Turkish names

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Back of the book indexes in Turkey, to the extent they exist, are names-only indexes. As yet little serious thought has been given either to subject indexing in general or to the problems of handling names for the purpose of either cataloguing or indexing. Standards and rules for handling names simply do not exist. This article surveys the existing situation, explores the problems relating to indexing Turkish personal names, and offers some practical solutions.

The Turkish language

Turkish belongs to the Altaic languages family, which is divided into three groups including Turkic, Mongolic and Tungusic. These include some 30 languages, spoken across a vast area from Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean to Siberia and Western China. The branch spoken in Turkey is called Anatolian Turkish. The Turks came to Anatolia from Central Asia during the second half of the eleventh century and established one of the longest-lived empires ever, lasting for over 600 years and extending across Eastern Europe, Northern Africa, Egypt, the Middle East and the Near East. Through the centuries, the Turkic language was influenced by Arabic, Persian and French, the Arabic script being adopted for writing purposes despite the fact that, coming from another language family, it was not well suited for this. The Empire suffered a gradual decline in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, until 29 October 1923 when the Ottoman Empire was abolished and the Turkish Republic established under Atatürk. He immediately began introducing a series of reforms intended to make Turkey a secular and democratic country with its face turned to the West and to European countries.

Some of the reforms in the new Turkish Republic are important in relation to the present topic: indexing Turkish names. The greatest reforms were in the educational system, an important aspect being romanization of the Arabic script to the new Turkish alphabet based on Latin letters. This has 29 letters (8 vowels and 21 consonants) (see note at the end of this article). In 1928, the Arabic script was outlawed, making it possible for both children and adults to learn to read and write easily. Great encouragement was also given to the use of Turkish words rather than words borrowed from other languages. In the 1920s, the written language as used by writers, poets and the educated elite group consisted of more Arabic, Persian and French words taken together than Turkish words, but by the early 1980s the ratio had declined to a mere 10 per cent. This is clearly a key factor to be taken into account especially in subject indexing in Turkish.

Another important reform closely related to the present topic was the passing of the Surnames Law in 1934. In Ottoman times, people and families were known by their *lakaps*, i.e. epithets or nicknames. These nicknames, and also personal titles, were abolished by the 1934 Law and everybody was provided with a surname in addition to his or her personal names.

Standards and rules for handling names in Turkish simply do not exist. This list of sample entries from a back of the book index, with forms of entry obviously chosen at random, shows some of the inconsistencies and inadequacies which inevitably follow.

- II. Murat – should be Murat, II. (a cross-reference is not given from Murat)
- Abdülhamid, II – correctly entered with the name first, however different format from II. Murat.
- Afet İnan – 'İnan' is the surname, therefore should be 'İnan, Afet'.
- Çağlayangil, (İhsan Sabri) – There is no reason for adding parenthesis around the author's personal names.
- Gürpınar, Hüseyin Rahmi *Bkz*. Hüseyin Rahmi (Gürpınar) – here the compiler of the index has made Hüseyin Rahmi (Gürpınar) his preferred entry with the surname added in parenthesis. This reflects the fact that in the text the person in question is referred to simply by his personal name, Hüseyin Rahmi. There is a *Bkz*. reference from Gürpınar, Hüseyin. In fact, as discussed below, it would probably be better to do it the other way round and use the 'official' version, Gürpınar, Hüseyin Rahmi, with a cross-reference to Hüseyin Rahmi (Gürpınar).
- İnalcık, Halil (Prof.) – there is no need to include the title 'Prof.'.
- McNeill – there is no personal name attached.
- Müjgan (Cumbur) – 'Müjgan' is the personal name, so the preferred entry and style should be 'Cumbur, Müjgan'.
- Sultan Reşat – wrongly listed under Sultan; it should be 'Reşat V'.
- Zeynep – Book indexes often include the personal names of people who do not really have much to do with the main topic, just because they happen to be mentioned in the text. They are perceived to qualify as 'names' for indexing purposes and are included in the index in the form in which they appear in the text, without any attempt to add clarification.

Apart from this problem of lack of rules and discipline, in almost every index there are different forms and variations of names, reflecting different usage in the Ottoman and Republican eras. And in the case of Ottoman Collections written in the Arabic script, there is also the need for transliteration of names from the old Arabic script into the

new Turkish alphabet. The following discussion of Turkish names in indexing is therefore divided into two sections: the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, or pre- and post-1928.

There are some general points to bear in mind. In a one-off index to a single-author book, the version used by the author should normally be the formula of choice, with cross-references as necessary from other versions which may be more familiar to the reader. But there may be occasions on which the author uses the personal name, but most users are likely to look for the full official version, hence the suggestion above that it would probably be better to take Gürpınar, Hüseyin Rahmi as the preferred version even though the text has just Hüseyin Rahmi**.** With journal and other cumulative indexes, database indexes and indexes to multi-authored texts, the full, official, name should always be taken as the main entry with *Bkz.* references from other formulae.

The target readership must always be borne in mind, with a distinction being made, for example, between an index in Turkish or for a Turkish readership and an index in English or for the English-language market: what will be standard usage in Turkish may well be totally unfamiliar to an English reader. An example of this is indexing a book about the famous architect Sinan. In Turkish, he is almost invariably known as Mimar Sinan (the Architect) and is indexed under his professional *lakap* or epithet. Other versions in Turkish are Koca Sinan (the Great) or Koca Mimar Sinan (the Great Architect). But he is much better known in English simply as Sinan, and this would probably be the only entry needed in the index.

I: Turkish names during the Ottoman Empire

Ottoman Sultans

Ottoman Sultans all have one personal name they are known by, but during their reign most acquired special epithets that became part of their names. Osman II is better known as Genç Osman meaning 'Young Osman', because he became a sultan at the age of 14 and reigned to the age of 18. Other examples are Mehmet the Conqueror (Fatih), Süleyman the Lawgiver (Kanuni), and Beyazid the Thunderbolt (Yıldırım). The appropriate way of handling this would be as follows:

Bayezid I (1360–1403)
Fatih Sultan Mehmed *see* Mehmed II
Genç Osman *see* Osman II
Kanuni Sultan Süleyman *see* Süleyman I
Mehmed II (1432–1481)
Osman II (1604–1622)
Süleyman I (1495–1566)
Yıldırım Bayezid *see* Bayezid I

Ottoman public figures

As will be seen below, many Ottoman public figures were also identified by their *lakap* or nickname. *Paşa* is a general in the Ottoman army; *Barbaros* (Barbarossa) is a nickname given to Hayrettin Paşa by the Europeans, because of his red beard. Mimar Sinan is the well-known Ottoman architect who has his profession, *Mimar,* added to his name. Recaizade is an epithet showing that he was the son of Recai; and Çandarlı is the village where this well-known man comes from. Katip Çelebi's personal name is Mustafa. Since there are many people with that personal name, there is no reason for making an entry under that. His epithet *Katip* (Secretary) came from the fact that he was a writer and also a man of intellect who held high positions in the state. Some of these names were adopted as family surnames generations later by the younger members of those families, after the Surname Law was passed.

These names are entered under the first names and or nicknames:

Ahmet Cevdet Paşa (1822–1895)
Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa (1478?–1453)
Çandarlı Kara Halil Paşa (1315?–1388?)
Katip Çelebi (1609–1722)
Mimar Sinan (1490–1588)
Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem (1847–1914)

Ottoman authors and poets

Below is a list of poets known only by their single personal names or epithets, without any additional personal name or descriptive nicknames or epithets attached to them. Fuzuli's real name is Muhammad bin Süleyman, but it is never used by or known to the wider public, therefore no cross-reference is needed, unless it is mentioned in the text. However in a biographical work there will be a need for it. The two women poets have the words *Hanım* and *Hatun,* both meaning Lady, in parenthesis.

There is no need to make cross-references for the following names, unless their variations are mentioned in the book or in the article, or in a biography, etc.

Fıtnat (Hanım) (1842?–1911)
Fuzuli (1483?–1556)
İhsani (1928–)
Nedim (1681–1730)
Zeynep (Hatun) (15th century)

Ottoman folk and religious poets, and folk characters

Eşrefoğlu Abdullah Rumi's personal name is Abdullah. However he is known by his father's name as Eşrefzade or İbnül Eşref. Because he was born in İznik, he is also known as İzniki, meaning from the town of İznik. Since he is well known by all these names, it would be sensible to provide cross-references to the preferred version. In folk literature the word aşık is attached to poet singers in general so Aşık Seyrani should be entered under Seyrani with a cross-reference from Aşık Seyrani.

Aşık Seyrani *see* Seyrani, Aşık
Eşref-i Rumi *see* Eşrefoğlu Abdullah Rumi
Eşrefoğlu Abdullah Rumi (?–1469)
İbnül Eşref *see* Eşrefoğlu Abdullah Rumi

İzniki *see* Eşrefoğlu Abdullah Rumi
Karacaoğlan (1606–1679)
Nasreddin Hoca (1208–1284)
Seyrani, Aşık (b. 1800)

Men of religion

In Turkey men of religion do not have titles to show their status, and their names take the same form as all other names, indicating their birth place or any other epithets they have acquired. 'Ahmet Yesevi' is the preferred name for a leading man of religion in twelfth century Anatolia. His full name is Ahmet bin İbrahim bin İlyas Yesevi, 'Yesevi' reflecting the fact that he came from the town of Yesi in Turkistan. He was also known as Piri Sultan. So cross references to Ahmet Yesevi are needed from Ahmet bin İbrahim bin İlyas Yesevi and Piri Sultan. The usual brief reference to Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi is simply Rumi. Therefore a cross-reference is made from Rumi to his full name.

Ahmet bin İbrahim bin İlyas Yesevi *see* Ahmet Yesevi
Ahmet Yesevi (1093–1156)
Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli (1280–1337)
Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi (1207–1273)
Piri Sultan *see* Ahmet Yesevi
Rumi *see* Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi (1207–1273)
Süleyman Çelebi (1408?–1421)
Seyyid Muhammed bin İbrahim Ata *see* Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli

Change of name on arrival in Turkey

There were, of course, examples during the Ottoman Empire when non-Turkish names had to be modified. An example of this is Dimitrie Cantemir, Romanian historian, philosopher, and musicologist (1672–1722), whose name was changed to Dimitri Kantemiroğlu when he came to Istanbul, as an Ottoman captive, becoming an important Ottoman historian and musicologist. A cross-reference must always be made from one to the other name version.

II. Turkish names in the Turkish Republic

The modern way of identifying families and individuals with their surnames came into use in 1928, five years after the foundation of the Republic. It became much easier to identify people, and this prevented much confusion in many activities of social life as well as legal matters, as a result. These names will be reviewed, including their variations and other practices which are quite similar to their western counterparts.

Turkish names following the western pattern with surname first

Ağaoğlu, Adalet (1929–)
Güvenç, Bozkurt (1926–)
İnce, Özdemir (1936–)
Kür, Pınar (1945–)
Sezer, Ahmet Necdet (1941–)

Turkish names following the traditional pattern with personal names first

Many men of letters or other well-known figures are more commonly identified by their personal names than their surnames. In these cases it may be appropriate to use these names as preferred entries and to make cross-references from the surnames. If the main entries are under their surnames, cross-references must be made from the preferred personal names entries.

Abalıoğlu, Nadir Nadi *see* Nadir Nadi
Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1906–1954)
Kakınç, Tarık Dursun *see* Tarık Dursun K.
Kanık, Orhan Veli (1914–1950)
Nadir Nadi (1908–1991)
Nazım Hikmet *see* Ran, Nazım Hikmet
Orhan Veli see Kanık, Orhan Veli
Ran, Nazım Hikmet (1902–1963)
Sait Faik *see* Abasıyanık, Sait Faik
Tarık Dursun K. (1931–)

Chosen/adopted names

As under the Ottoman Empire (see above), authors and other men of arts under the Republic are often more commonly known by their adopted name or epithet. They should be indexed under this more familiar name, with cross-references from the full, real name (assuming this is known). These adopted names usually contain first and middle names rather than first name and surname, and should not be inverted. For example, Cevat Şakir Kabaağaçlı is a famous author who retreated to a small southern town by the sea and lived there, adopting the name 'Fisherman of Halicarnassus' for himself, and writing his books under this name.

Demir, İsmail Kemalettin *see* Kemal Tahir
Gökçeli, Kemal Sadık *see* Yaşar Kemal
Gün, Güneli (1939 –)
Halikarnas Balıkçısı *see* Kabaağaçlı, Cevat Şakir (1890–1973)
Ilıcalı, Arkın *see* Mercan Dede
Kabaağaçlı, Cevat Şakir (1890–1973)
Kemal Tahir (1910–1973)
Mercan Dede (1966–)
Tamkoç Hershiser, Güneli *see* Gün, Güneli
Yaşar Kemal (1923–)

Fictitious names (Müstear Adlar)

Many men of letters use different pseudonyms at different times and for different reasons. Unlike chosen or adopted names which are used permanently, these varying pseudonyms should never be used as main entries, but in an index, library catalogue or bibliography, there should always be cross-references to the preferred name, so as to collect all the writings together and establish a relationship between them.

Adıvar, Halide Edip (1884–1964)
Adil, Hanlı *see* Kanık, Orhan Veli

Ahmet Agah *see* Beyatlı, Yahya Kemal
Beyatlı, Yahya Kemal (1884–1958)
Borjensky, Nazım Hikmet *see* Ran, Nazım Hikmet
Halide Edip *see* Adıvar, Halide Edip
Halide Salih *see* Adıvar, Halide Edip
İbrahim Sabri *see* Ran, Nazım Hikmet
Kanık, Orhan Veli (1914–1950)
Nazım Hikmet *see* Ran, Nazım Hikmet
Ran, Nazım Hikmet (1902–1963)
Sel, Mehmet Ali *see* Kanık, Orhan Veli

Names of women

Until the 1934 Surnames Law, Turkish women could use their father's or husband's personal name to identify themselves. After 1934, Turkish women had to use their family surnames before marriage, and after marriage their husband's surname. So, for example, Halide Edip (1884–1964) became Halide Edip Adıvar and Peride Celal (1915–) became Peride Celal Yönsel. Prior to the Surnames Law some women, rather than taking their father's or husband's personal name, preferred to use just their personal name(s), as in the case of Fıtnat Hanım or Fatma Aliye. For the first novel Fatma Aliye translated from French, she signed her name as 'Bir Hanım', meaning 'A Lady'.

As in other cultures, changes in the women's circumstances, going for example from single to married life, or when there is more than one marriage or divorce, etc., create problems for the indexer. An example would be the case of the well-known author Sevgi Soysal (1936–1976), who had to use different surnames during her two marriages, i.e. Sevgi Nutku and Sevgi Soysal. Some women writers prefer to stick to one name for all their works.

The 2001 Civil Law, which gave additional rights to women, states that they can continue using both their family surname and their married surname together (accepted since 1997), with the husband's surname following the family surname. The family surname would thus determine the alphabetical order. If the woman is also known by her married surname, a cross-reference should be made from this. Professor Nermin Abadan-Unat has been using two surnames (Abadan) and (Unat) together for several years, so she is listed under Abadan-Unat, Nermin.

Religious titles and titles of nobility

Religious and nobility titles do not exist in Turkey. Academic titles (Prof., MD), military titles (General, Admiral), professional titles (architect, lawyer, engineer), government and judicial titles (President, Prime Minister, Judge) may be added in parenthesis if necessary to identify the person in question.

Names with particles and prefixes

These do not exist.

Note: the Turkish alphabet

The Turkish alphabet consists of the following 29 letters:

Upper case:

A, B, C, Ç, D, E, F, G, Ğ, H, I, İ, J, K, L, M, N, O, Ö, P, R, S, Ş, T, U, Ü, V, Y, Z

Lower case:

a, b, c, ç, d, e, f, g, ğ, h, ı, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, ö, p, r, s, ş, t, u, ü, v, y, z.

The following letters are additional to those in the standard 26-letter alphabet:

Ü ü / Ö ö / I ı / Ç ç / Ş ş / Ğ ğ

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Halide Edip

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