



HERE AND EVERYWHERE: DIGITAL NEWSPAPERS FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

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Abstract:

Culture can be understood as the defining values, meanings and thoughts of a local, national or supranational community. Digital newspapers have played an increasingly important role in helping to understand historical research, as well as in giving insight as to how people interpret the world around them. Research on local history in Turkey can play a great role in developing the information environment in the region and build an awareness of the importance of the utilization of information in the minds of the community on all levels and in all aspects of life. Digital newspapers in libraries, archives and museums contribute local knowledge and expertise to the development of digital information services through their participation in all phases of historical projects.

This research provides a general historical analysis of the development of newspaper digitalization applications in Turkey. It also describes how the measures of collecting and providing the equipments of the records of the local archives, city archives, libraries, documentation centres, and institutions were reviewed. Meanwhile the relations between the digital newspapers of the information centres and institutions in Turkey were analyzed, especially the evaluation of the equipment of the organizations like Office of the Prime Minister Directorate General of Press and Information, The Turkish National Library and City archives.

Introduction

Social, political, economic and technological trends can influence attitudes, values, and behaviours. Cultural and heritage resources are preserved by retaining these trends against the forces of time, cultural change, the environment, and economic forces while remaining in compliance with environmental and historic preservation laws. Preserving these physical resources helps preserve intangible cultural values. The importance of newspapers in this application has stimulated the use of information technologies, such as digital newspapers. Physical historic preservation is generally static or isolated in time. Once a newspaper is preserved, besides regular maintenance, the newspaper remains static, representing one moment in the history of the cultural resource. But, it is possible to think that digital newspapers are dynamic because the data and the information obtained from it are capable of being used everywhere. A more dynamic approach is needed to preserve and to open common use the digital newspapers.

Digital technology has changed how visual newspapers are created, presented and stored. Scanners and digital cameras have allowed newspapers to be converted and presented in digital formats. Digital catalogues can be created that not only contain data about the newspapers but also contain a version of the digital image, allowing the user to immediately determine whether the search has resulted in finding the desired news. The catalogues and the digital files also can be distributed through computer networks, allowing an interested researcher to search for and use newspapers in collections thousands of kilometres away without leaving his or her own home or office. The digital format and distribution allows newspapers to be used repeatedly by a wider range of people than would be possible with physical objects. Genealogists, local historians, researchers, people or amateur historians who would not have the means to visit a library or archive to search for and use newspapers can now have access to them.

This research provides a general historical analysis of the development of newspaper digitalization applications in Turkey. It also describes published and unpublished sources, and the digital newspaper systems which were the useful for the historical research. Meanwhile the relations between the digital newspapers of the information centres and institutions in Turkey were analyzed, especially the evaluation of the equipment of organizations like Office of the Prime Minister Directorate General of Press and Information, The Turkish National Library and City archives. Turkey's role in the European Union (EU) newspaper digitization project was reviewed.

Review of the Literature

In order to understand how digital newspapers are being used in the genealogy and local history areas it is important to first understand how computers and technology in general are being used in today's information centres. Developments in information and communication technologies increase the amount of information produced and the importance of access to

current and / or historical information in various newspapers. While studies about digital newspaper services for history researchers and studies about the information retrieval problem of these researchers take place in the international literature, the amount of similar studies in Turkey is very limited.

Motivating people to use digital newspapers, especially in the genealogy and local history areas, do not appear together and commonly in Turkish library and information literature. In Turkey, the study of newspapers and their digitization technologies (Önal, 2010a; 2008; 2007; 2006) are considered to be different from the study of genealogy and local history (Önal, 2010 b). This study contributes to fresh perspectives regarding digital newspaper service experiences, and genealogy and local history.

Published and Unpublished Sources

Interest in the genealogy and local history to be written and broadcast in Turkey in this area go back to 1870s. Some of the factors that cause growing influential interest to begin are : writing history of country, cities, municipalities and printable foreign works on that issue. As well as nationalist movements and migrations, 19th century is a period of economic, administrative and mental transformations. In the process of being included in the world economy, commercial centres changed places, port cities became popular, the situation of producing for the European market caused changes in the structure of the rural sector. All of these changes were published as newspaper news and then prepared as unpublished newspaper clippings. These unpublished clippings are collected, preserved and serviced by city archives and libraries.

Anatolia's geographical location naturally facilitated very close relationships with neighboring countries, different languages, and several cultures during the period from the nineteenth to the end of the twentieth century. As all of these events, information and sources were used to prepared publications such as newspapers in the past. The basic reason is to make historical research with these newspapers published in the past. Up to now, those who have been interested in the newspapers for historical research have used some of the paper directories and, to a certain extent, official documents, but they have always thought of taking advantage of other technological facilities such as microforms in libraries and archives.

Some important articles and even some valuable directories, although limited in number, have appeared on the published sources, which were the useful for the historical research, but they come from newspapers. Documents dating between 1941 and 1994 would be of great help in shedding light on the history of this period (Koloğlu, 2006). A number of newspapers and publication movements that prevailed for centuries in Anatolia has been clarified, published, and bibliographical sources have been distributed as government publications.

For decades researchers relied on these paper directories:

- Bayrak, M. Orhan. (1994). *Türkiye’de gazeteler ve dergiler sözlüğü: 1831 – 1993. [The Dictionary of newspapers and serials in Turkey: 1831 – 1993]*. İstanbul: Kül Yayınları.
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New News About Newspapers for Historical Research

History is becoming more interdisciplinary science. Historians are using an ever-wider range of sources, particularly as born digital resources, records and digital surrogates come on – line. Historical research has always been a complex process of searching, retrieving, sifting and sorting. In developing on-line access newspaper collections in information centres have a unique opportunity to take account of these patterns. The digital newspaper systems being developed by information centres are intended for use by genealogists and other amateur researchers. The major objectives that connect digital newspapers with historical, especially with genealogy and local historical research, are (Anderson, 2004; Miller, 2000; Walravens and King, 2003):

- To capture the cognitive and behavioural aspects of researchers;
- To build and capture the dynamics of newspapers reading;
- To provide needs – oriented information;
- To make acquisitions according to legislation in force, with the costs as low as possible;
- To create efficiency;
- To access and compare news;
- To study the relationships between newspaper reading and historical research;
- To establish closely correlation between past and today;
- To use facilities of the new technologies;
- To promote the opportunities for access to contemporary information services and adapting electronic library resources;

- To extend library's resources and social experience with the online news environment;
- To involve users, as much as possible, in the acquisition of electronic resources;
- To revitalize the library for a new generation, offering new opportunities to make historical researches;
- To guide this process, the study established clear working definitions for the key components; community newspaper, digitization and networking technology and effect.

A Gateway to Newspapers in Turkey

Maintaining access to digital newspaper collections will cause libraries and information centres to concentrate their attention on overall operations as never before. Evaluation of the digital newspaper services is the process of determining the worth, merit, or value of all applications. Measurement is the precursor for evaluation in order to fully understand a system, service, or process. Measurement entails the quantification of a service or process. An evaluation can be done using these four broad levels of analysis or using one of them (Matthews, 2007):

- **Organizational:** The perspective is internally focused year established, places – address, special collections.
- **Individual:** Users and an individual customer's experience are the basis for an evaluation.
- **Service:** A program or service is the focus of a majority of information centre evaluation projects. In this research, services are included general services, most often used materials, expected information nature, bibliographic control, actions, and virtual services. The experience of a group of users is evaluated in order to draw some conclusions.
- **Societal:** It examines the impact of the information centre on the local community as people (users and / or librarians) or place (city, archive and / or library). It includes culturally – related activities and commends.

Having a clear understanding of the evaluation, these four broad levels of analysis were used. This study reports on three surveys as detailed and summarized below and compares the outcomes of these information centres which have digital newspaper services for historical research.

1 – Office of the Prime Minister Directorate General of Press and Information

Year established: 1920

Address: Balgat – Ankara

Special collections: 1700 Newspapers from 92 countries; 41 national newspapers from Turkey; 1200 local newspapers from Turkey.

Users: Open to government officials.

Services: Online newspaper services.

Most often used materials by historians: No specific information in this subject.

Expected information nature on historical research: Timely – when do users need this information; relevant – what do users need.

Bibliographic control: Bibliographic control by multi – level cataloguing.

Actions: Improvement in the quality and characteristics of their services; define professional, technical, information and financial conditions for the integration into the system.

Virtual services: Promote the creation of virtual documentary services; co-operate with other compatible shared systems in the region, in Europe and elsewhere.

Culturally – related activities: Arrange seminars and workshops.

Comments: The application of modern technology in the field of information services from newspapers to digital media is a gradual process.

2 – The Turkish National Library

Year established: 1946

Address: Bahçelievler – Ankara

Special collections: Newspapers in Ottoman Turkish (which its words borrowed extensively from Arabic and Persian, and was written in the Ottoman Turkish alphabet) , Turkish (which is written with roman letters and spoken language in Turkey, since 1928), Arabic, Persian, French, English since 1823; 41 national newspapers from Turkey; 180 local newspapers from Turkey.

Users: Open to the general public, researchers, students, free access.

Services: Online newspaper services; news media services helping with using online news sites, traditional services.

Most often used materials by historians: Newspapers, handwritten manuscripts, government papers and reports, scholarly periodicals, photographs, books.

Expected information nature on historical research: Relevant – what do users need; sufficient – to satisfy their needs; timely – when do users need this information;

high quality – correct and indisputable; easily accessible – to provide an easy access for the users.

Bibliographic control: Bibliographic control by multi – level cataloguing.

Actions: Promotion of improved national arrangements for the production and distribution of national digitalized newspapers; global changes to linked bibliographic records.

Virtual services: Exchange and obtain documents between different libraries and documentation centres.

Culturally – related activities: Arrange seminars and workshops.

Comments: Made good use of institutional facilities; using a wide a range of sources.

3 – **City Archives:** 27 City Archives, in Adana, Antalya, Bursa, Çankırı, Çorum, İstanbul, İzmir, Kayseri, Kocaeli, Konya, Mersin, Samsun, and etc.

Year established: Since 1950 and different years...

Address: In the city centres.

Special collections: Newspapers in Ottoman Turkish, Turkish, Arabic, Persian; national newspapers from Turkey; local newspapers from Turkey.

Users: Open to public, free access.

Services: Online newspaper services; news media services helping with using online news sites, traditional services.

Most often used materials by historians: Newspapers, photographs, books, scholarly periodicals, handwritten manuscripts, government papers and reports.

Expected information nature on historical research: Relevant – what do users need; sufficient – to satisfy their needs; timely – when do users need this information; high quality – correct and indisputable; easily accessible – to provide an easy access for the users.

Bibliographic control: Bibliographic control by multi – level cataloguing.

Actions: Assume important responsibilities in the collection, organisation, preservation and digitisation of materials in the service of local culture.

Virtual services: Promote to obtain, collect and use of local newspapers as digital form; the creation of digital documentary services.

Culturally – related activities: Communication for all users interested in the development of cultural, technical and training activities at a national and international level.

Comments: Made good use of institutional facilities; a preparation and training for professionals according to their sector specific needs; partnership between libraries with inside and outside partners.

Figure1: A Screenshot of whose newspapers and serials information system from The Turkish National Library

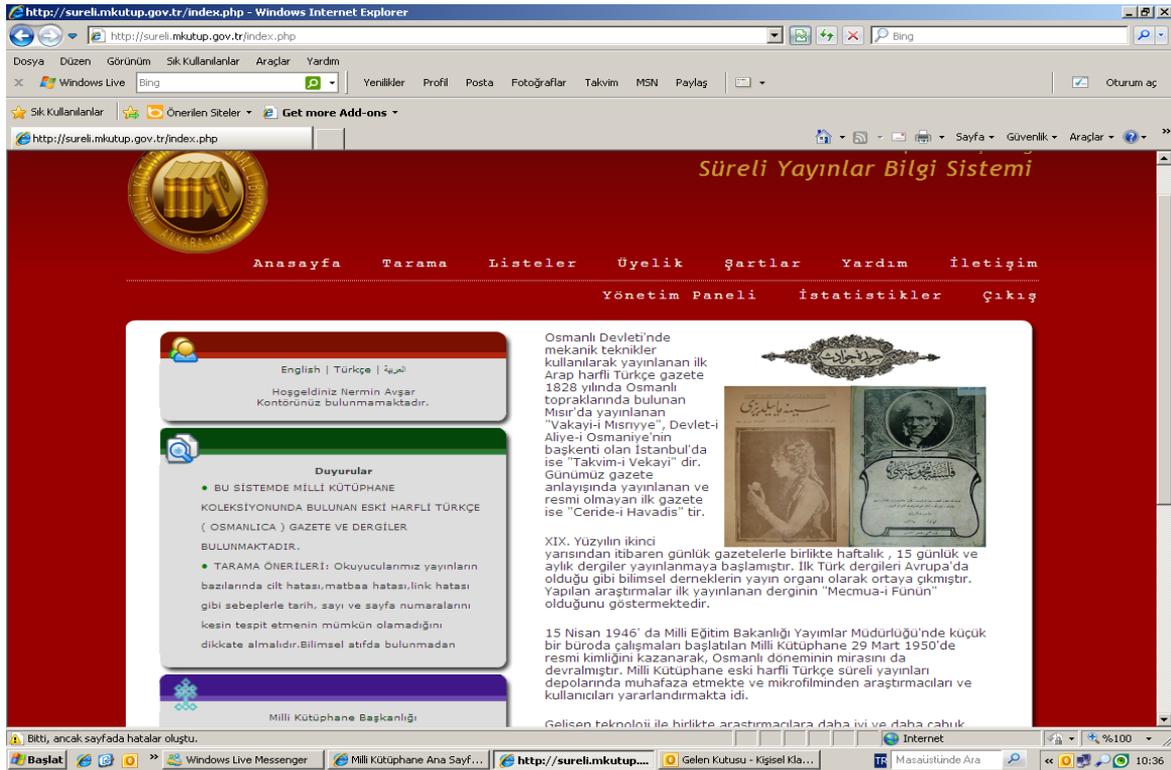
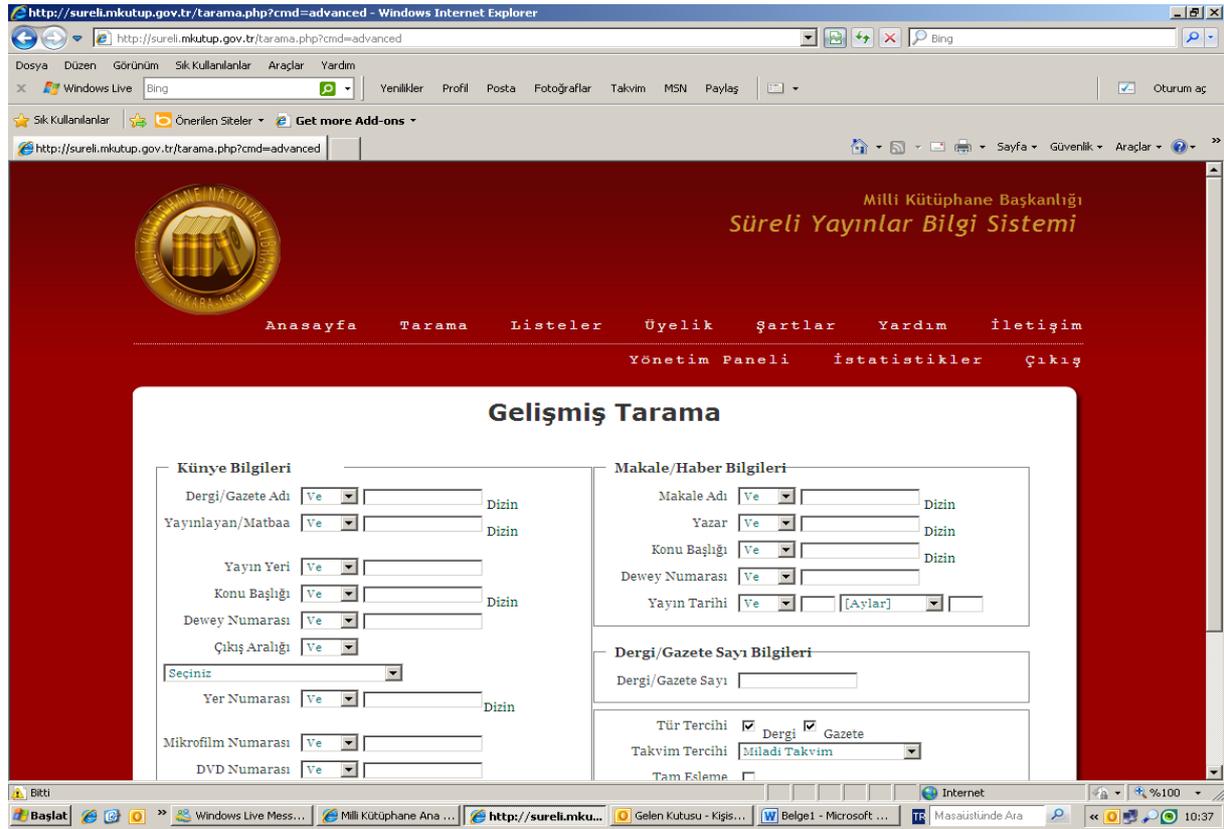


Figure 2: A Screenshot of whose online public access catalogue from The Turkish National Library



Turkey's role in the European Union (EU) newspaper digitization project

CALIMERA (2005), EUROPEANA (2009), EUROPEANA Collections 1914-1918 and PULMAN-XT (2002) can be considered as most important projects in the creation of a culture of collaboration for digitising cultural heritage and local history materials. The digital collections contain the full range of national library collections including books, newspapers, trench journals, maps, music sheets, children's literature, photographs, posters, pamphlets, propaganda leaflets, original art, religious works, medals and coins (EUROPEANA – Newspapers, 2012). These projects, especially EUROPEANA – Newspapers project, are organised in four main areas of work which is outlined below:

1. Coordination of content and enlargement of the network;
2. Digitising and full-text creation;
3. Dissemination and educational activities;
4. Coordination and management of the project, assessment and monitoring.

Turkey is a country that carries out projects with the aim of being a EU member. The EU states that EU Public Libraries, National Libraries, and special libraries have a responsibility for digitising local culture. Turkey is an active member in the EU newspaper digitization projects. Digitised sources, and especially digitised newspapers can be taken as a model by libraries and archives includes genealogy and local history collections.

Conclusions

It is thought that the factors such as culture, reforms, education, migration and population exchanges can create connection from the past. Moreover, it is considered that society's feeling on belonging and establish contact with their own histories will cause establishing connection with their history. Anyway, the most important incentive that makes local history be written is the feeling of belonging. If people want to understand the place, environment or society that they are in, they begin to be interested in genealogy and local history.

This study has showed library and an information system to develop an initial approach to the archiving and analysis of historic information services. At present, several organizations throughout Turkey and other areas of the world are developing digital newspaper systems to assist in the maintenance and documentation of newspapers. The virtual preservation of historic newspapers will provide important to present and future generations with a record and means to explore the culture that lived and published in a particular formats. It is anticipated that the preservation of spatial and historical information through digital newspaper systems will also help promote wider appreciation of the cultural heritage.

This paper can provide one of the ways to establish contacts and search for making historical research with using digital newspaper in Turkey. Office of the Prime Minister Directorate General of Press and Information, The Turkish National Library, and City archives will be delighted to work with amateur or professional researcher on these lines.

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