Note from the Series Editor

It is a very sad duty for me to write this note for the first-ever book of this series on Ottoman and Turkish Studies at Academic Studies Press. David Mason, with whom I had the pleasure of corresponding about this book, unexpectedly passed away on March 29, 2017 at the age of 46. Having received his PhD from McGill University, he was a visiting professor at Zayed University to American University of Sharjah at the time of his passing. The present book was in its final stages. His wife Hatice was kind enough to permit the publication of the book. I feel only somewhat relieved to think that David's son, Anton, will have an opportunity to add this fine book to the list of things for which he can be proud of his father.

Hakan T. Karateke

For my wife and son

Contents

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I wish to thank Professor A. Üner Turgay for all his help, encouragement, guidance, advice, and attention to detail in the production of this manuscript. I would also like to thank both Erol Üyepazarcı, who eagerly shared his knowledge of Turkish detective fiction with me, very kindly opened his expansive library to me and allowed me to photocopy a number of works from his collection, and Serdar Uraylı, who went to great effort and personal expense to procure a number of works of detective fiction for me and Ömer Türkeş, who also enthusiastically met with me to provide his insight into detective fiction.

I would also like to thank the staff, both past and present, of McGill University's Islamic Studies Library. In particular, I would like to thank the late Steve Millier for notifying me of significant new publications, Charles Fletcher for his help with formatting and furnishing me with some very important sources, and Khaled Medani and Thomas Heise for reading and providing very important insights regarding this work. I also thank Heather Empey for her help in conceiving the title for this work.

Last, I wish to thank my family for their encouragement throughout this process.

1

Introduction

It is estimated that a third of the fiction currently published in English is detective fiction.[1] That, in addition to the tremendous number of detective and crime fiction serial television programs broadcast today, attests to the popularity of the genre. This is by no means a new development. From the beginning, detective fiction has been very popular. This popularity, in addition to certain specific aspects of the genre, has helped detective fiction to develop and maintain an intimate relationship with propaganda. Propaganda was at the heart of the development of the genre; its subsequent popularity ensured that it would continue to be an effective vehicle for propaganda for generations to come.

In searching for the first example of a genre, one encounters a few key obstacles. Some of these obstacles include questions such as: (1) when did the genre officially begin?, (2) does the work in question contain all the elements of said genre?, and (3) how does one account for parallel developments in disparate parts of the world? It is the third question that interests this study with regard to the development of detective fiction as a genre.

Some claim that the earliest known murder mystery that contained all the key elements of detective fiction was "The Three Apples" (Arabic: "Hikayat al-sabiyya 'l-muqtula," which is literally translated as "The Tale of the Murdered Young Woman"), one of the tales in *One Thousand and One Nights*, which was compiled during the Golden Age of Islam (eighth to thirteenth centuries) and first translated into

1 Stephen Knight, *Crime Fiction, 1800–2000: Detection, Death, Diversity* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), x.

French in 1704 and English in 1706.[2] In this tale, a fisherman discovers a heavy locked chest that is painted pink with flowers along the Tigris River and sells it to the Abbasid Caliph, Harun al-Rashid, who then has the chest broken open only to find inside it the dead body of a young woman who was cut into pieces. Harun orders his vizier, Ja'far ibn Yahya, to solve the crime and find the murderer. This whodunit mystery may be considered an archetype for detective fiction. Yet, it cannot be considered a true detective story because Ja'far makes no effort to solve the case. Beyond this, we know that "Arabic literature never produced an indigenous detective fiction genre."[3]

Others discuss some eighteenth-century Chinese novels as being examples of early works in the history of the detective fiction genre. I, however, will limit my discussion of the development of detective fiction to the European/American form for two reasons. First, it is this strand that most scholars accredit with the development of modern detective fiction; second, and more important for this study, whether or not the Europeans and Americans did develop detective fiction, the detective fiction in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey arises and develops out of translations of European/American detective fiction.

As these stories were originally written in Europe for the most part and, accordingly, are an outgrowth of European culture, I will begin by looking at the culture from which they emerged by addressing crime, punishment, and public attitudes toward both beginning in the eighteenth century. Following that, I will look at socioeconomic realities that impacted on the development of these stories. This will be followed by a discussion of how the works of specific English, French, and American writers led to the development of detective fiction as a genre. Finally, I will discuss the Ottoman Empire into which these stories were transmitted with an eye to what cultural impact they had.

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2 Yuriko Yamanaka and Tetsuo Nishio, *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism: Perspectives from East and West* (London: I. B. Taurus, 2006), xv.

3 Samah Selim, "Fiction and Colonial Identities: Arsène Lupin in Arabic," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 13, No. 2 (August 2010): 191.

Development of Detective Fiction as a Genre

Robin Hood, the clever rogue who "stole from the rich to give to the poor," was a popular fictional archetypal English folk hero seen back as far as the fourteenth century.[4] Gil Blas, a hero described by Alain-René Lesage from a naïve youth through cunning servant to landed proprietor and nobleman—with a spell in jail, bereavements, and fits of remorse along the way[5]—is an example of a crime story hero in France.[6] The stories, written between 1715 and 1735, were extremely popular. Jack Sheppard (1702–1724) was a notorious English robber, burglar, and thief of early eighteenth-century London. Jack was born into a poor family. He began as an apprentice to a carpenter but left this path and took up theft and burglary in 1723, with little more than a year of his training to complete. "He was arrested and imprisoned five times in 1724 but escaped four times, making him a notorious public figure, and wildly popular with the poorer classes."[7]

These characters, notable for their lack of strict observance of the law, reflect a large group of society who felt disenfranchised and had no real stake in social order. This is evidenced by the crime rates of the period. Crime rates in the eighteenth century were high. Foucault informs us that there was a "crisis of popular illegality that occurred in the eighteenth century."[8] It is this crisis that, at least in part, drove the reform in penal justice that occurred in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, during which we see a flurry of new, modern penal codes in Russia (1769), Prussia (1780), Pennsylvania (1786), Tuscany

4 Mike Ibeji, "Robin Hood and his Historical Context," *BBC*, last modified February 17, 2011, accessed January 30, 2017, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle_ages/robin_01.shtml.

5 Alain René Lesage, *Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* (London: Printed for J. Mawman, 1819).

6 A. E. Murch, *The Development of the Detective Novel* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1958), 19.

7 Martin Priestman, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 29.

8 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 84.

(1786), Austria (1788), and France (1791). This was the situation just prior to the beginnings of the detective fiction genre, which speaks to just how much of a "radical change in the way the rogue was regarded by the general public"[9] was required for detective fiction and its detective hero to become a viable genre.

The Industrial Revolution also brought significant social repercussionsbeginning in the early nineteenth century. For our purposes, the noteworthy result was the creation of a new social class of industrialists. This now-wealthy group quickly began to have a real stake in social order and wanted to be protected from crime and criminals. They also wanted to fortify their economic power with sociopolitical power. One of their main efforts in this matter was the reformation of the education system. By opening new schools that focused on science and technology that became very popular, they drove a change in the liberal Oxbridge curriculum to a more science-based curriculum that, in the end, even Oxford and Cambridge incorporated.

With this, we see the beginnings of two trends that were to have significant impact on the events of the nineteenth century: (1) the growth of a middle class—the period is even often referred to as the century of the middle class, and (2) the scientification of education. Both events play significant theoretical and practical roles in the development and importance of detective fiction. But, before I discuss this role, I must return to the early development of police forces.

The first police force comparable to present-day police forces was established in 1667 under King Louis XIV in France, although modern police usually trace their origins to the 1800 establishment of the Marine Police in London, the Glasgow Police, and the Napoleonic police of Paris. The first modern police force, however, is also commonly ascribed to the London Metropolitan Police, which was established in 1829 and promoted the role of the police as a deterrent to urban crime and disorder. This new force was initially opposed by the general public, who feared that it would abuse its power to worsen their situation as arbitrary forces loyal to the monarch had in the

9 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 19.

past. This initially negative attitude had changed by the middle of the nineteenth century to one of appreciation and approval. This, however, was not the same as the situation in France, where the police force was changed by Charles X in 1824, following his coronation, into a political weapon against dissenters and would-be rebels. As a result, the French population harbored distrust toward police for a much longer period. This slowly began to change with the aforementioned growth of the middle class, who now had possessions and a stake in social order that they desired to protect. The scientification of education also played an important practical role in the development of a science/reason-based genre.

Development of detective fiction transpired as a result of the synergy between writers in England, France, and America. I will briefly trace the developments that resulted from this sharing of ideas, outlined in the following.

The initial glimmerings of detective fiction began in England. In the eighteenth century, broadsheets began printing "last words," "confessions," and career biographies of criminals. The most prominent example of this trend was *The Newgate Calendar* in England.[10] Collected editions of these stories began to appear in the mid-eighteenth century; in 1774, a five-volume bound edition became the standard version. This led to what was called the Newgate Novel, which was a novel that fostered the interest in exciting tales with a background in criminal exploits. It also originated the promotion of the idea that criminals should be punished, which was new to a population who loved its rogue heroes.

In 1789, Ann Radcliffe (1764–1823), pioneer of the gothic novel, introduced a device that was to become very common in detective stories: a discussion of events between one very clever individual, who requires no explanation, and another less intelligent individual, who does. Later, British writer William Godwin (1756–1836) makes the first step toward a detective hero with his character Caleb Williams (*Things as They Are: The Adventures of Caleb Williams*), who, upon being wronged

10 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 20–21.

by another character, devotes himself to establishing said character's guilt and seeing him punished. It is a reserved step, though, as it seems to indicate that revenge is the only way one could be motivated to take up that abhorrent occupation of informer. Godwin's student, Edward Bulwer-Lytton—later Lord Lytton (1803–1873)—becomes the first in *Pelham* and *Eugene Aram* (1828 and 1832, respectively) to carefully work out a detective theme with a climax.[11]

In America, Charles Brockden Brown (1771–1810) borrows Godwin's *Caleb Williams* plot, combines it with Radcliffe's technique for explanation, and adds his own innovation: a rational explanation.

James Fenimore Cooper, despite working in different genres—from romantic adventure to realistic narrative, in which he created a uniquely American personification of rugged individualism and the pioneer spirit—also made a significant contribution to the detective novel. His creation of characters possessing a combination of great skill and quick perception established the character of a tracker, which would become one of the prototypical characteristics of later detective heroes. His characters, while following a trail, would explain their conclusions or, as in the following example from *The Pathfinder* (1840), Cooper would explain their perceptions:

> Some of the leaves which were exposed to the sun had drooped a little, and this slight departure from the usual natural laws had caught the quick eyes of the Indian; for so practised and acute do the senses of the savage become, more especially when he is on the war-path, that trifles apparently of the most insignificant sort often prove to be clues to lead him to his object.[12]

His novels, the most famous of which was *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), were soon translated into French and struck a chord with the sensibilities of the French population, with his tales set in an unspoiled, natural setting.

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11 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 38.

12 James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pathfinder* (New York: Signet Classics, 1961), 60.

The appearance of *The Last of the Mohicans* in French translation coincided with the publication of Vidocq's *Memoires* (1828), which became a worldwide success. The two works quickly brought comparisons between the Native American hunter/tracker and the detective tracking his criminal prey.

Eugène François Vidocq (1775–1857) was a French criminal who later became the first director of Sûreté Nationale, a plainclothes unit he himself was instrumental in forming, and one of the first modern private investigators. Vidocq, possibly due in part to his criminal past and contemporary struggles with the official police force, became the first detective hero France and the world had ever known.[13] Accordingly, he bequeaths a number of character traits to the prototypical detective hero model: great physical strength, patience, endurance, skill in disguise, insight into criminal mentality, a reputation for success, a low opinion of the police force, and a catchphrase (his being simply "I am Vidocq!").

Vidocq set off the first literary attention to the subject of criminals in France with the works of Honoré de Balzac (1799–1850), Eugène Sue (1804–1857), and Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870). Balzac adopted elements from Radcliffe, Cooper, and Vidocq and created criminals who were admirable for their cleverness, but Balzac never made the detective a hero or even a main character. Despite this, Balzac occupies an important position in the development of the detective novel for a number of reasons: first, he was the first really great novelist to devote serious attention to the working out of detective themes; second, he popularized the use of serialized characters; and third, he introduced technical language into fiction and gave short dissertations on scientific subjects.

Eugène Sue added extensive knowledge of prison life, slang, and criminal psychology to the fledgling genre. He also introduced the concept, which would be commonly used in detective fiction later, that certain types of criminals commit certain types of crimes.

13 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 44.

Alexandre Dumas gave the world D'Artagnan and the three musketeers—Athos, Porthos, and Aramis—who were serial characters that readers could count on to succeed. Dumas also brought a greater focus on analytical deduction and is the first writer to present a sympathetic police officer.[14]

It is at this time that Dumas's American contemporary, Edgar Allan Poe, writes the first detective story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841).[15] The detective story has been defined as "a tale in which the primary interest lies in the methodical discovery, by rational means, of the exact circumstances of a mysterious event or series of events."[16] Poe was the first who wrote with the purpose of devising an entertaining, baffling problem that was to be unravelled by the detective hero, in this case Auguste Dupin, who is the most important character in each tale whose plots were designed to display his powers of reason and observation. Poe does this while the writers in England and France are still preoccupied with criminal heroes. His hero, Auguste Dupin, shows an obvious influence of Vidocq, as he is French, the story is set in France, he has great powers of observation, and harbors a negative opinion of the police force. Poe is also the first to make reference to a textbook that Dupin has in his personal library. Poe's work is recognized as the first detective fiction because it is the first work to have a detective theme with a detective hero as the main character.

Back in England, Thomas de Quincey (1785–1859) was one of the first English writers to turn from the preoccupation with criminals to an objective consideration of crime. But the closest he came to detective fiction was *The Avenger* (1838), which lacks a key element in detective fiction: the detective.

Still in England, two authors who were sensitive to changing trends in public attitudes, Charles Dickens (1812–1870) and Wilkie Collins

14 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 64.

15 Kenneth Silverman, *Edgar A. Poe: Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991), 171; "First detective story is published." History.com, accessed 29 November 2013. http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-detective-story-is-published.

16 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 11.

(1824–1889), begin to write stories in which criminals are punished. This reflects the developing desire of the public, more of whom now have a stake in social order, to be protected from crime and criminals and an accompanying positive attitude toward the police force. Dickens makes further additions to the developing genre, including a mysterious crime explained at the end of the story and a dominant detective theme.[17] But the work of Dickens also distinguishes the English detective story from American and French detective stories. Dickens uses typical police officers and shows a positive attitude toward the police force in general. One of his police officers is Inspector Bucket. Bucket is an honorable officer, but he is never the main character. Wilkie Collins, on the other hand, shows more influence from the French and Poe in that, aside from his Sergeant Cuff, he shows no admiration for the police.

It is at about the same time in France that we see two authors who are important in our consideration of the effect of detective stories on Turkish culture: Ponson du Terrail (1829–1871) and Emile Gaboriau (1833–1873). The very first detective story translated into Ottoman Turkish, by Ahmet Münif, was du Terrail's *Les Drames de Paris* (1857), and almost all of the first fifty-four works translated into Ottoman Turkish were written by French authors. In his newspaper article, Güner quotes Erol Üyepazarcı, who informs us that "[s]ince most of the detective novels at the time were written in French, they were translated from French. There were 54 novels translated during the reign of Abdülhamid."[18]

Rocambole, the creation of du Terrail, is a fictional adventurer whose importance to the genres of adventure novels and crime fiction cannot be underestimated. The word *rocambolesque* has become common in French to label any kind of fantastic adventure. Rocambole retains a good deal of roguishness in his character, a possible indication of the difficulty the French reading public had in accepting an honorable police officer. He is, like Vidocq, an ex-con who, eventually—in the fourth novel of the series—becomes a do-gooder.

17 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 92.

18 Musa Güner, "Polisiye roman okumadan uyumayan sultan," accessed July 15, 2017, http://www.haber7.com/kultur/haber/294535-polisiye-roman-okumadan-uyumayan-sultan.

Gaboriau, in his creation of detective hero Monsieur Lecoq, originates the French detective story, or *roman-policier* (*L'Affaire Lerouge* [1866]). The character Lecoq is strongly influenced by the real-life character of Vidocq. Monsieur Lecoq is a fictional detective who was employed, as was Vidocq, by the French Sûreté.

Now, we come to the year 1887 and the moment you have likely been anticipating: the appearance of Sherlock Holmes, the first serial detective hero in England.[19]

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle establishes his aims for his new character, Sherlock Holmes, early on in the series. Doyle clearly desires Sherlock Holmes to be the archetypal detective. This goal is made clear in the first novel—*A Study in Scarlet*—when, in a discussion between Holmes and Watson, Doyle has Holmes compare himself to the two preceding fictional detectives, Poe's Dupin and Gaboriau's Monsiuer Lecoq:

"It is simple enough as you explain it," I said, smiling. "You remind me of Edgar Allen Poe's Dupin. I had no idea that such individuals did exist outside of stories."

Sherlock Holmes rose and lit his pipe. "No doubt you think that you are complimenting me in comparing me to Dupin," he observed. "Now, in my opinion, Dupin was a very inferior fellow. That trick of his of breaking in on his friends' thoughts with an apropos remark after a quarter of an hour's silence is really very showy and superficial. He had some analytical genius, no doubt; but he was by no means such a phenomenon as Poe appeared to imagine."

"Have you read Gaboriau's works?" I asked. "Does Lecoq come up to your idea of a detective?"

Sherlock Holmes sniffed sardonically. "Lecoq was a miserable bungler," he said, in an angry voice; "he had only one thing to recommend him, and that was his energy. That book made me positively ill. The question was how to identify an unknown prisoner. I could have done it in twenty-four hours. Lecoq took six months or so. It might be made a text-book for detectives to teach them what to avoid."[20]

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19 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 145.

20 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet* (London: Cricket House Books, 2010), 19.

Holmes does become the prototypical detective hero or, as Murch says it, "with Conan Doyle, the detective story came at last to full fruition."[21] The fact that Sherlock Holmes became the prototypical detective also speaks to the long, arduous journey detective fiction writers set out on to popularize the detective. There were, as mentioned, some efforts being made to popularize the police force in general, but that still needed some time to develop, as even Sherlock Holmes regularly looks upon the police force with scorn.

But why was Holmes so popular? Sir Arthur Conan Doyle created the character traits of Holmes very carefully. In a blending of old and new, Doyle was able to retain the much-loved characteristics of the detective hero to date with new qualities, "the very qualities that the late Victorian general public admired most": superior intelligence, good sociocultural background, perfect respectability and integrity, status of a scientist, and an international reputation for success in his field.[22]

Now, I will address the Ottoman Empire into which these stories were translated. The Ottomans had, for centuries, been a mighty empire, habitually achieving military victories over all opponents. This gave them a good deal of confidence, both in their administration and in their religion, Islam, which was seen as the ultimate foundation of the system and the reason for its power. However, with this confidence came a side effect: hubris. The Ottomans saw Europeans—I refer to Europeans in particular as it was against them and their territories that the Ottomans aspired—as inferior, and they felt certain that there was nothing that they could possibly learn from them. So, while European powers kept embassies in Istanbul to carry out continuous diplomacy, the Ottomans saw no need to keep embassies in European capitals. Thus, they remained unaware of the developments and improvements occurring in Europe beginning in the sixteenth century.

One detail that could not fail to attract their attention was the obvious shift in the balance of military power. No longer were Ottoman military victories simply a formality by the seventeenth century.

21 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 191.
22 Murch, *Development of the Detective Novel*, 177.

In fact, they began losing battles (and territory) to the Europeans. By the last decade of the eighteenth century, it became clear to many in the Ottoman ruling class that something had to be done.

In response to this, the Ottomans began to open permanent embassies in European capitals[23] and, since it was the military that was showing weakness, they began to establish a new military force that would use European weapons and would be trained in European style. The details of the internal difficulties the administration faced in this policy are intriguing, but they will not receive a full discussion here. One significant problem the administration faced was with the implementation of these new methods of strategy and training. The janissaries, which had historically been the elite Ottoman fighting force strengthened by new recruits who had been selected for their physical and mental abilities, had weakened due to various factors, including nepotism. They realized that the new forces proposed by Selim III in the last decade of the eighteenth century would put them out of work; thus, they revolted and deposed, imprisoned, and eventually assassinated him. The aim of introducing a new European force was continued by Selim III's cousin, Mahmud II, who eventually brought down the janissaries in 1826 in an event that has been called "the Auspicious Incident" (*Vaka-i Hayriye*), the complete destruction of the janissary forces and their replacement by his new force, the Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad (*Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye*).[24]

Thus, modernization in the Ottoman Empire began with the military. Yet, a state enters a conundrum when it begins to modernize

23 Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) was the first to begin opening Ottoman embassies in European capitals, the first being London (1793).

24 For a further discussion of these events, see Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964); Roderic H. Davison, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774–1923: The impact of the West* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1990); M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008); Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968); Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: the Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976–1977); and Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004).

by using a foreign model. Uncertain about what provides the impetus for success, the reformers do not know how much of the foreign culture and practice to adopt. At the beginning, it is relatively easy: new weapons and new training. But then, what of subjects that may be related but further afield, such as mathematics and geography? Finally, the question becomes one of how much of a role culture in general plays in the success of a state. Some say that modernization is like a rose—you must take it all, thorns included. Yet, this interpretation presents modernization as a one-directional flow of knowledge, culture, and technology. This interpretation has been questioned by authors in a variety of fields, from cultural studies to globalization, who point out in their work that flows of knowledge, technology, and culture are multidirectional and have been for millennia—the Silk Roads provide an excellent example of this.[25]

This period of reform and modernization in the Ottoman Empire was called the *Tanzimat* (Reorganizations). It reached its height during the middle two-quarters of the nineteenth century, at which time Ottoman administrators adopted a great deal from European technology, weaponry, training, clothing, and even art and music.

Penal and commercial codes were adopted, virtually verbatim, from extant European examples: a modern police force was established (1845), changes in dress codes to correspond with European dress were imposed, and non-Muslims were granted equal status to Muslims. While these changes were easy enough for the administrative class—many of whom had spent time living in Europe, the rest of whom had, at least, familiarity with European languages and culture to adapt to—they were much more difficult for the general population to understand and accept. Unaware of the changes in the balance of power and firm in the belief in the superiority of their system of administration and its vitalizing force, Islam, the general population was surprised and shocked by these changes.

25 George Ritzer and Paul Dean, *Globalization: A Basic Text* (Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 7; and Timothy Mitchell, ed., *Questions of Modernity* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 23–24.

As it was a top-down approach to reform, the Ottoman administration recognized the need to get the population on its side if it was to succeed in accomplishing its aims. Thus, they began to implement extensive reforms to the civil education system.

One product of popular culture that did play a role in this was indigenous Turkish detective fiction. As previously mentioned, detective stories began to be translated into Ottoman Turkish during Abdülhamid II's reign (1876–1909). The first example of indigenous Turkish detective fiction was *Esrâr-ı Cinâyât* (1884) by Ahmet Mithat Efendi (1844–1912),[26] which also coincided with the reign of the autocratic sultan, Abdülhamid II.[27]

Regarding Abdülhamid, there are two points that are important for this study: first, Abdülhamid's institution of a strict rule of censorship over newspapers and, second, Abdülhamid's policy of pan-Islamism.

First, fearing criticism and possible revolt, Abdülhamid instituted a strict policy of censorship over the newspapers, which, finding it very difficult to write anything about current events, turned to different subjects to publish.[28] Newspapers began to write stories about different cultures, geography, physics, and literature.

The second point concerns Abdülhamid's pan-Islamism policy. With the separation of Greece from the empire and the continued push for liberation of territories in the Balkans, the Christian percentage of the population was ever decreasing. As a move to strengthen the unity

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26 Erol Üyepazarcı, *Korkmayınız Mister Sherlock Holmes!: Türkiye'de Polisiye Romanın 125 Yıllık Öyküsü (1881–2006) 1. Cilt*. (Istanbul: Maceraperest Kitapları, 2008); and "İlk Polisiye," accessed August 31, 2010, http://www.aksaraypmyo.edu.tr/index.php?do=static&page=ilk__polisiye.

27 Abdülhamid's image is currently being reconsidered by historians; previously portrayed as a tyrant (for further reading see Edwin Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid* [New York: Henry Holt, 1917] and Gilles Roy, *Abdul-Hamid: Le Sultan Rouge* [Paris: Payot, 1936]), current works are beginning to reassess him in a new light (see Mustafa Armağan, *Abdülhamid'in Kurtlarla Dansı* [Istanbul: Ufuk Kitap, 2006] and Ebul Faruk Önal and Sabit Bekçi, *Sultan İkinci Abdülhamîd Hân'ın Hayır Eserleri* [Istanbul: Çamlıca, 2006]). None have gone so far as to portray him as a soft ruler, but they are reconsidering his actions in light of the weak economic situation of the state.

28 Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 160; and Lewis, 187–190.