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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OTTOMAN RHETORIC UP TO 1882

PART I

THE MEDRESE TRADITION

Christopher Ferrard

Since the development of the medrese curriculum, the ‘ilmü l-beläga, the Arabic science of literary rhetoric, has played an important role in the education of Muslims. In particular one book, the Mi̇ftāhü l-‘Ulüm of Sekkākī (d. 626/1229)², was to dominate the study of beläga, being read principally in its epitome, the Telbîşiü l-Mi̇ftâh of Kazvînî (d. 739/1338)³ and its subsequent commentary, the Mu̇taβvel of Teftazânî (d. 792/1390)⁴. Since then the student of rhetoric has had an ever increasing proliferation of commentaries and super-commentaries from which to choose; of these the Häşiye ‘ale l-Mu̇taβvel of Seyyid Şerîf Cürcânî (d. 816-1413) seems to have been the most popular⁵. These books were to form the core of texts which became prescribed reading for medrese students throughout the Ottoman period. The conservative nature of the medrese syllabus...
bus, from which it was virtually impossible to dislodge a work which had at some time found its way into it, ensured that this central core remained intact. Thus it was that a syllabus which was established in the Fourteenth Century was to survive into the Nineteenth Century so that the Telbış was almost to become synonymous with belağa. The study of rhetoric saw its justification in its role as an ancillary Koranic science, for it was argued that a knowledge of rhetoric was necessary for the understanding of Arabic, which, in turn, is required for the proper understanding of the Sunna and the Koran. The literary purpose in the study of rhetoric was subsumed within its role as handmaiden to the religious sciences. Nevertheless it embodied the most systematic formulation of literary criticism in Arabic and it was to the Telbış that Nineteenth Century scholars first looked when searching for a basis on which to build a rhetoric of Ottoman.

The stable nature of the medrese syllabus for rhetoric would seem to suggest that it had proved satisfactory and had found general acceptance among the 'ulemâ and students. This, however, was far from true; indeed from the outset, there was a continual struggle to render the Telbış intelligible to students. Kazvînî, the author of the Telbış, produced its first commentary, a work which he entitled the Ģâzâh. In the same century Teftâzânî wrote the Muťavvel which he himself later abridged in the Muhtasar. Thereafter there was a steady and continual stream of commentaries, super-commentaries, versifications and translations. Their very number alone argues the case that the Ottoman 'ulemâ found the Telbış and its commentaries difficult to teach. In this continuing struggle we may observe the groundwork for the development of the Ottoman rhetoric, and it is the purpose of this article to trace some of the more noteworthy milestones on the road to the compilation of a literary rhetoric of the Ottoman language, up to 1882.

In 1299/1881-2, there appeared two works of major importance in the history of Ottoman literary criticism, each differing remarkably one from the other and both so influential that they were to overshadow all previous attempts to reconcile the traditional canons of literary criticism with the needs of the day. While the Belâğat-i 'Osmâniye of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa represented a conservative
approach to the problem of establishing a rhetoric for the Ottoman language, being little more than the translation of the classical theory of Arabic rhetoric to an Ottoman context, the Ta‘lim-i Edebiyat of Recâ‘îzâde Maḥmûd Ekrem was no less than a complete revolution in literary analysis. While Cevdet Paşa had clung to familiar precepts of the Telhîş, Ekrem had chosen to embrace European ideas with such enthusiasm that his work was heralded as revolutionary, rather than the culmination of a growing revolt against the classical modes of literary analysis.

These works represented two separate traditions of rhetorical study, both ultimately based on the Telhîş; but while the Belâğat-i ‘Osmâniye followed the traditional approach favoured by the medrese and was entirely Arabic in spirit, the Ta‘lim-i Edebiyat represented an alternative approach which sought to incorporate the work of schools flourishing outside the medrese system, the inspiration being mainly Persian up to the period of the Tanzimat, and thereafter French. Part I of this article will trace the development of a tradition of rhetoric which preceded and inspired the Belâğat-i ‘Osmâniye, while Part II will trace the development of an alternative approach to rhetoric which paved the way for the Ta‘lim-i Edebiyat.

The Development of an Arabic Literary Rhetoric up to the 15th Century

Islamic rhetoric, that is the ‘ilmû ‘I-belâğa, evolved from earlier works in criticism. Belâğa is the Arabic theory of style. Etymologically it is derived from «belağa» meaning to reach, and is interpreted by Ebû Hilal el-‘Askerî (d. 396/1005) as signifying the art of reaching the listener in attempting to convey one’s ideas to him, or the art of reaching the utmost perfection in the style and content of a composition. In the classical period it is indiscriminately applied to poetry, ornate prose and oratory. However, it must be emphasised that unlike European classical rhetoric, belâğa does not

6 The first editions of both these works were published in Istanbul, 1299/1881-2.
have its origins in oratory. Since the time of the ‘Abbāsids until the present century there has been no forum for persuasive oratory in Islam. Belāga when applied to oratory, usually in reference to the Friday mosque, was used to embellish speech, it did not provide the elements of persuasion. Before the Tenth Century A.D. (the Fifth Century A.H.), no definition of belāga was offered. It is, however, clear that it was to critical analysis that the word was being applied.

The earliest critics confined themselves to subjective judgements on the qualities of a particular beyt or poet, no reason or evidence being offered in support of their arguments. However, these critical evaluations were merely the by-products of philological discussion, and even as early as the First Century of the Hijra we have philologists attempting to evaluate not merely a line or two but the whole of a poet’s work. Later İbn Sellāmī ’l-Cümaḫī (d. 231/845) put criticism on a firmer footing by his insistence that personal taste was not enough for an evaluation of poetry, it was also necessary to be well-versed in the practice of poetry and the critic must also have made a study of the poets. In his Ṭabaḥat ü ’s-Su‘arā’ he classifies the poets according to their period and place of origin. He failed however to support his judgement by analysing the work of the poets. El-Cahız (d. 255/868) made an analysis of speech and then proceeded to postulate various theories on its correct use: one of his works, the Beyān ve-’l-Tebyīn, is divided into four sections, each of which deals with some aspect of speech: the first is concerned with correct pronunciation; the second with the correct use of the word, and the avoidance of dissonance between words placed in construct; the third with syntax and the relationship between words and their meanings; and the fourth deals with poses and gestures which should be adopted by the speaker. In these observations critical analysis is explicit, he does not however define the qualities of a good poem, nor does he develop a theory of criticism. These early faltering steps towards the development of a rhetoric of Arabic were followed by writers whose contribution to the field is undeniable. İbn Mu‘tezz (d. 296/908), wrote a treatise entitled Kitābū ’l-Bedī’, which successfully proved that certain figures of speech, claimed to have been invented by early Abbasid poets, were in fact
not only used by the ancient Bedouin poets but were also to be found in the Koran. To these figures (isti'are, tecnis, mutābaka, reddū l-'az, and mezheb kelāmi) he added twelve more.

Kudāme b. Ca'fer (d. after 320/932) in a work entitled the Kitāb Naḵdi 'ṣ-Ṣi'r set out to enumerate the good qualities of poetry which when combined together in a poem would make it sublime, and the bad qualities which would reduce the poem to the lowest level. These qualities do not depend on the moral values they express, but rather on the poet's skill in the use of the four constituent elements of poetry which he defines as word, meaning, meter and rhyme, the discussion consisting in the main of permutation of these four elements. Fortunately, this scholastic approach was not adopted by others, but the terminology he uses was to influence later Islamic rhetoricians. Both Ibn Mu'tezz and Kudāme b. Ca'fer contributed to the formulation of the style of exposition which was to be followed by most rhetoricians: each chapter was devoted to a separate part of speech which was dealt with in the same order: technical term, definition and examples.

Before proceeding to 'Abdūlkāhir el-Cürcānī (d. 471/1071) mention must be made of two other critics: the first, Ebū Ḥilāl el-'Askerī (d. 395/1005), defined the relationship between feṣāhat and belāgat, and among his other achievements raised the number of figures of bedī' to thirty-five. El-Bakillānī (d. 403/1013)'in a treatise on the l'cāz of the Koran, applied critical theories to the Koran and to his contemporary poets, thereby demonstrating that the work of mortals fell short of the sublime style of the Holy Book.

Rhetoric became firmly established as a discipline with two works by 'Abdūlkāhir el-Cürcānī, the Esrārū l'-Belāga and the Delā'ilū l'-l'cāz. El-Cürcānī criticises the superficial nature of the existing works on rhetoric (no doubt referring to Ibn Mu'tezz and Kudāme b. Ca'fer). Unsatisfied with the poor quality of these works, he builds his own theory of metaphor, simile and analogy based on an analysis of the psychological effects of metaphor which he explains at length in the Esrārū l'-Belāga. The Delā'ilū l'-l'cāz, the earlier of the two works, is not only an analysis of the style of the Koran which he proves to be inimitable, but also contains a discussion of syntax in its relationship to style. These two works marked
the greatest contribution to the development of Islamic rhetoric. Henceforth, it ceased to be the object of investigation and analysis and became an established science, confined to the medrese, whence it was to emerge once again in the Nineteenth Century.

The final stage in the development of rhetoric came with the establishment of a text-book which would dominate the field to the exclusion of all other original works. Both works of El-Cürcânî were abridged by Es-Sakkâkî (d. 626/1229) who stripped away the profound analysis which rendered El-Cürcânî's contribution so unique, and what remained of the contents of the Delâ'îlû 'l-İ'cáz was termed the 'ilmû 'l-me'ānî, while the Esrâ'îlû 'l-Belâğa became the 'ilmû 'l-beyân, each a separate chapter in the compendium of the literary sciences which he called the Miftâhû 'l-İ'lîm. To these two chapters are added a section entitled the 'ilmû 'l-bedû which contains those thirty-five figures of speech identified by El-'Askerî. These three sciences were further epitomised by El-'I}:azvîni (d. 739/1338) in a work entitled the Telişîşû 'l-Miftâh, the very name of which has become synonymous with belâga up to the present century.

The Telişîş was quickly accepted into the curriculum of the medreses, whence it has not yet been removed. One can only assume that its concise nature made it an attractive text-book, for it could be easily memorised. There is no other reason to recommend it: in places it is virtually incomprehensible, so that one could say with some justification that although it was memorised by generations of medrese students, it was probably fully understood by few of them. To understand the work, the student went to the commentaries of which there are many. El-Çazvînî himself wrote a companion volume, the İzâh, which is still taught today. Soon after the death of El-Çazvînî the two most popular commentaries were written by Et-Tefţazânî (d. 732/1390): the Muţavvel and the Muhtâsar, the latter being an abridgement not of the Telişîş, but of the Muţavvel.

It is possible to trace a continuous development of rhetorical theory from the earliest period of Islam up to the Tenth Century, when El-Cürcânî raised the discipline to the summit of its develop-
ment, whence it has since declined due to the scholastic approach favoured by his successors. However, as soon as the science was formulated in the *Telhīş* and established in the curriculum of the medrese, Islamic rhetoric became fossilised. There then followed a proliferation of super-commentaries and glosses, their number bearing witness to the inadequacy of the standard text-book.

From the beginning of the Fifteenth Century the study of rhetoric acquired a uniformity within much of the Islamic World. The ’ilmū ’l-belāga may, therefore, be defined, within this context, as the science of Islamic rhetoric as formulated in the *Telhīş* and expounded in its commentaries.

The core of the classical medrese syllabus for rhetoric took its final form with the addition of Seyyid Cürcani’s *Hāsiye ‘ale ’l-Muṭāvvel* in the first half of the Fifteenth Century. Thereafter rhetoric in the medrese developed through a proliferation of commentaries and super-commentaries. Kātib Çelebi (d. 1067/1656) noted that in his day the *Telhīş* had already attracted:

a) A commentary by its own author entitled the Īzāh
b) 14 other commentaries besides the *Muṭāvvel*
c) 4 versifications
d) 5 abridgements
e) 1 translation

and that the *Muṭāvvel* had attracted 14 hāsiyes besides the hāsiye of Seyyid Cürcani, which in its turn attracted 3 further hāsiyes; there was also an abridgement of the Muṭāvvel by its author, entitled the Muhtāsar, which itself had 10 hāsiyes.

The very number of these commentaries attests to the inherent difficulty of the medrese text books for rhetoric. The most important of the above works for the development of an Ottoman rhetoric is undoubtedly the translation of the *Telhīş* by Meḥmed b. Meḥmed Altı Parmak (d. 1033/1623), who also translated various other works into Turkish. In addition to his version of the *Telhīş*, entitled the *Kāṣīfī ’l-’Ulūm ve-’Fātihī ’l-Fīnūn*, he is, also credited with a translation of the *Muṭāvvel*. The latter, however, has not been lo-

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7 ‘Osmānî Mü‘ellifleri, I, 212-3, which is based on Ata‘ī, 758-9.
cated, and it seems probable that this reference most probably arises from the fact that much of the interpretation of the text of the Teliş was based on a selective use of this commentary.

*Altı Parmak's Terceme-i Teliş*

The Terceme-i Teliş is more than a mere translation, providing, in fact, a Turkish commentary to this epitome. Although it is based on the *Mutavvel*, it presents only the barest outline of this commentary. One may presume that, in common with many commentaries and super-commentaries in the Islamic world, it consists of no more than a fair copy of the author's lecture notes for the classes he was teaching. Although the work is entitled «terceme», the term cannot be rendered as «translation» without some qualification. The translation of any technical work from one language into another will necessarily present almost insuperable problems unless a convention allows the translator to borrow words from the language of origin and transfer them, together with all their meanings and nuances, to the borrower language. Just as it would be impossible for a Turk today to translate an English work on electronic engineering without a wholesale transferal of much of the technical vocabulary, Ottoman scholars, too, were at a loss for corresponding Turkish terms in their treatment of the Islamic sciences and were forced to resort to excessive borrowing from the language being translated, which was usually Arabic. The fact that the Ottomans preserved the original orthography of Arabic and Persian loan words, together with the accepted theory that virtually all Arabic substantives could be incorporated into the language in their absolute case, and all verbs borrowed simply by converting them into their appropriate *maṣdar* forms, made it only too easy for the translator to produce an accurate translation without actually having to understand completely what he was translating. In many works of translation, the only elements which remain Turkish, to any extent, are the word order and the syntax, and a small percentage of the vocabulary, consisting of the more commonly used words. The Ottomans seemed to have recognised the insuperable problems inherent in translating works with specialised vocabularies and made no great attempt to substitute Turkish words for the Arabic. At the
same time they recognised that simply to rearrange the words around a Turkish syntactical structure would be a pointless exercise, except in that it would indicate the grammatical organisation of the Arabic original, to which the reader, we may presume, had to have recourse in order to understand the purport of the work. Clearly it was accepted that merely remoulding the vocabulary into the new shape required by the Turkish syntactical structure was an unrewarding task which promised little return for the effort expended on it, and certainly did not merit the description of «translation». In order to remedy this problem, translators of Arabic works usually adopted the original Arabic word, for it contained all the same subtleties and nuances, or the convenient imprecision and vagueness, of the original, and supplemented it with a synonym, so that a single word in the original would be transformed into a couplet retaining the original word as its first member and a synonym as its second, verbs being treated likewise. Phrases are usually presented in a form as close to the original as Ottoman usage will allow, and if they are felt to be insufficiently clear—a defect which will be inherent not only in the translation but also in the original—, the translator will repeat the phrase using synonyms, introducing it with the conjunction, «ya'ni» or «el-hâsil» or some similar phrase. However the only solution to the problem of translating the technical language of Arabic rhetorical theory into Turkish lies in following a middle road between strict literal translation and the recension of yet another gloss in Turkish, in order to give meaning to the translation of a work which is obscure in its original language.

The text of an entire fasıl from the Telhis is given below and is followed by Altı Parmağ's translation. This fasıl was chosen for its brevity, and is thus given in its entirety, the argument being developed within a few lines of the original text:

«Ve-ka'd yu{l}alak  międz-i 'ala kelimetin
ta'gayyere hikmii ırâbi-hâ bi-hâzfi lafi{z}ii
ev ziyâdeti lafi{z}ii, ke-kavli-hi — te'âlã —:
Ve-ca'e rabbii-ke, ve-es'eli '{l}-karyete,
ve-kavli-hi — te'âlã — leyse ke-mi{z}ii-hi
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şey‘ün, ey emrü rabbı-ke, ve-ehle 'l-karyeti,
ve-leyse mişle-hü şey‘iin.» (Telhiş, p. 336.)

This succinct summary is elaborated as follows in the Terceme-i Telhiş:

Faşl:

Bilgîl ki kelime ma‘nâ-yı aşlıyesinden nakl olmak ile mevşüf olduğu gibi, 'îrâb aşlden aţara nakl olmak ile mevşüf olur. Miştâh9 'ibâre-tinde fehm olunan oldî ki mecâzîk ile mevşüf olan 'îrâbdur. Muşan-nîf10 — raĥita 'lâh selefe-h — ihtídâ hdüb dîdî:

Ve-kad yuľaku 'l-mecâzu 'alâ kelimetin tağâyyere hükmü 'îrâbi-hâ.

Kimi de mecâz kelimeye itlâk olunur ki 'îrâbinûn hükmî tağâyyûr olunur hükmüÎ i‘râbâ iţâfeti beyânîyedir — ya‘ni, ol hükm ki nefs-i 'îrâbdur.

Bi-hâzfi lafzîn ev ziyâdetî lafzîn.

Lafz, hâzîla yâhîd bir lafz ziyâdesi-yle;

evvelki:

ke-kavli-hi — te‘ălâ — : «ve-câe rabbü-ke».11

Señiûn rabbûn emri geldi: «emrü rabbı-ke» [de] «emr» haţf olûndi, hařfi reţ’îne tebdîl [oldî].

İkîncisi:

Kavli-hi — te‘âlâ — : «Es‘elî 'l-karyete» .12

Üçincisi:

Kavli-hi — te'ālā — : «Leyse ke-miši-hi şey'ün».

Allah — te'ālā — nuñ mişli bir şey yokdur.

Ey ca'ê emrû rabi-bi taşdîri ve-ca'ê emrû rabi-keçür, zirâ Allah — te'ālā — meci'den münezzehdûr. Ve-ehle 'l-karye taşdîri ve-es'el ehle 'l-karyedêxrû, zirâ su'al ehl-i şaryedêxrû. Lâkin mümkindür i'çibâr üçûn şarye-i şarabêden su'al eyledi ki ehlî nice oldû.


It is clear that this passage itself requires study and interpretation; the reader with no previous knowledge of rhetoric will be disappointed if he expects to understand its principles after a first perusal of the material therein. One must, therefore, accept this work as an aid to the study of rhetoric to which students could have recourse when the syntax of the original Arabic text presents an obstacle to its understanding. This translation was not, however, widely accepted, a fact attested by the relative scarcity of manuscripts available in Istanbul, from which we may infer that the Terceme-i Telîşî did not meet the demands of students of rhetoric. This is not to deny that there was need for another commentary on

14 K. 42/11.
15 Zemâşerî, p. 1307.
16 Compare also El-Cürcânî, Esrârû 'l-Belâğa, 383; Teftîzûnî, Muşuvel, 405; Seyyid Cürcânî, 旋律ye, 221.
17 The MS from which the above passage was transcribed was the only copy in all the collections now housed in the Süleymaniye Library.
the *Telhîş*, for none of the existing works were completely satisfactory. However, the inability of the students to grasp the purport of the argument in the *Telhîş* may well have been attributed to a lack of fluency in reading the language, rather than to the intrinsic difficulty of the text. A request for a Turkish translation may have been voiced, but once it was made available it achieved no great currency among the students. Its usefulness lies perhaps in the fact that it forced the students to resort to the Arabic *Mutavvel* in order to understand the principles of rhetoric.\(^{18}\)

*‘Abdünnâfi’*’s Translation of the *Mutavvel*

For two hundred and fifty years the *Terceme-i Telhîş* remained the only translation of the standard Arabic text-book on rhetoric. In the third quarter of the Nineteenth Century the *Mutavvel* was translated by *‘Abdünnâfi’* İffet Ef. (d. 1308/1890), under the title *Nef-i Mu’avvel: Terceme-i Telhîş-ü-Mutavvel*, the manuscript of which was completed in 1278/1861, and an edition printed in two volumes in 1289/1872 and 1290/1873. This work is actually an abridged translation of the entire *Mutavvel*. Below is given a translation of the *Mutavvel*’s commentary on the same *fasl* as above.

*‘Abdünnâfi’* translates only three-quarters of the passage, omitting the last section which begins: «Kâle şâhibû ’l-Miftâh...»\(^{19}\)

*Fasîl*


\(^{18}\) The *Miştâhû ’l-Belâغا* alludes to the difficulty of the *Telhîş* for Turkish students, and was written to meet precisely this need.

\(^{19}\) As the printed edition is rare, the above example has been transcribed from the MS in the Istanbul University Library, T.Y. 6534.


Kałe—rahime-hü 'llah—:

Ve-ka'd yəltəlu 'l-mecəzu 'alə kəlimətin tağayıyyə hükümü ərəbi- hə bi-hazfi lafzn ev ziyədeti lafzn, ke-kəvli-hi —te'ələ—: «ve-ca' e rabbü-ke», «ve'-s'elı 'l-karyete»x, ve müşli əlavə şerifinə —te'ələ—: «Leyse ke-mişli-hi şey'ünn; ey ca' emrü rabbı-ke, ve-ehle 'l-karyeti, ve-[leyse] müşle-hü şey'ünn.

[278] Ve bə'zen meçaz bir lafzuň əzə̄r və yahdəd ziyədəsi-yəl hükm-ı ı'rabı tağayıyyur iden kəlim üzre itlac olunur. Zahir olan «tağayıyyə hükümü ərəbi-hü» əlavə şerifinə, hümən ı'rabə işəfəsi beyən için ob, laf-1 Miftah daхи bunu is'ar ider. Ya'nı, bir kəliməye itlac olunur ki ı'rabı bir nev'den nev'i dəqərə tağayıyyur ide.


El-hâsil, fulânunî tev’emi sinn-i kibre resîde olub, ve âkrânî sinn-i bülûgâ mânteheiye olmasî, fulânunî daahi îfâ’-u-bülûgümü müstelzîm olur.


The translation is basically sound, most of the difficulties in it belonging to the original. Although the style of the translation is turgid and could possibly give rise to misunderstanding on several occasions, this is in part due to the respect he shows for his text. He remains as close as possible to the thought and language of the
Mu'avvel, and when the latter is obscure or otherwise difficult his translation strives to be faithful, while at the same time showing awareness of the needs of the reader by interpreting obscurities. The text, for example, contains the following phrase: «Ve-ctizâben bi-żab'ı 's-sâmi' 'ani 'z-zelk», which presents difficulties in that while the word «żab'» could signify «a rushing headlong», it is more probably used to mean «the upper arm», the sense being figurative: «grabbing the arm of the listener lest he slip». 'Abdünnâfi' retains the Arabic vocabulary, supplementing it with additional words for greater clarity: «Żab'-u-bâzû-yi sâmi'î zelkîden ictizâb-u-imsâk». Not all of the translation is so felicitously rendered into Turkish. When translating the discussion of 'Abdülkâhir's views on this type of mecâz, which is concerned with the nature of the vowelling of the final radical, 'Abdünnâfi' translates «lem yakta'» as «cezm olnamaz», intending «cezm» to be understood in its non-technical sense. This would have caused the reader no more than a moment's confusion, but could have easily been avoided by the choice of another, more suitable, word.

This work was the first contribution to the revival of rhetoric in the Nineteenth Century, and may be viewed as the final attempt at making classical rhetorical theory relevant to the educational needs of society. Whereas Altı Parmak's translation may be dismissed as no more than lecture notes, the publication of the Nef'i Mu'avvel was a serious attempt to provide Turkish students with the definitive exposition of classical rhetoric. Although it employed another language in a form which presumably avoided as much possible difficulty to the Turkish student, it nevertheless respects the integrity of the original by preserving its basic vocabulary. This work must surely have contributed to an awareness on the part of the Ottoman scholar that belâga, as based on the Telhîs, was to be studied for its own sake; but that it had no great value as an aid to understanding Arabic, or relevance for those wishing to acquire a good Ottoman prose style. Ironically this translation, which in all probability was an honest attempt to come to terms with belâga by offering an alternative approach to the servile memorisation of the Telhîs, was the first step on the road to creating a rhetoric of Turkish which, if realised, would render the Telhîs completely obsolete.
The Belâğat-i Lisân-i ‘Osmâni

Four years after the publication of the translation of the Muṭavvel (1290/1873), there appeared the Belâğat-i Lisân-i ‘Osmâni, a work which implicitly claimed to be no less than a rhetoric of Ottoman, rather than merely another Turkish translation of Arabic rhetorical theory. Its author, Aḥmed Ḥamdî Şirvânî (d. 1308/1890), a teacher at the Mekteb-i Hûkûk, wrote it at the behest of Cevdet Paşa, presumably intending it to be used as a text-book.

Although the author may be accused of making exaggerated claims for his work by giving it a title which would imply that it was a manual of Turkish rhetorical theory, they do in fact have some substance. Ideally, a rhetoric of the Ottoman language would be deduced from native literary practice and analysed accordingly, compiled by a process which would subject it to analysis exhibiting certain characteristic features, and elaborating a theory thereupon. The preponderance of Arabic and Persian elements in Ottoman prose and poetry, however, would tend to discourage efforts in this direction, especially as there already existed an accepted body of rhetorical teaching which could with ease be adapted to be made seem applicable. Aḥmed Ḥamdî, believing that the Telhîş had a more universal application than that of describing Arabic rhetoric, makes the assumption that Ottoman lay within the confines of this universality, and proceeds to apply it to his own language, without questioning its validity. In most respects this work is a translation of the Telhîş, with the addition of only the minimum explanatory material from the glosses to allow the text to read fluently. His one departure from the practice of previous translators is in the provision of Turkish illustrations, not as mere translations of the Arabic examples, but as instances of a paradigm which the reader is urged to accept as applicable to Turkish in all respects. By providing mainly Turkish illustrations, he implies that the illustrated theory could have been deduced from Ottoman as well as from Arabic.

In the section on me‘ānî and beyân, the treatment of the individual faṣls proceeds in the same order and fashion as in the Telhîş,

20 See the ihtâr, p. 1.
while in the *fenn-i bedi* he omits nine of the thirty-eight tropes, altering their order slightly and adding four more. Although it may appear superficially conservative in its approach, and otherwise completely derivative, the *Belâğat-i Lîsân-i ʿOsmanî* is a revolutionary work, in that it implicitly suggests that Arabic rhetorical theory should be studied neither for its own sake, nor as an aid to the study of Arabic literature, but as a tool for the mastery of Ottoman prose and poetry, and as a basis for its literary criticism. On this tacit assumption the author feels freed of the necessity of quoting and explaining Arabic illustrations. He treats most examples, be they Persian, Turkish or Arabic, as an integral part of his own argument, offering elucidation when necessary, but no translation. Sections which cannot be dealt with satisfactorily within a Turkish context, such as the «trope by inflection» are omitted without comment.

In the following example we can observe how Ahmed Hamidi deals with *teşbih*. The text of the *Telhîş* is as follows:

*Et-teşbihî 'a-delâletî 'âlâ müşâreketi emrin li-emrin fi ma'nâ, ve- 'l-muradu hâ-hûnâ mâ lem tekiîn 'âlâ vechi 'l-isti'âreti 't-ta'âkkîyetî ve- 'l-isti'âreti bi- 'l-kinâyeti ve-'t-tecrîdî, fe-daâhale fi-hi na'hve kavli-nâ «Zeydîn esedîn», ve-kavli-hi —te'alâ— :«Şummi'n bûkmûn 'umyiîn». Ve-'n-nâzarû hâ-hûnâ fi erkânî-hî, ve-hiye şarâfâ-hü ve-vechi-hü ve-edâtî-hü ve-fi 'l-garażî min-hü ve-fi aksamî-hî.* (p. 238)

The Ottoman version reads thus:

*Teşbih, bir şey'üün diğer bir şey ile bir ma'nâda müşâreketine delâlet itmesine dirler ki ol delâlet isti'âre-i ta'âkkîye ve isti'âre-i bi-'l-kinâye [sic] ve tecrid tarîki-yle olmiya, meşelâ: «Zeyd arslandur» dinildükde Zeydün arslan ile ma'nâ-yî*
We can see that the author is offering little more than a translation, but with some significant modifications. By altering the example from «Zeydün esedün» to «Zeyd arslan dur», Ahmed Hamdi is not merely translating, but in fact is accepting the Turkish version as the real illustration. The Koranic verse on the other hand is abandoned in favour of a proverb which not only illustrates the same point, but is very close to the original in form and content. The fact that one can find authentic Turkish examples of these features of rhetoric, which had previously been illustrated in the Arabic language, is an explicit claim that they are applicable equally to both languages. What is implicit, however, is the notion that if one were to write a rhetoric of Turkish, based on analysis of the language, it would differ little from what we have in the Belagat-i Lisân-i Osmani. Although he makes no attempt to substitute Turkish technical terms in place of the Arabic, the author makes a conscious effort to Ottomanise Arabic constructions, even to the point of violating accepted conventions, as in the case of «isti‘are-i bi-l-kinaye». The insertion of the hemze over the final ā of «isti‘are» forces the reader to pronounce this terkib as if it were a Persian izafe and not an Arabic construction.

In the section devoted to the fenn-i bedi, Ahmed Hamdi provides convincing illustrations, drawing heavily from the stock of Turkish proverbs and poetry, supplementing it with his own simple illustrations and verse compositions. To illustrate ubeq (mutabinka or tażadd) (pp. 95-96) he offers the following examples:
It is clear that Ahmed Ḥamdī has chosen his illustrations with thought and care, so that they require no elucidation and are successful in all respects.

The Zübdetü 'l-Beyān

The following year (1294/1877) saw the publication of a work entitled the Zübdetü 'l-Beyān, by Miḥalīcī Ḥāccī Muṣṭafā Ef., a teacher at the Darūš-Šafāka in Istanbul. This text-books is restricted to beyān, and the subject is studied in very much greater detail than in the Belāğat-i Lisān-i ʿ Osmanī, which comprises all three branches of the science of rhetoric. Being neither wholly a translation nor a Turkish commentary on the Telhīṣ, it may be best described as a rationalised rearrangement of the material in the latter, discarding what is impenetrable, elucidating and commenting on the obscure, and translating the obvious. Thus, for example, while he has omitted large portions of the material on teşbīḥ, he has enlarged the section on mecāz-i mürsel from the few lines in the Telḥīṣ to thirty pages in the Zübdetü 'l-Beyān. Although he always looks to Teftāzānī's commentaries for elucidation and will occasionally use extracts therefrom, the additional material is mainly his own contribution. The work exhibits throughout the painstaking care with which he has sifted through the material of the Telḥīṣ, choosing only that which can be understood without presupposing existing
knowledge of the subject, and reorganising it into a more logical framework.

His examples, having been chosen for their appropriateness, are for the greater part extremely helpful, and rarely require more than the minimum explanation. In the first instance, they are generally translations of those in the *Telhiş*, if they are suitable; when they are not, they are either taken from the *Müvvel*, or coined by the author himself. When dealing with *mecâz-i mürsel*, he lists all twelve types of adjunct (‘alâka) identified in the *Telhiş* and *Müvvel*, providing them with Turkish versions of the same illustrations, to which he adds a further twenty-one types, but with his own illustrations. As an example of the adjunct *ıfılsı*, in *mecâz-i mürsel*, he offers the following example: «‘Kurşun atdim’ diyüb, ‘tüfenk ile kurşun atdim’ dimegi murad itmek gibi» (p. 21); and to illustrate *lazımiyet* as an adjunct: «bu Cüm’a Aya Şofya Cami’ine gitdim» (p. 26).

It is regrettable that this work did not find greater currency among the students at the new colleges which were being founded at this time. The fact that it was never reprinted and the relative scarcity of its copies indicate the obscurity in which it remained, overshadowed by the *Belâgat-i Osmanlıye* of Cevdet Paşa, in which the treatment of *beyân* is in many respects inferior. The following passage, which once again explains the concept of «trope by inflection», will serve to illustrate some of the virtues of this work:

3 *Mecâz bi ’z-Ziyâde*

4 Mecâz bi-’n-Nokşan

Aşl-i terkibden ba’zi lafzlarının āzfi-yle
tekellüm olunan terkiblerden «Câmi’iân kapusı
açıldı» diyecek iken mužâfi āzfi iderek «Câmi‘
açıldı» dimek, ve «Şırbistan ehâlişi «aşi oldı»
diyecek iken «Şırbistan ‹aşi oldı» dimek gibi
bu nişâllerini mecaz-ı mürsel oldukları dağ
beyân olunmuş idi. «Şopa geliyor uşlı otur ve
deynek geliyor derse çalış» diyüb bunlar elinde
olan adam geliyor dimeğ murâd itmek dağ
boleydir. (p. 78-79)

This passage is based on the Muťavvel, from which he selects
only those illustrative points which help to develop the argument,
successfully resisting the temptation to overstate it and, thereby,
obfuscate its main point. He seems to have extracted the essentials
of this rambling exegesis, subjected them to logical analysis and
produced something clear, where previously there had existed only
the cryptic summary of the Telhîş and its verbose and impenetrable
commentaries. For the first time the Turkish student had a text­
book which explained Arabic rhetorical theory in a manner that
was not only easy to assimilate, but was to some extent relevant
to his own experience. Although the text is full of illustrations which
employ the archetypal Zeyd, most, in fact, refer to objects or ideas
within the experience of the Ottoman student. References to Serbia,
Aya Sofya and modern armaments are most persuasive means of
helping students to realise that the theory is applicable.

Conclusion

These four works, the Terceme-i Telhîş, the Nef-i Muťavvel :
Terceme-i Telhîş-ı-Muťavvel, the Belâğat-i Lisân-i ‘Osmâni and the
Zübdetü ‹l-Beyân, each, in their turn, played a significant role in
the development of an Ottoman rhetoric. The first two, both transla-
tions, are attempts on the part of the Ottomans to escape from the
servile dependence on the authorities, whose works had become the
core of the educational system of the Empire. Even those of them
who are most abject in their respect for the sources, in some way betray a realisation that the system was not entirely adequate for the purposes of an Ottoman Turkish rhetoric. The very fact of translation must be taken as indicative of this, and as these translations gradually seek the expansion and clarification of the material that tradition compelled them to rely on, it is not too much to assert that they were in this way protesting at the constricting conditions of the educational system. The works herein treated are merely the best-known of many similar efforts of this kind attested in the biographies of the 'ulemā, and should not be regarded as isolated instances. While it might be too much to claim that there was a conscious effort to liberate this aspect of education from the consecrated precedents, they nevertheless, each in its own way, and in its own time, represent a tacit expression of the sense of inadequacy felt by Ottoman scholars in the materials they were obliged to study and teach.

The translation and subsequent publication of the Muṣannaf marks the end of a period in which the Ottoman 'ulemā tried to come to terms with Arabic rhetorical theory. By offering a Turkish version of the entire Muṣannaf, 'Abdünnāfi' had virtually translated most of the curriculum's required reading for rhetoric, the remaining works being merely commentaries, glosses and versifications based on the Telbīṣ. Although it was far from his intention, by translating this pivotal work on classical rhetoric, he demonstrated most effectively the total inadequacy of the traditional approach. The study of Arabic rhetoric was abandoned with seemingly little regret, and henceforth the Telbīṣ was to be exploited as a framework for the creation of an Ottoman rhetoric. The transition from the Telbīṣ to the Belāḡat-ı 'Osmanîye of Cevdet Paşa as the basic work of rhetorical theory in the Empire was not sudden; it proceeded through four stages: (1) the translation of the Telbīṣ, (2) the translation of

21 In A. Uğur's study of the Ottoman 'ulemā, *The Ottoman 'Ulemā in the mid-17th Century: an Analysis of the Vakā'i 'ü'il-Fuḍlā of Meḥmed Seyhī Ef.* (Ph. D. Thesis: Edinburgh University, 1973) we have several references to 'alims preparing commentaries and glosses on rhetoric (see I, 50, 279; II, 410, 692) and in particular a translation of the Telbīṣ, by 'Arūzī Meḥmed Ef. (d. 1084/1673), II, 614.
the *Mutavvel*, (3) the translation of its theory from Arabic into Turkish, with examples cited only from the latter language, and (4) the adaptation of its material to the needs of Ottoman, omitting the tedious, and expanding the relevant. The arrival of the *Belâğat-i ʿOsmâniye* should not be regarded as revolutionary as might first appear, for, indeed, this achievement was being prepared for over three centuries by the implicit sense of protest against an alien importation to be detected in the commentaries, translations, annotations, and explanations of many of the ʿulemā.