

Turkish Translations of Stephen King's Novels and the Development of Horror Fiction in the Turkish Literary Polysystem

TURKISH TRANSLATIONS OF STEPHEN KING'S NOVELS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF HORROR FICTION IN THE TURKISH LITERARY POLYSYSTEM

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/ijla.64745>

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Abstract

The dynamics of the development of horror fiction in the Turkish literary polysystem are related to the socio-cultural and literary contexts of the country throughout years. It was observed that both the original horror fiction books in Turkish and the translations of the well-known works of the gothic genre were very limited before the 1980s. The main reasons for the low number of productions in horror fiction can be explained with the literary views of the early novel writers who primarily aimed for the modernization of the society. This tendency continued between 1960 and 1980 in the literary atmosphere of social realism. With the political and socio-cultural transformations of Turkey during the 1980s, though, genres of popular literature started to develop considerably. Translations of the best-seller works of the West played a crucial role in this development during those years. Since Stephen King was one of the most prolific and widely read horror fiction writers of the time, his novels had a pioneering influence on the development of horror fiction. Through the analyses and discussions of the present article, it was identified that the translations of Stephen King's horror fiction books had a central position in the development of the genre in the Turkish literary polysystem. The central position of King's works was evidenced by the number of the translations, their reprints and editions over the years. In addition, the significant place of the author's horror novels in the Turkish literary system can also be observed through their influence on the Turkish horror fiction writers after the 1980s particularly in terms of the themes and the language style of their books.

Keywords

Stephen King, horror fiction, translations of popular literature, gothic, literary transfer

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