

Düçane CÜNDİOĞLU

TÜRKÇE KUR'AN ÇEVİRİLERİNİN SİYASÎ BAĞLAMINDA
BİR KUR'AN MÜTERCİMİ: SÜLEYMAN TEVFİK*

I. Giriş

1994 yılında yayımlanan *19. ve 20. Yüzyıllarda İki Fıkra Derleyicisi: Mehmed Tefvik ve Süleyman Tefvik* (M. Sabri Koz, "Müteferrika", sy. 4, sh. 45-58, Kış-1994) adlı kıymetli makale, ilginç bir tesadüfün eseri olarak, kitapları ve hayatı hakkında mâlumât toplamaya çalıştığım bir Kur'an müterciminin, *Seyyid Süleyman Tefvik el-Hüseynî (Öz) Zorluoğlu'nun* (1865-1939)

* Makalenin yazımı sırasında teşvik ve yardımlarını gördüğüm Sayın İsmail Kara'ya ve Süleyman Tefvik'e ait bazı metinlerin fotokopilerini çektirip Erzurum'dan göndermek lütfunda bulunan Sayın Prof. Sadık Kılıç Beyefendi'ye bu vesileyle şükranlarımı arz etmek isterim. Kıymetli dostlarım Atalay Gül ile Zekeriya Hayır sayesinde bazı nüshalara ulaşabilme imkânı buldum; kezâ sevgili talebem Servet Kızılay'ın fedakârâne yardımlarını gördüm, kendilerine müteşekkirim. İstanbul kütüphanelerinin, bilhassa Taksim Atatürk Kitaplığı ile Hakkı Tarık Us Kütüphanesi'nin kıymetli çalışanlarını, Kubbealtı'nın sahibi Hanefi Bey dostumuzu burada anmayı ve kendilerine şükranlarımı sunmayı îfası vâcib bir vazife addediyorum.

conservative and impeding the spread of Qur'anic understanding to the Turkish public.

Süleyman Tevfik (1865–1939)

The first translation to appear in print was Süleyman Tevfik's (*Translation of the Noble Qur'an*) in 1924 (See Figure 10, revised edition of Tevfik's translation). Tevfik worked for several years as a French language teacher and then in a variety of minor Ottoman bureaucratic posts until the Constitutional Revolution of 1908, after which he dedicated himself full-time to writing and journalism.⁷ A prolific translator of French, Arabic and English texts, as well as the author of a number of compilations and simplified popular books on sundry topics, his translations include Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes*; French novels by Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas and Émile Zola; and Arabic works including Ghazālī's magnum opus *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn (The Revival of Religious Scholarship)* and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Qur'anic commentary *al-Tafsīr al-Ḳabīr*. In addition to translations of European literature and Islamic works, Tevfik composed and compiled books on subjects as varied as fortune-telling, cooking, history, language, literature and how to write amulets.⁸ Tevfik described himself as a 'people's writer' and a 'collector of anecdotes', and that he was.⁹

No small amount of advertising and questionable marketing surrounded the publication of his translation.¹⁰ For each version, Tevfik used the pseudonym 'Seyyid Süleyman el-Hüseyni', a pen name that he used for many of his other works. In this case, as in previous ones, 'Seyyid' and 'el-Hüseyni' appear to have been chosen to bolster the Islamic credentials of the author, connecting him to descendants of the Prophet's family. In an advertisement for the book, the publisher Naci Kasım refers to Tevfik with even more honorifics, adding 'efendi' (sir) and 'hazretleri' (his exalted presence), the latter being a term of extreme deference, to the already inflated Seyyid Süleyman el-Hüseyni.¹¹ These titles seem disproportionate and ironic given that most devout intellectuals considered Tevfik to be nothing more than a popular commercial writer. Needless to say, this disingenuous presentation of the author as an Islamic authority displeased the devout critics and suggested that

financial motivation was the driving force behind the selling of the book. Kasım, however, maintained that the publication was undertaken as a service for Turkish Muslims: 'It is impossible for those who do not know Arabic and Persian to understand the noble meaning of the Holy Qur'an which is the light of guidance of the civilised world.' Kasım argued that the Turkish commentaries of the nineteenth century were too archaic in style and language to be useful to Turks in the 1920s, and that these shortcomings had 'prevented the students from benefiting from them'.¹² He contrasts them with Tevfik's translation, which he describes as a 'literal translation . . . in a style that everyone can understand'.¹³

Despite these proclamations of good intentions, the book was not well-received. Most devout intellectuals criticised it vociferously and attacked Tevfik's character. His previous works on profane and esoteric subjects (including cookbooks published under female pseudonyms and works on sorcery) raised questions as to his credibility as a translator of the Qur'an. The influential Muslim-modernist journal *Sebilürreşad* denounced this translation as a 'misguided attempt' by an unqualified and morally suspect author.¹⁴ Rather than analyse the actual translation, *Sebilürreşad* cast doubt on the reliability and moral rectitude of Tevfik by publishing passages he had previously composed on casting spells, parts of which involved the incantation of Qur'anic verses.¹⁵ The review suggests that his work on black magic was involved in the translation, remarking, 'Sorcery is an art, but if it is mixed with Qur'anic commentary it is a great treason against religion and against the Qur'an'.¹⁶ Though Tevfik's translation contained nothing related to sorcery, his previous works on the subject disqualified him as a reliable author on Islamic subjects in the eyes of the ulama establishment and devout critics.

Sebilürreşad's dismissal of Tevfik demonstrates that an important segment of the devout intelligentsia felt that Qur'an translators should meet the conventional requirements of moral rectitude and reliability that pertained to other Islamic scholarly disciplines; in other words, the quality of knowledge should be governed by its source and transmitter as well as by its content. It is important to note that the journal defined the translation of the Qur'an as part of

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MADDE YAYIMLANDIKTAN
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TÜRK KÜLTÜR VE EDEBİYAT DİZGESİNDE ÇOK KİMLİKLİ BİR MÜTERCİM: SÜLEYMAN TEVFİKEshabil BOZKURT¹

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Ayşe Banu KARADAĞ²**Özet**

Bu makalede kültür ve edebiyat dizgemizde farklı kimlikleriyle ön plana çıkan Süleyman Tevfik'in "gazeteci", "muallim", "muharrir" ve "sözlükbilimci" kimliklerine kısaca değinildikten sonra, "mütercim" kimliğinin Türk çeviri tarihindeki yeri ve önemine dikkat çekilmiştir. Amaç, Süleyman Tevfik'in gerek telif gerekse çeviri eserleri ve "mütercim" kimliği üzerine "çeviri eser seçimi" ve "çeviri amacı" vurgusuyla bütünlüklü bir çalışma yapmaktır. Arapça, Farsça, İngilizce, İtalyanca, Fransızca ve Ermenice bilen Süleyman Tevfik dil, edebiyat, din, yemek gibi konular hakkında birçok telif eser vermiş ve çeşitli çeviriler yapmıştır. Eserlerini çevirdiği yazarlar arasında Emile Zola, Paul de Kock, Ponson du Terrail, Maurice Leblanc, Pierre Louys ve Pierre Benoit gibi Fransız edebiyatının önde gelen romancıları yer almaktadır. Bunların yanı sıra yazarı bilinmeyen eserler de çevirmiştir. II. Meşrutiyet sonrasında Türk kültür ve edebiyat dizgesinde çok popüler bir tür olarak ortaya çıkan polisiye roman türünde de çevirileri bulunan Süleyman Tevfik, dönemin üstat kabul edilen mütercimlerinden olan Avan-zâde Mehmed Süleyman ile Fransızcadan Türkçeye bir de sözlük çevirmiştir. Süleyman Tevfik'in *II. Meşrutiyet'ten Cumhuriyet'e Elli Yıllık Hatıralarım* (haz. Tahsin Yıldırım - Şaban Özdemir, 2011) isimli hatıra türündeki eserinden ve çevirilerine yazdığı ön sözlerden hareketle "mütercim" kimliğinin irdelenmeye çalışılacağı bu makalede elde edilen veriler, Alman çeviribilimci Hans J. Vermeer'in "skopos (amaç)" ve İsraili çeviribilimci Itamar Even-Zohar'ın "kültür repertuarı" kavramları temel alınarak değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Süleyman Tevfik (Özzorluoğlu), Türk çeviri edebiyat tarihi, çeviribilim, "skopos", "kültür repertuarı".

A TRANSLATOR WITH MULTIPLE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN TURKISH CULTURAL AND LITERARY SYSTEM: SÜLEYMAN TEVFİK**Abstract**

In this essay, the identity of Süleyman Tevfik as a translator, who comes into prominence with his various professional identities in our cultural and literary systems, will be highlighted in terms of his position and significance in our history of translation, after his identities as a teacher, a journalist, an author and a lexicologist have been touched on shortly. It is aimed to conduct a complete and comprehensive study on both the original and translation works of Süleyman Tevfik as well as his identity as a translator, with an emphasis on his selection of original work to be translated along with his purpose of translation. Süleyman Tevfik, who speaks Arabic, Persian, English, Italian, French and Armenian languages, has original works on a wide variety of fields like language,

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