

**Reading and Translating Gustave Le Bon in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Translations
of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Mehmed Fū‘ād**

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Abstract

In 1907 ‘Abdullāh Cevdet published the translation of Gustave Le Bon’s *Lois psychologiques de l’évolution des peuples*¹, and in 1909 Mehmed Fū‘ād published his translation of Le Bon’s *Psychologie des foules*². Both intellectuals provided complete translations of the works, yet slightly modified the translation titles, and ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Mehmed Fū‘ād published their translations under the titles of *Rūḥ ’ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ ’ul-Cemā ‘āt* respectively.

The translators’ emphasis on the *rūḥ* (spirit) was not coincidental; as suggested by Le Bon *l’âme des foules/people* (the spirit of the people/crowd) constituted the fundamental vocabulary of the progress of civilizations, *l’évolution des civilisations*, or as translated by his Ottoman counterparts as *tekāmül-ü medeniyet*. The two Ottoman intellectuals indeed provided a careful reading and translation of Le Bon’s texts, with respect to the ideas and key concepts they entailed. Le Bon presented the characteristics of *foules* and *peuples*, which in many ways resonated the Islamic tradition *al-khāssa wa’l-‘amma*. The vocabulary of *foules* and *peuples* in Le Bon’s conceptualization and in the Ottoman translations appear as a complementary and necessary concepts related to the issues of progress and civilization.

In Ottoman historiography, reading and translating Gustave Le Bon is associated with ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s understanding of him. This study brings Mehmed Fū‘ād into the picture, and contextualizes ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s and Mehmed Fū‘ād’s decisions to translate Gustave Le Bon within a close period of 1907-1909. The theoretical and methodological framework of this study is threefold; intellectual elite, civilization and translation. This work aims to demonstrate what reading and translating Gustave le Bon meant to the late Ottoman intellectuals through an analysis of his influence on ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Mehmed Fū‘ād, who came from different educational, social and cultural backgrounds, and generated dissimilar legacies in Modern Turkey.

¹ Henceforth *Lois*

² Henceforth *Foules*

Table of Contents

Note on Transliteration, Translation and Abbreviation of Works	iv
Introduction.....	1
1. Theoretical Framework.....	6
1.1. Intellectual Elite and the Crowd: From the ‘ulemā Tradition to the New Intellectuals, 18 th -late 19 th Centuries	6
1.2. Civilization: The Empire between Islam and Europe	16
1.3. Methodological Framework: Translation and Reception	19
2. Profile of the Intellectuals: The Translators.....	21
2.1. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet	22
2.2. Mehmed Fū‘ād	28
2.3. Comparative Remarks.....	31
3. Reading and Translating Gustave Le Bon	32
3.1. Civilization and Progress in Gustave Le Bon’s Works	35
3.1.1. <i>L’âme des races</i> and <i>L’âme des foules</i>	38
3.2. Gustave Le Bon’s Reception in Europe.....	41
3.3. Two Translations in the Empire: An Introduction to <i>Rūḥ ‘ul-Aḳvām</i> and <i>Rūḥ ‘ul- Cemā ‘āt</i>	43
3.3.1. <i>Rūḥ ‘ul-Aḳvām</i>	44
3.3.2. <i>Rūḥ ‘ul-Cemā ‘āt</i>	46
3.3.3. The Two Translations in the Empire	48
4. The vocabulary of the “Crowd” and related Issues in <i>Rūḥ ‘ul-Aḳvām</i> and <i>Rūḥ ‘ul- Cemā ‘āt</i>	51
4.1. Vocabulary of the <i>Foules</i>	54
4.2. Revolution, Progress and Change	61
4.3. Arab Thought and Gustave Le Bon	67
Conclusion	69
Appendices.....	73
Bibliography	77

Note on Transliteration, Translation and Abbreviation of Works

For the transliteration of Ottoman Turkish, I used the transliteration of the *İslam Ansiklopedisi*.

Unless stated otherwise, translations of Ottoman, Turkish and French are my own.

To facilitate the reading, I use the following abbreviations for Gustave Le Bon's works;

Lois psychologiques de l'évolution des peuples: Lois

Psychologie des foules: Foules

La Révolution française et la psychologie des révolutions : Révolutions

Introduction

When I had the chance to take a class with Professor Şükrü Hanioglu as a sophomore student at Sabancı University, I was surprised to learn about the influence of a French intellectual, Gustave Le Bon on late Ottoman intellectual thought. Among other Western intellectuals Ottomans studied, Le Bon seemed unique with his ideas on the crowd, which, in my interpretation, needed to be explored in a larger framework. Under the supervision of Nadia Al-Bagdadi, my initial interest in the reception of Le Bon's crowd psychology found its way to two Ottoman translations of the early 1900s, *Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā'āt*, by 'Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū'ād respectively. My elementary expectation of finding two translations of the same original Gustave Le Bon work transformed into a larger quest of understanding whether these books were the same translation of the same source text, and whether reading and translating Gustave Le Bon in the Ottoman Empire provoked the same reaction and reception on two different translators and two translations of intellectually closely related texts.

In the present thesis, reading and translating Gustave Le Bon in Late Ottoman Istanbul refers to a case study of two Ottoman translations of Gustave Le Bon into Turkish-Ottoman, both of which appeared in close temporal proximity, namely the years 1907 and 1909. These years are situated around the Constitutional Revolution of 1908, which liberated the troubled intellectual activity of the reign of 'Abdülhāmid II. Despite the fact that the source texts for the translations are not the same books, the titles of the Ottoman translations suggest a certain similarity; Gustave Le Bon's *Lois Psychologiques de l'évolution des peuples* (1894) is translated as *Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām* (1907) by 'Abdullāh

Cevdet, and *Psychologie des foules* (1895) as *Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā'āt* (1909) by Mehmet Fū'ād .

The similarity of the titles signals a shared emphasis on the recognition of the two works: the spirit, the characteristics of the people and the crowd. In this study, I aim to analyze the key vocabulary of the two translations, the crowd and the people, and to contextualize their translation of these central terms within the larger framework of Ottoman debates on civilization and progress. These two interrelated concepts constituted a fundamental problematic of change with regards to Islamic and European civilizations.

Gustave Le Bon and his audience in the Empire has been widely recognized and portrayed by prominent Ottoman historians, such as Şerif Mardin³, Şükrü Hanioglu⁴ and Eric Jan Zürcher⁵. These works mostly dwell on 'Abdullāh Cevdet's interest in Gustave Le Bon, and emphasize his attraction to Le Bon's formulation of the crowd. In this thesis, I bring into the picture another prominent Ottoman intellectual, with a different background and legacy, Mehmed Fū'ād. To provide a multifaceted perspective, one needs to integrate into this analysis the fact that Fū'ād had translated *Foules* earlier, namely 15 years before 'Abdullāh Cevdet did. I chose to compare the translations of two different works instead of the translation of the *Foules* to be able to stay within the temporal proximity, to discuss the significance of the Constitutional Revolution, and to provide a dynamic framework of Le Bon's ideas.

³ Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2008)

⁴ Şükrü Hanioglu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor 'Abdullāh Cevdet ve Dönemi* (Istanbul, 1981); ibid, *Blueprints for a Future Society: Late Ottoman Materialists on Science, Religion, and Art.*” *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy*. Edited by Elizabeth Özdalga. London: Routledge, 2005; ibid, “Garbcılar: Their Attitudes toward Religion and Their Impact on the Official Ideology of the Turkish Republic”. *Studia Islamica* (August 1997): 133-58; ibid, *Preparation for a Revolution: the Young Turks, 1902-1908*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001; ibid, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011; ibid, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Zihniyet, Siyaset ve Tarih*. Istanbul: Bağlam, 2006.

⁵ Erik J Zürcher, *Young Turk Legacy and National Awakening: from the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey* (S.l.: I B Tauris & Co Ltd., 2010).

‘Abdullāh Cevdet had translated other works of Le Bon before his translation of *Foules*⁶. His interest in Le Bon has been associated with his interest in the crowds, which seems to be a retrospective emphasis based on the recognition of Le Bon’s *Foules*. I prefer to emphasize the role of Gustave Le Bon’s ideas of civilization and progress, as a larger framework to understand the crowd, as suggested by the publication order of Le Bon’s works, and the Ottoman translations. The quick response of Ottoman readership and translation of Gustave Le Bon should and will be traced back to his recognition through his earlier work, *La Civilisation des Arabes*. This work demonstrates Gustave Le Bon’s acquaintance with Arabic societies and Islamic thinkers which had already appealed the Ottoman intellectuals to Le Bon.

The thesis is structured in the following way; the first chapter constitutes my theoretical and methodological framework, and discusses the state of the literature. The two theoretical sections provide the framework of the two interrelated and dynamic concepts: (1.1) Ottoman intellectual as *‘ālim*, *mütefekkir* and *münevver*, and (1.2) civilization as *medeniyet*, and the (1.3) translation provides the methodology of my work, as well as its significance in the reign of ‘Abdülhāmid II as an intellectual exercise to accustom the European civilization. I discuss the emergence of new Ottoman intellectuals; both with respect to the Western education institutions, which themselves enfolded the dilemma of secular and Islamic education and the legacy of the *‘ulemā* tradition as the former intellectual elite of the society. The dynamism of the Ottoman intellectual is also

⁶ In chapter 2, I will offer a list of translation and sequence of translations of the two authors under consideration.

reflected on the concept of civilization, which constituted the key vocabulary in the Ottoman intellectual position for change, and progress. Despite the linear understanding of progress towards West in the established paradigm of Modernization theory, the Ottoman intellectual was engaged in a complex thinking process of change from an Islamic and Ottoman civilization to a European one,⁷ while embracing both. The third section of the first chapter presents my methodology: translation. I use translation as a means of cultural-transfer of ideas, instead of a philological approach; as a means, it allows me to examine the Ottoman vocabulary of *foule* and *peuple* among the Ottoman translations of Le Bon.

The second chapter presents the two intellectuals that constitute the basis of this thesis; Mehmed Fū'ād and 'Abdullāh Cevdet. I provide a brief biography of each intellectual, their legacy in the Turkish Republic and try to contextualize the reading and translating of two very different intellectuals of Le Bon's related works in temporal proximity. Despite the fact that this is not an extensive research on the biographies of the two translators, it provides the different conditions for the development of an interest in Le Bon. I emphasize the dissimilarities both in the background and formation of these two intellectuals, because I believe it helps to provide a multifaceted understanding of the interest in Le Bon. The biographies and publications of the two translators contribute to my thesis with respect to the dynamic understanding of the intellectuals and of civilization. I find Fortna's work and his quote below inspiring and true;

The lines between the "traditional" and the "modern" were often quite blurred. Whether in terms of educational influence and inspiration, school

⁷ Benjamin C Fortna, "Education and Autobiography at the End of the Ottoman Empire," *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 1 (2001) 1-31.

curriculum and discipline, or the diverse matrix of biographical trajectories, the clear lines of demarcation melt under closer scrutiny.⁸

The third and fourth chapters constitute my research chapters; in Chapter 3, I introduce Gustave Le Bon, and the concepts of civilization and progress in Gustave Le Bon's Works (3.1), his reception in Europe (3.2) and introduce the two Ottoman translations, *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt* and *Rūḥ'ul-Akvām* in (3.3), and in Chapter 4, I analyze the vocabulary, and the motivations of the translators. First part of Chapter 3 demonstrates my reading of Gustave Le Bon's works, and an analysis of his reception in the Europe; not as a retrospective emphasis on the crowd, but through the predominant themes in Le Bon's work; namely, change, progress and civilization. My attempt in Chapter 4 is to understand the Ottoman intellectual's process of defining the crowd and the people vis-à-vis himself through the translation of the vocabulary of Le Bon's *peuple* and *foule* within the larger context of change. I also integrate 'Abdullāh Cevdet's *Foules* translated, published after the foundation of Turkish Republic. I benefit from 'Abdullāh Cevdet's prefaces to these works, and Mehmed Fū'ād's preface to *Ḥayāt-ı Fikriyye* (1909), his first book published the same year with his *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt*, to discuss the translators' motivation to translate Le Bon.

Within the limited scope of this project, this study is based on two primary sources, which are two editions of 'Abdullāh Cevdet's *Rūḥ'ul Akvām* (1907, 1913) published in Egypt and Istanbul, and Mehmed Fū'ād's *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt* (1909) published in Istanbul. I also benefit from Cevdet's *İlm-i Rūḥ-i İctimā'i* published in Istanbul in 1924.

⁸ Fortna, *Education and Autobiography*, 30.

1. Theoretical Framework

1.1. Intellectual Elite and the Crowd: From the *‘ulemā* Tradition to the New Intellectuals, 18th-late 19th Centuries

A fundamental dichotomy that has defined how the late Ottoman intellectuals saw themselves vis-à-vis society was their ideas of the division between the *münevver*⁹ (intellectual elite) and *cemā‘āt*¹⁰ (people, crowd). This differentiation was a continuation of the Islamic dichotomy of *al-khāssa wa’l-‘āmma* borrowed beginning with the early years of the Empire. The tradition adapted to the circumstances in the Ottoman Empire, and evolved in 18th and 19th centuries, when the role of the *‘ulemā* declined, and new group intellectuals emerged. These intellectuals were independent in their readings, and intellectual activities (such as translation), however, their formation was dependent on the (new) state institutions. My aim in this chapter is to discuss the dichotomy of people and intellectuals in the Islamic tradition, and its impact on the late Ottoman intellectual. Thus, I will present the Islamic tradition of this dichotomy, its adoption and transformation in the Empire, and portray the transition as the former state and social mechanisms changed, the role of the *‘ulemā* declined, and new groups of intellectuals emerged built on this heritage.

Problems in Approaching Ottoman Intellectuals

Generalizing and theorizing about the *weltanschauung* of late Ottoman intellectuals (*münevver*) is problematic for three main reasons. Firstly, instinctively, one attempts to

⁹ I chose to use the Ottoman Turkish counterpart of *münevver*, which means an enlightened person, based on Recep Şentürk’s formulation in Recep Şentürk, "Intellectual Dependency: Late Ottoman Intellectuals between fiqh and Social Science," *Die Welt des Islams* 47, no. 3/4 (2007), 288.

¹⁰ There will be references to some other equivalents of the concepts of people and crowd other than *cemā‘āt* such as *‘avām*, *cumhur*, *ictimā*, used by Mehmed Fū‘ād and ‘Abdullāh Cevdet. I now use *cemā‘āt* to with respect to Mehmed Fū‘ād’s translation.

identify Ottoman intellectuals with the Young Turks, without considering the diversity of those individuals who were actively contributing to the Ottoman intellectual world. Secondly, the ideas of these intellectuals, if generalized as Young Turks, are understood monolithically, their *Weltanschauung* restrained to the influence of secularized education, and European ideas such as, materialism and scientism. Finally, the late Ottoman intellectuals were so deeply concerned with the practicalities of “how to save the state,” that it is hard to follow their theoretical interests.¹¹

This study aims to overcome some of the limitations of the first problem by elaborating on Ottoman intellectuals who, in my view, were not typical Young Turks. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet was regarded as one of the ideological fathers of Young Turks, yet he did not even return back to Istanbul for a long time after the Constitutional Revolution of 1908 because of the disagreements between him and the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress, after which he cut his ties with the organization.¹² Mehmed Fū‘ād belonged to a different generation entirely, and could therefore not be categorized as a Young Turk.

The second problem of approaching the late Ottoman Western schools as purely secular institutions was indeed a result of the limitation of the Modernization Theory that constituted the fundamental paradigm through which the late Ottoman Empire was seen. Roderic Davison, in the 1960s, perceived the education in the late Ottoman Empire lost in the dichotomy of Middle Eastern Islamic and European Western; “Most Turks grew up

¹¹ Mardin, *Jön Türkler*, 14-16.

¹² Şükrü Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşündür*, 59.

without any sound knowledge of their Islamic past or world around them... the learning of Islam was forgotten, the learning of the modern West not yet acquired.”¹³ Benjamin Fortna would object to this dichotomic perception of Ottoman education by highlighting the drawbacks:

Assumptions about the inevitability of this [Westernization] process, which is closely linked to the modernization paradigm, have tended to obscure many of the important nuances ... in late Ottoman education, not the least of which was a more pronounced role for Islam.¹⁴

These nuances Fortna discusses comprise the existence of “the Islamic morality in Ottoman secular school,”¹⁵ and constitute the complexity of the formation of intellectuals in late Ottoman Empire, with respect to Muslim practices of living, knowledge of Islamic theory, side by side with European materialism. As suggested by Şükrü Hanioglu’s various works that involve ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s frame of mind,¹⁶ even a sound materialist like Cevdet was engaged in the theory of Islam, and tried to achieve the recognition of materialism in its Islamic “jacket.” The name of his magazine, and publishing House, *İctihad*, which means jurisprudence, interpretation in Islam, portrayed the double nature of Cevdet’s ideas, which entailed a complex relationship with Islam and secular values. Coming from a religious family, and having lived a religious life until Royal Medical

¹³ Roderic Davison, "Westernized Education in Ottoman Turkey." *The Middle East Journal* 15, no. 3 (1961), 290.

¹⁴ Benjamin C. Fortna, "Education and Autobiography at the End Of The Ottoman Empire" *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 1 (2001), 4.

¹⁵ Benjamin C Fortna, "Islamic Morality in Late Ottoman Secular Schools" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol 32, No, 3 (2000), 373.

¹⁶ Şükrü Hanioglu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor ‘Abdullāh Cevdet ve Dönemi*, (Istanbul, 1981) ____, "Blueprints for a Future Society: Late Ottoman Materialists on Science, Religion, and Art." *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy*. Edited by Elizabeth Ozdalga. London: Routledge, 2005. ____, "Garbcılar: Their Attitudes toward Religion and Their Impact on the Official Ideology of the Turkish Republic". *Studia Islamica* (August 1997: 133-58) ____, *Preparation for a Revolution: the Young Turks, 1902-1908* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

Academy in 1885 (May 27, 1301)¹⁷, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet was familiar with the Muslim way of life. Meḥmed Fū‘ād , expressed that beside the unsuccessful education of European Law at the Law School, he grasped Islamic Law from his professors.¹⁸

The late Ottoman intellectual was formed within a complex scheme of the conflicting Islamic values and practices and European ideas and way of life. As suggested by Ami Ayalon, “the exposure of Middle Eastern society to the different principles of European politics modified its own traditional values.”¹⁹ And it was “not necessarily as a result of borrowing from the West by the East.”²⁰ Rather than being stuck in between, this led to a unique blend of tradition and modernization. Nikki Keddie²¹ provides significant references with regards to the legacy of a predominantly Muslim society that embraced traditional thinking, and as suggested by Anscombe, “from top to bottom of Muslim society, religion was not only a matter of belief, but a necessity to personal identity and sense of social order,”²² something that has had a huge impact on the intellectuals as well. Eventually, the intellectuals were born and raised with some reference to these traditions along with the modernization process.

¹⁷ Hanioğlu, *Siyasi Düşünür*, 5.

¹⁸ “İslam hukukunu okutan hocalardan istifade etmediğimi söyleyemem” (I cannot say I did not benefit from the professors who taught Islamic law). Fevziye Abdullah Tansel, *Memleketimizin Acı Kaybı: Fuat Köprülü* (Nekroloji, 1966), 268.

¹⁹ Ami Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East: The Evolution of Modern Political Discourse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 54.

²⁰ Benjamin C Fortna, "Islamic Morality in Late Ottoman Secular Schools." *Cambridge University Press* 32, no. 3 (2000), 373.

²¹ Nikki Keddie, *Intellectuals in the Modern Middle East: A Brief Historical Consideration*. *Daedalus*, Vol. 101, No.3, *Intellectuals and Change* (Summer, 1972), 42

²² F.F. Anscombe, 159.

Regardless of how transformed the empire and its intellectual life, as Hourani would suggest, the output, “like everything in the Middle East [had] a concealed religious element.”²³ Fortna’s works on the education of the late Ottoman intellectual epitomizes this concealed element;²⁴ “the socio-cultural effects of schooling were far from pre-ordained... the state’s emphasis on Islam as a source both for religio-moral guidance and for the templates of every day life demonstrates the necessity of recognizing schools should not be believed to have acted like agents of secularization, as has generally been assumed.”²⁵ The secular schools of the modernizing Empire did not necessarily provide a strictly secular education, but also incorporated Islamic practices, and encouraged students to pray, and taught Islamic texts.²⁶

The third problem encountered in the study of the world view of the late Ottoman is also related to the complex position of Islamic and European knowledge, and values among the intellectuals. Under the trouble of finding quick solutions to “saving the empire”, the intellectuals used parts and parcels from each “civilization”. I agree with Davison that “each took from the Islamic past and from the West what suited their intellectual needs,”²⁷ as it is the case with ‘Abdullāh Cevdet, and his emblematic *İctihad*. Unlike Davison, I understand this problem not only as a deficiency in their understanding and knowledge of Islamic and European ideas and practices, but as an obstacle in reaching

²³ Albert Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 16.

²⁴ See Fortna, *Islamic Morality*.

²⁵ Benjamin C Fortna, "Education and Autobiography at the End of the Ottoman Empire," *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 1 (2001), 3.

²⁶ See Fortna’s works indicated above.

²⁷ Davison, 290.

their sincere thoughts with respect to tradition, modernization and the discomforts of both.

I find it significant to trace back the emergence of new Ottoman intellectuals to their precedents, and reflect on their changing position in Ottoman society. Not referring to the Islamic tradition, and its adoption and transformation in the Ottoman Empire signals a huge rupture with Ottoman intellectual tradition, and reduces all intellectual activity of 19th and early 20th century to the ideas transferred from Europe. Thus, I want to present the concept of *al-khāssa wa'l-‘āmma*, how it was incorporated in the Ottoman Empire, and transformed. In my opinion, the tradition of this dichotomy contributed significantly to the Ottoman intellectuals' positioning themselves opposed to the rest of the society, and portrayal of themselves as the doctors of the society.

From *al-khāssa wa'l-‘āmma* to the New Ottoman intellectuals

A particular understanding of the crowd vis-à-vis the leading elite has been formulated after the first few centuries of Islam; in contrast to the early few hundred years that welcomed philosophy, by the 11th century “philosophers developed a sort of protective coloration that philosophical thought was designed for a small elite and that ... unquestioning orthodoxy was best for the masses,” with the claim that otherwise “would confuse the masses.” Keddie refers to al-Gazālī, and how the formulation of “keeping theology from the masses” divided humanity into “small elite capable of understanding philosophy and a large mass who could not be exposed to it.”²⁸ Since “Islam was accepted by men whose minds had been formed by Greek thought,” the doctrines of

²⁸ Keddie, 41-42.

Islam were diffused with the Greek philosophy,” which highlighted the “inherent harmony between human nature and society [and, thus] the best state is that which is ruled by the best man.”²⁹ Thus, Islamic ruling tradition developed the antithetical concepts and understanding of elite and people.

In Islamic tradition, the Arabic, *al-khāssa wa’l-‘āmma* “may be literally translated as ‘the special’ and ‘the general’”³⁰ and refers to “two antithetical terms which ... denote in general way the elite and commonality, the notables and the plebs, or aristocracy and the masses.”³¹ The dichotomy has emerged in Islam due to the economic developments that changed the social structure, and challenged the egalitarian³² nature of the religion. As one of the earliest thinkers who wrote about the concept, Ibn al-Muqāffā highlights that “the attitude which one should adopt according to whether he is in the presence of a member of the *khāssa*, understood as a comprising group of merit and quality, or as the *‘āmma* a thousand times more numerous.” By the historians, the *khāssa* has been mentioned as the people close to the caliphs and sultans, and a flexible group that involved the entourage of the notables that did not constitute a legal connotation. Ibn al-Fakih suggests that “rich and cultivated people, at the side of the rulers and their ministers, with the rest of the community making up a completely uninteresting *‘āmma*”.³³

²⁹ Hourani, *Emergence*, 15-16.

³⁰ Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 67.

³¹ “*Al-khāssa wa’l-‘āmma*” Encyclopedia of Islam.

³² Suggested so by Encyclopedia of Islam; one needs to take into account some classifications that exist, which, according to Bernard Lewis is “the unequal status of master and slave, of man and woman, of Muslim and non-Muslim. Lewis, *The Political Language*, 65.

³³ “*Al-Khāssa wa’l-‘āmma*” EI².

The concepts of “elite” and “people” were maintained in the Ottoman Empire with some modifications. Early Islamic societies developed under the caliphs, yet as the political unity of Islam dissolved, the social structure of these societies changed leading to new dynasties. In these dynasties, namely the Ottoman Empire, “the power laid in the hands of a military group... the sultan, his freedmen, and their dependents.”³⁴ Laws of the state were edicts of the sultan, administered by him and his governors. Lewis provides a clear definition, and position of the bureaucratic and religious classes in Ottoman state structure:

The bureaucratic and religious classes-the *kalemiye* “men of the pen” and the *ilmiye* “men of (religious) learning” in traditional Ottoman terminology. Together with the *askeris*, these formed the military, religious, and bureaucratic establishments maintaining the Ottoman state.³⁵

The ‘*ilmiye* class Lewis refers to is almost synonymous with ‘*ulemā*, which is the plural of ‘*ālim*; ‘*ālim* means learned, wise, scholar, and ‘*ulemā* signify “those who know”. They were basically “those who were learned in religion and the religious law, who taught interpreted and administered it.”³⁶ ‘*Ulemā* were the “men of learning” in Islamic societies, as it was in the Ottoman Empire where “powerful corps of Muslim learned men who dominated the religious institutions, the judiciary and the education of the Empire, and, in addition, held most of the positions in public administration, diplomacy, and politics”³⁷ Hourani called the ‘*ulemā* “doctors of religion” “guardians of Islamic morality

³⁴ Lewis, 62-63.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Albert Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 5.

³⁷ Uriel Heyd, *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization* (Jerusalem: Editions Dezobry, 1961), 63 .

and law... they were judges, teachers and officials; they were consulted and used for foreign negotiations, they took part in politics and revolutions of palace.”³⁸

The role and agency of the *‘ulemā* is more complex, as suggested by Uriel Heyd, they were not only guardians of religion, but active actors of Ottoman modernization as well.³⁹

In the 19th century, the *‘ulemā* class was no longer the channel to enter the government, and new groups of intellectuals came out of new Westernized institutions. The new intellectual could be educated in the Western schools of the Empire, trained in translation offices, and could pursue individual readings. The position of this intellectual differed from the former intellectual elite, *‘ulemā*, since the new Ottoman intellectuals did not necessarily cover their subsistence by the sultan, or “envision[ed] a society that was not centered and legitimated around the office of the sultan.”⁴⁰ As Göçek suggests, the new intellectuals had means to acquire sources without the courtesy of the Sultan. On the contrary, many escaped from the Sultan, and lived in Europe. These intellectuals published new journals and newspapers, and established even their own publishing houses, as in the case of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet, and his *İctihad*. These developments hint at the development of an in partly independent intellectual, who wrote novels, made numerous translations, opposed the sultan, briefly, “created the new cultural environment.”⁴¹ It is, nonetheless, of utmost significance to treat these intellectuals, not

³⁸ Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 11-12.

³⁹ Heyd, 5.

⁴⁰ Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 118.

⁴¹ Göçek, 117-18.

as a monolithic product of the 19th century Ottoman context, but with respect to the different types of intellectuals existed together.

According to Recep Şentürk, four groups of intellectuals; *‘ālim*, *‘arif*, *academician* and *münevver* (*aydın*) existed side by side. Şentürk points out that no “clear-cut cleavage [existed] between *‘ulemā* and the new intellectual elite;”⁴² the *‘ulemā* was not necessarily more traditionalist than the new intellectuals. He also distinguishes “the modern intellectual,” and divides him into another two groups; “academic intelligentsia trained in modern colleges, higher institutes and later universities at home, and abroad,” familiar with European languages and sciences, and the “other were the home-grown ‘enlightened persons’” who wrote in newspapers, journals and magazines.⁴³ I find it useful how Şentürk demonstrates continuity and complexity of the late Ottoman elite, with emphasis on different formations. How “modern intellectual[s]” defined themselves with respect to their precedent and contemporary *‘ulemā* is yet another significant aspect.

Thus, the 19th century the Ottoman Empire embodied various intellectual elites, among whom, the “modern” (as suggested by Şentürk) intellectuals’ position vis-à-vis the state was very different from that the earlier elite. The independence of the intellectuals to reach material sources and express his own thinking about the state created the transformation of the *‘ulemā* as the “doctor of religion,”⁴⁴ to the modern intellectual “doctor of society” (*tabīb-i ictimā’ī*). The development of the Ottoman intellectuals into

⁴² Recep Şentürk, “Intellectual Dependency: Late Ottoman Intellectuals between fiqh and Social Science,” *Die Welt des Islams* 47, no. 3/4 (2007), 288

⁴³ Şentürk, 287

⁴⁴ Hourani, *Emergence*, 4

the doctors of the society was the result of long-lasting paradigm of “decline” in the Empire, which will be explored in 1.2 within the framework of “civilization.”

1.2. Civilization: The Empire between Islam and Europe

Civilization (*medeniyet*) constitutes a fundamental notion that is interrelated with “decline” and “progress” in late Ottoman Empire; it was a means to “observe, interpret, and, eventually compare the West with their own society.”⁴⁵ It allowed the Ottoman intellectuals to provide a critique of government, and perpetually define and re-define the Empire with respect to Western ideas, values and life-styles. As put by Göçek, “the concept’s ambiguity did not weaken but instead strengthened its effect on the Ottoman social structure.”⁴⁶ The concept came along with its complementary vocabulary of decline and progress; and provided the fundamental question of how to reform society and religion. Despite the fact that the Ottoman intellectuals were vested in an effort to advance towards European civilization, their relationship to the Ottoman-Islamic civilization was not clear. They knew Islamic theory and Muslim way of living; however, the problem was how to progress towards European civilization, with the Islamic-Ottoman legacy they had inherited.

The overemphasis on civilization by the late Ottoman intellectuals is a cumulative result of the ongoing discourse of decline that started at the end of sixteenth century, and exacerbated with the 1768-74 wars and the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. In 19th century, the Ottoman Empire faced “nationalist stirrings, economic backwardness, and a rapid

⁴⁵ Göçek, 117-18

⁴⁶ Ibid

erosion of both internal and external confidence.”⁴⁷ The discourse of decline transformed throughout centuries, yet maintained, what Kafadar calls its ‘cross-referential continuity,’ Europe set as the reference point ... the fundamental question of “Why have we/they been surpassed by the West?”⁴⁸ The problematic of civilization was bred with this “cross-referential continuity,” due to long-lasting decline discourse that was accompanied by European superiority.

For the Ottoman intellectuals, the ever-present infatuation with European advancement did not imply the outpace of Ottoman and Islamic values. For Young Ottomans, the precursors of Young Turks, Islamic culture had indeed provided a greater framework to accommodate progress, and European civilization, which is unthinkable to disappear completely with the Young Turks. The article published by Hanioglu in 2005⁴⁹ questions and criticizes the dominance of Republican ideology that created a teleological historiography of the late Ottoman Empire intellectual history, which lacked sophistication, and portrayed the period in terms of pure secularism and Westernization. Hanioglu portrays an alternative study of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet challenging his own prior works as well, and emphasizes the sophisticated and complex relationship the late Ottoman intellectuals had with Islam, and the ideas of progress and civilization. Such an outlook situates the ideas of Young Turks, as well as any other intellectual of early 20th century, in a different standpoint with respect to not only the relationship between religion and science, but also progress.

⁴⁷ Cemal Kafadar, *The Question of Ottoman Decline. Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 4 (1997-1998), 65

⁴⁸ Kafadar, 33

⁴⁹ Titled *Dindar bir Dinsiz ya da Dinsiz bir Dindar: Dr. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet ve Modern Türk Toplumunu* (A Religious Man without Belief or A Believer without Religion: Dr. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and the Modern Turkish Society) which be found in Şükrü Hanioglu, *Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Zihniyet, Siyaset ve Tarih* (Istanbul: Bağlam, 2006)

The overemphasis of Ottoman “secularism” was also challenged by various works of Benjamin Fortna that provide a new perspective on the “Western” education of late Ottoman intellectuals.⁵⁰ Fortna studies the “secular” schools of the Empire, and emphasizes the Islamic curriculum, especially in the years of ‘Abdülhāmid II (1876-1909) when, in contrast to what is expected, there was a theoretical and practical implementation of Islamic knowledge⁵¹ when came the realization that the “reform of *devlet* (the state) was intolerable if it meant the loss of *dīn* (the religion).”⁵² Even if the motivation and goal of the intellectuals who went through an education as such was to promote science and progress, they appealed to Islam not only to get a better understanding of the people and contextualize the Ottoman society in the European civilization. This inbetweenness is well supported by the fact that William Draper’s *Conflict between Religion and Science* became a best-seller in the Ottoman Empire upon its translation into Turkish in the closing years of the nineteenth century.⁵³

The interest of the late Ottoman intellectual in the search for a new civilization should be understood through the complex blend of traditional and European values. My interpretation is that, Le Bon’s formulation of civilization and progress of civilizations appealed to the late Ottoman intellectuals not only as a Western route to follow, but also hinted at something close they knew of and searched for, not only in terms of vocabulary, but also through the works of prominent Islamic thinkers that for sure were read in late Ottoman Istanbul.

⁵⁰ See Benjamin Fortna’s works stated before.

⁵¹ See Selim Deringil, *The Well Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998)

⁵² Anscombe, F.F. "Islam and the Age of Ottoman Reform." *Past & Present* 208, no. 1 (2010), 188.

⁵³ M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 50.

1.3. Methodological Framework: Translation and Reception

Translation is central to this study on three levels; historical, conceptual and methodological. Firstly, translation had been an integral part of Ottoman modernization; therefore an analysis on two translations of the same thinker by two different intellectuals is valuable in itself for understanding changing directions of translation activity in the Empire. Secondly, thinking of “translation activity as a vehicle for cultural transfer”⁵⁴ leads to question how ideas were transferred from the French to the Ottoman context, and how particular concepts were received in the late Ottoman intellectual atmosphere. Last, translation serves as a significant methodological tool for my study, through which I analyze the reception of key terms and concepts. Thus, an exercise of closer reading of two Gustave Le Bon translations allows a threefold analysis.

Changes in the agents and institutions of translation parallel the development of late Ottoman intellectual thought. The establishment and development of translation chambers in Ottoman modernization challenged and transformed the dragoman, *tercüman*, a tradition that existed from Seljuk state onwards, and that was institutionalized in 16th century.⁵⁵ If one of the turning points for the activity of translation is the foundation of translation chambers at the port in 1822, the second one is the Constitutional Revolution of 1908. Before 1908, translation was used as a safe intellectual activity to express thoughts and opinions. The growing number of newspapers and foundation of independent publishing houses were simultaneously accelerating the import of ideas despite of ‘Abdülhâmid ’s censorship. 1908 triggered the already

⁵⁴ Saliha Paker, *Translations: (Re)shaping of Literature and Culture* (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press, 2002), 58.

⁵⁵ “Turkish Tradition” Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies, ed. by Mona Baker.

boosting translation activity, and “the deposition of ‘Abdülhāmid II [was] followed by a significant revival of translations of canonized works in history, philosophy and social sciences, as well as English, German and Russian Literature.”⁵⁶

The expansion of translation activity also generated a new conflict; the confrontation of conventional Ottoman vocabulary with European concepts. In this study, I aim to benefit from the analysis of the reception of European concepts by the Ottoman intellectuals, since “inter-lingual translation as perhaps the most important single avenue of reception in the history of ideas.”⁵⁷ As I follow the choice of concepts in the adaptation process of Le Bon’s idea, I bear in mind the suggestion of Skinner and Pocock, that language functions “to realize intentions which thereby are transformed into meanings,”⁵⁸ which applies “specifically to the ‘vocabularies’ and ‘discourses,’”⁵⁹ as is intended in this thesis.

The publication dates of the two books situated around the Constitutional Revolution, this thesis is concerned with the two translations of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū‘ād , as a practice in analyzing the vocabulary and intentions of translating Le Bon. It is not an exercise of close reading, which I am sure, would evoke new questions, and new answers to old ones.

⁵⁶ Routledge, 578.

⁵⁷ Laszlo Kontler, “Translation and Comparison: Early-Modern and Current Perspectives,” *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 3, (2007), 72.

⁵⁸ Laszlo Kontler, “Translation and Comparison II: A Methodological Inquiry into reception in the History of Ideas,” *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 4, no. 1 (2008), 29.

⁵⁹ *ibid*

2. Profile of the Intellectuals: The Translators

The biographies of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū‘ād provide the necessary background to understand the motives of these two writers and to contextualize their reading and translating of *Lois* and *Foules*. They reveal certain characteristics the Ottoman intellectuals shared in common, as well as the diversity of worldviews formed by various factors that carved out late Ottoman intellectuals. The social and cultural backgrounds of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū‘ād differ substantially, as do their intellectual and educational formations, and their intellectual legacy and posterity. It is these differences that make their reading and translating of Gustave Le Bon in the 1907-1909 more remarkable, because it demonstrates how two Ottoman intellectuals were preoccupied with the similar issues of Le Bon’s crowd, and people, and in my interpretation, civilization. Moreover, as I am treating translation on an equal basis with the source text in this thesis, the biographical background of the translators and thinkers contribute to my analysis of their *weltanschauung*.

In this chapter, I aim to present only a brief biography of each of the two intellectuals, with an emphasis on their intellectual formation, and an analysis of their reception in Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey. As suggested by Fortna, a closer look at biographies in late Ottoman Empire leads us to see the “unforeclosed individual trajectories and cumulative societal outcomes”⁶⁰ of intellectuals. My aim is to trace these individual trajectories that have shaped their preoccupation with Gustave Le Bon, and to understand the choice of these two intellectuals in translating Le Bon as an intellectual activity.

⁶⁰ Fortna, *Education and Autobiography*, 3.

2.1. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet

‘Abdullāh Cevdet⁶¹ was born in Arapkir in 1869, to a family of “imams, hodjas, and extremely pious and very conformist’ individuals”⁶² (“...*imam, hoca, ilmiye sınıflarından ve şiddetle mütteki ve nazıları çok müteassıb kimseler.*”⁶³) He received his early education from these family members, and he was a very religious person himself who made frequent visits to mosques. He published a poetry book with a eulogy to Prophet Muhammad, where he wrote “You are the bright star that radiates in the ninth heaven of Islam ...You are the ultimate cause of creation.”⁶⁴ After he entered the Royal Medical Academy in 1884, he realized that “some of his early ideas and writings stood very much in contradiction to the scientific truth that he subsequently acquired” and called his earlier years “years of innocence.”⁶⁵

The Royal Medical Academy transformed ‘Abdullāh Cevdet in a very short period of time; only “six months after the publication of his eulogy to the Prophet Muhammad, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet completed a translation of a chapter from Büchner’s *Kraft und Stoff*.” At Medical Academy, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet confronted a biological-materialist explanation for his religious perception of the world. Şükrü Hanioglu elaborates on the role of Medical Academy in presenting religion as an obstacle against social change, and thus creating enlightened individuals, *aydın* or *münevver* who stand against the values of the

⁶¹ On ‘Abdullāh Cevdet; Hanioglu *Siyasal Düşünür*, ibid, *Blueprints*, Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought; A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962); Mustafa Gündüz, *İçtihad'ın İçtihadı: ‘Abdullāh Cevdet'ten Seçme Yazılar* (Ankara: Lotus, 2008) and Abdullāh Cevdet” *Büyük Türk Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: Ankara Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990)

⁶² Hanioglu, *Blueprints*, 39.

⁶³ Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 5.

⁶⁴ Hanioglu, *Blueprints*, 39.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

society. According to Hanioglu, the reasons behind the emergence of strong materialism in Medical Academy lie in the books and instructors imported from France.⁶⁶ The *aydın* formed by the Medical Academy tended to apply natural sciences to society, which explains ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s reading of Holbach’s *Système de la Nature*, Büchner’s *Kraft und Stoff*, and his infatuation with Gustave Le Bon. *Système de la Nature* helped Cevdet to prove the eternity of the soul by mathematics, and Büchner provided a simple narrative of explaining materialism to Ottoman society. At the Military Academy, he also read Karl Vogt, Haeckel and Spencer, and definitely knew about Darwin.⁶⁷ A reading of these European ideas brought with it the philosophical breeding for his intellectual formation, along with his political opposition.

Cevdet stepped into political life after the foundation of *İttihad-i Osmani Cemiyeti* in 1889 by İbrahim Temo, İshak Sukūti, Meḥmed Reşid and Hikmet Emīn. He followed a more political path than an intellectual one in the first years after his graduation; he was arrested a few times and the exiled to Tripolis, he then escaped to Tunis and to Marseille. Cevdet moved to Geneva in 1897, and began to publish *Osmanlı* with İshak Sukūti. After he took part in negotiations with ‘Abdülhāmid II, he was deported to Vienna as *sefaret tabībi* (embassy doctor). He stayed in Vienna for three years. Beginning with 1901, his interest shifted from politics to literature; he reduced his columns in *Osmanlı* and became involved in literature and French poetry. After encountering difficulties with *Osmanlı*, he could no longer stay in Vienna and went to Presburg, Paris and then Geneva. Along with publishing *Osmanlı* again, he founded his own publishing house and journal called

⁶⁶ Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 8-9.

⁶⁷ Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 11-16.

İctihād. *İctihād* was more radical than its alternative, *Şūrā-yı Ümmet*, and this difference of ideology is the main reason that Cevdet separated from the Young Turks. Different Young Turk organizations claimed that Cevdet was not their member, and Cevdet ended his connection with Geneva and went to Cairo in 1905. Cevdet was not invited to the significant 1907 Young Turk Congress, and he did not return back to Istanbul after the 1908 Constitutional Revolution. As suggested by Hanioglu, after his disagreements with the Young Turks, Cevdet shifted his interest from politics to culture, and worked on literature and issues related to cultural reform⁶⁸.

Cevdet is regarded to be “one of the most active and committed translators of the period.”⁶⁹ ‘Abdullāh Cevdet was always interested in translation; however, the Constitutional revolution provided the opportunity to publish more freely. Cevdet provided various political, literary and sociological translations. He translated Gustave Le Bon’s *Lois, Rūḥ’ul-Aḳvām*, when he was in Vienna, in 1900, and published it in Cairo. The period he translated *Rūḥ’ul-Cemā’āt* (1907) is particularly significant since it corresponds to when he translated two volumes of the controversial *Tārīḥ-i Islāmiyet*, (1908-1909), (*Essai sur l’histoire de l’Islamisme*) from Reinhart Dozy, *İngiliz Ḳavmi* (1909), (*Essai d’une psychologie politique du peuple anglais au XIX éme siecle*) from Emile Boutmy, *İstibdād* (1908) (*Del principe delle lettere*) from Vittorio Amedeo, and Alfieri’s work (*Della Tirannide*) *Musīḳi ile Tedavi* (1908) and many works of Shakespeare. As the study of Ayluçtarhan demonstrates, Cevdet provided the translations of Shakespeare with “full adherence to the text” for the first time. Cevdet translated six

⁶⁸ Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 20-59.

⁶⁹ Routledge Encyclopedie, 578.

plays from Shakespeare, four of which were published in this period; Hamlet (1908), Macbeth (1909), Julius Caesar (1908), and Romeo and Juliet (1909), and two other pieces later, King Lear (1917), Anthony and Cleopatra (1921)⁷⁰.

Cevdet translated numerous Gustave Le Bon works which accentuates what Mardin described as a talent for “*fikr-i takip*” systematic thinking.⁷¹ Cevdet indeed had a special interest in Le Bon, as indicated by his numerous translations, and in many ways, Le Bon’s description of social events from the perspective of a multi-disciplinary doctor resonated with Cevdet, and further attracted him. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet translated multiple books of Gustave Le Bon; *Rūḥ’ul Akvām* (1907) (*Lois*), ‘*Aşrımızın Nüsuş-i Felsefiyesi*’ (1914) (*Les aphorismes du temps présent*), *Avrupa Harbinden Alınan Psikolociyaî Dersler* (1918) (*Enseignements psychologiques de la guerre européenne*), ‘*İlm-i Rūḥ-i İctimā’î*’ (1924), (*Foules*), *Dün ve Yarın* (1924) (*Hier et demain*), *Amelî Rūḥiyyat* (1931) (*Les incertitudes de l’heure présente; réflexions sur la politique, les guerres*), etc.⁷²

Other than the ones stated above, he translated some other works and wrote himself a number of original books. Some other translations from Cevdet are *Giyom Tel* (1896) *Wilhelm Tell* from Schiller, *Şilyon Mahpuşu*, *The Prisoner of Chillon* from Byron, *Terbīye ve Veraset* (*Education et heredite*) from Jean-Marie Guyau and *Amerika Terbīye Uşülleri* (*Methodes americaines d’education generale*) and verses from Ömer Hayyām⁷³.

⁷⁰ Sevda Ayluçtarhan, Master Thesis submitted to the Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences in Translation Studies at Boğaziçi university; *Dr. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s Translations (1908-1910): The Making of a Westernist and Materialist “Culture Repertoire” in a “Resistant” Ottoman Context* (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University, 2007), 183.

⁷¹ As is suggested by Şerif Mardin.

⁷² Hanioglu, *Blueprints*, 97.

⁷³ “‘Abdullāh Cevdet” *Büyük Türk Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: Ankara Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990)

He also published several other his own books, which vary in subject, from literature to philosophy, and even a guidebook of manners.⁷⁴

‘Abdullāh Cevdet was a prolific Ottoman intellectual of the late 19th, early 20th century. He played an active role both in the political and intellectual transformation of the Empire and Republic. However, his intellectual career overrode his political one, and he wrote, and translated in literature, philosophy, education and sociology. He is regarded to be one of the translators As suggested by Cemil Meriç, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet “ was a faculty of literature on his own and he wrote better in French than Nesteren, and translated Persian better than Ali Tarhan.”⁷⁵ He was engaged in a quest to transform the Ottoman Empire, thus arose his interest in education, sociology, psychology and literature, as suggested by his translations. He wrote to inform the society, and he used Islamic vocabulary to be able to transmit the ideas he acquired from West. His effort to reconcile traditional values with European ideas was perhaps his own sincere contemplation. According to Mardin, Cevdet distinguished himself from the rest of the Young Turks, who were lost in their personal pursuits, gossip and plots, with his talent of, as was expressed, *fıkr-i takip*.

Yet, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet did not receive high recognition neither in the Ottoman Empire and nor in Turkish Republic, and there seems to be various socio-cultural reasons behind

⁷⁴ Bir Hıttbe Hemşehrilerine (1909), Dimāğ: Dimāğ ve Rıh Arasındaki Mınasebāt-ı Fenniyeıı Tedkık (1308), Dimāğ ve Melekāt-ı ‘Akliyenin Fیزیolociya ve İfz-ı Şıhhası (1335-1337), Düşünen Musıķı (1932), Fünün ve Felsefe Sanihaları (1328), İkāz-ı Müslim (1906), İki Emel (1914), Kahriyyāt (1908, 2. Baskı), Māhkeme-i Kübrā (1908), Ma'sūmiyet (1311), Mükemmel ve Resimli Ādāb-ı Muāşeret Rehberi (1927), Kārlı Dāğdan Ses (1931). Gündüz, 25.

⁷⁵ Gündüz, 26.

this. First of all, he was known for his “materialist” ideas, and a controversial position towards religion. As “one of his Royal Medical Academy friends delivered a eulogy... he described the deceased materialist poet as either ‘a pious atheist or an atheistic pietist’ (*dindar bir dinsiz veya dinsiz bir dindar*)”⁷⁶. His position vis-à-vis religion was complex, both due to his religious background that was transformed in the Academy, and also his *İctihad*, which incorporated Islam, but in an unprecedented way. As Hanioglu mentions in his 2005 column, Cevdet’s relationship with religion was mistaken in the retrospective history of Young Turk ideas. Cemil Meriç’s description of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet demonstrates Cevdet in a more sympathetic way;

‘Abdullāh Cevdet was perhaps not a Muslim. However, he was a truer believer than those who scolded at him. What matters for us is that these are a few people who are brilliant minds, and are open to understand the mysteries of life through both religions and philosophies.’⁷⁷

His funeral demonstrates perfectly well his acknowledgement in Turkey. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet wanted to be cremated, however his friends and family did not accept his will, and gave him a Muslim funeral. “The event, not unexpectedly, triggered yet another debate between Turkish materialists and conservatives.”⁷⁸ Another reminiscent of his materialist legacy is epitomized by one of the popular myths known about his “*Avrupa’dan damızlık celbi* (demand to bring Europeans to breed with Turks) to improve

⁷⁶ Hanioglu, *Blueprints*, 64.

⁷⁷“‘Abdullāh Cevdet Müslüman değildi belki. Fakat kendisine çatanlardan çok daha mümindi. Bize göre dava şu: bir yanda kafası işleyen, kainatın muammalarını anlamak için hem dinlerin hem felsefelerin ışığından faydalanmak isteyen, bütün bilgilere, bütün düşüncelere açık birkaç kişi” Gündüz, 31

⁷⁸ Hanioglu, *Blueprints*, 64.

Turkish race.⁷⁹ The truth of this fact is not known, however, it is a popular idea known about Cevdet, that does not hint at a positive reaction.

2.2. Meḥmed Fū‘ād

Meḥmed Fū‘ād has a very different position with respect to the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic, when compared to ‘Abdullāh Cevdet⁸⁰. In contrast to the conservative family members of Meḥmed Fū‘ād, he was born in 1890 in Istanbul, as the great grandson of the 17th century grandvizier Köprülü Meḥmed Paşa,⁸¹ grandson of Bucharest ambassador Aḥmet Ziyā Bey, and the son of Tanzimat official ‘Ārif Bey. Fū‘ād published his first article at the age of 15 in 1905 when he was a student in *Mercān İdādisi* (high school).⁸² Fū‘ād learned Persian, Arabic and French at an early age, and read the literary and historical books belonging to his father.⁸³ He went to law school in 1907-1909, and based on his statement to Feridun Es⁸⁴ he quit school because he did not benefit from the education as he desired.

He entered the intellectual circles of the country very early on through literature. The period between 1908 and 1913 constitutes Meḥmed Fū‘ād’s early intellectual formation when his poems, and articles on literature, art and sociology were published in *Mehasin*, *Servet-i Fünūn* and *Ṭanin*. From 1908 to 1911 he was a member of *Türk Yurdu Cemiyeti*

⁷⁹ Gündüz, 29.

⁸⁰ For the profile of Meḥmed Fū‘ād, among the extensive literature on him, I used the following sources; Fevziye Abdullah Tansel, *Memleketimizin Acı Kaybı: Fuat Köprülü* (Nekroloji, 1966); Orhan Köprülü, *Fū‘ād Köprülü* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1987); Ali Galip Erdican, *Mehmet Fū‘ād Köprülü A Study of His Contribution to Cultural Reform in Modern Turkey* (Hartford, Connecticut, 1974). I chose these particular sources because they provided his legacy in Modern Turkey along with biographical information.

⁸¹ Fevziye Abdullah Tansel, *Memleketimizin Acı Kaybı: Fuat Köprülü* (Nekroloji, 1966), 1.

⁸² Orhan Köprülü, *Fū‘ād Köprülü* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1987), 1.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ To be explored in 3.3. Feridun Es is a Turkish journalist (1909-1992) in Tansel’s Nekroloji.

(Turkish Society Organization). He began translating from French in 1900; he translated Henri Becque's play *Paris Kādını* (Istanbul 1910), two works from Gustave le Bon in Istanbul in 1911, *Rūḥ-i Siyaset ve Müdāfaa-i İctimā'īyye* and *Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā'āt*. Two years later he translated two works from Dirault; *Selim-Salis* and *Napolyon*. Between 1910 and 1913, he also worked as a high school Turkish language and literature teacher, and in 1913 he became an assistant professor of Turkish literature at Istanbul University, only at the age of 23.

Fū'ād played a transformative role in social and cultural reforms in late Ottoman and early Republican years of Turkey, and was preoccupied with the idea of progress. By 1908 Meḥmed Fū'ād was already a member of *Türk Derneği* (Turkish Society), and in 1910 he reformed the high school literature curriculum. After the foundation of the Republic, he was among the *'İlm-i Heyet* (Scientific Committee) that was chosen to reform education, and he worked on several reform projects of modern Turkey. He became the head of the Theological school at Istanbul University, because "he felt that Islam, as it was practiced then in Turkey, was out of harmony with the social and cultural development of Turkey."⁸⁵ Fū'ād believed that Turkey had to go through some religious reform, however, he did not agree with "Atatürk's idea of drastic religious reforms."⁸⁶ He tried to understand the history of Turkish Republic, and the eminent Turkish sociologist, Ziya Gökalp, had a huge impact on Fū'ād's understanding of Turkish history, "particularly in connection with pre-Islamic history of their nation."⁸⁷ In his 1931 *Bizans*

⁸⁵ Ali Galip Erdican, *Mehmet Fū'ād Köprülü A Study of His Contribution to Cultural Reform in Modern Turkey* (Hartford, Connecticut. 1974), 14.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Erdican, 6.

Müesseselerinin Osmanlı Müesseselerine Tesiri Hakkındaki Bazı Mülahazalar, he demonstrated the Ottoman institutions incorporated the institutions of not the Byzantine Empire, but from the Seljuks. Fū‘ād ’s growing interest in history, and especially history of Anatolian, Islamic and Ottomans civilizations demonstrate his desire to perceive the roots of the Turkish society before initiating reforms.

Thus, Fū‘ād published influential and groundbreaking historical and literary works, and became the Dean of Language of History Department in Istanbul University. Among his most influential works are *Türk Edebiyâtı’nda İlk Mutaşavvıflar* (1919), *Türk Edebiyâtı Tārīhi* (1920 and 1921), *Ānāadolu’da İslamiyet* (1922). In 1923 he had compiled *Türkiye Tārīhi* which was highly acknowledged by Atatürk, and in 1934, he was invited to Sorbonne University in Paris and lectured on the origins of the Empire, which refuted Gibbons theories and provided a fresh outlook on the subject, which was published the following year in Paris under the title of *Les Origins de L’Empire Ottoman*⁸⁸. His following works are *İslam Medeniyeti Tarihi* (1940), *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Etnik Menşei* (1943), and *Demokrasi Yolunda- On the Road to Democracy* (1964).⁸⁹

Meḥmed Fū‘ād is regarded as the historian of the Turkish Republic, and has maintained a respectable legacy in Republican Turkey. As suggested by Fevziye Abdullah Tansel’s necrology to Meḥmed Fū‘ād⁹⁰; “We have lost for eternity the guide and forerunner of our Turkey’s science and thought, our former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. Dr. Fū‘ād

⁸⁸ Orhan Köprülü, 3-5.

⁸⁹ Erdican, 17.

⁹⁰ The translation of the source indicated above would be; “The Sorrowful Loss of our Country Prof. Dr. Fū‘ād Köprülü”.

Köprülü on 28 June 1966.”⁹¹ Fū‘ād was not only acknowledged in Turkey, but also in the international academic circles. Fū‘ād received four honorary doctorates and eight honorary memberships⁹² among which he was acknowledged for his devotion to history and literature, and he was awarded with honorary degrees, such as the Honorary doctor of Philosophy degree awarded to him by Hungarian Orientalist Research and Science Society in 1927, and other honorary degrees from University of Heidelberg in 1927, Athens University in 1937, and the Sorbonne University in 1939. He was an honorary member The American Oriental Society in 1947, the Hungarian Academy of Science in 1956, worked at Harvard University in 1958-59, and became a researcher at London School of Oriental and African Studies in 1964.⁹³ Meḥmed Fū‘ād provided a fresh analysis on the history and literature of the newly founded Turkish Republic.

2.3. Comparative Remarks

‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū‘ād came from very different social and religious family backgrounds, experienced distinct intellectual formations, and left behind a dissimilar reception and posterity. Fū‘ād is the descendent of the grand-vizier Köprülü-zāde, whereas Cevdet comes from a family of religious notables. Fū‘ād starts and quits law school, and does not experience the modern secular education of late Ottoman Empire that Cevdet goes through at the Royal Academy.

I find it useful to refer back to Şentürk’s categorization of late Ottoman intellectuals, among whom the modern ones were divided into *münevver* (enlightened person) and the

⁹¹ Nekroloji, 267.

⁹² Orhan Köprülü, 9.

⁹³ Erdican, 5.

academician. Fū'ād and Cevdet do not match with these categories; Fū'ād becomes a renowned academician, and Cevdet is well educated to fit into this category. However, within the period of 1907-1909, both were the *münevver* of the late Ottoman Empire. Both of them were publishing in journals, and were not involved in academic activity. Moreover, they were interested in related issues, the ones that united different Ottoman intellectuals, such cultural transformation, literature and education. Fū'ād and Cevdet dedicated themselves to these ideals throughout their lives, writing and publishing to educate the society, and contributed to the transformation of Ottoman civilization. For Fū'ād, this preoccupation developed into an academic exploration, and for Cevdet remained within the scope of his *İctihad*.

3. Reading and Translating Gustave Le Bon

In this section, I will provide an overview of Gustave Le Bon's ideas and his reception in Europe, and then introduce the two Ottoman translations of Le Bon, *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām* and

Rūḥ 'ul Cemā 'āt. Through an analysis of his most prominent works, I aim to give a full picture of his understanding of the idea of “civilisation” (civilization), “*l'évolution des civilisations*” (evolution of civilizations), and “*foule*” (crowd); three concepts that constitute the fundamental vocabulary and concepts of my research on the translations of *Foules* and *Lois*. After a brief introduction of him, I will present my reading of Gustave Le Bon's works through the fundamental vocabulary of civilization and progress, elaborate on his reception in Europe and finally introduce my two sources that will constitute my analysis of Gustave Le Bon's reception in the Ottoman Empire, in Chapter 4.

Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931) was an eccentric French social psychologist whose works⁹⁴ generated a controversial legacy in the history of ideas⁹⁵. He was read by a large number of very different political leaders and thinkers, especially thanks to his probably most influential book is *Psychologie des Foules* (The Psychology of the Crowd). *Foules* appeared in 1895, and provoked long lasting debates among sociologists, with regards to Le Bon's “confusion” with the word *foule*. Le Bon studied medicine in Paris, but never practiced it, yet he developed interests in similar issues such as physiology and hygiene,

⁹⁴ The list of his works according to Encyclopédie Universalis France S.A. 1996 « Gustave Le Bon » is as follows; *Traité de physiologie humaine* (1895) ; *Histoire des origines et du développement de l'homme et des sociétés* (1877) ; *L'homme et les sociétés* (1880) ; *La Civilisation des Arabes* (1883) ; *Les Civilisations de l'Inde* (1887) ; *Les Premières Civilisations* (1889) ; *Lois psychologiques de l'évolution des peuples* (1894) ; *La Psychologie des foules* (1895) ; *Psychologie du socialisme* (1898) ; *L'Evolution de la matière* (1905) ; *La Psychologie politique et la Défense Sociale* (1910) ; *Les Opinions et les Croyances* (1911) ; *La Révolution française et la psychologie des révolutions* (1912).

⁹⁵ In this chapter, I use; Alice Widener, *Gustave Le Bon, the Man and, his Works* (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1979); Harry Elmer Barnes, “A Psychological Interpretation of Modern Social Problems and of Contemporary History: A Survey of the Contributions of Gustave Le Bon to Social Psychology,” The University of Illinois Press. *The American Journal of Psychology* , Vol. 31, No. 4 Oct.,(1920); and the introduction of Gustave Le Bon, *Trans. Robert Merton. Introduction: The Crowd* (New York: The Viking Press, 1960) for the overall presentation of Gustave Le Bon. Some other works that can be referred to are; Susanna Barrows, *Distorting mirrors – Visions of the crowd in late 19th century France* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1981); Robert Nye, *The origins of crowd psychology – Gustave Le Bon and the crisis of mass democracy in the Third Republic* (London: Sage, 1975).

and published his works on cholera and the hygiene of soldiers. He was interested in anthropology, and went to India in 1884 as an archeologist,⁹⁶ and served as an archeologist, provided statistical study in social anthropology, education, and social psychology.⁹⁷ Le Bon was a highly influential intellectual, and Widener approaches him with utmost appreciation. She suggests that his underestimation was a result of his ideas against revolutions, and socialism, along with his racist use of vocabulary.⁹⁸

His rejection of revolutions and sympathy for evolution is based on his own observations of the consequences of the French revolution.⁹⁹ As Merton signals, reducing Gustave le Bon's theories to his experience of the French political and social life is simplistic, yet one has to accept the significance of "reactions to his French milieu"¹⁰⁰ that Le Bon experienced the rise of radicals in the Commune of 1871, the trials of the Third Republic and the quick rise of the demagogue, General Georges Ernest Marie Boulanger to power.¹⁰¹ Merton suggests that his theories did not constitute its departure from the French Revolution only; however, his reading of the revolution indeed played a significant role in his understanding of revolutions and crowd behavior, especially after

⁹⁶ "Gustave Le Bon" Encyclopedia Universalis Paris, 1996.

⁹⁷ Barnes, 333.

⁹⁸ Widener, 16-25.

⁹⁹ Will be elaborated in Chapter 4.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ "A crowd may easily enact the part of an executioner, but not less easily that of a martyr. It is crowds that have furnished the torrents of blood requisite for the triumph of every belief. It is not necessary to go back to the heroic ages to see what crowds are capable of. They are never sparing their lives in an insurrection, and only a few years ago, a general, suddenly became popular, might easily have found a thousand men ready to sacrifice their lives for his cause had he demanded it." Robert Merton, Introduction, *The Crowd*, 20.

observing the “fickle crowds of Paris.”¹⁰² Le Bon’s distaste of quick change is reflected in several other aspects of social change and civilization.

3.1. Civilization and Progress in Gustave Le Bon’s Works

Gustave Le Bon’s works complement each other in terms of the ideas Le Bon wants to convey, and they embrace common themes and ideas he aims to deliver. Two interrelated concepts that appear in most of his works, and contribute greatly to my reading of Le Bon’s Ottoman translations are the concepts of *civilisation* (civilization) and *progrès* (progress). Among the numerous Le Bon works that comprised diverse topics, I will reflect primarily on *Lois* and *Foules*, along with *Psychologie du socialisme* (The Psychology of Sociology), *Les Opinions et les croyances* (Ideas and Beliefs) and *La Révolution française et la psychologie des révolutions* (The French Revolution and The Psychology of Revolutions) to present what *civilisation* and *l’évolution des civilisations* designate for Le Bon.

In Gustave Le Bon’s works, the concept “progress” is fused with “civilization”, and Le Bon uses various phrases “*l’évolution des civilisations*,” “*changements de civilisations*” (change of civilizations), “*a la marche de la civilisation*” (on the road of civilizations), and “*le progrès de la civilisation*” to refer to the progress of civilization. According to Le Bon, as he states right at the beginning of his *Lois*, “*civilisation*” “rests on a small number of principles, which derive from its institutions, literature and arts.

¹⁰² Merton, 24.

[These principles] not only develop, but also perish slowly.”¹⁰³ The institutions that a *civilisation* is composed of, and its progress is based on are the characteristics of the people, and their *âme* (spirit). Le Bon endeavors to understand “*l’histoire des peuples*” (history of the people) to determine the laws that lead each civilization.¹⁰⁴ These characteristics that define are very difficult to change “if it is difficult to impose one idea, it is no less difficult to destroy an old one.”¹⁰⁵ Le Bon knows that the emerging demands for the equality of individuals and nations require change, and he points out that “the solution is simple: to reform institutions,”¹⁰⁶ however, with time.

Le Bon’s *Psychologie de socialisme* (The Psychology of Socialism) published in 1898, is a study of the psychology of socialism through the principles explained in *Lois and Foules*¹⁰⁷, and it fits well with Le Bon’s worries not only on the nature of quick changes, but also with respect to the *foule*, crowds, whose mental capacity Le Bon does not trust. For le Bon, socialism requires too much of a quick does not match with the characteristics of the people, more precisely with the “*l’âme de peuples*.” Since *civilisation* comprises institutions, a mechanism that defines its society, socialism is nothing but the destruction of it, which according to Le Bon, would lead the *civilisation* to its destruction. It cannot be changed so quickly, if does, it would lead to its destruction and decline;

¹⁰³ “La civilisation d’un peuple repose sur un petit nombre d’idées fondamentales. De ces idées dérivent ses institutions, sa littérature, et ses arts. Très lentes à se former, elles sont très lentes aussi à disparaître”

Gustave Le Bon, *Lois psychologiques de l’évolution des peuples* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1895), 10.

¹⁰⁴ “Lois permanentes qui dirigeant la marche générale de chaque civilisation.” Le Bon, *Lois*, 10-11.

¹⁰⁵ “S’il est difficile d’imposer une idée nouvelle, il ne l’est pas moins de détruire une idée ancienne. L’Humanité s’est toujours cramponnée désespérément aux idées mortes et aux dieux morts” *ibid*.

¹⁰⁶ “Le remède était des lors très simple: refaire les institutions” *ibid*.

¹⁰⁷ “L’application des principes exposés dans nos derniers livres ‘Les Lois psychologiques de l’Evolution des peuples’ et la ‘Psychologie des Foules’” Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie du socialisme* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1898), 13.

It is evident that one can destroy a society through violence... But our current knowledge of the evolution of things allows us to question why one would reform a destroyed organization. When one penetrates into the mechanism of civilizations, one quickly discovers that a society, with its institutions, beliefs and arts, represents a network of ideas, feelings, and habits, hereditary ways of thinking and all these elements constitute its force... Society would decline when it dissolves.¹⁰⁸

Le Bon's understanding of civilization and approach to socialism also hints at his understanding of revolution. According to Le Bon, revolution "generally applies to sudden political changes that occur, but this expression can also be extended to all transformations."¹⁰⁹ Le Bon's definition of revolution seems unique to himself, since for him slow transformations are the real revolutions that take place in the society. Despite the fact that Le Bon asserts that he is not to condemn or glorify the French Revolution at the beginning of his book, his position with respect to revolutions is clear, they are explained through "violence, hatred, persecutions, etc."¹¹⁰ As he suggests in his *Révolution*, his conceptualization of revolutions are in definitely not disconnected from his understanding of civilization and progress. Le Bon discusses in depth, how *Lois*, *Foules* and *Les Opinions et les croyances* prepared the basis for argumentation on revolutions.

¹⁰⁸ "Il est évident qu'on peut, par la violence, désorganiser une société. Tout comme on peut anéantir en une heure par le feu un édifice lentement construit. Mais nos connaissances actuelles sur l'évolution des choses nous permettent-elles d'admettre que l'homme puisse refaire à son gré une organisation détruite ? Dès qu'on pénètre un peu dans le mécanisme des civilisations, on découvre vite qu'une société, avec ses institutions, ses croyances et ses arts, représente un réseau d'idées, de sentiments, d'habitudes et de modes de penser fixés par l'hérédité, et dont l'ensemble constitue sa force. Une société n'a de cohésion que quand cet héritage moral est solidement établi, non dans les codes, mais dans les âmes. Elle décline dès qu'il se désagrège. Elle est condamnée à disparaître lorsque la désagrégation est complète." Le Bon, *Socialism*, 14

¹⁰⁹ "On applique généralement le terme de révolution aux brusques changements politiques, mais cette expression doit être attribuée à toutes les transformations subites, ou paraissant telles, de croyances, d'idées, et de doctrines". Gustave Le Bon, *La Révolution française et la psychologie des révolutions* (Paris : Les Amis de Gustave Le Bon, 1912), 19.

¹¹⁰ Le Bon, *Revolution*, 107.

A significant component of the progress of civilization is dealt with in his *Les Opinions et les Croyances* (1911), and it is the essence of knowledge. According to Le Bon, opinions and beliefs are two very different ways minds function. The difference between “la croyance” (belief) and “la connaissance” (knowledge) for Le Bon is again related to civilization. He asserts that “knowledge constitutes an essential element of the civilization, and a great aspect of material progress. The beliefs guide people, whereas ideas lead them.”¹¹¹ Le Bon’s *Les Opinions et les Croyances* demonstrates his position with respect to beliefs, and his high regard of ideas in contrast to them.

3.1.1. *L’âme des races and L’âme des foules*

Crucial to the progress of civilization, is the soul, the spirit of the races; “in order for people to transform their institutions, beliefs and arts, they should first transform their spirit.”¹¹² This spirit is invisible in its essence, yet visible in terms of consequences, since the whole reality of the evolution of people is governed by it.¹¹³ Le Bon refers to this “âme” (spirit) frequently in his various works, because it is only through the spirit of races that the people and civilization derive their character, and change¹¹⁴. *L’âme de la*

¹¹¹ “La connaissance constitue un élément essentiel de la civilisation, le grand facteur de ses progrès matériels. La croyance oriente les pensées, les opinions et par conséquent la conduite” Gustave Le Bon, *Les Opinions et les croyances* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1911), 7.

¹¹² “Pour qu’un peuple transforme ses institutions, ses croyances et ses arts, il lui faut d’abord transformer son âme” Le Bon, *Lois*, 13.

¹¹³ “Invisible sans son essence, cette âme est très visible dans ses effets, puisqu’elle régit en réalité toute l’évolution d’un peuple” Le Bon, *Lois*, 19.

¹¹⁴ “Cet ouvrage a pour but de décrire les caractères psychologiques qui constituent l’âme des races et de montrer comment l’histoire d’une peuple et sa civilisation dérivent de ces caractères » Le Bon, *Lois*, 12.

race composes of the assembly of ideas, feelings that individuals of the same country share from their birth onwards¹¹⁵ and it is only time that has a force over this.”¹¹⁶

Gustave Le Bon's *l'âme des races* as a central component of the progress of each civilization, and the slow accumulation of the change requires an explanation in terms of Le Bon's ideas of materialism and scientism, along with Social Darwinism. Le Bon maintains a narrative that is invested in the vocabulary of scientism, and his conceptualization of *l'âme des races* also accommodates such an approach. The necessity of the slow nature of change is a result of the “*l'hérédité de race*” which implies that each race has its own mental constitution.¹¹⁷ This is a biological understanding of civilization since the “history of civilizations is ... composed of slow adaptations, of slight successive transformations,”¹¹⁸ conforming to the principles of Social Darwinism.

If *Lois* was dedicated to describe “*l'âme des races*”, his *Foules* is dedicated to the sketch “*l'âme des foules*.”¹¹⁹ Gustave le Bon defines *l'âme de race*, as “all the common characteristics that is imposed the by the heredity on all the individuals of a race.”¹²⁰ This definition demonstrates the role of crowds in the life of peoples, and its history and current condition. *L'âme des foules* has some transformative force; it is not the leaders,

¹¹⁵ “L'ensemble d'idées, de sentiments que tous les individus d'un même pays apportent en naissant” Le Bon, *Lois*, 19.

¹¹⁶ “Or le temps seul possède un tel pouvoir” Le Bon, *Lois*, III.

¹¹⁷ “Chaque race possède une constitution mentale fixe” Le Bon, *Lois*, 17.

¹¹⁸ Barnes, 337.

¹¹⁹ “Notre précédent ouvrage a été consacré à décrire l'âme des races. Nous allons étudier maintenant l'âme des foules” Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie des foules*. (Aris: Félix Alcan, 1895), I.

¹²⁰ “L'ensemble de caractères communes que l'hérédité impose à tous les individus d'une race.” Le Bon, *Foules*, I.

who have the power, but *les âmes des nations*”¹²¹ He calls the present era, “*l’ère des foules*”, and he is very cautious about the increasing role of the crowds in place of the kings, and he fears that the crowds will rule instead of them. He discusses the minds of the crowds in detail, and claims that the crowds are not conscious actors as they perform a collective mind (“*les foules, sans doute, sont toujours inconscients*”). However, it is what constitutes the “*secrets de leur force*” (secrets of their power).¹²² The crowd is bound to be inferior to the intelligence of single individuals; “*l’extrême infériorité mentale des foules*” (the extreme mental inferiority of crowds)¹²³ thus despite the fact that “civilizations have always been created by a small intellectual aristocracy (...) the rule of the crowds has ever characterized periods of decline and disintegration.”¹²⁴ When Le Bon discusses the problematic interaction between the crowds and crowd leaders, and asserts that leaders are mostly agitators of an idea rather than careful thinkers, and that they should be aware of the collective mind.

In the analysis of my reading of Gustave Le Bon’s works, I tried to provide an overview of Le Bon’s worldview within the greater framework of the recurrent themes in his works; namely, civilization and progress. According to Le Bon, these concepts are intertwined, and the spirit of the race is the fundamental characteristics that determine the civilization’s course of progress. Thus, the intellectual aristocracy should take into account their spirit, and allow time to change the institutions of the society.

¹²¹ “Ce n’est pas les conseils des princes, mais dans l’âme des foules que préparent les destins des nations.” Le Bon, *Foules*, 3.

¹²² Le Bon, *Foules*, VI.

¹²³ Le Bon, *Foules*, II.

¹²⁴ Barnes, 341.

3.2. Gustave Le Bon's Reception in Europe

Gustave Le Bon's reception in Europe is quite complex; he was very widely known, and was read and acknowledged by various political leaders and thinkers from Roosevelt to Hitler, Mussolini to Freud. Sigmund Freud, the psycho-analyst, even devoted huge sections to Gustave Le Bon's passages in his *Massenpsychologie* and along with some shortcomings, Freud "is impressed by the 'brilliant psychological character-sketch of the group mind' provided by le Bon."¹²⁵

However, Le Bon has also been strongly criticized for his "ideological" stance against socialism, and his "racist" terminology. Moreover, his works have been reproached as incoherent, and succinct. According to Barnes, Gustave Le Bon is one "of the three chief psychological sociologists that France has produced"¹²⁶ with Tarde and Durkheim; among whom Le Bon is the "versatile and the most popularizer."¹²⁷ However, Le Bon lacked the sociological methodology and systematic assembly and presentation of data that one observes in Durkheim.¹²⁸ As suggested by the reviews on his works by his contemporaries, his books are "full of generalizations"¹²⁹ and "snapshots of truth, interesting in themselves, but sadly unconnected, and out of focus,"¹³⁰ and one observes the "prejudiced viewpoint ... and is led to feel that the book was written with a

¹²⁵ John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 28.

¹²⁶ Barnes, 333.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Merton, 36.

¹²⁹ Barnes, 353.

¹³⁰ The Psychology of Peoples. by Gustave Le Bon. Review by: George E. Vincent. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Jan., 1899), 555.

preconceived purpose.”¹³¹ Another criticism directed at Le Bon is his ideological position; his “uncritical dogmatism” or what Herbert Spencer would have called “anti-patriotic bias” and his “class bias.”¹³² Barnes describes that “from his viewpoint progress and civilization are almost exclusively the contribution of the intellectual elite.”¹³³ Moreover, his effort to explain society through biological terms has led him to embrace a racist vocabulary, which Merton describes as a naïve choice to define race hereditary characteristics, and suggests “le Bon’s anthropological ignorance rather than his ethnocentric malevolence.”¹³⁴

Le Bon was accepted by the political leaders more than he was by the theoreticians, since his writings emphasized practicalities rather than systematic theories, and he was mostly associated with his ideas about the crowd, that served the interests of leaders. Twentieth century European intellectuals, especially the leaders, indeed underwent the effort to re-define the mass; “to acquire the control over the mass,”¹³⁵ and Le Bon’s effort was indeed belonged to this tendency. However, reducing Gustave Le Bon to his *Foules* or his understanding of the crowd is unfair. Thanks to his works that deal with seemingly different issues through a particular lens, one realizes that Le Bon offers more than “the crowd”; namely, progress and civilization.

¹³¹ The Psychology of Revolution by Gustave le Bon *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 22, No. 5 (May, 1914), 506.

¹³² Barnes, 333.

¹³³ Barnes, 333.

¹³⁴ Merton, 38.

¹³⁵ Carey, 23.

3.3. Two Translations in the Empire: An Introduction to *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt*

The Ottoman recognition of Gustave Le Bon was indeed quick; ‘Abdullāh Cevdet had already translated Le Bon’s *Lois* (1894) in 1900, and Meḥmed Fū‘ād published his translation of *Foules* (1895) in 1909. Le Bon should have appealed to the Ottoman intellectuals with his formulations of *civilisation* (civilization) and *l’évolution des civilisation* (progress) in the middle of the ever-existing “Ottoman decline.”¹³⁶ Le Bon’s readership and quick response in the Ottoman Empire was also a result of his *La Civilisation des Arabes* (1884), which acknowledged Le Bon’s qualification in Islam and the Arab world.¹³⁷ From his ideas on revolutions to progress, crowds to leadership, Gustave Le Bon appealed to the Ottoman intellectuals to understand how to progress in the stages of civilization, where Ottoman Empire was situated, and what kind of change it was in need of. In Chapter 4, I will elaborate on the Ottoman reception via the translation of the vocabulary of the “*foule*” (*cemā’āt*, *‘avām*, *cumhur*), “*l’âme*” (*rūḥ*) and “*l’évolution de civilisation*” (*Tekāmül-ü ‘azīme-i medeniyet*). Before the analysis, I want to introduce the publication of *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt*.

Two translations of Gustave Le Bon’s works appeared in the Ottoman Empire within a period of two years only; 1907 and 1909. The two books that were translated were Gustave Le Bon’s famous and influential *Lois* and *Foules*. In 1907, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet published his translation of *Lois* under the title of *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām*, and in 1909 Meḥmed Fū‘ād published his translation of Le Bon’s following work on the people, *Foules*, under the title of *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt*, in Uḥuvvet Matbaası. As a part of the attempt to

¹³⁶ As was shown by Kafadar, on the Question of Ottoman Decline in Chapter 1.

¹³⁷ Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 165.

understand why intellectuals of the late Ottoman Empire translated Gustave Le Bon in close years around the Constitutional Revolution (1908), I aim to describe the publication of these two translations briefly, before I analyze their key concepts, ideas and reception in Chapter 4.

3.3.1. *Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām*

‘Abdullāh Cevdet had already finished translating *Lois* (1894) in 1900, and his preface dates back to 1901. As was explained in Chapter 2, Cevdet was in Vienna in 1899-1902 on exile, serving as the doctor of the Embassy, and his translation activity corresponds to this time.¹³⁸ He published his translation under the title of *Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām* in his Publishing House, *İctihād Matbaası*¹³⁹ in Egypt¹⁴⁰ in 1907. He made a second edition for his *Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām*, and published it in the *İctihād* Publishing House in Istanbul, in 1913.

‘Abdullāh Cevdet abides by the rules of modern translation, and preserves all the five main chapters, and all their subchapters of the original source text. He provides the *medḥal* (introductory principles chapter) that is the translation of Gustave Le Bon’s own introduction to *Lois*, and he adds a *ifāde-i mütercim* (translator’s note) to his 1907 Egypt publication, and a *muḳaddime* (preface) of his own to the 1913. In his 1913 edition of *Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām*, he provides the preface from the 1907 edition along with the new

¹³⁸ ‘Abdullāh Cevdet, *Rūḥ 'ul Aḳvām* (Istanbul: İctihād, 1913), 5

¹³⁹ İctihād is ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s own publishing house that moved from Istanbul, to Egypt, to Geneva and Paris due to the political censorship of Hamidian Era. Opening the Egypt branch İctihād was a deliberate choice to escape from the censorship of the period. The name of the publishing house is emblematic in demonstrating his struggle.

¹⁴⁰ He was in Annemase, Switzerland, before he came to Egypt. When he could no longer pursue his opposition there, he traveled to Egypt in 1905, and published the first copy of “İctihād’ın Mısırı” in the same year. He enjoyed the comfort of publishing in Egypt, thanks to the disregardful governance of Egypt. Hanioglu, *Siyasi Düşünür*, 55.

muḳaddime. His *ifāde-i mütercim* and *muḳaddime* describe his motivations of translating Le Bon and his reception, as will be explored in Chapter 4.

‘Abdullāh Cevdet preserves the overall structure of the text, except for changing the titles of the books. Despite the fact that the original title of Gustave Le Bon’s work are *Lois*, and has been translated in English as *Psychological Laws of the Evolution of Peoples*,¹⁴¹ the translation in Ottoman is “The Spirit of Peoples” (*Rūḥ ’ul-Aḳvām*). ‘Abdullāh Cevdet provides the full translation of the original French title as a sub-title of the work as *Tekāmül’ü Aḳvām’ın Kuvvānı Psikolojisi* (The dynamic psychology of the evolution of people), and he also calls Gustave Le Bon’s introduction chapter as such. Whereas the original introduction chapter is called *L’âme des peuples*, which means the spirit of the people, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet uses it as the title of book itself.

‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s effort to translate the original source to Ottoman in its integrity is a modern practice; according to Saliha Paker, unlike the Ottoman tradition, Cevdet uses “full and direct translations that convey the integrity of the original”¹⁴² as is seen in *Rūḥ ’ul-Aḳvām*. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet seems to overcome the Ottoman (perhaps more like an early modern tradition maintained in the empire) tradition of vague and blurry translations, and present translations in its integrity, as suggested in his preface to *İstibdād* in 1899:

The perfections and defects of works that were translated with complete care belong to their author, not to their translator. The existence of some points in a work conflicting with the thoughts and firm beliefs of a translator must not

¹⁴¹ First published in English in the Unites States by G.E. Stechert, New york, 1924, and reprinted from that edition by Arno Press, New York, 1974.

¹⁴² Ayluçtarhan, 4.

prevent it from being translated. What is more, a translator can translate a work which is totally incongruous with his own ideas and submit it to everyone's eyes for their judgment and investigation.¹⁴³

This effort makes ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s choices for the titles of these works more meaningful. Cevdet does not translate the original title, and shifts it with the first the title of the first chapter. His choice of *rūḥ* (spirit) instead of *psīkolociya* (psychology) highlights the emphasis on the fact that Cevdet is more interested in the characteristic, spirit of the people, rather than their psychology. It is even more interesting that the first chapter called as *L’âme des foules*, which corresponds to ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s title. It is interesting to note that ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s translation of *Foules* in 1924 would still use *rūḥ*, but as *‘ilm-ı rūḥ* (science of the spirit). This change demonstrates the development in the reception of Cevdet, who now regards Le Bon’s theories, not as a description, but as a part of science.

3.3.2. *Rūḥ’ul-Cemā’āt*

Two years after ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s publication of *Rūḥ’ul-Aḳvām*, in 1909, Meḥmed Fū’ād published *Rūḥ’ul-Cemā’āt* in *Uḥuvvet Matbaası*, in Istanbul. The 1909 edition is the first edition of the translation, and probably the only one. Meḥmed Fū’ād translates a *medḥal* (introductory principles) and *muḳaddime* (preface) from Gustave Le Bon. He does not provide a translator’s note, or any personal comments in the footnote. Fū’ād

¹⁴³Translation of Sevda Ayluçtarhan “İtina-yı tam ile tercüme edilen eserlerdeki kemalat ve nekayıs mütercimlerine değil müelliflerine aiddir. Bir kitabda mütercimin efkar ve yakiniyatına mügayır bazı nukatın bulunması, tercüme edilmesine mani olamaz. Hatta mütercim serâpâ efkarına gayrı muvafık bir eseri de tercüme ederek herkesin nazar-ı hükm ve tedkikine arz edebilir. (‘Abdullāh Cevdet, İstibdad, 1899)” Ayluçtarhan, 4.

translates Le Bon's preface directly, except for referring to 'Abdullāh Cevdet's translation of 1907.

Mehmed Fū'ād also abides by the rules of modern translation, and provides the book in its integrity. The English translation of the *Foules* is *The Psychology of the Crowd*,¹⁴⁴ however, Fū'ād translated it into Ottoman as the *Spirit of the Crowd* (*Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā 'āt*). Similar to the usage of 'Abdullāh Cevdet, Mehmed Fū'ād also uses the translation of the first chapter of *Foules*, *L'âme des foules*, *Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā 'āt*, as the title of the book, whereas the original title could have been translated as *Psīkolociya-yı Cemā 'āt*.

However, Fū'ād does not provide any personal remarks, neither a preface, not a translator's note. The only personal remark written and signed by Fū'ād is a small note at the end of the translation, where he explains that after translating a few parts together with Şadreddīn Celāl, Mehmed Fū'ād continued and finished the work on his own due to some inconveniences Celāl was faced with.¹⁴⁵ Fū'ād's efforts to provide accurate translations are explained well by his reasons for leaving Law school in 1911. Since his leaving corresponds with the date of this translation, it seems to be a strong enough motivation get involved in translating.

“It was for the love of sciences that I haven't finished school... the ones who taught the new European sciences did not know foreign languages. They would use inaccurate translations that they themselves would not understand

¹⁴⁴ First published in English in the United States by the Macmillan Company, New York, 1896; republished by Viking Press, New York, 1969.

¹⁴⁵ Mehmed Fū'ād *Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā 'āt* (Istanbul: Uḥuvvet, 1909), 281.

anything. I would prefer to read these works on my own, from their originals. I knew French better than they did.”¹⁴⁶

A significant similarity of the two books, that has driven me to this project in the first place, has to do with the name of the two books that are, in contrast to the rest of the chapter headings modified not only by ‘Abdullāh Cevdet, but also by Meḥmed Fū‘ād. The modifications in the name of Gustave Le Bon’s work are one of the few changes in the structure of the original work, and signify that the aspect of the two books that appealed to ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū‘ād was to understand the spirit of the peoples and/or the crowd.¹⁴⁷

3.3.3. The Two Translations in the Empire

The publication of these two translations stands at a critical junction with regards to a historical turning point in the Empire; the 1908 Constitutional Revolution. The Constitutional revolution overturned the *İstibdād* period¹⁴⁸ of ‘Abdülhāmid II that began to dominate the Empire in the two final decades of 19th century, and introduced a freer political atmosphere. It explains why ‘Abdullāh Cevdet had already translated *Lois* in 1901 and it took him years to publish him, and ended up publishing in the Egypt branch of his own publishing house. This delay of the publication of his translation for seven years, and its publication finally in the Egyptian branch of *İctihad* was overcome by

¹⁴⁶ (“Yine ilme olan aşkımdan bir mektep bitirmedim. ... Elleriine geçmiş yanlış tercemelerden, eminim kendileri de bir şey anlamayarak, ders verirlerdi ki, ben bu eserleri, elimde bulunan asıllarından okumağı tercih ederdim. Fıransızca’yı, hocalarımdan daha iyi biliyordum.”) Tansel, Fuat Köprülü Nektoloji, 1-2.

¹⁴⁷ Chapter 3.3 will describe their understanding, and translation of the people and/or the crowd in detail.

¹⁴⁸ See for further reading Georgeon, François. *Abdulhamid II : le Sultan Calife 1876-1909*. (Paris : Fayard, 2003) and Nader Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011)

1908, as highlighted by the explosion of the number of publications,¹⁴⁹ specifically translation, following this date. As Cevdet would express in the translator's note of his 1913 edition, he needed "the demand and courage"¹⁵⁰ to reprint his translation, four years after the first publication, and only when he returned back to the country in 1911. 'Abdullāh Cevdet's decision to make a second edition for his *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām*, and its publication in the *İctihad* Publishing House in Istanbul, in 1913 demonstrates the changing political atmosphere, along with Fū'ād's publication of his translation in 1909 in Istanbul.

'Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū'ād demonstrated a similar intellectual interest, and preoccupation for translation. It was part of a protective response developed in the Hamidian era when "Ottoman writers preferred *terceme* (translation) as a means to disseminate their ideas rather than writing indigenous *te'lif* (works), thereby hoping to avoid state oppression and to escape responsibility for the content."¹⁵¹ In contrast to the Ottoman tradition of keeping "blurry boundaries between *terceme* [translation] and *te'lif* [original work],"¹⁵² 'Abdullāh Cevdet's and Meḥmed Fū'ād's structures of translations of Gustave Le Bon match perfectly well with their originals; the book structures, chapter headings, and sub chapter headings match in form of a direct translation, without any omission of even a subchapter, both in the translations of *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt*¹⁵³.

¹⁴⁹ See Ayluçtarhan's study.

¹⁵⁰ "İhtiyaç ve cesaret hasıl oldu." Cevdet, 6-7.

¹⁵¹ Ayluçtarhan, 4.

¹⁵² Ibid.

An aspect of both works that facilitate the process of understanding what the crowd, and other related concepts meant to our translators is that both ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū‘ād provide certain words and names in Latin script. ‘Abdullāh Cevdet uses it less frequently than Meḥmed Fū‘ād does, and he is not necessarily consistent. For instance, Cevdet provides the name of the Times magazine in Ottoman, and refers to Scotman’s magazine in Latin script¹⁵⁴. Meḥmed Fū‘ād, on the other hand, seems more consistent, and provides the original French and his translation of not only the names that are unfamiliar to the audience, but also, and more significantly for this particular study, concepts that are important for the work; such as crowd, intellectual, etc... I understand these both as Meḥmed Fū‘ād’s effort to provide accurate translations, but also to express some interpretation, since he does not provide a clarification of his ideas through a translator’s note.

The publication of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s and Meḥmed Fū‘ād’s translations of two Gustave Le Bon works that deal with the crowd in such a limited period with the Constitutional Revolution in between is indeed significant. Not only a departure from the tradition of “blurry translations,” is observed in both translators, but also a similar emphasis –the people/crowd- on the work, as suggested by the change of the names, and juxtaposition with the French and Ottoman translations of related concepts. Chapter 4 will elaborate on the content of Gustave Le Bon’s works, and how they might have appealed to these two translators, both with respect to translation of some passages, and Cevdet’s personal remarks shared in his translator’s note and preface.

¹⁵⁴ Cevdet, *Ruh’ül Aḳvām*, 5.

4. The vocabulary of the “Crowd” and related Issues in *Rūḥ’ ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ’ ul-Cemā’āt*

Reading Gustave Le Bon’s *Lois and Foules*, and translating *Rūḥ’ ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ’ ul-Cemā’āt* in late Ottoman Istanbul was the result of a certain interest that matched well with the problems that occupied the minds of the late Ottoman intellectuals, namely, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū’ād. The problematic of “how to save the empire?” developed into a quest to redefine Ottoman civilization, and the role of the *aḳvām* (people) and *cemā’āt* (crowd) vis-à-vis the intellectual elite. The key concepts and ideas that Gustave Le Bon offered in *Lois and Foules*, namely the issues of civilization and progress, had already become an integral part of Ottoman intellectual thinking by late 19th, early 20th century.

The concepts “*cemā’āt/foule*” (crowd) and “*aḳvām/people*” (people) were both new and old for them. The idea of leading the masses was a familiar one since the Islamic tradition of *ulema* had created and maintained such a practice.¹⁵⁵ In the meantime, with the increasing transfer of ideas from Europe via books, travels and education, Ottoman intellectuals were becoming aware of the expansion of the masses in European industry, politics, and mass media. The French Revolution transformed the intellectual landscape of the Ottoman Empire by creating of a negative perception of the people, associated with terror.¹⁵⁶ Thus, for fear of an upheaval, Ottoman intellectuals approached the power of people to cause upheaval with hesitance, but they were also aware of the necessity to reach out to them for acquiring support against the rule of ‘Abdūlhāmid II. This process

¹⁵⁵ See Chapter 1.

¹⁵⁶ Nader Sohrabi, “Global Waves, Local Actors: What the Young Turks Knew about Other Revolutions and Why It Mattered,” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (Jan., 2002): 45-79.

necessitated to define the masses, the intellectual elite and their share in the Ottoman effort toward progress. Gustave Le Bon appealed to the Ottoman intellectuals in terms of defining the Ottoman condition with respect to both the Islamic-Ottoman heritage, and the civilization ahead. This chapter aims to discuss the key terms of *aḳvām* (people), and the *cemā'āt* (crowd) in the European and Ottoman context with respect to the two translations, *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt*, within the greater question of what Gustave Le Bon meant to these late Ottoman intellectuals with respect to the complexity of their position with respect to the European civilization, and their Islamic heritage.

L'ère des foules

19th century European intellectuals experienced, and feared the growing role of the people in the society. As Gustave Le Bon coined the term *l'ère des foules* (era of the crowds), the zeitgeist in the late 19th century European history was the “emergence of mass society, the associated development of mass politics and culture, which most essentially distinguishes this period from what has gone before.”¹⁵⁷ The expansion of media, and literacy led the intellectuals to fear that “the development of half knowledge has turned out often more dangerous than the preceding knowledge.”¹⁵⁸ This fear contributed to the controversial relationship between mass media and the people, and the media tried to take control over the masses. The Ottoman intellectuals were aware of the power of the European media on people, and they also aimed benefit from it by attempting to reach out to them via the developing Ottoman press.

¹⁵⁷ Michael Denis Biddiss, *The Age of the Masses: Ideas and Society in Europe since 1870* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1977), 14.

¹⁵⁸ Biddiss, 16.

Osmanlı

Learning the lessons of the European mass media, and the growth of an antagonism against ‘Abdülhāmid II, İshak Sukūṭi and ‘Abdullāh Cevdet realized that they needed not only to educate the masses, but also to penetrate them. In 1897, they founded the *Osmanlı* newspaper to openly propagate against the sultan;

In order to apply our agenda, we had to teach the society what they were, and what they may become. Thus, it was necessary to change the society/environment to enlighten them, and to enlighten them to change to the society/environment. We began applying the methods of the committees in all countries, and began propagating¹⁵⁹

Beginning with the Tanzimat reforms, the newly emerging groups of Ottoman intellectual elite had positioned themselves as teachers of the society, to teach the society the Western way.¹⁶⁰ However, their position and role in the society had changed with the weakening condition of the empire in the international arena. The moderate efforts of westernizing the society were insufficient; the intellectual elite had to redefine his role towards, and if necessary, against the state, to cure it.¹⁶¹ *Osmanlı*’s intended readership of an “educated, and somehow sophisticated, high-middle class men”¹⁶² echoed the expansion of the literary middle class people in Europe, that did not find a counterpart in the Ottoman context, and *Osmanlı* did not receive the reaction and collaboration it had aimed for. Young Turks were surprised that their ideas were not welcomed through *Osmanlı*, and according to Mardin, this constituted the main reason for ‘Abdullāh Cevdet

¹⁵⁹ Mardin, *Jön Türkler*, 148.

¹⁶⁰ Ottoman writers would produce popular works that would educate the masses. The epitome is Ahmet Mithad Efendi.

¹⁶¹ See Mardin, *Jön Türkler*.

¹⁶² Mardin, *JönTürkler*, 149-151.

to turn to the study of the psychology of the people, based on his main interest in materialism.¹⁶³

According to Mardin, it is in this political and intellectual context that began the process of reading and translating Le Bon, but as I showed in my introduction of Le Bon's reception in the Empire, Le Bon was already acknowledged in the Empire after his publication of *La Civilisation des Arabes*. Gustave Le Bon provided the characteristics and psychological reasons behind masses. Le Bon's language was controversial and vague, especially in the vocabulary of people and the crowd, which allowed room for interpretation of the Ottoman translation of his vocabulary.

4.1. Vocabulary of the *Foules*

Le Bon's most influential book *Foules*, the original source of Meḥmed Fū'ād's *Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā'āt*, coined the term the *foule*. The word in French "*foule*" is vague itself, since the primary meaning of the word is the gathering of various people in the same place, with a secondary meaning that denotes its opposition to the elite.¹⁶⁴ It is translated into English as "the crowd,"¹⁶⁵ however, in the English translation of the American sociologist, Robert Merton also uses it with caution, in quotation marks, since it does not completely match the French *foule*;

In its ordinary sense of the word "crowd" [*foule* in the original] means a gathering of individuals of whatever nationality, profession, or sex, and whatever be the chances that have brought them together. From the psychological point of view the expression "crowd" assumes quite a different

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ According to Le Robert Dictionnaire D'aujourd'hui *foule* 1. *multitude d personnes rassembles en un lieu*. 2. *le commune des hommes(oppose a elite)*.

¹⁶⁵ Oxford Hachette Concise French Dictionary. "Foule"

signification. Under certain circumstances, only under those circumstances, an agglomeration of men presents individuals composing it. The sentiments and ideas of all the persons in the gathering take one and the same direction, and their conscious personality vanishes. A collective mind is formed, doubtless transitory, but presenting very clearly defined characteristics. The gathering has thus become what, in the absense of a better expression, I will call an organised crowd, or if the term is considered preferable, a psychological crowd. It forms a single being, and is subjected to the law of the *mental unity of crowds*.¹⁶⁶

When Le Bon refers to *foule*, it does not simply mean the gathering of the people, but entails a psychological aspect that highlights a unique state of mind men do not exhibit alone. Moreover, a fundamental turmoil derives from his confusion or negligence to differentiate the crowd from the mass; mass is not composed of people of close proximity, whereas the crowd, by definition, requires proximity. For Gustave Le Bon, *foule* is not a “mere group of individuals assembled in physical congruity, but rather such an organized aggregation that a collective mind is formed and the conscious individually of the assembled persons is practically lost.”¹⁶⁷ The vague term “*foule*” and its theory has been criticized by European thinkers, such Gabriel Tarde.¹⁶⁸ A study on the Ottoman translation of such a vague term allows overtaking the conceptualization of the Ottoman intellectuals, and demonstrates the vocabulary with the closest meaning to the *foule*.

In *Rūḥ-ul-Cemā'āt*, Meḥmed Fū'ād translates Gustave Le Bon's “*foule*” as “*cemā'āt*” and “*avām*”, and uses them interchangeably. Meḥmed Fū'ād's translation of “*foule*” as *cemā'āt* and *avām* provides, a religiously evocative meaning, and the meaning of a common people, vulgar, respectively. Fū'ād seems to be very aware of translating a controversial concept and provides the original French word in Latin script next to its

¹⁶⁶ Merton, 24.

¹⁶⁷ Barnes, 341.

¹⁶⁸ “Gustave Le Bon” Encyclopedie Universalis.

translation; as “Foules, ‘*avām*”¹⁶⁹ and “Foule, *cemā’āt*”. ‘*Avām* is a condescending term to define the “common people, populace, vulgar.”¹⁷⁰ *Cemā’āt*, on the other hand, is primarily defined as a congregation, a religious community and as its third meaning crowd.¹⁷¹ It is a curious and significant decision that Fū’ād has chosen the particular term “*cemā’āt*” to describe the features of the *foule*,¹⁷² and it is more interesting to see that he uses the underrating term “‘*avām*” almost identical with *cemā’āt*. Fū’ād seems to associate the negative connotation of *foule* with religion, and his usage of *cemā’āt* interchangeably with ‘*avām* exacerbates the negative connotation of not only the *foule*, but also the religious congregation.

It is not only the translation of the particular word, *crowd*, but also its usage that one needs to take into account. Fū’ād suggests the term “*nüfûz-u cemā’āt*” for the influence of crowds, and uses it in the utmost negative understanding of the term, as he translates the part about the inferiority of the crowds, “*l’extrême infériorité mentale des foules*”, as “*cemā’āt* presents an astonishingly low level of taste.”¹⁷³ He interprets the *l’ère des foules* as *devr-i ‘avām*, the ideas of the crowd as *fikr-i ‘avām*, and the class of the crowd as *sınıf-ı ‘avām*.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ Fū’ād , *Ruh’ül Cemā’āt*, 5.

¹⁷⁰ “‘*Avām*”; Redhouse Dictionary.

¹⁷¹ “*Cemā’āt*”; *ibid*.

¹⁷² For some negative associations with *cemā’āt*; “*Cemā’āt*, şüphesiz dā’imā ğayr-ı ihtiyārī ve ğayr-ı irādī harekâtta bulunurlar; ya’nī *inconsientes*dirler. Faakat bu ğayr-ı irādiyet bile ihtimālki onların ısrar-ı kuvvāsından biridir (Without a doubt, the crowd is always instinctive and involuntary in its actions; thus *Inconsientes*. But this feature is one of their powers). ... Bütün if’āl ve harekâtımızda ‘ğayr-ı irādī *inconsient*’ inin müdāhalesi ğāyet büyük, kuvve-i muhākemenin ise ğāyet küçüktür (The impact of the involuntary *inconsient* is great, and the power of judgement is small in all our actions). Fū’ād , *Ruh’ül, Cemā’āt*, 10 . *Cemā’āt* yalnız mahv ve harāb etmek için bir kuvvete mālīktir (The crowd has the power only to destroy and ruin). Fū’ād , *Ruh’ül Cemā’āt*, 18.

¹⁷³ “*Cemā’āt* çok kere şāyān-ı ta’accüb derecede ‘ādī bir seviye-i dimāġiya ‘arz ederler” (The crowd portrays an astonishingly inferior level of intelligence). Fū’ād , *Ruh’ül, Cemā’āt*, 9.

¹⁷⁴ “*Şınıfı ‘avāmın ibtida’i nüfûzu*” Fū’ād , *Ruh’ül Cemā’āt*, 12.

Despite the fact that Fū‘ād is very careful in providing an accurate translation, he takes the liberty to translate “*foule*” as *aḳvām* (plural of *ḳavm*, means peoples/nations) when he mentions the reforms taking place, and suggests that reform (*ıslahat*) is only possible through an understanding of *Rūḥ ‘ul-Aḳvām*. This choice suggests that the concepts of people (*aḳvām*) and crowd (*cemā ‘āt, ‘avām*) were not distinctively different in the Ottoman understanding, whereas the two concepts constitute the fundamental vocabulary of two different books, as the name of Cevdet’s book suggests. Fū‘ād seems to have chosen *aḳvām* to avoid any sense of degradation of people by calling it “*cemā ‘āt*” when mentioning reforms, and replaced it with a more neutral term.

‘Abdullāh Cevdet and *aḳvām*

Before describing ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s choice of vocabulary for his *Rūḥ ‘ul-Aḳvām*, I want to discuss the vocabulary of Cevdet’s translation of *Foules* in 1924, the same book of Fū‘ād’s translation. In the preface *Rūḥ ‘ul-Aḳvāmın İkinci tabı için* (for the second edition) of Cevdet’s *Rūḥ ‘ul-Aḳvām*, he mentions that he will publish the translation of Gustave Le Bon’s *Foules*, which he does years later. It is very interesting to find the translation of the same title as *İlm-i Rūḥ-i İctimā ‘i*¹⁷⁵ (the science of the social spirit). Cevdet maintains the use of spirit instead of using the direct translation of psychology (which would have been *psīkolociya*). The title incorporates two significant departures from Fū‘ād’s *Rūḥ ‘ul-Cemā ‘āt*; firstly, the addition of ‘*ilm* (science) before spirit generates a closer meaning of psychology, or at least, adds some scientificity to Le Bon’s

¹⁷⁵ ‘Abdullāh Cevdet, ‘*İlm-i Rūḥ-i İctimā ‘i* (Istanbul: Amdî, 1924)

work. Secondly, and more interestingly, Le Bon uses the term *ictimā'ī* (social). *İctimā'ī* deviates from all the different connotations the concept of *foule* accommodates, and points at the society. Cevdet either treats the whole society as one huge *foule*, or he simply understands Le Bon's treatise as a guide to the science of the society. The difference between *cemā'āt* or *'avām* and *ictimā'ī* is immense, since *ictimā'ī* lacks the opposition of elite against the crowd as the original word suggests. Secondly, it does not entail any of the connotations of the two concepts Fū'ād uses.

Another word Cevdet uses to define the *foule* is even more engaging; *cumhur*. He uses the two words interchangeably, as suggested by “*ilm -i rūḥ-i ictimā'ī yahud 'cumhurların rūḥiyātı*”¹⁷⁶ (the science of the social spirit or the spirits of mass of people) as Fū'ād does with *'avām* and *cemā'āt*. The meaning of *cumhur* is again neutral; it means “mass of people”, “the public”, “and the crowd”, “nation”; it can also be regarded within the ideological stance of the newly founded Turkish Republic (*cumhuriyet*). For example; “exceptional minds can only launch activity when they penetrate among the *cumhur*, and get into the spirit of their spirit.”¹⁷⁷ This exemplary quote from 'Abdullāh Cevdet's preface to *'İlm-i Rūḥ-i İctimā'ī* demonstrates not only the continuation of the emphasis on the spirit “*onların rūḥıyla ve rūḥiyatlarıyla rūḥlanmak*” (to get into the spirit of their spirit), but also the distinction between the “*müsteşnā zekalar*” (exceptional minds) and the *cumhur*. Cevdet emphasizes the role of the intellectual (or leading) elite vis-à-vis the people, and meantime, he highlights that the elite should try to penetrate into the society. This is indeed related to *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām* as well, in which Cevdet had

¹⁷⁶ Cevdet, *İlm-i Ruh-i İctimā'ī*, 4.

¹⁷⁷ “Müsteşnā zekalar ancak cumhurların arasına girmek ve az çok onların rūḥıyla ve rūḥiyatlarıyla ruḥlanmak şartıyla fa'āliyyete geçebiliyorlar.” ibid.

translated that “the social significance of a idea is only measured by its impact on the spirits”¹⁷⁸

‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s *Rūḥ’ul-Aḳvām*, counterpart of *Rūḥ’ul-Cemā’āt*, deals with the psychology of the people, so he works with the concept *ḳavm*, *aḳvām* which mean people, nation, tribe, family, sect” *Aḳvām* plural of *ḳavm* (nation, nations) carries a general meaning of people, does not indicate any form of humiliation.¹⁷⁹ *Ḳavm* fits well with the original text “*peuple*” (people). Cevdet asserts that his aim to translating Le Bon was to produce doctors of the people, nation (*ḳavm*), “*bir ḳavmin tabīb-i ictimāi’si*”¹⁸⁰ (the doctor of society) as the term suggests. However, as does Gustave le Bon, Cevdet refers to race and races (‘*ırk*, *urūk*) and their role in the progress of civilizations. For Cevdet, as put forth by Şerif Mardin, the use of race does not bother him. As was suggested by Merton, Le Bon himself used the term to refer to national characteristics, and racial soul means the “sum total of the moral and intellectual characteristics that lie at the foundation of the civilization of a race and determine the course of its evolution”¹⁸¹ and Cevdet welcomes this idea.

¹⁷⁸ “Bir fikrin ehemmiyet-i ictimā’iyesi, āncāk, rūḥlar üzerine icrā ettiḡi nüfūz ve ḳudret ile mīzān olunur”. Cevdet, *Aḳvām*, 17.

¹⁷⁹ “*Aḳvām*” Redhouse Dictionary.

¹⁸⁰ Bir ḳavmin tabīb-i ictimā’iysi olmak isteyenlere, ‘uzūbet-i aḳvāmın teşrīhini feyz yolu ...sını göstermek üzere bu kitābı tercüme ettim. Cevdet, *Ruh’ül Aḳvām*, 10-11.

¹⁸¹ Barnes, 336.

The Intellectual Opposed to the People

As is suggested by Keddî, the impact of the classical Islamic tradition that distinguishes between the division of *al-khāssa wa'l-‘āmma* was incorporated in the Ottoman intellectual thought,

A great residue among modern Islamic intellectuals and politicians... Medieval Muslim authors saw their society as divided into two great classes, the large mass and the small elite... The words used are the same as those used by the philosophers and others to describe the intellectual elite and the common mass.¹⁸²

Meḥmed Fū‘ād and ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s translations and choice of vocabulary in *Rūḥ’ul Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ’ul-Cemā‘āt* demonstrate this division, as was seen in the “*müsteşnā zekalar*” and the *cumhur* example from *‘Ilm-i Rūḥ-i İctimā‘i*.

Meḥmed Fū‘ād’s translation of the intellectual varies from one context to the next; Fū‘ād chooses to use the term *‘ālim* for thinkers in general, *mütefekkir* when he refers to a foreign thinker, and *āşālet-i ‘ilmiye*, *aristocratie intellectuelle*, for intellectual aristocracy¹⁸³. He discusses how a real “*‘ālim*” (a learned, wise, scholar) should approach problems.¹⁸⁴ However, he refers to Goblet d’Alviela as *mütefekkir* (who thinks, reflects, thoughtful) and not *‘ālim*.¹⁸⁵ The difference portrayed by *‘ālim* and *mütefekkir* is a significant one, as is highlighted by the connotation of the word *‘ilm*. “Since ‘religious learning’ and ‘science’ had been synonymous in Ottoman parlance for centuries—the term *‘ilm* denoted both—the initial penetration of materialist thought was

¹⁸² Keddî, 42.

¹⁸³ “Bütün medeniyât, bugüne kadar aşlâ cemā‘ât tarafından değil, âncâk bir kısım-ı kalîl aşâlat-ı ‘ilmiyye *aristocratie intellectuelle* tarafından icâd ve idâre edilmişlerdir” (All civilizations have only been created and ruled by the *aristocratie intellectuelle*, never by the crowds). Fū‘ād, *Ruh’ül Cemā‘āt*, 18.

¹⁸⁵ “Bir mütefekkir... (Goblet d’alviela)” Fū‘ād, *Ruh’ül Cemā‘āt*, 6.

unobstructed.”¹⁸⁶ However, with the influx of material knowledge that arrived from Western education, books, etc., the new secular knowledge was left without a new formulation, and thus the words *‘ilm* continued to exist to refer to both. The continuation of this traditional vocabulary in the Ottoman language in late 19th and early 20th centuries created a continuous confrontation of traditional values, and Western material thinking, especially in the activity of translation.

4.2. Revolution, Progress and Change

Their translations of the titles suggest that ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū‘ād were drawn to Gustave Le Bon in order to understand the spirit of the crowds and peoples. As was explained in 3.1, *l’âme*, the spirit, was integral to the idea of progress and change in Le Bon’s works, and Cevdet and Fū‘ād were aware of this. Despite the fact that, the Young Turks are seen as an extension of Jacobin ideology, they indeed “[condemned] the terror, [and] positivism, and the current theories of “crowd” (Le Bon in particular) provided theoretical support for their preferred model of revolution: a constitutionalist military take-over from the top.”¹⁸⁷ This type of change was not only reflected on the politics of Young Turks, but also on the intellectual and cultural agenda of the late Ottoman intellectuals. They integrated the vocabulary of Le Bon’s *l’évolution des civilizations* as *tekāmül-ü medeniyet* into Ottoman, and approached the change in evolutionary, progressive terms, with a fear of revolutions.

¹⁸⁶ Hanioğlu, *Blueprints*, 32.

¹⁸⁷ Sohrabi, *Global Waves*, 52.

Gustave Le Bon's outrage against the French Revolution,¹⁸⁸ any revolution, appealed to some of the Late Ottoman intellectuals. According to them, the 1908 Constitutional Revolution, was only had to be done, since otherwise, the masses would have shed blood. As was published in *Şūrā-yı Ümmet* in 1903;

As a sure way to progress, walking is not enough, they tell us. Haste, a bloodletting haste, is necessary. In our opinion, bloodshed humanity can do without. One should not show blood to the masses (*'avām*) and should not get them used to it. Otherwise no end and limit may be found for the awakened human brutality.¹⁸⁹

It fits perfectly well with Gustave Le Bon was about to offer “while practically every real and substantial advance in culture is the result of the services of the elite in any society... the truly elite never bring about any sudden or startling changes; they affect civilization only gradually.”¹⁹⁰ For Gustave Le Bon, any kind of quick change in the society is not efficient, and the intellectual elite, *aristocratie intellectuelle*, would fail to evoke quick changes. Both *Lois* and *Foules* elaborate on the nature of change, and ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Mehmed Fū‘ād did not only translate the vocabulary of this progressive and evolutionary change, but also expressed what this type of change meant to them in the translator's notes and prefaces they wrote.

Motivations for *Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā 'āt*

Both ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Mehmed Fū‘ād desired the Empire to progress in the *tekāmül-ü medeniyet*, *l'évolution de civilisation* (evolution of civilization), and this expectation involved a complex confrontation with the Islamic past, and a gradual

¹⁸⁸ Gustave Le Bon, *La Révolution française et la psychologie des révolutions* (Paris : Les Amis de Gustave Le Bon, 1912)

¹⁸⁹ Sohrabi, *Global Waves*, 52.

¹⁹⁰ Barnes, 339.

integration of European values to Ottoman society. In the *ifāde-i mütercim*, translator's note of *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām*, 'Abdullāh Cevdet confesses his premature desire to transform the society very quickly; however, he came to realize that it was not possible.

I was blissful with the idea that deficiencies in the science, and civilization of our society would diminish in a few years. I realized that the desire to carry out a thorough social reform in limited time and with limited people is like being motivated to cure a pleurisy patient in a day...¹⁹¹

'Abdullāh Cevdet realized slowly that it was not easy to solve the problems of Turkey¹⁹²

'Abdullāh Cevdet's preface dated 1901 explains his realization of his disillusionment of society, and his disappointment with its incapacity to change quickly and radically. He begins by the phrase "I never forget,"¹⁹³ and explains his classes at the Royal Medical Academy, when he was positive and confident in illnesses and remedies. He thought "if there are some many diagnoses and treatments, why would there be bad illnesses?"¹⁹⁴ But, then he realized the inconsistency of theoretical knowledge and its application ("huge whirlpools exist between theories and operations"¹⁹⁵.) This realization saddened Cevdet, and made him regret his unawareness of evolutionary-dynamic depth. Only if he had grasped these ideas before, he would not have such a deep weakening in his courage and effort.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ "Memleketimizin 'umrāniyesi, ḥalkımızın 'ilmī ve medenī noḡṣānı birkaç sene zarfında izāle olunur ḥulyāsiyla mest idim. Maḥdūd zamāna ve maḥdūd ṣaḥīşlara münḥaşır mesā'ī ile esāslı bir inḳılāb ictimā'ī vücūda getirmek sevdāsının, bir 'zātı'l-cenb' mübtelāsını bir günde şifāyāb etmek dā'iyesi gibi..." Cevdet, 10.

¹⁹² Mardin, *Jön Türkler*, 229.

¹⁹³ "Ḥāṭırımdan çıkmaz." Cevdet, *Ruh'ül Aḳvām*, 9.

¹⁹⁴ "Elde bu kadar bol teşḥīş ve eşfā vāṣıtaları varken neden muzmın ḥastalıklar bulunsun derdim." Cevdet, *Ruh'ül Aḳvām*, 9.

¹⁹⁵ "Nazariyāt ile 'ameliyāt arasında ne büyük girdāpların bulunduğu nazarımda taḥaḳḳuk ettim." İbid.

¹⁹⁶ "Eğer nefs-i ṭabābete müstaḥak olduğu dereceden fazla i'timād etmemiş ve ṣaḥt ve imrāzın tenāḳuş ve tekāmülü kavānīn 'amīḳesine evvelce lāyıkıyla vāḳıf bulunmuş olsa idim cesāret ve ḡayretimdeki ḥubūt bu ḳadār derīn olmazdı. Cevdet, *Ruh'ül Aḳvām*, 9-11.

Perhaps, it is thanks to Gustave Le Bon who showed him the path of gradual change, or he encountered le bon in a moment of despair... In either case, his motivation for translating Le Bon is that he “wanted to protect the future the youth form [his] experience” (of a disillusioned excitement, and then disappointment).¹⁹⁷ Thus, he made this translation for those who want to be the social doctors of a society (*bir kavmin tabīb-i ictimā’īsi*) to show the dissection (*teşrīh*) of the nations (*uzūbet-i aqvām*) on the road to science, knowledge (*feyz yolu*),¹⁹⁸ for the service of showing the right way (*irşād*) ve and enlightenment (*tenvīr*).¹⁹⁹ As Hanioglu suggests;

“Almost all important Young Turks seemed to share ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s view that those who wished to be the “social doctors” of a nation must be familiar with Le Bon’s ideas, and that to make any attempt in this regard without understanding these ideas was akin to claiming to be a physician without knowing “anatomy and physiology.”²⁰⁰

Despite the fact that Mehmed Fū’ād does not provide a translator’s note for *Rūh’ul Cemā’āt*, the preface he wrote for *Hayāt-ı Fikriyye* can be treated for *Rūh’ul-Aqvām*. *Hayāt-ı Fikriyye* is about different art theories and philosophers that Fū’ād was interested at a time when Fū’ād was a part of Fecr-i Ati literary circles. Despite the fact that the book does not deal with Gustave Le Bon at all, Fū’ād refers to Le Bon in his preface along with Herbert Spencer, another sociologist of evolution. According to Fū’ād, after all the enduring years, the Empire was in need of an *inķilāb-ı fīkri* an intellectual

¹⁹⁷ “Kendim çektiğim....müstakbelin gençlerini esirgemek istedim” Cevdet, *Ruh’ul Aqvām*, 9-11.

¹⁹⁸ “Bir kavmin tabīb-i ictimā’īsi olmak isteyenlere, ‘uzūbet-i aqvāmın teşrīhini feyz yolu ...sını göstermek üzere bu kitābı tercüme ettim.” İbid.

¹⁹⁹ “.....ve bilmünāsebe ‘umūm-i ibnā-i nev’ime irşād ve tenvīr hizmeti ifā etmek...” ibid.

²⁰⁰ Hanioglu, *Preparation*, 309.

reform more than ever,²⁰¹ and “as is suggested by, Gustave La Bonn and Herbes a political reform is only possible when it is accompanied by an intellectual and social one.”²⁰² In the same preface, Fū‘ād maintains the vocabulary of Le Bon in terms of civilization, progress and social sciences. According to Fū‘ād, “the greatest responsibility for the intellectual life is to learn the philosophy, literature and social sciences of the West... and thus move towards light and truth.”²⁰³ As seen in his future preoccupations and works, Le Bon’s ideas of progress and civilization should have influenced greatly at an early age of intellectual formation.

Mehmed Fū‘ād worked on the reform of education, language and institutions throughout his life, and reading Le Bon indeed contributed to his understanding of civilization, progress and gradual change. Fū‘ād never supported quick change since “once the speed of the revolution gained momentum, it was very difficult to stop.”²⁰⁴ Mehmed Fū‘ād seems to agree with the realization of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet, and the idea that “civilizations have always been created by a small intellectual aristocracy, while the rule of the crowds has ever characterized periods of decline and disintegration.”²⁰⁵

²⁰¹ “Bizim gibi anasır-ı medeniyyesinin cümlesi kahreb duçar-ı inhitat olmuş bir kütle-i zaife-i siyasiyesnin muhafaza-ı mevcudiyetine çalışmak” Mehmet Köprülü, *Hayât-ı Fikriyye* (Ankara: Akçağ Yayınları, 2007), 16-17

²⁰² “Medid ve dura-dur senelerin bar-ı mü’tüb ve takat-fersası altında ezilmiş olan zavallı zulm-dide heyet-i ictimaiyyemiz beka-yı siyasiyesini temin için nasıl bir ihtilal-ı necib ikına mecbur olmuşsa, bugün onun daha ziyade birinkilab-ı fikri ve icrasında mecbur bulunuyor. “Herbert Spencer” “Gustave La Bonn” gibi mütefekkirlerinin pek muhikk olarak söyledikleri gibi bir inkilab-ı siyasesiyyenin ciddiyeti, ancak onun bir fikri ve ictimai ile mütefık bulunmasına vabestedir.” (the original text without corrections) İbid.

²⁰³ “Hayât-ı Fikriyye nin tenmiyes için ifası icab eden en büyük vazife, Garb’ın felsefe, tenkid edebiyat, ulum-ı ictimaiyye ... böylece daima ziya ve hakikate doğru ilerlemekten ibarettir.” İbid.

²⁰⁴ Erdican, 11.

²⁰⁵ Barnes, 341.

Fū‘ād’s reading of Le Bon was not only about gradual change, but also about the transition from Islamic to European civilization process, both of which were actually related concepts. As suggested by his use of *cemā‘āt*, he associated the crowd with the Islamic crowds of medieval ages that were juxtaposed to the religious elite who would “do the thinking for them.” As Meḥmed Fū‘ād said;

“Our society leaving the sphere of the Islamic civilization of the Middle Ages has felt it to be a vital necessity to enter the sphere of modern civilization. This was necessary so. The placing-things-adjacent policy of the Tanzimat and Constitutional Monarchy periods which appeared in the form of creating new values by the side of old values”²⁰⁶

And,

“the main cause of upheaval in Turkish society was the poor relationship between the Western civilization which the new Turkey hoped to adopt and the institutions of Islamic civilization”²⁰⁷

More interestingly, these statements belong to 1920s, after the foundation of the Turkish Republic in the process of Turkish modernization. His statements echo Gustave Le Bon, which can be interpreted as either Le Bon has influenced him in his early years of reading, or, and, most probably, along with the first, the ideas of civilization and progress had been an integral part of Ottoman modernization. Fū‘ād saw Ottoman/Turkish modernization in its continuity with the Islamic roots, and therefore “even though he expressed a need for a relaxation of the religious law, he did not completely agree with Atatürk’s idea of drastic religious reforms.”²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ (From The Turkish Press 1925-1932) Erdican, 9-10.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Erdican, 14.

4.3. Arab Thought and Gustave Le Bon

While reading Gustave Le Bon I could not help but notice that certain ideas of Le Bon echo Islamic intellectuals, such as Ibn Ḥaldūn and Kınalı-zāde. As referred in Gustave Le Bon's earlier work, *Civilisation des Arabes*, Gustave Le Bon had indeed read and interpreted Ibn Ḥaldūn²⁰⁹. The role of the intellectual elite resonates the works of Ibn Ḥaldūn and Kınalı-zāde, respectively, and together. The ending sentence of Le Bon's *Psychologie* is; "Passer de la barbarie à la civilisation en poursuivant un rêve, puis décliner et mourir dès que ce rêve a perdu sa force, tel est le cycle de la vie d'un peuple »²¹⁰ which itself reminds one of Ibn Ḥaldūn and his theory on cyclical history. Ibn Ḥaldūn also discusses the place of the ruler in "maintaining the stability of states."²¹¹ Kınalı-zāde, known to be read among the Young Ottomans only a generation before²¹² also resonates the significance of rulers in contrast to the position of the society, and relationship of civilization with respect to this.

It is mentioned before that the perfect ruler is like a skillful doctor and the people is like a corps. The doctor needs to know the illness of body, and their symptoms and reasons, and how to cure them. The sultan must know the temperament of the land, which consists of only ... It should be known that civilization is about gathering friendship of different people and opposite communities. Since each group stands at its appropriate level and since they occupy special function, they should reach due to this civilization reaches its balance, and based on this the composition of the world will reach equilibrium and will free it.²¹³

Such a similarity hints at another dimension of how and why Gustave Le Bon was read in the late Ottoman Empire. Reading and translating a French intellectual is not only about trying to find the (Western) way of maintaining and progressing, but also is a

²⁰⁹ Gustave le Bon, *La Civilisation des Arabes* (Paris: La Fontaine au Roy, 1884)

²¹⁰ See Le Bon, *Foules*.

²¹¹ Hourani, Arabic, 22.

²¹² See Şerif Mardin, *Genesis*.

²¹³ Kınalı-zāde. *Ahlāk-ı Alā-i*. Translation in Ottoman Text seminar at Central European University .

complex process of choosing a particular intellectual to follow. Thus, ‘Abdullāh Cevdet and Mehmed Fū‘ād found in Gustave Le Bon something similar to their prior readings and education. It was indeed the similarity of language, though in a complete different context and motivation, that has provided the right appeal for them to read Le Bon.

My research of the vocabulary of the two translations and motivations of the translators focuses on the translation of “*foule*” and “*peuple*” in the Ottoman vocabulary within the context of the late Ottoman Empire. It demonstrates not only that this was a complex process of reception and transmission through concepts, but also the role of Islamic tradition, as a culture, knowledge of Islamic intellectuals and religion itself. One needs to contextualize reading Le Bon not only as a sub reading of Ottoman materialism among Young Turks, but as an intellectual challenge of confrontation of European values, and Islamic (and Ottoman) heritage.

Conclusion

This study is the development of an initial interest in the publication of two Ottoman translations of Gustave Le Bon; *Rūḥ'ul-Aḳvām* and *Rūḥ'ul-Cemā'āt*. My immature fascination in attempting to analyze the Ottoman vocabulary of *foule* gradually positioned itself under the larger concepts and issues of the civilization, and progress. Thus, I provided my reading of Le Bon's *civilisation, l'évolution de civilisation and l'âme* in his works, and attempted to provide an analysis of its reflection on the Ottoman vocabulary. I demonstrated how the two Ottoman intellectuals developed a similar and accurate understanding of Le Bon's ideas, and synthesized them with the Ottoman condition, and vocabulary. To be able to develop a multifaceted perspective of the late Ottoman intellectuals, and their reception of their Western counterparts, I tried to build up a well rounded profile of the two translators, as two different late Ottoman intellectuals. My study has provided me an overall threefold conclusion that I want to elaborate on, through three interrelated issues; the profile of late Ottoman intellectual elite, the Constitutional Revolution and Gustave Le Bon's reception in the Empire through translation as an intellectual activity of cultural transfer. In light of these threefold conclusive remarks, I will finalize my conclusion with a few remarks on the Ottoman reception of Gustave Le Bon.

First of all, it is both difficult and misleading to discuss the existence of a coherent and harmonized late Ottoman intellectual. I tried to demonstrate the complexity of the legacy of traditional past and thought on the late Ottoman intellectuals, each of whom went through a unique experience of Islam and Europe, which was, in no ways dichotomic.

Regardless of the fact that similar formations of secular education led to the generation of a new intellectual elite; one cannot disregard the historical continuity of the Empire that prevented the existence of a monolithically materialist or progressive thought. This complex blend of tradition and European idea is epitomized in the two different profiles of Gustave Le Bon's translators in 1907-1909.

The translation of the two texts stands at a critical junction in the history of Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic: the Constitutional Revolution of 1908. Constitutional Revolution of 1908 did not only lead to a radical change in the political regime of the Empire, but also facilitated the creation and transmission of intellectual activity. Translation was preferred as an intellectual activity since it protected the intellectual from being held responsible from his ideas throughout the *Istibdād* regime of 'Abdülhāmid II. The translation boom after 1908, which applies to 'Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū'ād , demonstrates that translation had already served the function of expression of ideas among Late Ottoman intellectuals, and enabled the transfer of European ideas in Ottoman vocabulary.

Lastly, I want to elaborate on the Ottoman reception of Gustave Le Bon through the function of translation in late Ottoman Empire, as a means of cultural transfer, and intellectual activity. By 19th century, translation was no longer an occupation in the state apparatus, but rather an individual intellectual preoccupation, so in early 1900s, when 'Abdullāh Cevdet and Meḥmed Fū'ād translated *Foules* and *Lois*, this was a result of a personal engagement. Thus, the choice of translating Le Bon, and his particular books

were their own, along with their decisions to translate *foule* and *peuple* as *‘avām* or *ḳavm*, etc. The relative independence of the intellectual activity is best hinted by Cevdet’s publication of his works in his own publishing house. These developments hint at the emergence of, if not completely, independent Ottoman intellectuals. From this perspective, my analysis of Ottoman reception of Gustave Le Bon through the fundamental of the fundamental vocabulary of the texts is valid and appropriate, since working with Ottoman translations as primary sources provide access to their understanding of not only the particular book that is translated, but also their interpretation of concepts and ideas, that do not necessarily exist in Ottoman vocabulary.

Within the larger context explored above, my analysis of Cevdet’s and Fū‘ād ’s biographies, vocabulary of Gustave Le Bon’s translations, and prefaces revealed certain conclusions on their reception of Le Bon’s works, thus on the reception of Le Bon in the Empire. First of all, it was not a random choice that Le Bon was read and translated. His presentation of the *foule*, *l’évolution des civilisations* and *l’âme* parallels the Ottoman condition drowned in the paradigm of “decline,” and the corresponding necessity to adopt European values. Le Bon’s conceptualization of the *foule* and *peuple* hinted at understanding their position as intellectual elite vis-à-vis the society, and the process of change. Both Cevdet and Fū‘ād expressed that the society should only slowly change, as readers of Le Bon, and contributed to Ottoman and Turkish reforms. Secondly, their reading, and translation of Le Bon was accurate. Despite the fact that late Ottoman intellectuals are criticized for only grasping what is needed from theories, both writers

provided an accurate and complete translation, and understanding, as is analyzed through their vocabulary.

Within the limitations of the scope of this study, I primarily relied upon the two Ottoman translations, and provided only an overall analysis of the texts and worked on the transfer of vocabulary. I think a more in depth analysis of textual and/or philological comparison of Gustave Le Bon's texts and the Ottoman translations will lead to new discussions, and reveal new aspects of reception and ideas in Late Ottoman Empire.

Appendices

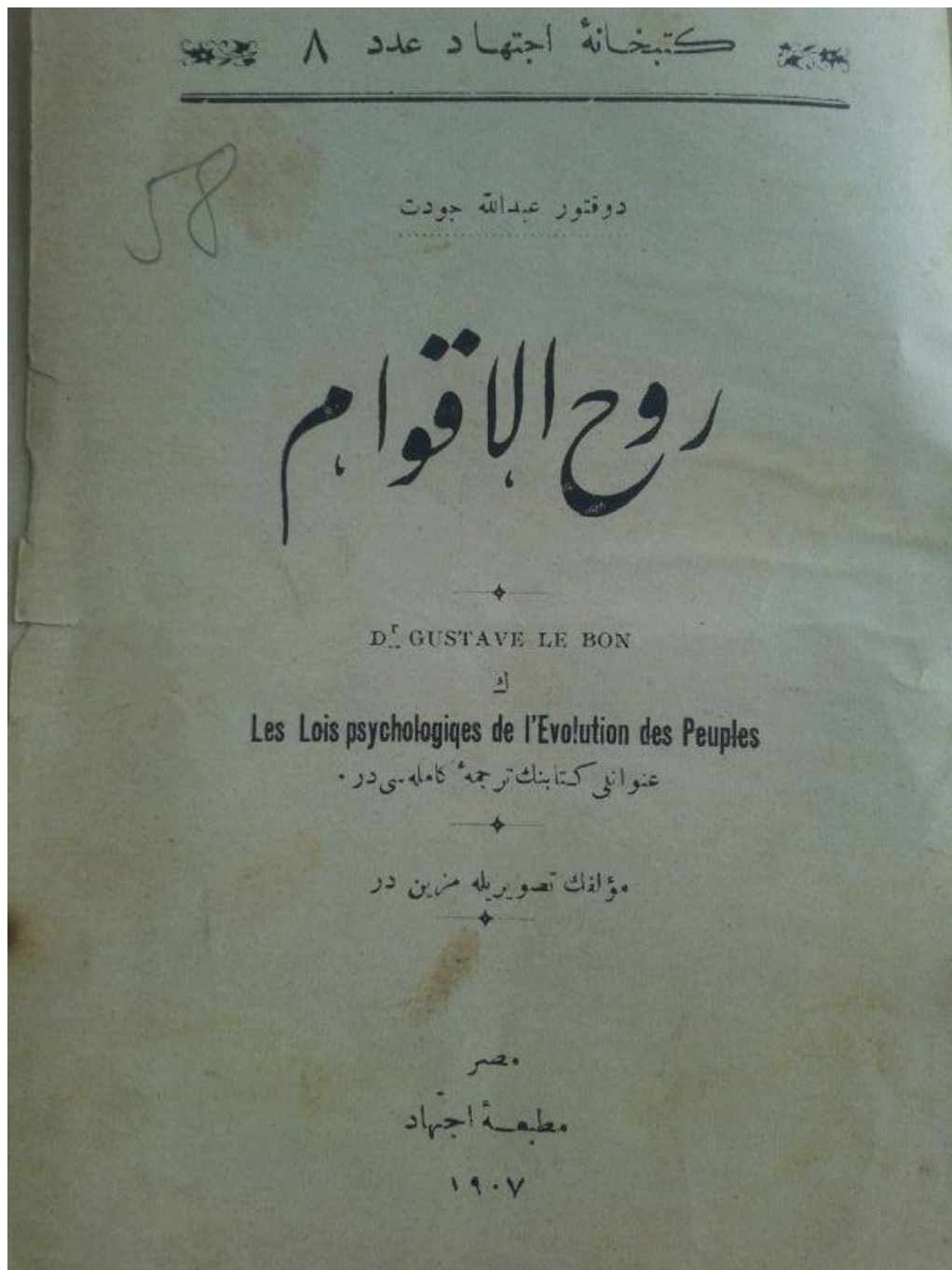
Appendix I

Ottoman Translations of Gustave Le Bon's *Les Lois Psychologiques de l'évolution des peuples* and *Psychologie des foules*

Translation	Source Text	Translator's Preface	Translation Date and Place	Publication Date and Place	Publishing House
<i>Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām</i> , 'Abdullāh Cevdet66	Les Lois Psychologiques de l'évolution des peuples (1894), Gustave Le Bon	September 1, 1901 Vienna	1901, Vienna	1907, Egypt	<i>İctihad</i> , (Cevdet's own publishing house)
<i>Rūḥ 'ul-Aḳvām</i> , 'Abdullāh Cevdet	Les Lois Psychologiques de l'évolution des peuples, Gustave Le Bon	May 13, 1913 Istanbul	1901, Vienna	1913, Istanbul	İctihad
<i>Rūḥ 'ul-Cemā 'āt</i> , Meḥmed Fū'ād and Sadreddin Celal	Psychologie des foules (1895), Gustave Le Bon	-	13 August 1327 (1911)	1327 (1911)	Uḥuvvet
<i>İlm-i Rūḥ-i İctimai</i> , 'Abdullāh Cevdet	Psychologie des foules, Gustave Le Bon	Teşrini sani, 1923	27 Kanuni sani 1923	1924, Istanbul	Amdi

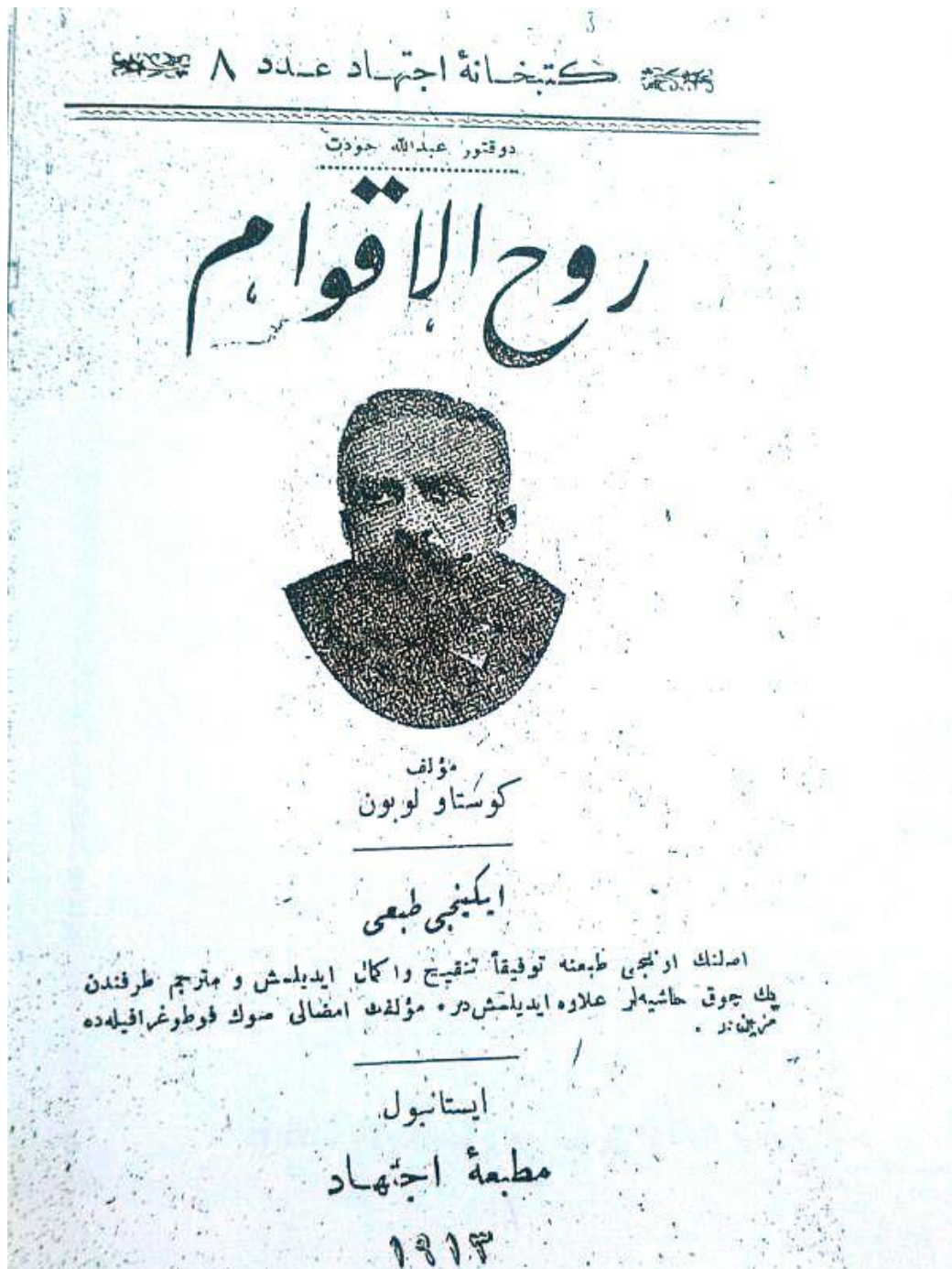
Appendix II

The Cover Page of 'Abdullāh Cevdet's *Rūḥ'ül Aḳvām* dated 1907, in Egypt.



Appendix III

The Cover Page of ‘Abdullāh Cevdet’s *Rūḥ’ül Aḳvām* dated 1913, in Istanbul



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