



JEVDET, 'ABD-ALLĀH

JEVDET, 'ABD-ALLĀH (ABDULLAH CEVDET, b. Arapkir, 9 September 1869; d. Istanbul, 29 November 1932), Ottoman poet, writer, translator, and thinker. He was the son of Ömer Wasfi Bey who belonged to the Ömer-oğulları Kurdish family. Upon finishing primary school in Hozat (Kozāt) and Arapkir he studied at the Military Middle School in the city of Ma'murat al-'Aziz (today Elazığ) in 1882-85, and then at the Kuleli Military High School in 1885-88 and at the Gülhane Military Medical School in 1888-94, both in Istanbul. During his military studies he developed an interest in politics and in 1890 became one of the founders and active members of the political group that later became known as the Society for Union and Progress (*İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*). In 1894 he graduated as a medical officer. In 1896 he was exiled to Tripoli for political reasons. In 1897 he went through Tunisia and France to Geneva, where he joined the Young Turks. He wrote various articles for *'Otmānli*, a critical newspaper, and founded the journal *Qahriyāt* which was against the Ottoman political system. In 1899, while continuing his political activities, he accepted the position of medical officer at the Ottoman Embassy in Vienna. After having been expelled from Austria in 1903, he went back to Geneva, where in 1904 he founded the periodical *Ejteḥād*. After some time he was expelled from Switzerland as well and came to Cairo in 1905 and then to Istanbul in 1910, where he renewed the publication of the *Ejteḥād*. Although this periodical was banned many times, he continued publishing it under different names. After World War I, he became director-general of public health for a short time. He wrote an article in which he praised Bahaism (see [BAHAI FAITH](#)) as an ideal religion. As a result of this, in 1922 he was



summoned to court for having allegedly insulted the Prophet Muhammad, but in 1926 the proceedings were dropped. However, he was never again allowed to take any public post, because he had sided with the British after World War I and also because he had had contacts with *Kürt Te'âli Cemiyeti* (Society for the Advancement of the Kurds). He died from a heart attack on 29 November 1932 in Istanbul.

'Abd-Allāh Jevdet wrote 46 books and translated about 30 books on politics, philosophy, literature, history, psychology, and medicine. He mastered the Persian language and translated two books from Persian into Turkish. The first of them was *Delmasti-e Mowlānā* which contains parts of the *Maṭnawī-e Ma'nawī* and the *Divān-e kabir* by Mowlānā Jalāl-al-Dīn Rumi (Istanbul, 1921, pp. 3-60). Besides Rumi's poems, it contains two more parts: one of them, entitled *Robā'iyāt-e Ġazālī* (pp. 61-97), includes Ġazālī's poems, and the other, under the title *'Urfī'de şî'r ve 'irfân* (pp. 98-128), comprises selected poems from the *divān* by 'Orfī Şirāzī (1555-91). The language of the translation is very clear and impressive; footnotes were added for clarification.

'Abd-Allāh Jevdet's second translation from Persian into Turkish is that of 'Omar Ḳayyām's quatrains (*Robā'iyāt-e Ḳayyām ve Türkçe'ye tercümeleri*, Istanbul, 1914; 2nd ed. 1926; 3rd ed. 1926; *Rubā'iler*, ed. Mehmet Kanar, Istanbul, 2000). Its introduction, entitled *Hakim 'Omar Ḳayyām*, deals with Ḳayyām's biography and poems. The original texts of the *robā'is* are presented together with the Turkish translation (pp. 42-180), and footnotes have been provided to explain ambiguous places. He also added some Turkish couplets similar to Ḳayyām's *robā'is*, as well as an index for the *robā'is* (pp. 182-89). This translation clearly shows the extent to which 'Abd-Allāh Jevdet had mastered the Persian language as well as Turkish literature. However, this work was later criticized because some of the *robā'is* were in fact not of 'Omar Ḳayyām.

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