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How does money inform? A study on Turkish banknotes: The National Library of Turkey Example

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ABSTRACT

Money is a very important and precious medium of exchange which has been used for nearly 2500 years. This medium of exchange consisted of metal coins until the 17th century, and later on coins were used together with paper notes. Money, as well as being the most important medium of exchange, is the symbol of a state's economic and commercial vision, wealth, culture, national values, political viewpoint and international influence. Money is both an information source and a medium for the recording of information. In this paper the main characteristics of paper money and its usefulness as an information source will be studied along with a comparative analysis of the organization and presentation of the banknote collection of the Turkish National Library and the banknote collections of the German, American, British and French national libraries.

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1. Banknotes as information sources and the banknote collection of the Turkish National Library

The National Library and Central Bank are understood to be independence symbols of a country. The former can be described as an information bank where the information created in a country is stored and transferred, and the latter can be described as a bank, minting and controlling the banknotes which direct the economy of a country. These two institutions intersect at the point at which they make banknotes available to researchers as information sources in library collections as non-book materials and quite apart from their economic value [2–4,9].

As mentioned before, banknotes provide interesting and dependable information about firstly the economic level and then the culture, crafts, history, geography, important events, people and institutions of a country. Because of these characteristics, they have become important information sources for researchers in various fields, for collectors and numismatists. The most important characteristic of banknotes is that they can provide ample and dependable information although they have less surface or physical features in comparison with other printed information sources. In the case of banknotes printed on both sides, this characteristic can be exploited more beneficially. National Libraries are institutions generally founded by special laws in order to collect the published and/or unpublished works (information sources) of a given country and make them available for use. Banknotes too are among these information sources. However, national libraries have had difficulties in collecting such sources. For this reason, regulations governing legal deposit were enacted and procedures were standardized in order to gather information sources together within national libraries, to make them available to readers and to transfer them to future generations (Fig. 1).

As in every other country, the Turkish Republic has a National Library founded with the above mentioned aim. The Turkish National Library was founded on March 23rd, 1950 as a result of the "Law Concerning the Foundation of the National Library," and it has become both the owner of the largest collection in Turkey and also the largest legal deposit library. The Turkish National Library has a collection of 2,560,372 items including books, manuscripts, rare items, Arabic printed works, daily newspapers, magazines,

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Fig. 1. Metal cylinder banknote mold.

bulletins, annuals, posters, maps, notes, sound recordings (on CD and cassettes) and pictures. There are 1,120,940 books in the National Library, and it has a periodical collection consisting of 1,302,528 daily newspapers, magazines, bulletins and annuals. Moreover, there are 26,262 manuscripts and a non-book material collection consisting of 85,809 items such as posters, maps, notes, sound recordings (on CD and cassettes), pictures, video cassettes, paintings and stamps, which are stored under special conditions [5].

The National Library, which is Turkey's largest legal deposit library,[1] makes use of the "*Deposit Law*", enacted in 1934, in order to collect, both in Turkey and from beyond, all kinds of information sources relating to Turkey. It collects samples of banknotes and reproductions minted by the Banknote Mint of the Central Bank of the Turkish Republic in accordance with the article of the law that states: "With the exception of documents kept secret by the government, all printed works and pictures published by official institutions and official printing houses are governed by this law. "*Debenture bonds, cheques, stamps and valuable papers, bearing a mark to show they are cancelled, are to be provided to the institution named in the third paragraph (the Ministry of Education)*[2] *by the pertinent Ministry, Office and institutions.*" According to the catalog records of the Turkish National Library, banknotes minted from 1956 to 1999 by the Banknote Mint were sent to the National Library. There is a total of 86 banknotes from between these dates. These banknotes are preserved from environmental threats within notebooks in a special room in the Non-Book Material Section of the library.

Each of the banknotes has a call number. This number is assigned according to the order in which the banknotes are placed in the notebook. This number has 3 parts (See Fig. 2). In Fig. 2, a banknote is seen with its call number, year, material type and record number.

A special cataloging module is used for the banknotes in Turkish National Library. The banknotes are cataloged in book format and they are specified by a "*graphic*" note in MARC records. Fig. 3 shows the record that appears in the interface of the library automation programme. This record has ten parts. The system number in the upper part shows which module and database the material belongs to. The other parts consist of type of material, call number, main entry, title, place and date of publication, description, language and notes. The part of the banknote record most referred to is the notes section, which contains important details about the pictures on the front and back of the banknotes and the watermarks and colours used on the banknotes.

In the library automation programme in use at the Turkish National Library, it is possible to search the records by call number, title and author (main entry). It is possible to see the results in three different formats: the standard form, catalogue card (see Fig. 4)

[1] There are six legal deposit libraries in Turkey: the National Library, Beyazıt State Library, İstanbul University Main Library, İzmir National Library, Adnan Ötüken Public Library and the Turkish Grand National Assembly Library.

[2] Materials had been collected by the Ministry of Education until the foundation of the National Library on March 23rd 1950, and the materials here discussed were turned over to the National Library on this date.

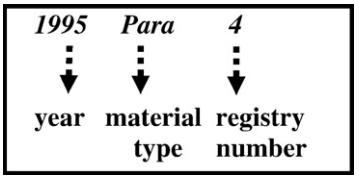


Fig. 2. Call number of a banknote.

and MARC form. The search can be conducted from the following internet address http://mksun.mkutup.gov.tr/F. All of the banknotes in the library are banknotes of the Turkish Republic, and they all date from between the fifth and seventh official issues (see The Banknotes of the Turkish Republic). In reply to a request for information made to the Central Bank of the Turkish Republic, it was explained that samples of banknotes were sent to the National Library and the Adnan Ötüken Public Library. The same request for information was also made to the National Library, and it was explained that samples of banknotes were sent to them up to 1999. However, there are missing items in both libraries. Therefore, it can seen that there are problems in putting the Deposit Law into practice.

A large proportion of the banknotes of the Ottoman Empire (1299–1922) which were used between 1863–1918 are held in the İstanbul Ottoman Bank Museum, and banknotes from the first and fourth official issues are in the Museum of the Central Bank of the Turkish Republic, Ziraat Bank Museum and the Museum of the Second Turkish Grand National Assembly. The PULKO catalogue, which contains information about the characteristics and values of banknotes is an important resource for information on this topic.

There is a total of 92 items in the National Library of Turkey's banknotes collection. These banknotes were sent to the library by the Turkish Republic Central Bank in accordance with the "*Deposit Law*" along with the foundation of the Banknote Mint. However, the banknotes in the collection begin with the fifth official issue. The banknotes in this issue were used between the years 1951 and 1971. Other banknotes date from the years between 1968 and 1999. Banknotes printed by the Turkish Republic Central Bank within the last ten years have not yet been sent to the National Library by the Ankara Repository Office.[3] During the years 1927–2004 in total 59 denominations (some banknotes in the collection are for the same denomination) and 120 different typeset banknotes were printed [10]. According to these numbers 28 banknotes are missing at the National Library of Turkey.[4]

The banknote collection of the National Library of Turkey, although not complete, is one of the most important collections in Turkey. There is also a collection of banknotes on display at the Museum of the Central Bank of the Turkish Republic. But this collection is not complete and is only open to foreign researchers with special permission. In Turkey there are two collectors with a

Sistem numarası **System Number**	000429195
Materyal Türü **Material Type**	Kitap (Book)
Yer Numarasi **Call Number**	1961 Para 2
Ana Giris **Main Entry**	**Türkiye Cumhuriyet Merkez Bankası** (Ankara) .
Eser Adi **Title**	On Türk Lirası (Ten Turkish Liras)
Basim **Date of printing**	[Ankara] : **Merkez Bankası Central Bank of Turkey**, 1961
Descr.	1 kağıt para (banknote) ; 71x150 mm
Dil - Lang.	TUR
Gen. Not **Notes**	11 Haziran 1930 tarih ve 1715 numaralı kanuna göre çıkarılmıştır (Printed according to law 1715 numbered and dated 11 June 1930).
	Ön yüz: Hakim renk nefti yeşilidir. Geometrik şekiller ve desenlerden oluşturulmuş zeminin sağ tarafında Atatürk'ün portresi, sol tarafında bu portreden farklı bir Atatürk filigranı bulunmaktadır Arka yüz: Hakim renk kızıldır. Bir köprü manzarası ve geometrik desenler yer almaktadır
Holdings	Kopyalar

Fig. 3. Bibliographic record of a banknote on National Library of Turkey Database.

[3] An office receiving repository copies of all materials printed.

[4] For detailed information about Turkish banknotes see; *Doğan Para Koleksiyon Para 2008 (3. Yıl): Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ve Osmanlı Dönemi Kağıt, Madeni Paraları ile Madalyon ve Madalyaları*, Edi: Necati Doğan, Ankara, 2007; *2008 PULKO Cumhuriyet Dönemi Kağıt Para Kataloğu-Republic of Turkey Paper Money Catalogue*, İstanbul, Bahadır Pul Evi, 2007; *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Madeni ve Kağıt Paraları Cep Kataloğu 2008/2009*, Edi: Kaan Uslu-M. Fatih Beyazıt-Tuncay Kara, İstanbul, 2008; *İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyete Kağıt Paranın Öyküsü*, İstanbul, Yapı Kredi Kültür Yayınları, 2008; *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Paraları*, Edi: M. Nurcan Deniz, İstanbul, 2008.



Fig. 4. Catalogue card of a banknote.

complete collection of banknotes from the time of the Turkish Republic. These are Güvendik Fişekçioğlu and Cem Mahruki. Naturally as these are personal collections, access to and usage of them are extremely limited.

The banknote collection in the National Library of Turkey is ordered by acquisition date, and the notes receive consecutive call numbers. They are stored in envelopes on which the call number, value, type of material and inventory number are written, but this storage system is not feasible in the long term. The banknotes cannot be examined without removing them from their envelopes, and removal may cause damage. For this reason the banknotes should be stored in a transparent material to protect them from moisture and dust while enabling both sides to be seen, and they should be made available to researchers in this form. This method would also protect the banknotes from physical wear and tear from handling. Officials at the National Library are currently trying to institute new methods for the protection and presentation of the banknotes.[5] Banknotes arranged according to year of printing are stored in a cardboard folder inside a steel safe to protect them from moisture, dust and fire (Fig. 5). These safes are placed in a special section in the National Library of Turkey where paintings, CDs, video-cassettes and sound records are kept.

The annual usage rate of these materials is extremely low. We were informed by the head of the National Library of Turkey and officials of the National Library of Turkey Non-Book Materials Division that banknotes are used by 2–3 readers per year. Readers have to make a formal request and complete a form in order to see the banknotes under the supervision of authorized persons.

An inquiry was sent to the German, French, United States and British national libraries in order to ascertain whether they hold collections of banknotes, shares, bond, etc. The questions below were submitted to those libraries in writing:

- Do you have a special banknote collection?
- If the answer is yes, how many banknotes are there and how are they catalogued?
- How do you obtain the banknotes held by your library (repository, gift, exchange or purchase)?
- Can we see catalog cards of the banknotes from your website, and can you send us a sample?

The conclusions reached as a result of the answers received by electronic mail are as follows:

Officials from the Library of Congress Rare Books and Special Collections Division informed us that the LOC maintains no collection of banknotes or coins. For this reason there is no catalogue card there. But at the Smithsonian Institute National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center, the National Numismatics Collection, which is part of the LOC system holds 1.1 million printed banknotes of different years and values from American colonies, states and different countries. These banknotes are not catalogued according to the principles of librarianship but rather inventoried as museum artefacts along with the relevant bibliographic information. Alongside these banknotes there is a large archive containing documents such as shares, bonds, tickets, certificates and so on [1].

There is no special collection of banknotes printed by the United Kingdom in the British Library. According to officials of the BL Prints, Drawings and Photograph Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections, there is only a small collection of Indian and Burmese banknotes in the BL, for which there is no special catalogue.

As in the U.S.A. and U.K., there is no special collection in the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek. The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, founded in 1912 only maintains a special collection including books, periodicals and other material relating to banknotes. On the initiative of the Head of the Department for Services and Archiving, research on the banknote collections was carried out by the Deutsche Bundesbank. Under the auspices of this organization, the Germany Central Bank, a collection of coins, banknotes and medallions minted and circulated in Germany is maintained within two sections named the Geldmuseum (Museum of Money) and

[5] An interview with Tuncel Acar, Head of the National Library of Turkey, and Tülin Eş, Head of the National Library of Turkey Non-Book Materials Section and Specialist Fatih Özdemir on May 6, 2008.

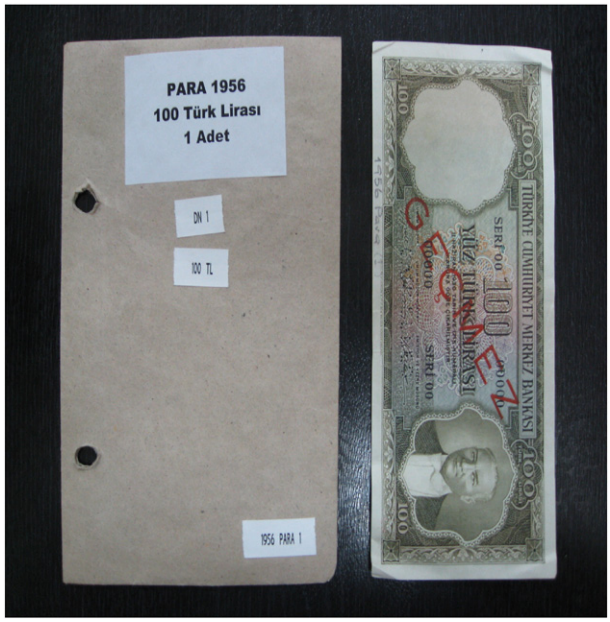


Fig. 5. A Hundred Turkish Liras that registered in the National Library of Turkey.

Numismatic Library. Printed and electronic information sources pertaining to the collection are also available. They organize various exhibitions of banknotes and coins in the *Geldmuseum* [6].

As in the other national libraries, the banknotes in the Deutsche Bundesbank Geldmuseum are not catalogued but held as museum artefacts with an inventory record (Fig. 6).

In the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, one of the most famous libraries in Europe, there is a special banknotes collection developed through donations to the library. This collection is housed in the Monnaies, Medailles et Antiques Department, but



Fig. 6. Steel box in the Non-Book Materials Division.

according to officials it has not yet been classified and transferred to electronic media. The Bibliothèque Nationale de France also has a rich collection of coins and medals from different periods minted in Greece, Rome, Byzantium, the Celtic lands and France [8].

Alongside that held by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, there is an important collection of coins and banknotes collection at the Banque de France [7].

In the light of this information, it can be seen that there are considerable differences in terms of the development and preservation of banknote collections among the National Library of Turkey and the German, American, French and British national libraries. In Turkey according to the "*Deposit Law*", banknotes printed by the Turkish Republic Central Bank must be sent to the Turkish National Library, and the Central Bank exhibits these banknotes in its own museum. However, in other countries banknotes are not given to national libraries according to deposit laws. Banknotes printed by the central banks of the above mentioned countries are made available as museum artefacts to researchers and the public by means of special exhibitions in the central banks' museums (as, for example, in the Deutsche Bundesbank Geldmuseum and the Banque de France); banknotes in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France are made available to researchers on request, as in the Turkish National Library. In other countries access to exhibited banknotes is much more limited. Compared with other countries the banknote collection of the Turkish National Library is inadequate in terms of quality and quantity. Although there are no restrictions on the usage of the banknotes in Turkey, access to the banknotes in the Museum of the Central Bank of the Turkish Republic is hindered by the policies of the organization.

2. Conclusion

Besides being tokens of economic value generally accepted to be the most important means of exchange, banknotes also serve as invaluable records concerning a nation's economic, cultural, artistic, legal and social characteristics. For this reason, they must be reliably collected, preserved and passed on to future generations in national scholarly institutions. Banknotes are preserved and made available to researchers and to the curious in both libraries and museums. When considered as library materials, banknotes are categorized as non-book materials and handled according to the regulations that govern this kind of material. In order to provide useful and clear information concerning a particular period in a country's history, the name of the country or the name of the institution responsible for minting money, the place and date of printing, official signatures and/or seals, information concerning value and special marks and pictures must be provided.

The banknotes of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic reflect political and economical developments in different periods of Turkey's history. It may be that these banknotes, the design of which must be thought of as an integral whole encapsulating everything from the kind of paper used to the illustrations and inscriptions that appear on them, are now only rarely used as an information source within a limited number of scholarly fields, but each represents something of original value in Turkey as in every country. Furthermore, from the perspective of design and its integration with the information they record, the banknotes are surely also works of art.

As a result of research conducted both in Turkey and abroad, it appears that no serious study of banknotes along these lines has been undertaken. The objective of this study is to consider money as a source of information rather than matter for collection. It is hoped that this study will be useful not only to collectors but also to researchers working in the fields of numismatics, the economy of Turkey, Ottoman and Turkish banknotes and non-book materials.

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