

## Discourses on *Hamlet's* Journey in Turkey

Hilal Erkazanci Durmus  
Hacettepe University

### Abstract

This study seeks to scrutinize extratextual discourses which frame the Turkish translations and post-translation rewritings of *Hamlet* as an instrument of national self-imagining and projecting Turkey's self-image in different socio-political and historical contexts. The study points out that various discourses see image construction as the major motive behind the different versions of *Hamlet* in Turkey. It also underlines that the extratextual material surrounding the retranslations and rewritings focus on various contextual dynamics that reveal how Turkey is torn between dualities that frame its image in line with the narratives of modernity and tradition, secularism and religion, easternness and westernness. In this context, the study emphasizes that theatre translation, and particularly the translations of *Hamlet*, formed significant part of the late Ottoman Empire's and modern Turkey's westernization efforts. Ultimately, the study concludes that discourses on the *Hamlet* renderings have foregrounded what is and what is not part of Turkey's historically constructed self-image by bringing the West alongside the East, centering on how the retranslations and rewritings promote Turkey's Western (secular and modern) identity against a largely negative representation of its eastern cultural identity.

Key words: *Hamlet*, Turkey, retranslation, post-translation rewriting, image