



## YAZICI, TAHSIN

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**YAZICI, Tahsin** (b. Hoğas, 1338/1922; d. Istanbul, 20 November 2002), Turkish scholar of Persian language, literature, and culture (FIGURE 1). He was born in Hoğas, a village near the town of Kiğı in the province of Bingöl, into the Yazıcızâdeler, a family of Turkish origin, which had been sent there as the chief state officials (*motaşarref*) during the Ottoman period.

Yazıcı learnt the Arabic alphabet from his father Mehmed Yazıcı before starting his formal education. He joined his uncle in Istanbul in 1929 and stayed there for a year, attending the second grade at Nişantaşı 15th Primary School. He returned to Kiğı the following year, where he completed his elementary education in 1934. He finished middle school in Erzincan in 1937 and returned to Istanbul, where he entered the *Kabataş Erkek Lisesi* High School. He graduated from high school in 1940 and began his college education at the Department of Turkish Language and Literature at Istanbul's Teachers College (İstanbul yüksek öğretmen okulu). While he was in college, he also studied Arabic and Persian languages and literature at the Faculty of Literature at the University of Istanbul. He graduated in October 1945, and, in the same year, he started teaching literature at Diyarbakır Lisesi. About three months later, in 1946, he began working at the Department of Classic Oriental Languages at the Faculty of Language and History-Geography (Dil ve tarih-coğrafya fakültesi klâsik şark dilleri bölümü) as a research assistant of Prof. Necati Lugal (d. 1964).

During the period that he was working for Lugal, he married his wife, Suzan, who bore him three children: Suna (b. 1949), Mine (b. 1956) and Orhan (b.



1964). In 1948 he started to work as a teaching assistant in the same department. He wrote his dissertation on Ebrāhim Golšani and his Sufi order (“İbrahim-i Gülşenî ve tarikâtı”) and received his doctorate degree in 1949. In 1952 he was appointed assistant professor at the Department of Arabic and Persian Languages and Literature at the Faculty of Literature of the University of Istanbul, where he worked together with Helmut Ritter (d. 1971) and Ahmed Ateş (d. 1966). Three years later he became associate professor when he wrote *Abdullâh-ı Ensârî ve eserleri*. He served in the army for eighteen months in 1956-57. In 1963 the Department of Arabic and Persian language and literature was split in two, and he became director of Persian language and literature.

He published in 1959-61 a two-volume facsimile edition with commentaries and notes of *Manāqeb al-‘ārefin* by Şams-al-Din Aḥmad Aflâki (d. 761/1360), which led to his promotion in 1965 as professor of Persian Language at the University of Istanbul. After the death of Ahmed Ateş in 1966, he became the chief editor of *İslâm ansiklopedisi*, the Turkish version of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. In 1970 he became Dean of the Faculty of Literature at the University of Istanbul and served for two terms. He was elected the director of the Department of Persian philology and Pakistani Culture (Fars filolojisi ve Pakistan kültürü) when it was created in the mid-1970s by the merging of the so-far two separate departments of Pakistani culture and Persian language. In 1981, the university created the Department of Oriental Languages and Literatures, which included the Department for Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Hindology and Sinology and appointed Yazıcı its director. He served in this capacity until 12th May 1983, when he was dismissed as slanderous accusations were leveled against him by General Hüseyin Tapa (Yazıcı, “Autobiography,” p. 3). He was, however, reinstated later when the false nature of the accusations were acknowledged. In the meantime, his former position had been cut back, and therefore, in 1985, he started to work at the Department of Oriental Languages and Literatures at the University of Atatürk in Erzurum. A year later he decided to retire.

Yazıcı continued his scholarly activities long after retirement. He attended and submitted papers at various congresses, including the Third International Congress on the Economic and Social History of Turkey (USA, 1983); the UNESCO Sa‘di Congress (Shiraz, 1984); the Ḥāfez Congress (Shiraz, 1988); the Ferdowsi Congress (Tehran, 1989); the Neẓāmi Ganjavi Congress (Tabriz, 1991); and the *Türkische Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte von 1071 bis 1920* Congress (Germany, 1995). At the same time he kept serving on the editorial



board of various encyclopedias. From 1966 to 1987 he was the chief editor of the Turkish version of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (*Millî eğitim bakanlığı İslâm ansiklopedisi*), and until his death he was director of the section dealing with Persian language, history, and culture for the *Türkiye diyanet vakfı İslâm ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1988-). He was also responsible for the editing of the *Büyük Larousse encyclopaedia* and dictionaries, and, at the same time, served until his death as the consulting editor for the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* on Perso-Turkish history and literature. He was also member of the Turkish Society of History (Türk tarih kurumu), the Society of Turkish Language (Türk dil kurumu) and the Institute for Seljuq Studies (Selçuklu araştırmaları enstitüsü). Yazıcı died on 20th November 2002 in Istanbul.

During fifty-five years of scholarship, Yazıcı wrote, translated, and edited many books and articles. His first major research was his Ph.D. dissertation on Ebrâhim Golşani (1949), which was followed six years later by his next major work *‘Abdullâh-ı Ensârî ve eserleri*. The booklet *Pârsinevisân-e Âsiâ-ye Şağir*, written in Persian, was a pioneer work and a piece of substantial research, providing a list of Saljuq and Ottoman poets and scholars in Anatolia who wrote in Persian, translated from Persian to Turkish, or wrote commentaries on Persian works (for details of these and his major contributions to scholarly publications, see Bibliog.) Yazıcı contributed more than 150 articles to *İslâm ansiklopedisi* (e.g., “Sa’di,” “Sâ’eb,” “Şâh İsmâ’îl”), *Türkiye diyanet vakfı İslâm ansiklopedisi* (e.g., “Avfî,” “Belh,” “Târîh-i Beyhakî,” “Hemedan”), *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (e.g., “Gulşhanî,” “Kalandariyya,” “Mawlawiyya”), and *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (e.g., “Çelebî, ‘Âref,” “Aflâki,” “Fattâhî Nîşâbûrî”). He also wrote more than 500 articles on Iranian and Arabic history and literature for *Gelişim büyük Larousse*. Most of his contributions to various encyclopedias are on classic Persian literature and scholars, Sufism, and authors and poets in Anatolia who wrote in Persian.

Yazıcı edited several classic Persian texts on mysticism, Sufism, Islamic sects, and Mawlawiyya Order: “Abdullah-ı Ensârî’nin *Kanz as-sâlikîn* veya *Zâd al-‘arîfîn*’i,” *Şarkiyat mecmuası* 1, 1956, pp. 60-88, 3, 1959, pp. 25-49, 4, 1961, pp. 87-96, 5, 1964, pp. 31-44; and Aḥmad Aflâki’s *Manâqeb al-‘arefîn*; Moḥyi Golşani’s *Manâqeb-e Ebrâhim Golşani*; Kâtib-e Fâresi’s *Manâqeb-e Jamâl-al-Din Sâvi*; and the *Roşanâ-i-nâma* of Nâşer-e Kōsrow.

Yazıcı made many translations from Persian into Turkish with critical introductions and commentaries. More notable among them are translations of Aflâki’s *Manâqeb al-‘arefîn*, the Persian version of Abu’l-Qâsem Qoşayri’s



*Resāla*, and the *Aḥwāl-e Mawlānā* of Faridun b. Aḥmad Sepahsālār. He is also the co-author of a number of Persian and Arabic grammar books and readers for students. Most of these books contain a grammar part, a small glossary, and a selection of texts.

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