer explains, at the beginning of the Millenium decade there were poetry books, but that publishers now believed there was a lack of demand for the genre, and for fear of poor sales they no longer publish books of poetry. “*Can Yayınları*” in particular, which A.E. refers to as a major publisher, is not publishing new poetry books, Doğan Kitap publishes no poetry of any kind, nor does İletişim, and I have not seen anything recently published by *Metis Yayınları*. Sel Yayınları almost non, Yapı Kredi does publish some, but whether they give place to young poets or not, I am not sure. Everest publishes poets occasionally. Published poetry becomes a rarity,” (A.E., 2018, Istanbul). Whereas, for A.E. poetry is the most important conduit of literature.

The writer J.V. felt that the emergence of book supplements, especially the publication of Radikal Kitap were an “essential”. She stresses that the publication sector was expanding, that publishers were producing more books than ever, and that besides the well-known major publishing houses, new houses were publishing, while many more were being founded. She finds the emergence of Cumhuriyet Kitap followed by Radikal and other press book supplements to have been “very timely”. And that as a result, publishing and these Daily press supplements became somewhat interconnected. Due to the lack of alternative spaces, publishers advertised in these supplements, which provided them with revenue, while the publishers were able to print any book reviews and criticism they wished. J.V. further points out that with the emergence of Radikal Kitap, literature became a commodity that was available to the lower readership segment, and became accessible even to those who were not

readers at all. The writer stresses that literature became “somewhat” more visible (to the general public). Those who wanted to read literature could access it via *Kitaplık* and other journals, although such journals targetted the upper segment of readership. Whereas the daily press supplements not only appealed to a wider general readership but also had the advantage of being distributed throughout the provinces. Today, such supplements have become six to eight page long pamphlets, prepared by an editorial staff of no more than one or two people, in which advertising is prominent and the publishers who advertise have their books reviewed. Even though the writer says “I don’t want to make any comments about my colleagues working there”, she does feel that the quality of these supplementets is no longer waht it was in the years of the millenium. “Have they put in any advert for the book? Yes they have. Okay then, lets put something in about it. That’s what its turned into. Give and take. Whatever. I can say that for many branches. But both the supplements and the arts and culture are suffering as a result.” (J.V. 2018, Istanbul).

This situation has had the effect of promoting or making profitable what is considered popular or ‘light’; it has caused this sort of thing to be more a topic of conversation, which is, from one point of view, a motivation for those who subscribe to this culture. For example, for the daily columnist, the number of clicks they get is now important. Lets think, in the press, “How many clicks, how many clicks? Could there be such a thing as how many clicks did Semih Gümüş’s piece get? Or the same for Selim Ileri. Such a thing would have been unthinkable in the past. Such and such’s piece didn’t get many clicks. They shouldn’t be writing. What’s the measure for the value of these writers? Its turned into something very weird. “ (J.V. 2018, Istanbul). Of course we must adapt to developments in technology, of course there should be internet journalism, but, according to J.V., since the rules of the game have not yet quite been written, content is being sacrificed to a banal product. This is the situation, both for the book, for the daily press and for the arts and culture. There are many

possibilities, but for J.V. how well they are being used remains questionable. For example; since the supplements are not getting any advertising, most of them cannot afford a good writing team, and are unable to stay afloat. These days, advertising is directed towards blogs or instagram phenomena. “A blogger will share your book three times on his account for 2,000TL,” says the writer J.V., stressing that there is no problem about using all the possibilities available today to promote a popular product, but that one must be very is careful to identify what defines the distinction between what is popular and what literature. “Earn from the popular, but invest in literature”.

“Just because something is being done doesn’t mean that it is complete”.

J.V. mentions that Wattpad has become famous in the last four years. She mentions that she is not one of those who elevate writing to the realm of the sacred, nor does she reject the idea of a book being written on the internet. She believes that time will decide what can be called literature. Children, young people or adults her age “can all write something somewhere”. She stresses that this is the era of the ‘self’, and that everyone can present themselves as a columnist or a writer. “They can write a story and imagine that it is a novel,” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul). There is a similar situation in the cinema sector. One director’s film might get an audience of three thousand, while the most ‘stupid idiotic’ film of another director can get an audience of a million. “But there is no use in getting angry about it. All you can hope to do is to distinguish between the two,” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul). She thinks that it is this point that makes people angry. J.V. believes that if the TV, press and book sellers can arrange for books “selling a million” copies to take precedence, they can still set aside space for those selling a thousand copies.

In general, literature picked up a momentum during the millenium decade, when new writers emerged, the first books of the 1980’s generation came out on the shelves, new publishers were founded, meanwhile it was during these years that the TEDA (Turkish

Literature Goes Global) Project was born; although the momentum of the moment was lost in subsequent years, says the writer. That literature should pick up speed at that time was not unrelated to the global situation. “There was an agenda in Europe which had a general impact; the 80’s generation were publishing their first books....” Many much loved names in literature today began to emerge in the 2000’s, and were writing in journals, publishing stories and working for the daily press”. This was in answer to a need. But the momentum gained by literature at the time was undoubtedly effected by “the creation of new spaces”:

“Ultimately, for a publisher to bring out a good writer means that they must imagine someone is expecting this, or they must believe that the writer deserves to be launched. In some ways they effect each other. Something is offered, someone was trusted, the writer was launched, and the aftermath happened. This effected others. Other publishers started to feel the need to include young writers’ books. They began to say that: literature no longer belonged only in literary journals, and it started to emerge in different areas of life. Now that’s a little encouraging, I think it all follows on, piece by piece (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer J.V., describes an explosion in the novel in the 2000’s. She believes that this was actually a disadvantage for writers since “when a writer went to a publishers the publishers began to say if its a novel lets publish it, will stories sell?” So that is why, apart from the few known publishers who continued to publish stories, the others tended to look at novels rather than stories to publish. The 2000’s were the years technology “entered” publishing. They were the years that publishing books was relatively easy. So J.V. feels that this also effected production. “Printing a book by traditional methods, where it was layed out by hand on the print plates, [...] is one thing. Being able to print 2,000 copies thanks to technology is quite another. I think such things are strongly connected ” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

During the millenium years, J.V. believes that there was a desperate need for culture and the arts. But while saying so, the writer does not seperate literature from the “national issues of the day”. At the begining of the millenium, there was a tendency towards the popular idea that one was (either) individualistic or liberationist; that one creations were for everyone; that one was creating art anew. Although in fact, she criticises “we now understand that these things were actually window-dressing for them”. “When change takes place in a country, or there is the desire for change, the first thing to be whittled down” is culture and the arts. For example, when the economy is suffering, the culture and arts pages are immediately cut down. Culture and the arts are like workhouse boarders in Turkey. J.V., having stressed the need for culture, the arts and literature during the millenium years, and commented on the momentum gained by culture, the arts and literature during the same period, goes on to conclude that “we were unable to maintain this (momentum in the arts), which would suggest that “since we were unable to preserve it, Turkey was perhaps not in so much need of it as was previously thought.”

J.V. points to the year 2010 as being when a variety of new writers emerged on the literary scene, building from the diversity of the previous decade. A similar diversity occurred in music and art, but she observes that after 2010, work began to appear more shallow or perhaps the content had become less important. “There are specific reasons for such things: You are organising a festival, or bringing out a book supplement, the team gets smaller, two people are doing the work previously done by a team of ten. Whatever you do, you cannot maintain the quality of material,” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul). The visibility of a piece taking precedence over the content is also an important factor. “The focus being on the one in the window. All of these things are linked. It’s the way the whole world is going.....”The writer J.V. gives an example of the book in the window being the one in focus, the increasing vacuity of work, and this “wierd popularisation”:

“I was walking through Nişantaşı recently; there was a new sort of bar– restaurant. In the window they had hung portraits of Turgut Uyar, Cemal Süreya and Edip Cansever in circular frames. Another time we were on our way somewhere to have tea, and there was Adile Naşit and Münir Özkul. I mean, perhaps popularisation in its true sense is not a bad thing, but this is a weird form of popularising.... Well, okay, maybe they know that Turgut Uyar is a poet, maybe they don’t. They might know his verses, or they might think they are tweets (from somewhere). To idolise something without knowing its origin, or if something is so popular it will never stand the test of time. Today it’s a photograph of Münir Özkul, tomorrow someone else, who knows. It makes no difference. Its just a fad. The fashion for Hubble bubble meant that Hubble bubble cafes proliferated. Then there were the Dürümcü’s, the fashion for flat bread roll sandwiches took off, spawned dürümcü’s all over. Everything, consume, disperse, consume, disperse...” (J.V., 2018, Istanbul).

Although she suspects that this may not be the case for the average literature reader, J.V. believes that after 2010, literature turned into a consumer product. Even though not all books, but most had begun to be marketed almost like consumer products. Being ‘a bit of ‘ a writer on the internet meant that people began to see themselves as masters of the craft, and to imagine that their writings could be turned into books. “Why couldn’t a “Lifestyle” writer write a book in a magazine-based approach? Why not. I’ve no quarrel with that.” However, we mustn’t place such “figures” alongside true novel writers. The publisher marketing “Lifestyle” books, from which they “earn millions”, sees the writers of such books as “Oh how nice! Very nice! You are so brilliant! So valuable!”. And if, meanwhile, they are also publishing a work of literature, the author of that work is left “waiting onn the wings”. Such authors, who are actually viable literary figures, can actually begin to feel themselves “redundant” or to feel as if there is no place left for them in the scheme of things. “Well, is

that what value means nowadays?” Even Selim İleri is complaining about this. “I keep on writing, and writing, but who understands? There’s no reader. The readership for what I write is not there... (J.V., 2018, Istanbul). According to J.V., the hunger for books prevalent at the onset of the millenium, and the desire to blend with the second previous generation of writers, followed by an expansion in diversity, dispersement and subsequently degeneration “is not the way some things are preserved”.

The writer T.L. believes that the Leman group journals, *Kaçak Yayın*, *Yeni Harman*, the weekly *Tempo*, *Hayvan*, *Adam Öykü*, and *Kitaplık* and *Varlık* which are still in print, were crucially decisive for would-be writers in 2002. “It was that, if you wanted to be a writer, the way in was through these journals. How could they be anything but crucial?” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). The journal *Son Kişot*, located in Kadıköy, although a small publication, had a writing team that was worth following. And yet, according to T.L., anyone writing stories needed to be published in *Adam Öykü*, *Varlık* or *Kitaplık*, “if your story has not appeared in one of those journals it would be very difficult for you to publish a book,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). But the situation began to change in 2010:

“The existing mechanisms that determined whether you were a good writer or not had disappeared. There was no longer any need for the journals. You could now connect directly with the reader. Was this good? I believe it was actually better. You no longer had to send your work to a journal, to *Adam Öykü* or *Notos*. You could write about it in a blog, publishers could discover you through it and you might get an offer from them. So you could prove what a good writer you were over the blog. This is something, however, that had positive and negative sides to it. In one sense, the writing environment proliferated. Ways to gain visibility, publishers proliferated, as did the settings. I think this was all good. I mean, power is changing hands. They are trying to keep hold of it right now but they won’t be able to. Power is transferring into

the hands of youth. Publishing editors are now very young. They all use snapchat and Instagram, which the others don't.....I think it had to change. It went on for too long, in fact," (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

When we consider the socio-cultural, political and economic transformations that have taken place in this country between the years 1970 and the millenium, it is clear that these changes have reflected directly onto people's language, and subsequently onto the works they have created. The writer T.L., who mentions that he was born in 1980, defines an '80's generation that arrived on the scene, began to write "their big issues" and to become visible with them. He points out that after 2010, this generation focused particularly on writing stories, and that there was a huge expansion on the number of stories being published. Hence, a new voice, a new breath of air arose. Nobody these days reads Selim İleri or Enis Batur; everyone reads the writers in *Ot* and *Kafa*. So much so that if a writer is not writing for the journals, the readers will even forget the names of these old writers, they won't know who they are. Today's youth reads *Ot*, *Kafa* and *Tuhaf*. "Only a small minority of readers with a deeper interest in literature, who really know Turkish literature and want to learn more about it" will read *Varlık*, *Notos* and *Kitaplık*. (T.L. 2018, Istanbul).

T.L. also mentions the transformation that has occurred in the writer-reader relationship. The reader now has a "100%" chance to reach the writer directly via social media. "Could you have reached Yaşar Kemal so easily back in the day? The editor and publisher were seemingly perched on the highest peak in those days and it was so hard to get even close up the slopes," (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). The reader could only reach the writer during the TÜYAP book fair or during book-signing days, whereas nowadays they can contact them easily through Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Occasionally, readers can even send an e-mail directly to a writer to correct a mistake on one of the pages, or sometimes readers themselves form a group and ask the writer to join them for a book-signing session.

Not only can the reader reach the writer more easily now, but the reader's critical views are also now more visible. When you published a book, the critical review would appear in Metin Celâl's Radikal Kitap. No-one would see the readers' critical views". (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

The reader had the chance to meet the writer and share his own critical views with him only at book fairs. Nowadays, according to T.L., the reader occasionally using "pseudonym" can very easily share "everything", whether positive or negative. And this, he believes, is significant for the writer. For instance, someone can easily write about a writer in Ekşi Sözlük that "this person is a deviant, for example; I was a reader of his, I asked for his signature and he invited me back to his home.". T.L. believes that such things can finish a writer's career in an instant. Back in the day, his readers knew nothing about a writer's private life. They didn't know anything about "his character, his views on life, his relationship with women, with men and with money" and that, in fact, they had heard nothing about such things. The reader knew the writer only through his works. Whereas now, the reader can get to know the writer close to, and can easily find out everything about them, whether positive or negative. And writers reveal their private life to their readers:

"I end up getting to know whether any writers of my generation have a boy or girlfriend, about their private life, what work they do, the party they threw at home and what they did at the weekend. You can follow everything about the private life of a writer. Is this good or bad? I find it negative, generally speaking. But that's what the reader sees. Their relationship with the writer goes beyond the page. They now have a personal connection with them. In the past, that connection would have been through the text. You would fall in love with their heroes. Now you fall in love with the writer themselves," (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

As far as T.L. is concerned, for a writer to have visibility on social media doesn't necessarily mean that they have to form such an intimate relationship. If the writer is reasonably prolific, if what they write is good, it will disseminate, and win the appreciation of the reading public. He gives the example of Barış Bıçakçı. He is a writer who never gives interviews or takes part in book-signing days, nor does he have any profile whatsoever on social media. T.L. stresses that with all this, the shape of writing has changed. There are youtube writers and Instagram phenomenon writers. This, according to T.L., is not necessarily a positive situation, because the writer has priority over the work. "The writer before the work... I mean, you are not buying a book, you are buying something connected to the writer," (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). As far as T.L. is concerned, it is just as "extreme" for people to be so involved in social media that they share their entire life there, as for Barış Bıçakçı to have no profile on social media whatsoever. "When I spoke to him recently in Ankara, I told Barış Bıçakçı, this has to happen." He will have nothing to do with it. He needs to have a minimal involvement at least. You have to adapt to modern conditions," (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). T.L. believes that one needs to find a compromise, because the reader likes to be in contact with the writer. He himself follows the comments added by his readers on his social media accounts and shares them. Or if he comes across his readers somewhere he will take selfies with them and share them on his instagram account, but he thinks that the reader doesn't need to know about the writer's private life, beyond their writer's identity.

Being too visible on social media, being present there with your personal life in its entirety, is not just a habit confined to writers. But it is evidence of the formative changes one is seeing throughout all strata of society, as applied to writers. Academics are apparently running from "one TV channel to another", he observes. Being visible, being on Instagram, having something to say about every topic in the media context is attractive to them (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). At the same time, there are also many academics you may follow through

their talks at universities, or their published articles and books. The writer believes that fame is a dangerous thing, and that it has become so easy to acquire it these days that everyone is drawn in by it, and that to resist such temptation requires considerable strength of purpose. “Look at a writer or academic’s first photo on social media, and compare it with the most recent one, you will immediately see the difference”. That initially suit-clad academic later turns into an earring sporting, ring-wearing individual,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). He stresses the palpable difference between those who spend their time working on being visible and those who concentrate on writing; and those who are concerned with easy notoriety or captivated by ensuring that their words are being transferred and those who are not, while stressing that this “exposure ailment” is also a cry for help. They are saying “I’m alone,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer T.L. points out that publishing a book these days is much easier and more accessible. Although, in the past, anyone who wished could publish their own books, when compared with the past, today “everyone has a book.” The would-be writer is “encouraged” these days to send their files, and even to think of publishing by much easier access to the publishers. But T.L. believes that the most palpable evidence (of change) is the fact that the publishers have begun to give a greater space to young writers, and to encourage young voices. One reason for this is the much younger generational profile now dominating editorial teams. “Just think, you are working with a team of editors in their sixties, you have written a book, the probability of it being published through that team as against a much younger editor of your own generation? Its much more likely that a (younger) editor is going to be more empathetic towards your issues than one of the older generation,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). Putting younger writers on the agenda has also impacted the readership profile. “Something is changing. A generation is changing, perceptions are changing,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). And so publishing houses are taking more of an interest in new work, and publishing first books:

“There is a kind of reaction, to something Melisa Kesmez emerges. Oylum Yılmaz emerges, there is a reaction to them....that says this is a different world, a new world. the publishers *İletişim Yayınları* for example, are changing.... Emrah Serbes, Alper Canıgüz, Murat Menteş come out of Ankara. You see that, Ankara literature, and something else. *Can Yayınları* takes a new tack with Sine Ergün. Now when certain prominent publishers do that....they see the effect and you begin to see those names in the journals. Suddenly they begin to feature in Radikal Kitap, on interviews, they are on TV, these are the writers getting the awards. Then other publishers, suddenly getting wind of the new direction, also begin to search for young writers and then something inevitable happens. That is quite normal, but also a totally radical. Change,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

Not only have publishers changed internally, but they have also grown numerically. This also has facilitated the process of publishing young and would-be writers. T.L. mentions that for a new, unknown writer to be published, they had to have received an award, or otherwise a publisher would only rarely give them this chance. “Right now, everyone has a chance, and if you write well, everyone is interested,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

However not every change is positive, according to T.L. A general increase in the human drive for power and fame has also had an impact on literature. In the past, the writer “wrote from a place of ‘personal angst’” whereas now, they write for the sake of “producing a book”. His generation wrote with purpose, to express their anxieties and concerns. They did not consider it at all easy to identify themselves as ‘writers’. Anyone who produces a book these days automatically classes themselves as a ‘writer’. As far as T.L. is concerned, people these days do not want to be “just anybody”. Not only in the field of literature, but in every field they are in pursuit of fame, status and notoriety. They want to write in journals, not because they have something to say, but because that is the popular thing to do.

“Before.....you would be saying, because you had a problem, and that was the only place you could write about it, make it heard. Now all that is changing.... They are in search of a title, status and fame. People no longer want to be writers, they want to own books,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

As it is, the journals and publisher’s attitude has also changed. They behave more commercially. T.L. comments that journals and cafes which were meeting places for him have turned completely into “commercial enterprises”. “Now, Varlık is not a commercial operation, it is a literary journal, but just imagine if Varlık were to open a chain of cafes everywhere and decorate them with literary quotations, and present menus in which each item was the title of a story, and so on, it could no longer be called a literary journal, but more a commercial operation....In other words, the journal would have become an enterprise vehicle,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul). This would not prevent some readers from still seeing Varlık as primarily a literary journal, while another group of readers might react very differently to such a situation. “In my view such a perception is very problematic; impossible to manage, sword edge...”

The writer T.L. points out that the “cult of popularity” has proliferated with magazines like *Ot*, and that his readers find out about his books via that source. He attends five-six book-signing events throughout Turkey per year with the journal, which is where he meets his readers. The readers attending these events are young, but T.L. has observed numbers of young conservative men and women among those attending. He refers to a significant change in the readership profile after 2014-2015. The mass conservative readership has become more visible, and is, making direct contact. Undoubtedly much of this is to do with the political climate. For instance, there are very many readers sharing such a profile amongst my Instagram followers. I find this surprising, because this was never the

case when I used to attend book-signings with the older generation of authors, I never saw anything like that,” (T.L., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer R.C. talks of a fashion for publishing books. She accepts that, of course, everyone has a right to be a writer, and that everyone has the right to ensure that their work reaches its readers, and further comments that she cannot possibly decide who is to be a good writer and who otherwise, and that there are professional editors who can do that, But that she realises there is an incredible concentration of books at present. “Everyone, famous or not, publishes that first book, then later, with that book, just one book, we are in such a world that they are not only declared a writer, but even proclaimed a literary figure. Everyone is emotional, everyone is very romantic, everyone is a poet, they are all writers... (R.C., 2018, Istanbul). Social media being the kind of platform where everyone can deposit all their creativity, this exacerbates the situation, says R.C.. However, this is not just the way things are in Turkey, but is a global phenomenon, the writer suggests. If one were to travel to the USA, one would see clearly that publishing has expanded exponentially and without restraint there too, and that bookshelves have been filled with a lot of books, written who knows how, for some unknown reason. Nowadays, for any book to find room on a bookseller’s shelf is a rare feat, certainly for literature of any quality, despite the importance of doing so.

“I mean there is no place left to put our books. Every corner is literally stuffed with rubbish print.” R.C. reflects that in the past, at least there would have been room for one or two works of literature among everything on those shelves. She suggests that the younger generation of writers, amongst whom she counts herself, are “very enthusiastic”, adding that she was actually at the age of thirty when she produced her first book, which she considers “not so young at all”. She further comments that in her opinion, a writer’s file of work needs time to mature. Although she has observed that certain young writers can cross paths with editors who speed up the process, in which case many books appear suddenly, all at once,

before they are really ready to publish, and still in raw state. So that anyone with a file of work can say that “now they have a book”. R.C. adds that she has seen many what she calls half-baked files published in book form, members of her own generation among them:

“Lets do a book. So that we can all have one. Lets all do a book-signing straight away. Get some photos (of ourselves) with the book.....I mean, in general, I would say the thing that is changing most is the quality. But this is, of course, actually due to the drop in quality throughout publishing. In the final analysis, a book or a writer needs a publisher to publish the work. So who is that publisher’s editor? Who makes the decisions about publication in that institution? With every change to these people’s approaches and attitudes, inevitably there is a change of tone in the books that are published,” (R.C., 2018, Istanbul).

R.C. links this change to personal relationships between reader and publisher. She points out that the reader generally prefers “an easy read”, something that they can read quickly, and “wants to own a library whose books they can pile up one on top of the other and be able to say that they had read them all”. For example, there are “book gurus” on Instagram boasting 500,000 followers. R.C., being curious as to which books these gurus were recommending, investigates, only to discover that she has heard neither the titles nor the authors they have recommended before. She mentions the “I’ve read it, its over” hashtag on social media. Someone reads a book, shares it on social media and writes underneath the phrase ““I’ve read it, its over”. I mean, it seems thats the kind of relationship there is between most people and books. They read something and have finished it. Its done. What they read, what they got out of the book, not important. Where did the book take them, did it persuade them to read other books, non of this matters. (R.C., 2018, Istanbul). This alacrity, this “averice” are, in her mind, actually what inform decisions in publishing, publication policies and publisher attitudes, since everything is sales focused, says R.C. Publishers want to make a

profit, and so they are in pursuit of the big sellers, and want to sell as much as possible in as little time as possible. R.C. describes this as a “situation in which one side poisons the other”. As the reader becomes accustomed to reading poorer quality books, publishers begin to produce worse books. As the quality of their publications drop, the reader begins to get used to reading even lower quality material. And yet, amidst all this, R.C. points out that quality publishers still exist, producing brilliant content that has been through the hands of great editors. We can say that that kind of publishing still persists, “The translation is excellent; or maybe if it’s a first file, its a very good manuscript; one that has been selected from among hundreds of others, has been read, edited, printed...” (R.C., 2018, Istanbul). R.C. feels that change, in terms of the increased diversity of content being covered is positive. There are so many books available; crime novels and titles in many other fields, such as ecology and motherhood. Also there are publishers focusing specifically on one special interest area. Children’s literature, for example, is a particularly highly developed area of interest. R.C. believes that the reflection of a diversity of interests in publishing is a positive change.

When the writer Ö.A. began to write, and to publish stories on line, he admits that he “did not have much idea about publishing houses”, “I didn’t have a publishing house myself at that point. I was writing from a much more restricted space, looking at everything through a very small window...” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). But now, he observes that the writer-publisher relationship has become much more ‘democratic’, in terms of diversity of content. Before there were fewer channels. If there were forty publishing houses then, five or ten of them were major publishers. By major, I mean publishers big enough to be able to handle a diverse band of publications.....Diversity provides more opportunity to young writers. Ultimately, a YKY style is no longer obligatory and you don’t have to write for Notos” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Writers with a more “original” (marginal) style, are now able to find a publisher to print them, and readers can get to read them. So due to the growing number of publishers,

“those little footpaths got access to bigger connections, and major roads opened up into small by-ways”. The only disadvantage in all this being that as publishing became easier, the quality of books dropped.” Some of the books being published were really not very good. It’s as if they were better before. I don’t know, perhaps my tastes have changed. Perhaps I’ve got older. Perhaps it’s that. But back then, sixty out of a hundred books published would have been good, whether translations or Turkish originals; whereas now, only forty will reach the quality mark.” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). Obviously, increased variety will mean that some books will come out below par, but in the long run, the writer believes that those books that turned out to be of low quality, whose texts were unconvincing, will ultimately be forgotten altogether, leaving only the best to survive. So, from that point of view, variety is a good thing, if nothing else, it gives a range of different trends a chance of exposure,” thinks the author.

“It causes a crush, a noisy gaggle, sound pollution, that’s for sure. But out of this pollution, in the long run, the good will sustain, and undoubtedly, some books or writers that wouldn’t have stood a chance of exposure under the old system, be they translated or Turkish in origin, will gain recognition. So an adventure that was unthinkable in the old days now becomes worth trying,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer Ö.A., while pointing out that there are no authoriterian figures bringing the entire literary world together, does, however, mention certain figures of gravitas in his own group. These were people who mentored certain would-be writers, encouraging and promoting them when they saw a spark of light, and were, in fact, the persons who decided whether someone “could make it as a writer or not.” And yet, the writer declares that the “yoke of oppression” was relatively lighter these days, compared to the past. “Pressure to join this or that group, to become friends with this or that person and such things are less frequent these days.” According to Ö.A., having no authority at all is much better. He describes the

presence of authority as being more like a “funnel” than a “filter”, since it means that everything is arranged according to one person’s taste. He exemplifies this as follows: a writer writing for *altZine*, no matter how much he has written in his own style, to his own taste, if his work is modified, even just a little, by that figure of authority according to that person’s taste, or whatever views of literature they may have, they can influence would-be writers to write in that way:

“Now, if I know that this piece is going to have to pass over that person’s desk, inevitably, I’m not going to go out and seek adventure by writing something in a style that’s not going to pass muster at the end of the day. Even if unconsciously, most people will carry on writing in the preferred style. It’s not even about trying to please that person. Because... it’s like when a child does something good and you praise them, they try to keep it up, but when you say no, that’s not good, they won’t try something again. It’s that sort of logic, more a funnel than a strainer approach, squeezing people into pre-cut moulds, into a narrow passage perhaps lots of people were put off writing in the style they might have been good at, or wrote like that but it wasn’t approved of, or gave up on the idea on their own initiative to avoid repercussions, and maybe we missed an entirely new direction in literature by choosing the road to approval [....] so as you can see, there is nothing good about it...” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul).

Ö.A. stresses that the narrative has changed together with the internet. He claims that people’s attention span has narrowed, and that no-one, himself included, had the patience to read long texts anymore. So texts have got shorter. He points out that stories, or texts, are evolving, and that when we consider how things may look in the future, if a story written in the 2000’s was 3,850 words long, by the year 2030 it could well be reduced to 1,800 words in length. It seems as if everything is going to be shorter, more “compact”. But for Ö.A., what’s

important is the “independence” the internet has provided. And hand in hand with this independence is the possibility of more “partnerships”. I can meet with a team of people I don’t know at all and create a journal right now. In fact, every journal is created like that. We actually know more than half the people involved, in one sense, but in another we don’t know them at all,” (Ö.A., 2018, Istanbul). The writer does not have an opinion as to whether this is desirable or not. But comments that apart from people being less intimate, less familiar and there being less interaction between them, it definitely facilitates things from a work perspective, making it much easier to complete any task.

The writer Ç.D. stressed that we should focus on the cause behind changes in the literary world rather than whether those changes were positive or negative, the cause being “more important and more negative.” That, according to Ç.D., is the “threat of standardisation.” The writer thinks that although literature has acquired a certain recognisable identity in terms of its content and design, “the tendency and propensity for writers to take risk has diminished.” “For example, If a writer develops a specific style in two of his books, and this style proves viable and more or less acceptable to the reader, the writer may be reticent about trying out something new,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). Plus, he will not do so for financial reasons “since that is not an issue”. This is a growing global movement and not just confined to Turkey. Even when a writer is writing outside the lines, it is still a form of non-conformity that can be defined “in terms of the pre-set boundaries.” There is no attempt to create one’s own space, and worse than that” certainly “no notion of ‘group’, any more.” “The reason being that all (possible) spaces have been created, all probabilities have been consumed; that’s also possible, I’m not sure, but we don’t take that risk.” According to Ç.D., not only are writers avoiding the risk of trying out new styles, but they do not invest any “effort in their craft”. Writers today prefer to devote time and effort to “marketing

themselves”, and “building their own brand”, rather than channelling their resources into the craft of literature.

“The work is more about branding than content. What I’m trying to say is: if the work is more or less satisfactory, then they will modify the package and present it repeatedly in different contexts, this being both a more logical marketing strategy and less effort. This is the approach these days, whether or not its desirable. It is risk-free.....They say that the greatest risk is self-repetition [...] Meanwhile you can talk about the same coffee cup for your entire life. That’s not what I’m talking about. Its about modifications in style.....That I find sad,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

Ç.D. mentions how funding in the European countries is forcing bespoke content onto the public. She comments that she is unsure about its impact. For example; refugees are a subject of general concern. I mean that out of every ten books published, three will be three about refugees; is this due to the sensitivity of three in ten EU citizens, or the fact that they have received funding to write about this topic. She points out that she herself is able to access funds in the visual arts, in particular, with the content she is producing, and suggests that a writer should be able to access funds in the same way. She points out that for some writers in Turkey who have the challenge of appealing to an overseas readership, certain types of content “are more attractive, safer.” “Now, there is a readership for stories, and then there is also an LGBT readership for stories. Do you see what I mean?”

While claiming that writers are engaging in risk-avoidance, Ç.D. comments that this is also the case for editors. “Now, no-one can undertake the task of taking on someone’s manuscript, nor can they put in the effort to work it up from its raw state, what’s known as ‘Kerouc’s first scroll’.” She thinks that, however “brilliant a manuscript may potentially be”, however disorganised, or ungrammatical a text it is in its raw state, there are no editors around anymore who could say “I’ll whittle this into shape somehow.” “People are no longer willing

or able to undertake that sort of task. The job of editing has become more focused on marketing and simple text correction.” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). Visibility has become one way for a writer to remain in the public eye. The writer Ç.D. reflects: “As far as I understand, but not that I know about it really, in the past a writer knew up-front that they were never going to reach a desired level of visibility in their own lifetime however much they tried, and perhaps as a consequence they were more likely to devote themselves to the concepts of permanence and immortality in their work.” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). She points out that, today, a writer is only visible when he is engaged in the act of writing, and that this visibility is immediately consumed; which means that the writer is forced to continue producing before their previous work has been consumed so that they can continue to be visible, since they would otherwise be forgotten by their readers in the intervening gap. “You can’t take that risk”. The question most frequently asked this writer is whether or not they saw the gap of four years between their second and third book as a (career) risk, for example:

“It’s about a book having a specific sell-by date, a shelf-life. The next book has to come out straight after this one, if it is not to lose its potential shelf space. Get your new book on the shelf next to the previous one, get it on the shelf next to the other one..... Once you are out of that booksellers, getting back in....., once your off their catalogue list, getting put back in...you will never be able to come back if you don’t sit at the table....you have to ensure continuity. And thats very tiring,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer Ç.D., comments that the nature of knowledge itself has changed. People are more interested in information than in-depth knowledge. “Its considered sufficient just to glance from a distance, rather than getting involved in details. We take a look at something, then go straight on to the next thing....we look at that, then go back to the other.... Inevitably this has a reciprocal effect on what’s produced,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). So we end up, says

the writer, with a situation like this: imagine a researcher with a readership of just 150-200, who may have spent years investigating and working on a specific subject at great depth, while 15 minute-long Youtube videos can have many more viewers, and are a more popular form of media.

The writer Ç.D. also raises another point, the subject of criticism, which she defines as a “problem” common not only to literature but to all fields in general. She compares the attitude of writers and critics of the previous generation towards criticism with that of the current one. For example, a critic who was also a friend of a writer, someone who had shared a raki table with them, and who had liked three of their books, but then couldn’t find a way to describe the fourth one, which they didn’t like, or if they published a strongly critical piece about it in a journal saying it was something not worthy of the writer, “they would still feel alright about sitting with them at the same table, I assume. We can see that, they all shared the same table, so it was a question of who was criticising who....” Whereas today, suggests Ç.D., the preference is to stay in familiar waters no matter what, and I say this not just for literature but for all fields:

“Today I am seeing the same thing in all walks of life, we try not to step on each other’s toes. And if we have to do so we first take all the necessary precautions, if you know what I mean. First we create the situation of ‘the other’. I say this not only about literature. I think it really applies generally, in the political context. Daily politics are, in my view, not that far removed from everyday life, and just as influential. And it’s like this in every field. What’s more, this is not a new situation. Its been like that for ten-fifteen years. Because, how shall I put it, we don’t have the patience for real criticism. There’s no place for it in our life any more. We want to be visible, and we want to be praised, whether it be as a writer or an actor, in essence as a human being,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

Ç.D. stresses how “starved” of real criticism she herself has become. When she reads a criticism of her work in a journal, she expects to see both the positives and negatives of it exposed, not praise. She suggests that someone who “cannot praise a writer enough” in a critical piece about them, will inevitably be the very person who “inexorably and unfathomably buries them deep without any explanation on another occasion,” and that these are ‘extreme behaviours’ we refer to: “If the critic has not grounded this extreme praise in any sort of rationale, and you do not respond to this in any way, then they are not obligated to express a rationale for sinking you in any way either. Somewhat like the Nasreddin Hoca story of the cooking pot,” (Ç.D., 2018, İstanbul). According to Ç.D., the idea of grounding criticism in a rational, logical framework is no longer relevant. She observes that some writers have such a “major reputation” that they are considered above criticism, or we don’t criticise them “for fear of being crushed by their shadow”, and others because they are “too close to us”. There are times when someone finds a writer’s style “so diametrically opposed” to their own that they will condemn what is actually a literary piece as being “anything other than literature”, and may also think they are justified in basing their criticism on their “personal distaste for a piece”. “It becomes a form of favoritism. If the reader favours a more elaborate style of literature, they will tend to criticise the writer who has a leaner, more minimal voice, wby using phrases like “This is not literature”, instead of comenting: “I don’t understand this, this is not my style” (Ç.D., 2018, İstanbul).

The writer Ç.D. indicates that literature as opened up a space for the ‘popular’. “Has literature in general become popularised? No. How many readers read stories? The story genre...I don’t know. Let’s say 10,000....” According to Ç.D., when one compares the population of Turkey in 1970 to what it is today, there appears to be no great increase in the readership for stories in the meantime. Although she accepts that some writers are selling very

well ever since books began to be viewed as commodities, the debate on how much and which of these is literature has begun:

“We have begun to discuss the issue of whether something is literature or just writing. We have begun to question anything a writer produces, any book they may bring out, on the basis that it may be fiction, but is it literature. This, yes, this is how it is.....I have nothing to say about writers writing books with this sort of content, since their motivation is entirely different. Just because the product has the same format doesn’t mean that your motivation for producing it will be the same. Neither does it mean that your impulse will be the same. Is it in book format? Yes. At least that. I’m not saying this to belittle that genre, but this is something else. And it is something the publisher is also all too aware of,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

As far as Ç.D. has observed, the publishers tend to vary their marketing budgets and strategies according to the identity of the writer and their sales figures. If the book is expected to sell 30,000 copies, the budget will be in line with that figure, if only three, that will reflect on the budget. Although the writer claims not to “underestimate” this type of pulp fiction, it is equally true, she proposes, that there is no guarantee that someone who reads vampire books today will move on to Dostoyevski tomorrow. Although the “act of reading” may be identical in either case, this does not mean that easy-reading best-seller pulp fiction will necessarily lead to the reader choosing what is generally defined as literature in the future, in Ç.D.’s view. “The reader won’t be automatically attracted to higher quality content by engaging in the act of reading. Watching Ertuğrul one day doesn’t make the viewer say ‘I am engaging in the act of viewing’ the next day, ‘so today I will watch a Nuri Bilge Ceylan film’,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). Ç.D. interpretes this as a kind of ‘package’ deal; there are packets, each consisting of a slice of culture, one this slice, the other a different slice of culture.”

Yet another example of change in the literary world the writer mentions is “the need for visibility,”. İhsan Oktay Anar and Barış Bıçakçı are the examples she chooses from a recent generation to illustrate her point. İhsan Oktay Anar’s visibility, his image exposure towards the reader consists of little beyond an I.D. photo of the writer, while she mentions that she could only contact Barış Bıçakçı via his wife’s e-mail address; “You “can exist like that”, she comments. When her book is published, she does not refuse the publisher’s request that she take part in an interview because of the visibility requirements of her own culture and the arts enterprise, adding that if, then as now, she had been a lone writer working in her own room, and if she hadn’t had the predetermined visibility requirements of her own enterprise, she might not have wanted to do the interview. Although stressing that, as it was, she was actually not a writer “without visibility” in any case:

“There must be a reason for this but there are very few writers who do not use social media. And I don’t know why this is the case. Does it mean that, in general, people have the need for exposure? I mean, has it become a personal need of ours that we can’t bear not to be visible? Or does this (need) actually make a qualitative difference to people’s visible recognition, this I do not know, but I don’t think so, actually. I mean.... if you are not writing a novel on a popular topic....what difference does it make....[...] I don’t, I really don’t know. Every need does not invoke the same reaction in every individual. For example, I find exposure disturbing,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

For the writer Ç.D., her first experience of using social media, particularly Twitter, began “like many people, before and after Gezi”, when, she explained, she used it mainly to get information. Later she added the Facebook and Instagram platforms, which she mainly used to access headlines and read the news. “The main reason for this (use of social media) was the fact that you could no longer access news via the mainstream media channels. Consequently you were obliged to use Twitter, whether you wanted to or not.” The writer has

no idea whether the social media is considered a viable media space by other writers, and she does not feel that she has enough information to judge that. She defines herself as someone who had such a “loathing” for technology that she would continue to write on the typewriter and avoid social media altogether if she could. “I mean, since I know that I couldn’t do this even if I wanted to, it’s a question of getting more exposure on social media....this is my book, or these are my books....if you know what I mean?” Meanwhile she mentions a writer renowned for their books, whom she claims it disturbs her to see so frequently on social media. She is unable to respond when asked the question why. Other than that, apart from the acquisition of information or news, she has no desire to read that person’s “emotional state in the moment” because she feels that it is nothing to do with her. “I don’t know. Maybe it’s because I don’t consider myself all that valuable. I don’t think that one’s personal daily life is something that should be shared so much, and so I am not so interested in the minutia of other people’s daily lives”. If a person shares something exceptional that they have read or listened to, and if that person is someone whom they have previously heard or read and whose previous work is a viable reference in itself for the reader, Ç.D., points out that she would look forward to their sharings.

Ç.D., mentions a message she recently received on Twitter as an example of how she sees the relationships between writer and reader having changed. The message reads: “Why aren’t you writing?” and it was received very late at night. “And since I normally don’t receive messages via Twitter, but didn’t know how to turn off the sound, you hear a ‘bleep’ and it wakes you up. ‘Why are you not writing?’ Never mind fifty or a hundred years ago, think back just ten years ago, would any sort of communication like that have been possible?” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). Someone who has never personally met a writer, but who may just have read their books, can ask them ‘why they aren’t writing’ on Twitter just like that. And even though failing to mute the message tone may be the writer’s fault, still, being woken up

at that hour of the night, in such a way does give Ç.D. pause for thought. Why is she so accessible to everyone? Why can she access anyone so easily? As far as Ç.D. is concerned, such convenience lowers the quality of communication. She is of the opinion that someone should “think twice” before initiating communication with another person. But one doesn’t do that. There is no need, and there isn’t time.” In the past, a writer submitting a story to a literary journal would write it by hand, correct it as they type it out on a typewriter, then go over the text again, create a final draft, then when it was finished, put it in an envelope with a cover letter and send it via the post Office. All of which was part of a process, and at every stage the writer would repeatedly think: “I’ve written it, is it worth sending?”, “Is it really good?” Whereas today, you are on your third beer, or you are in the middle of a manic attack, and at that moment you think you are writing the best work in the world. When you press the send button, that’s over, Its gone to the other party. So the ease and speed with which we can communicate now means that that moment for reflection has gone, disappeared. Ç.D. ponders whether the person who was able to write ‘why aren’t you writing’ so late at night on Twitter would be able to ask that question so easily if they came to one of the writer’s interviews, or would they even be able to write it in an e-mail at all, provided they could get a hold of the writer’s e-mail address. “They may not be able to make that much effort. It’s effortless communication I’m talking about.” Ç.D.’s view is that when an individual does not put in any effort in communication at any time, they will not pay much attention to the “content” either. And since they have not devoted any time on the act of communicating, nothing changes in their life when they write to Ç.D. “But nor does anything change in my life. The lines are beginning to cross. Do you see what I mean. You begin to take nothing that is said at all seriously. Because the information being transmitted both in and out, is random. So you no longer feel bound to pay attention to everything that is said.” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul).

The writer Ç.D. mentions that they are surprised by the recent increase in the numbers of writers and publishers. Publishers are under quite extreme economic risk. She stresses that most publishers and arts and cultural institutions in European countries receive 20% - 100% support from various non-profit organisations and funds, unlike this country where one cannot find this kind of support. A Spanish publisher can get support from the “Spanish Cultural Centre to publish one in ten of their writers.” Meanwhile, with a paper market indexed totally to the dollar and to product supply, the estimated cost of a book may start out at 10 liras, but by the time the book is published four months later, may end up being 13 liras. They can withstand that risk. Also price-indexed rents everywhere....they can undertake that risk too,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). These are, effectively serious risks, which means, according to Ç.D., that to start a new publishers needs courage as an individual, and is a move to be respected. Ç.D. says “lets have more” writers. But if the writer’s book is not durable in itself, no matter how much advertising it gets, no matter how much money is spent on advertising, and even if it sells, non of that will make it any more permanent. She gives the case of a book which had been very popular on its publication, and which also sold very well.” “I have not read the book, so you see I have no idea [...] We are talking about a very popular title. One that we all know about. I know that the publishing house hired an marketing agent solely to promote that title,” (Ç.D., 2018, Istanbul). But today, you never hear about it. And this, according to the writer, is due to the title in question having very little “resonance” with the reader. The writer views the *Harry Potter* books, from another, rather more fanciful perspective. These are titles she read while at university, commenting that ten years later her thirteen year old niece is reading the same books. “Either this is the result of an incredible marketing campaign, or there really is something about these books. There is something about them.....and if there wasn’t, there would be no way you can make it exist.”

The writer H.E. sees the largest change in the literary world as sales-oriented publishers beginning to exclusively dominate the market. This change, according to H.E., had direct impact on the production of literature. H.E. informs us that many writers who believed in the depth and aesthetic of literature tried to write novels under a pseudonym and send them to this kind of publisher. “Instead of sitting down and writing their own good novels, or their own stories, they chose to try this, out of economic concerns, thinking that they could manage to turn it into a form of income, with the caveat that they are already capable of writing literature,” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul). Having said that, many of them either leave this task half-finished, or just express the idea without actually trying to write anything. “But when you think about it, such titles sell so well that if 10,000 are sold it's quite likely that, the writer stands to take away figures like forty or fifty thousand lira.” In all this, the writer, of course, is thinking, that with that amount of money in their pocket, they can then easily sit down and write that masterpiece. However, according to H.E. that is not how things actually work. The growing dominance of sales-focused publishers on the market also affects the few publishers who focus on real literature.

Some sales-focused publishers founded just two or three years ago already have an annual turnover equal to that of a well-established major publisher. This situation, H.E. thinks, may well cause the owners of publishing house to ponder: “I don't know, but does our boss think about this, but surely he must be thinking about it, or why am I paying wages to eighty people, when they have made more with a staff of just five? We are paying a fortune to eighty people...” And so the publishers are pushed, inevitably, bit by bit ‘down that slope’. However, as H.E. says, one positive outcome of all this is that writers are now in a position to bargain with publishers, and to make money. A situation, which H.E. points out, did not exist in Turkey until fairly recently. “This is undoubtedly a good thing” he proposes. “Yes, perhaps the writer does bargain with them, and maybe cheats a little, but in the final analysis, the

writer is finally able to make a living through his writing, without having to do other things” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul).

In the writer H.E.’s view, apart from being a sector in themselves, publishers in Turkey, also function as a kind of “school”, although this side to their operations is fast diminishing in size. But there are still some publishers who, in spite of everything, will print good quality books regardless of their sales potential. For example, even though novels are considered more valuable in Turkey, as elsewhere, it is still possible to get books of stories printed. This is “no longer quite the case” in either the USA, Scandinavia or Europe. H.E. points out that stories are published in Europe, Scandinavia and the USA in about the same quantities as poetry in Turkey. If a well-known novelist writes a book of stories, it will of course be published, whereas for a struggling young writer to try launching himself with a book of stories simply would not work. “Why should it still be like that in Turkey, I can only think that it’s somehow connected to this cultural integrity agenda, in the hands of editors and writers. It is still possible to put a little pressure on the publishers to print at least 1000 copies of a book,” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul). The writer suggests that we may view the publishing houses as ‘schools’ because, in his view, academics in Turkey have seriously lost vigour, or are being repeatedly honed down, and that evolving intellectual capital is “mainly in the hands of publishing” as a result of the instabilities suffered by academia under various political agenda. In other countries, this sort of non-fiction work is usually printed by academic publishers, so the academic knowledge being produced by the universities is hence disseminated through the same channel. Whereas, such channels in Turkey produce “popular novels “for sale to the general public”. However, H.E. stresses that this: “The Turkish public should read this book. It is exemplary, it should definitely be promoted” kind of attitude is slowly disappearing in Turkey. We are losing ground however (as literary editors), and we will all disappear, as in Europe or the USA. We will carry on, even continue to make a living

somehow, but either we will become the kind of editor they want, the sector wants, or... That is obviously the direction the sector is heading, no question....” The major turn-over to best-sellers and the sectorisation within the literary world “ensures that the giants will continue to swallow the mites”. This is not going to change whatever the political situation. The thirst for money doesn’t change, since the capitalist system doesn’t change, as we continue down that route.”

H.E. comments that the publishing houses are no longer the literary clubs they once were. “And that’s sad...” He believes that in the past the support that the more important publishers particularly, gave writers through such ‘literary clubs’ was significant. For example, H.E. mentions discussions that carried on right up to the end of the day in the offices of the publications chief editor. Some writers came to talk about their books, others to sign contracts. They all ended up chatting in the editor-in-chief’s room where they would inevitably talk about literature, politics, and everyday issues. H.E. occasionally joined these conversations. Although by then such gatherings happened relatively rarely, particularly large gatherings, because people realised that they couldn’t just ‘knock and walk-in’ any more. Not like they once did. Occasionally you might be lucky and come across something of that sort. Nowadays they don’t happen at all...”(H.E., 2018, Istanbul). Today, it’s very difficult, almost impossible, for a young translator to meet an experienced master of their craft, or a young writer to learn something from a master of the pen. Being a publisher himself, H.E. knows many translators and writers, whom he sees frequently, although, despite this, he doesn’t personally seek out more frequent meetings, but he stresses that this is not possible for those who are not publishers. Having said this, the writer does mention some small publishers in Cağaloğlu who might still maintain the role of a club. He assumes that even if none of the ‘great’ names frequent such places, there could be many a young writer like himself who could rub shoulders with his peers in these little publishers.

He also mentions the situation with book supplements. The dailies all have book supplements. Every one.” *Milliyet, Birgün, Akşam, Sabah, Yeni Şafak, Agos* and *Vatan*, although the writer does not think that they are very effective. He explains that they are published merely for the “advertising”. And the publishers are placing adverts ‘like crazy’, says H.E., “after all, what can they possibly be earning from their books?”, especially, according to the writer, since “visibility is not possible through the supplements, as they are not distributed universally, nor does anyone read them anyway, because the content is of such low quality.” Almost 50% of the book supplements brought out by best-seller publishers are “devoted” to adverts he adds, and for a promotional piece targeting a particular book to appear in these supplements will depend largely on whether or not the publishers have submitted bespoke advertising. But, he stresses that apart from *Radikal Kitap* (*Radikal Kitap* started publication in 2016 under the *Hürriyet* Daily umbrella) and *Cumhuriyet Kitap* supplements, none of the others have any informative content about books whatsoever.

The writer M.G. points out that there were fewer publishing houses in 2011, and fewer books were being published then. So he thinks that what is happening now may be a change or a moment of awareness, in parallel to the rise in the number of new writers, first books and publishers. The change in question began with the policy of *İletişim Yayınları*, especially under the editorship of Levent Cantek, in favour of “giving young literary writers a chance.” Some of the writing team, including Emrah Serbes, Alper Canıgüz, Murat Menteş and Afili Filinta publish under *İletişim Yayınları*. But supporting the work of young writers was not the only goal. M.G. mentions that an *İletişim Yayınları* plan was initiated in 2015 to print twelve new books a year, one each month. “Let’s be the ones to discover new blood for literature. Let’s encourage them. If we don’t, if they never get to write their second book, that’s unthinkable. If it does work, we will have gained a new literary writer. This will be a positive, both for the publishers and for new writers. And as far as M.G. is concerned it is “not a bad

project”. However, in the years following 2015, *İletişim Yayınları* begins to receive serious criticism on this score. The drive to gain new writers meant a relative drop in the number of good books. In subsequent years they modified their policy accordingly. The project remained limited to that one year. A 12 month long experiment. Although it did effect the other publishers. They “introduced so many new writers that we were left behind.” And “we opened the gates to new writers saying we should do something similar,”. Now, for example, Yapı Kredi publishes more young writers. I’m not sure about *Can Yayınları*, but in my view, the change began with *İletişim Yayınları*, when publishers began to be more open (M.G., 2018, İstanbul).

As the number of publishers increased, books that would not normally have reached the bookshelves were also published. In the past, when there were fewer publishing houses, it was more difficult to publish; nowadays, as the numbers of titles increase, it has become easier to do so, he points out, adding that there were some writers publishing their own books. “In 2010, a friend of mine published a book of poetry with his own resources. I think you can still do that.” He thinks that in the long run, this can be a positive development. There has to be an injection of new writers, although perhaps for every new writer (of quality) a hundred indifferent writers emerge.” M.G. adds that not only did the number of writers, publishers and printed books increase, but so did the number of books written in other languages available in translation This definitely was a positive change; although the writer is not sure whether and how much effect these developments had on the size of quality readership. And even if the readership grew:

“When the interest in literature, the readership, or the potential readership goes up.... and when we look into that, we find that mediocre literature is also in amongst the rest. And with it the reader that comes with the magazine, or via Instagram; the Oğuz Atay team, for example. The readership goes up, yes, but, I don’t know, its not for me

to try and assess all this but has there been a change, an increase in what we might call quality readers, those who follow literature and the history of literature or not, I don't know. In general, there are definitely more readers, although mainly of books of the best-seller variety. And yet, when you look at the list of best-sellers, sometimes unusual names such as Stefan Zweig are included, or Ahmet Ümit, or Orhan Pamuk. Apart from these writers, it could be Canan Tan or Ayşe Kulin, if they have a book coming out, or occasionally, Zülfü Livaneli when he is launching a book. These are the kinds of people one might expect to see on the list, but apart from them, the remainder of titles are not to be believed. You might wonder about these other best-seller titles, and when you look at them you see some very strange things indeed," (M.G., 2018, Istanbul).

Even though he does not make a direct connection to this event, the writer M.G., comments that there was an explosion in the numbers of journals after Gezi. Particularly mentioning the emergence of *Ot* and its many counterparts. "Strangely enough, literature was at the centre of most of these initiatives, 'in inverted commas'." It was also interesting that the sales of journals were high at the time, says the writer. "It was then a general myth that no-one was believed to be reading at all." The writers contributing to the journals were good. and have become quite well-known in their own right since then, although the writer finds the journal's presentation to be "pop". For example, they use quotes from one of the stories to make stickers. That sentence alone is enough for you to think negatively about that writer. You can question the structure, the meaning of a sentence, because they have taken the most 'banal' statement out of context, chosen the sentence most likely to attract attention, and turned it into a 'sticker, " (M.G., 2018, Istanbul). This he dubs "a wink towards the Instagram coffee school". The journals, M.G. thinks, have tried to create a middle way by making space for mainstream literature, and "packaging it in this way", so as to attract

mainstream literature readers. He also comments that by mainstream literature, he actually means literature as we know it.

4 CONCLUSION

Throughout human history, the tools of communication have been determined and shaped by the way we communicate and form relationships. Marshall McLuhan said that while it is “we” who invent communication tools, it is the tools that shape us. Harold Innis said that forms of communication are indicators of social transition/transformation. McLuhan, while dividing human history into four eras, also points out the impact communication tools can have in the transitional periods between each era. First, the “Tribal Period”, characterised by an ‘oral culture’, in which the main communication tool was speech. This period ended with the invention of the phonetic alphabet, which marked the commencement of the “Literate Period”, during which humans began to use “visual” as well as “oral” tools. The third, or “Print Period” began with the invention of the printing press. According to McLuhan, the event of the printing press increased human dependency on the visual even more. “People saw the printed word for the first time, in a medium that completely changed the meaning of the written word”. The ability to express ideas in print give form to the entirety of global thought and opinion of the day,” (Altay, 2005, 20). During this period, people engaged in the act of reading as a solitary endeavour, which isolated them from society in general. At the onset of the “Print Period” society was fragmented. But with the transition to the “Electronic Period,” by way of the telegraph, people once more begin to perceive the world in a more collective context thanks to electronic media tools,” (Altay, 2005, 20). The human race, first emerging from the Tribal Period began to develop more individualised characteristics, and later returns to a form of tribalism during the Electronic Period. Humans began to rebuild their lost connections with primitive perception and tribal instinct (McLuhan & Fiore, 1967, 63). Walter Ong refers to the emergence of a “secondary oral culture” following the invention of

the printing press, which was characterised by devices such as the “telephone, radio, TV and various voice-recording devices” leading us into the “Electronic Period”; through which we came closer that we had ever been to the “Oral Culture” of our distant antecedents,” (Ong, 2003, 162). Ong also holds that prior to the period of literacy, humans developed a sense of ‘group consciousness’ out of necessity, and that today we, as humans, now “consciously program this consciousness”. Ong’s perception supports McLuhan’s notion that there has been a return to tribalism during the “Electronic Period”.

Turkey, being equally effected by global developments as any other country, the literary world in this country has repeatedly changed under the impact of both local conditions and global events. Literary intellectuals and writers of the Reform Period clustered around the dailies, journals and publishing houses, meeting and gathering together there, not only in order to ensure the publication of their texts and books, but to build communications and relationships with their peers. The fastest and most direct way to find out about current affairs and the latest developments was through one-on-one, face-to-face relationships. This was to change with the onset of communication technology. Ideological factions will also form beyond literary concepts, but up to the 1980’s, face-to-face relationships were effectively almost the sole communication tool at our disposal for information and knowledge sharing. Although the military Coup d’Etat of 12 September, 1980 triggered an extended period of “silence” throughout the country, it is also the case that economic developments both at home and abroad instigated a growing dynamism in the literary world. Meanwhile, however, the tools and methods of relationship-forming changed. Computers and the internet became part of our lifestyle, particularly in the 1990’s, while social media followed during the millenium decade. With these developments, the world of writers and literary intellectuals, whom we consider the representatives of “literary culture” has taken on a new form during the period

McLuhan referred to as the “Electronic Period” and Ong called the era of secondary oral culture.

The 12 September military coup had a distinct impact on the worlds of literature and publishing, just as it did in other areas of societal existence. Nurdan Gürbilek describes “a prevalent coup atmosphere of pressure and violence,” during the first half of the decade, followed by the relative freedoms of the second half of the decade, a time bearing the stamp of what might be described as a more modern, more ‘civil’ regime,” (Gürbilek, 2009, 13), which, she observes, instigates after the 80’s “an explosion in word, image and view.” This situation naturally reflected on the publishing world, as one may easily see. In his thesis entitled: “Book Publishing in Turkey: Problems and Prospects in the Context of Industrialization”, Cemil Boyraz claims that new trends and tendencies began to emerge in Turkish book publishing after the 1980’s. He mentions the widespread crisis the publishing sector underwent immediately following the 1980 coup, due to new economic policies and various political crises. He claims that the drop in book sales from the 1980’s to the mid 1990’s is linked to the overseas sourcing of technology and rises in paper costs, coupled with devaluation and high inflation on a national scale. Although the major publishers and those producing out-of-school cramming workbooks were relatively less effected, the smaller publishers were crippled by the new regime. Many publishers closed down. However, Boyraz claims that following the normalisation (return to *çivil* rule) after 1982, new publishers began to emerge in the sector. He identifies the emergence of a considerably competitive and flexible structure in the sector. However, since this period is characterised as somewhat economically unstable and 90% of the sector is dominated by new publishers, there was nothing preventing anyone who wished to do so from forming their own publishing company and so entering the sector.

On the other hand, while publishers like *Remzi, İnkılap, Altın, Bilgi, Cem, Dergâh* and *Varlık*, who had been founded prior to 1980 continued to publish, others today considered to be among the most powerful publishers in the sector, such as *Can Yayınları, İletişim Yayınları, Ayrıntı Yayınları, Metis Yayınları, Yapı Kredi Yayınları* and *Adam Yayınları*, which latter, throughout its active publishing existence brought a new understanding to publishing, were all founded in 1980. Boyraz points out that the rules and regulations forming an organisational framework for the publishing world were, at that time, almost non-existent. (Boyraz, 2006, 30-1). So much so, as he points out, that Murat Gülsoy, in an interview, mentioned that “Before, up to the eighties, there was no such thing as purchasing a foreign writer’s copyright, the publishers simply had the book translated any way they liked and printed it,” (Gia Dergi) hence illustrating the situation existing at the time. The Turkish Publishers Association (Türkiye Yayıncılar Birliği) is founded in 1985.

In his post-graduate thesis entitled: “Türkiye’de Yayıncılık Alanının Dönüşümü” (The Transformation of the Publishing Sector in Turkey), Mehmet Erken separates the years from 1980-2015 into two phases, in terms of publishing history. The first, from 1980 – 1995, he defines as a period of slow-down and renewal, characterised by the military and political effects of the post-coup years, and the declining economic situation, reflected as price-hikes in paper followed by strikes at the state paper factory (SEKA) resulting in a decline in published books (Erken, 2016, 57). As far as Erken is concerned, 1995-2015 were years representing the birth and development of the publishing sector. What separates the two phases is the extremely fast rise in the number of books published annually after 1995.

The literary world was clearly centred in Cağaloğlu, particularly up to 1980. Nearly all the publishers and daily press were situated there. Consequently, Cağaloğlu may be considered to have been a work, life and social environment for publishing house owners, editors, translators, writers, journalist, and all those involved in culture and the arts up to that

time. However, by the 1990's, the dailies and most of the publishers had moved elsewhere, away from Babiali (the Porte). It was no longer possible for a writer or member of the literary community to find all the major publishers in one place in Cağaloğlu. The image of Cağaloğlu invoked by the writer S.Ö. remains in the past. Nor was Beyoğlu ever quite like Cağaloğlu.

Even though the writer and critic E.K. mentions new beginnings following the 12 September 1980, he stresses that the actual social, conomic and cultural changes took place more visibly after 1990. "Life became, in a way, fragmented, or perhaps the results of change began to be felt most palpably during those years," (E.K. 2017, Istanbul). For example, there were no longer clusters of people grouping together around specific concepts; consequently that sort of journal was no longer published. "Everyone lives alone." (People's lifestyle became more individualised). According to E.K., the reason for this was that life itself and ideas had completely changed, become fragmented, while each individual lived seperately, focused entirely on their own thoughts. And yet, he is of the opinion that the 1990's were productive years. Also years during which a regeneration could be felt in the realm of literature and culture. Relationships had changed. A huge transformation had taken place. The lifestyle of former years had gone but there was somewhat a sense of relief as the oppressive years of the 12 September coup began gradually to lose their grip.

The poet E.A. felt that face-to-face relationships disappeared in the 1990's. For example, the internet enabled people to form e-mail groups in the 90's. The writer S.Ö. felt that face-to-face relations began to disappear ias early as the 80's, and had entirely disappeared by the 90's. The writer M.S. describes "a flimsy deculturation, a shallowness," that emerges after the 1990's, in which there is no longer a place for warm brotherly / sisterly relationships. He reminds us how when he used to visit a journal, *Varlık*, for example, Yaşar Nabi Nayır, even though too busy to raise his head, would still converse with writers

and would-be writers there, and would always have some ideas if asked for advice. Publishing houses and journals turn into major companies, coffee houses into cafes, meyhanes into bars, pubs proliferate. According to some writers, face-to-face relations are completely finished, “the old warmth has gone”, the relationships between writer and publisher have turned into “something much more savage”, writers have become isolated from society, advertising has taken over. The writer Y.K. comments that the three or four years after the coup were difficult years. Journals closing down, publishing houses exclusively publishing definite best-sellers or the titles of their best-known writers. Being very careful in their choice of titles. He also comments that the real change, the expansion, started after the 90’s. The number of writers increases; writers begin to write with greater ease. And all this change is linked to global changes.

Desktop publishing and advanced print technology in particular, play a role in all the changes and transformations of the 1990’s; although the entry of major corporate funding into the sector is another factor. There was serious expansion in the variety and types of publications, and the numbers of publishers. Book-seller chains began to form. The onset of the internet from the mid 1990’s onwards supported internet book sales, which changed the publishing sector yet again. Boyraz records that it was during the 1990’s that the market for best-sellers began to form, and celebrity authors took the stage. Measures to prevent illegal book sales become law and begin to have an impact in 1995. According to one item in the relevant law, (Law for Creative Arts and Ideas, no. 5846, Section 81) (5846 sayılı fikir ve Sanat Eserleri Kanun 81. Maddesi), publishers were bound to attach copyright certification to each publication, other than regular journals. Although not without its problems, we can speak of an organised form of publishing emerging in the 1990’s. According to the writer L.D., the turning point of the 90’s was the introduction of copyright laws. Prior to those laws, publishers could select works from global literature and publish whatever they wanted. As a

result, they were not investing in Turkish writers. However, L.D. points out that, by the 90's, advanced technology in publishing and restrictions on publishers due to the copyright laws meant that the publishers began to encourage young Turkish writers. This was one of the reasons for the increase in Turkish writers during the 1990's. However, despite this increase, publishers became more commercial, and books began to be regarded more as a commercial commodity, 'selling power' becoming their most valuable feature. Consequently, as the writer Ş.F. points out, written output focused primarily on the commercial aspects and writer visibility.

The 1980's were characterised as "shake out and renew" years, devoted to "building a new life, a new system..." By the millenium years, according to the journalist–writer Mustafa Sönmez, "Turkish publishers had become totally integrated with international publishing bodies. More publishers attended sectoral fairs. A modern attitude to publishing now dominated the sector," (Sönmez, 2013, 110). In the 1990's, the number of publishing houses increased, and in the millenium decade published titles increased, hence the literary world became "a huge sector". But expansion was not only confined to publishers and titles, printing techniques underwent significant changes and the variety of journals, for example poetry and story journals and broadsheets proliferated, particularly in the years following the millenium. The writer J.V. defines that decade as the years that technology entered publishing. The writer E.A. comments on the explosion in journals following publishing innovations throughout the sector. There are at least one or two journals published in almost every district in Turkey (E.A., 2017, Istanbul). However, this situation introduced the notion of the 'market' into the literary world. The writer-critic E.K. comments that a book, while formerly a product which would be presented in a cultural context, whereas nowadays it was a market commodity. The writer J.V. refers to those people who founded various publishing houses in order to market best-sellers during the millenium decade, once they had "discovered," "that publishing could

be lucrative.” Some of those publishers did, in fact, make money, although some stopped publishing, and others went bankrupt.

The writer M.S. points out that writers professionally productive during the millenium years did not know about their literary antecedents or their works. According to M.S., after the millenium there was a “generation without a past”. While the writer G.K. comments that after the millenium it was more important that writers be visible than be writing. As everyone began to “withdraw within their own isolated existence” during the 1990’s writers began to construct their own literary environment within that isolation. They no longer needed a literary group either socially, professionally (in order to publish), or to ensure that their book reached the reader, nor did they occasionally need publishers to print what they had written. Thanks to the internet, the writer can share what they have written with hundreds and thousands of people; and can also build up a readership and a writing community. This in turn engendered the notion that to be “visible” was more important than the act of writing. The advent of social media meant that visibility on the internet became “almost a necessity”. The writer J.V. stresses the relative importance of visibility over content, and the idea that what’s in the window is most prominent, but that this spawned a “weird kind of popularism””. Tayfun Atay comments that without visibility in this “age of the culture of the visible, it was almost like being “non existent”. (Atay, 2017, p. 102)

As Bauman states, “Today, we are all highly mobile..... Some of us do not feel the need to leave our own homes in order to travel: we can fly from one place to another at the speed of light via websites, read messages from all the farthest corners of the planet on our computer screens, and send replies;.... Space is no longer an obstacle, it takes just a second to circumvent it.” (Bauman, 2010, p. 89). Every new technology instigated a variety of changes. The internet began to spread particularly during the mid 1990’s, and had become an integral part of our life by the millenium years. It caused changes in the literary world both in terms of

content and relationships. At the very least, a writer who would have formerly tucked his manuscript under his arm and gone door to door to one publisher after another can, by the millenium, send his file to ten publishers at once with a “single click”. As Bauman says, we can do everything at the speed of light, and go anywhere at that speed, sitting in front of a computer. The writer or would-be writer can send what they have just written to the publishers, and get a response much faster than before; all the publishing processes for a book can be carried out over the internet. So much so, that editors and publishing chiefs generally preferred to avoid face to face with the writer or to carry out that process in real time. This actually speeds up everything. However, the loss of tangible connections between individuals meant that relationships tended to become more mechanical, more professionally sterile. A publication chief or an editor would formerly have been close enough to a writer to know everything about them, from their personal problems to their little joys, whereas, after the millenium, this form of relationship began to disappear.

During the 2000’s, the distance between the writer and his readers was reduced, especially through social media. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram provided space for writers to store and share information about themselves, and announce any future books they may be launching when used something like a personal website, but also became spaces where the writer was personally accessible. Social media platforms replaced the journal, and given the hiatus in culture and arts news on TV, became the main platform for a writer to promote and talk about their work. It had this function not only for writers, but also for publishers,. While for readers, it became a platform where they could access the writer directly. Readers could now write personally to the writer, share their opinions about their boks or simply chat. Occasionally, we even see readers sharing their personl problems with the writer, although mostly they ask for advice and help to get their own work published. Since most writers also use this platform to share personal information, this means that the

reader automatically becomes part of their personal life. That converts their relationship from reader-book-writer into a direct reader-writer situation. As a result, the book now acquires the function of a tool to facilitate this two-way relationship between reader and writer. For writers, social media is also a platform to meet other writers, and get to know them. Via social media, a writer might contact one of his peers whose book he has read, to share his opinions, and they might then become social media “friends”. If they do not come across each other at an event such as a book fair, their “acquaintancy” will remain confined to a social media “friendship”.

It has been claimed that writing via social media has begun to appear more of value. That this form of writing has its own style, that those who write well and are amusing can become internet “phenomena”, acquire hundreds of thousands or even occasionally more than a million followers, and begin to earn their living via their social media account. The writer Y.F. pointed this out, saying that it has become more important to write well, particularly on Whatsapp. The writer G.B. comments that social media has encouraged people to take more interest in writing. Meanwhile, the ‘phenomena’ with several hundred thousand followers are now writing books, or are being encouraged to do so by publishers who approach them with proposals. These books are best-sellers, even though the literary value of their content may be questionable. The fact that those would-be writers who are not phenomena can now surface, and make themselves heard without having to go through the literary journal mill, as they would have had to do in the past, means that some texts get to be published in an ‘incomplete’ state. Although the writer does point out that the removal of the ‘vetting’ process is a sign of the collapse of “literary authority”; especially since that ‘authority’ tended to judge other people’s work on the basis of their own literary taste and their own knowledge base, which can be discouraging for would be writers, or even those with a book already under their belt, and may even be an obstacle to diversity in literature. So, even if it might be the cause of

mediocre books being published, this development is looked upon with approval by many writers and members of the literary intelligensia. From another perspective, even though those grand authorities who held the entire literary world in their sway are now gone, some writers indicate that mentoring would-be writers, and giving encouragement as their more experienced peers is still something that writers do on an individual basis.

In conclusion, from the 1930's to the 60's, the platforms available to writers and literary figures for them to share their literary work were journals, dailies, the radio, and TV, which was added in due time. Hence, it was practically essential for would-be writers to pass vetting by journal directors and publishing committees, and for them to be on the radar of TV and radio program producers. These people could very easily bypass them, and when they did so, that writer would not exist in the literary world.

Actually, awards had a similar power. If a writer received an award, this resonated in the literary world. Although literary journals retained their power up to the 1980's, when publishing journals became so much easier thanks to technology, broadsheets began to be published alongside the major corporate, well-established journals. After the internet arrived in the 1990's, particularly around the millenium, blogs, then later social media became the accepted platform for would-be writers to garner exposure for themselves and their writings. The would-be writer no longer had any need for the approval of a journal or an authority. The authorities of the past were no more. Anyone who wished could publish their own work and make sure it reached their readers in any way they desired. They no longer needed critics or to belong to a literary group, even though there may still be some individual mentoring going on among writers. This certainly led to a change in the quality of the literary works being produced. Even though the more established publishing houses may still uphold the tradition of passing work through a publication committee, in today's environment where it is so much easier to establish your own publishers, and to publish your own books, publishing

companies focusing on best-sellers have proliferated, filling the bookshelves, on-line book-sellers pages, and even, from time to time, best-sellers lists with books whose literary value is under dispute.

Developing technology and digitalisation has created a levelling in culture. Anyone can access any information whenever and from wherever they choose, and share it. As Marshall McLuhan said: the entire world is “a global village”. The whole world is a mere click away. Where we are and when is no longer important. The development of mass communication tools has effectively removed all borders. The changes related to these developments have also impacted relationships in the literary world. First face to face relations disappeared (during the 1990’s), Today, most interpersonal interactions, whether work-related or personal, are both initiated and sustained over the internet. The necessity for writers to exist in the digital world automatically leads to the discussion about “visibility” (or exposure). For example; it is no longer enough for a writer’s book promotion to be carried out via their publishers social media platforms. The writer has to remain on the social agenda personally in order to contribute to the promotion of his book. Some writers, for example arrange special promotional photoshoots for their book launch. This, of course, draws the literary world into that of popular ‘magazine’ culture, and occasionally leads to the writer gaining priority over the book. However, even though so much has changed with the internet, and especially social media, as Y.S. claims, interpersonal relations remain the same. To be more accurate, the need to make connections and come together doesn’t change. Even though the way in which relationships are formed may have changed, - generally-speaking - writers do make an effort to make contact with their peers.

Reader-writer encounters were relatively few in previous years. There were periods when, not to mention actually meeting the writer, there might not even have been a photo of them on the rear cover of their books. The reader only got to catch a glimpse of them at one of

those rare book-signing days. The Istanbul Book Fair of 1981 was, in that respect, one of the more important platforms bringing writers and readers together. The public could also attend book-signings and interviews. Other platforms where readers and writers met included creative writing workshops and private reading groups.

Communication technology, the internet and social media not only transformed relationships, but also rendered physical spaces or the need for such spaces all but irrelevant. Today, even now, most of the publishers, dailies, journals and printers are centred in Istanbul. Although a writer or would-be writer from any other city is no longer required to bring his portfolio to Istanbul in order to submit it for publication. As McLuhan expressed it, distances have shrunk globally, thanks to communication networking and the mass media, changing perceptions of time and space. Nowadays, writers or would-be writers participate in the publication process from submission of their file to the final print via the internet. Even written interviews are carried out these days via e-mail, while live interviews can be found on Twitter or Facebook. Ultimately, a writer can make contact with his publishers, the press and his readership without leaving the city in which he lives. And yet, the heart of literature, the literary pulse is indisputably still in Istanbul.

Apart from the historical and cultural significance of the metropolis; the fact that the writers all lived there at a time when the foundations of today's literary world were being laid; and that the journals, dailies, publishers and printers are all located here were all factors contributing to Istanbul being the centre of the literary world. It was important that writers and literary figures lived in Istanbul in order to have their work published in a journal or the daily press.

The arrival in the Turkish literary world of writers and their works from places other than Istanbul occurred via the Village Institutes (Köy Enstitüleri) during the 1950's. In fact, Istanbul was also the centre of higher education. For example, Istanbul University, Istanbul

Technical University and Ankara University were the only higher education institutions in Turkey up to 1950 (Sargın, 2007, p. 138). Consequently, literary output, the consumption of literature, literary dynamism and distribution were all situated in Istanbul.

At a certain point, Ankara had been a dynamic centre in terms of the influence of the Turkish Language Institution (Türk Dil Kurumu), *Bilgi Yayinevi* and various literary journals, in combination with the writing community living and working in that city. For the millenium decade, for example, one may refer to the “Ankara school of literature” and Ankara writers. Izmir is also a city with importance for the literary world. Meanwhile, there are those who claim that since there is no longer a necessity for the literary world to be concentrated physically in any one specific space, thanks to technological innovations, one may talk of a decentralisation, or the disappearance of that one dominant centre. However, when it is the pulse of literature which is the topic, Istanbul inevitably comes to the fore; always Istanbul, with its many publishers, distributors and writers, besides the fact that most literary events and competitions take place in that city. Naturally, the numbers of writers living in Istanbul is greater, since there are greater opportunities for them to earn their living just through writing. Istanbul is still the keeper of the literary pulse, as it not only presents more economic resources, but also retains the ‘soul of literature’.

The centre of literature in Istanbul was Cağaloğlu up to the 1990’s; as it was the location of the publishers, book sellers, daily press, and journals, and hence the place most frequented by writers and literary figures. In fact, in the 70’s, Cağaloğlu was the place where writers spent almost all of their time out of their own homes. “To be a writer meant first to find Cağaloğlu,” (L.D., 2017, Istanbul). However, first the dailies, then later the publishers gradually abandoned this location, and once that happened, the coffee houses, pastry shops and small restaurants (lokanta) in the area lost much of their attraction. Cağaloğlu, once “the

meeting place”, lost its status as a literary centre in the 1990’s, even if some small publishers remained, where young writers continued to meet.

Even before the publishers moved to Beyoğlu, that district had been a location for literary gatherings, with its (famous) pastry shops, then later small lokantas and meyhanes. Beyoğlu’s pre-existing culture, coupled with the arrival of the publishers, contributed to it gradually becoming a cultural centre. However, Beyoğlu never quite became a Cağaloğlu, the publishers and book sellers being somewhat scattered through this district. Although its most dynamic years were the 1990’s, cultural interchange and diversity continued to mark Beyoğlu up to the Gezi events of 2013. After that, this district lost its traditional dynamism. In the words of the writer E.K., it became an area abandoned by a certain strata of society, which, according to the writer S.R. was due to its existence having been cauterised. But still one may refer to a “dynamism” of sorts in this area. “Take no notice of my saying it is dead. We’ll give it CIP and resuscitate it. How often did it die and was reborn up to now?” (H.E., 2018, Istanbul).

Since Beyoğlu began to lose lustre as a cultural centre, particularly after the Gezi events, when the world of culture and the arts withdrew, Kadıköy comes to the fore. Kadıköy had long been home to writers and literary figures, where they lived and participated in its street life. Some publishers had their offices here. It has always been a district replete of book sellers, book markets and literary figures, with an abundance of meyhanes, cafes and lokantas, theatres and other places where people meet and congregate. In recent times, book-cafes have been added to the mix. In Kadıköy there is an air of cultural and artistic vibrance. Similarly, since Beyoğlu had lost its attraction for writers as a dynamic place to live, many of them also moved to Kadıköy. In fact, H.D. commented that Cihangir, where he used to live, had itself moved to Kadıköy. Although R.C. was quick to point out that Kadıköy had a more homogenous feel to it, rather than the heterogenous character of Beyoğlu. So even though the

centre appears to have moved over to Kadıköy, it seems that it will take some time before the latter can be counted as the kind of arts, culture and literature centre that Beyoğlu once was. For Cenk Özbay, Kadıköy is still “the other side” and will always remain so. As far as Özbay is concerned, although Kadıköy remains the “centre of the Asian side, and is larger even than Turkey’s second largest city, the capital Ankara,” there is a notion of “being on the other side”, while most of the universities, hotels, a considerable number of commercial centres, the more ostentatious of the shopping centres, the important restaurants, and most significantly the cultural activities of international status are also on the European side (Kadıköy Gazete).



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