GRADUATE SCHOOL
ISTANBUL MEDENIYET UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL OTTOMAN STUDIES

Dictionary Initiatives in the Ottoman Empire in the Second Half of the 19th Century

Master's Thesis

Fatma Süeda Sarı

October 2025

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Style and Reference Manual Statement

Having reviewed this thesis written under my supervision, I confirm that it has been written in accordance with Chicago Manual of Style and used its footnote reference format consistently throughout the entire text.

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that all information in this dissertation has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conducts, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ÖZET

Xıx.Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Osmanlı'da Sözlükçülük Teşebbüsleri

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Danışman: Prof. Dr. Güneş Işıksel

Ekim 2025

Sözlükler çoğu zaman teknik başvuru kaynakları olarak değerlendirilir; anlamları sabitleyen, kelimeleri tanımlayan ve dilin kullanımına dair temel bilgileri aktaran araçlar olarak görülür. Ancak tarihsel bağlam içinde ele alındıklarında, sözlükler dilin hangi sınırlar içinde düşünüldüğünü, hangi tür kullanımların makbul sayıldığını ve hangi kavramların öne çıkarıldığını da görünür kılar. Bu çalışma, geç Osmanlı döneminde yayımlanan tek dilli Osmanlı Türkçesi sözlüklerini bu perspektiften ele almakta; sözlükleri, dönemin dilsel, kültürel ve siyasal tartışmalarıyla temas hâlindeki metinler olarak okumayı amaçlamaktadır. Özellikle önsözler, sözlüğün hangi gerekçelerle yazıldığını, nasıl bir okur kitlesinin tasarlandığını ve dil hakkında hangi kabullerin benimsendiğini gösteren ayrıcalıklı bir alan sunduğu için incelemenin merkezine alınmıştır.

Bu yaklaşım, sözlükleri yalnızca kelime hazinesini aktaran araçlar olarak değil, dilin nasıl düşünülmesi gerektiğine dair normatif öneriler içeren metinler olarak ele almayı mümkün kılmaktadır. Ön sözlerde yer alan hitap biçimleri, fayda vurguları ve eleştirel değerlendirmeler, sözlük yazarlarının kendi dönemlerindeki dil sorunlarını nasıl kavradıklarını ve bu sorunlara nasıl çözümler önerdiklerini göstermektedir. Böylece sözlükler, dilin kullanımına dair mevcut durumu yansıtan metinler olmanın ötesinde, dili yönlendirmeyi ve dönüştürmeyi hedefleyen müdahale alanları olarak da okunabilmektedir. Bu müdahalelerin ortaya çıktığı zemin, 19. yüzyılda Osmanlı matbuatının geçirdiği dönüşümle yakından ilişkilidir. Matbaanın yaygınlaşması, basılı metinlerin dolaşım hızının artması ve okuryazarlığın görece genişlemesi, dili yalnızca sınırlı

bir elit grubun kullandığı bir yazı alanı olmaktan çıkararak daha geniş bir kamusal dolaşıma açmıştır. Bu süreçte dilin düzenlenmesi, sadeleştirilmesi ve sınırlarının belirlenmesi meselesi, yalnızca filolojik bir tartışma olmaktan çıkarak idarî ve toplumsal bir mesele hâline gelmiştir. Sözlükler de bu yeni basılı kültür ortamında, dilin "doğru", "yerinde" ve "makbul" kullanımını tanımlayan metinler olarak özel bir işlev kazanmıştır.

Çalışmanın odağında, Hicrî 1269–1332 (Miladî 1853–1924) yılları arasında yayımlanmış on beş tek dilli Osmanlı Türkçesi sözlüğü yer almaktadır. Bu sözlükler, Osmanlı sözlükçülüğünde çok dilli ve ıstılahî geleneğin yaygın olduğu bir ortamdan, dilin kendi konuşurları için tanımlanmasına yönelen yeni bir anlayışa geçişin ürünleri olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Tez, bu geçişi doğrusal bir "ilerleme" anlatısı içinde ele almak yerine, her sözlüğü kendi tarihsel, entelektüel ve kurumsal bağlamı içinde tartışmayı tercih etmektedir. Bu nedenle sözlük üretimi, Tanzimat reformlarının tek belirleyeni olduğu bir alan olarak değil; farklı aktörlerin, okur pratiklerinin ve yayın koşullarının kesiştiği bir pratik zemin olarak incelenmiştir.

Bu bağlamda, sözlük yazımının arkasındaki motivasyonların tekil olmadığı; eğitim, bürokrasi, matbuat ve entelektüel çevreler arasında şekillenen çok yönlü bir ihtiyaç alanına karşılık geldiği görülmektedir. Sözlüklerin artan okuryazarlık, eğitim kurumlarının yaygınlaşması ve basılı kültürün genişlemesiyle birlikte daha görünür hâle gelen dil sorunlarına cevap verme iddiası taşıdığı söylenebilir.

Yöntemsel olarak çalışma, sözlüklerin önsözlerinden hareketle söylem analizi yaklaşımını benimsemektedir. Önsözler, yazarların projelerini gerekçelendirdikleri, okurla ilişki kurdukları ve sözlüğün işlevini tanımladıkları metinler olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çerçevede önsözler, yalnızca teknik açıklamalar içeren giriş metinleri değil; yazar niyetinin, meşruiyet stratejilerinin ve dönemin dil tartışmalarının yoğunlaştığı söylemsel alanlar olarak okunmuştur. Analizde ayrıca, tarihsel bağlamda kavramların anlam dönüşümlerini izlemeye imkân tanıyan kavramsal tarih yaklaşımından ilham

alınmıştır. Bu yöntem sayesinde, aynı kavramların farklı sözlüklerde nasıl tanımlandığı, hangi bağlamlarda öne çıkarıldığı ve hangi kullanımların dışarıda bırakıldığı karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenebilmiştir. Böylece sözlüklerin yalnızca içerikleri değil, içeriklerini kurma biçimleri de analizin bir parçası hâline gelmiştir.

Çalışmanın temel verisini, Tanzimat sonrasında ortaya çıkan sözlükler içerisinden seçilen on beş sözlüğün önsözleri ile Ali Seydî Bey'in *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* (H.1330/M.1912–13) adlı eserinin "İlâve" bölümünde yer alan elli altı kelimenin, örneklemdeki diğer sözlüklerle birlikte karşılaştırmalı incelenmesi oluşturmaktadır.

İncelenen sözlükler arasında, yazarların yöntemsel ve ideolojik müdahaleleriyle öne çıkan bazı eserler özel bir önem taşımaktadır. Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın iki versiyonu olan *Lehce-i Osmânî* (H.1293/M.1876) ve *Lehce-i Osmânî (Tabʿ-ı Cedîd)* (H.1306/M.1889–90) sözlükleri Osmanlı Türkçesini Türk dilinin tarihsel seyri içinde bir "lehçe" olarak konumlandırması ve ikinci baskısında sözlük düzeninde Türkçe kelimeleri ayırma fikrini belirgin biçimde gündeme taşımasıyla dikkat çekmektedir. Şemseddin Sâmî'nin *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* (H.1317/M.1899–1900)'si ise tek dilli sözlük ihtiyacını en sistematik biçimde gerekçelendiren metinlerden biridir; mevcut sözlükleri içerik ve düzen açısından eleştirirken kendi eserini daha kapsayıcı ve işlevsel bir model olarak kurar. Bu iki önsöz, çalışmada problem alanlarını daha berrak gösterebilmek için özellikle merkeze alınmış; ardından diğer sözlüklerin önsözleri bu çerçevede karşılaştırmalı olarak değerlendirilmiştir.

Sözlüklerin üretim ve dolaşım koşulları, Tanzimat sonrası yürürlüğe giren matbuat düzenlemeleriyle doğrudan ilişkilidir. 1857 Matbaa Nizamnamesi ile başlayan süreç, 1888 ve 1895 tarihli nizamnamelerle daha merkezi ve kurumsal bir denetim yapısına kavuşmuştur. Bu düzenlemeler, yalnızca gazete ve dergileri değil, sözlük gibi referans eserlerini de ruhsatlandırma ve inceleme süreçlerine tâbi kılmıştır. Özellikle II. Abdülhamid döneminde Maarif Nezareti aracılığıyla işletilen kontrol mekanizmaları, dilin kamusal dolaşımını dolaylı biçimde

sınırlandırmış; sözlükler bu bağlamda, tanım tercihleri ve kavramsal sınırlarıyla dönemin denetim rejimiyle temas hâlinde üretilmiştir.

Örneklemin seçimi, sözlüklerin modern anlamda genel tek dilli sözlük tanımına yaklaşması ölçütüyle sınırlandırılmıştır: Bir dilin kelimelerini kendi konuşurları için açıklama iddiası taşıyan ve "standart/yerleşik kullanım"ı temsil etmeyi hedefleyen eserler tercih edilmiştir. Seçim sürecinde bibliyografik çalışmaların yanı sıra, içerik çeşitliliği ve karşılaştırma yapmaya elverişli eşleştirmeler de belirleyici olmuştur. Örneğin *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (H.1269/M.1853) ile onun "ilâveli" versiyonu olan *İlâveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (H.1297/M.1880–81) birlikte değerlendirilmiş; Dr. Hüseyin Remzi'nin cep sözlüğü niteliğindeki *Lûgat-ı Ecnebiyye İlaveli Lûgat-ı Osmaniye* (H.1298/M.1881) ile daha kapsamlı *Lugat-ı Remzî* (H.1305/M.1889) sözlüğü, hacim ve amaç farkları üzerinden ele alınmıştır.

Bu çalışmada oluşturulan korpus, bilinçli bir tercih olarak ihtisas, teknik ve ansiklopedik sözlükleri kapsam dışı bırakmaktadır. İnceleme, 19. yüzyıl boyunca yapısal ve işlevsel bakımdan birbirleriyle karşılaştırılabilir nitelikte olan, genel amaçlı tek dilli sözlüklere odaklanmaktadır. Tarım, botanik, felsefe veya denizcilik gibi alanlara özgü sözlükler düzensiz aralıklarla üretilmiş, süreklilik arz eden bir kavramsal hat oluşturmamış ve bu nedenle karşılaştırmalı söylem analizini parçalama riski taşımıştır. Benzer biçimde, eğitim amaçlı manzum sözlükler de gerek literatürde kapsamlı biçimde ele alınmış olmaları gerekse pedagojik yönelimlerinin yazar niyetine odaklanan bir söylem çözümlemesini zorlaştırması nedeniyle örnekleme dâhil edilmemiştir. Bunun yerine, matbaanın yaygınlaşmasıyla birlikte eğitim, bürokrasi ve yayıncılığın iç içe geçtiği 19. yüzyıl bağlamında üretilmiş genel sözlükler seçilerek, sözlük yazarlarının önsözlerde dil, okur kitlesi ve sözlüğün amacı hakkında nasıl bir çerçeve kurdukları süreklilik içinde izlenebilir kılınmıştır. Korpus, Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e geçişte süreklilik ve kırılmaları izleyebilmek amacıyla 1924 tarihli *Yeni Türkçe Lugat* ile genişletilmiş; ayrıca yalnızca İstanbul merkezli bir bakışın ötesine geçebilmek için Trabzon'da hazırlanmış *Lugat-ı Cûdî* de örnekleme dâhil

edilmiştir. Seçim ölçütleri arasında sözlüklerin genel kapsamlı ve tek dilli olması, eksiksiz ve karşılaştırmaya elverişli nüshalarının bulunması, yazarın önsözde amaç ve yönteme dair açık beyanlarda bulunması ve farklı baskılar arasında yatay/dikey karşılaştırmaya imkân tanıması belirleyici olmuştur.

Tezin üçüncü bölümünde sözlük üretimi ile Osmanlı'daki matbuat denetim mekanizmaları arasındaki ilişki ele alınmaktadır. Tanzimat sonrası dönemde yürürlüğe giren Matbaa Nizamnameleri, Maârif Nezâreti'nin ruhsat sistemi ve II. Abdülhamid döneminde yoğunlaşan kontrol uygulamaları, sözlüklerin üretim ve dolaşım koşullarını doğrudan etkilemiştir. Bu bağlamda, *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* (H.1330/M.1912–13)'nin "İlâve" kısmında yer alan ve literatürde "yasaklı kelimeler" tartışmasıyla birlikte anılan kelimeler, diğer sözlüklerle karşılaştırılarak incelenmiştir. Bu karşılaştırma, kelimelerin sözlüklerdeki varlık/yokluk durumlarını, tanım stratejilerini ve kullanımın hangi sınırlar içinde temsil edildiğini görmeyi mümkün kılmaktadır. Böylelikle sözlükler, yalnızca dilin kaydı değil, basılı kültürün denetlendiği bir ortamda bilginin dolaşımına eklemlenen metinler olarak yeniden konumlandırılmaktadır.

Bu tarihsel seyir, sözlüklerin farklı siyasal rejimler ve yayın düzenlemeleri altında üretilmesi üzerinden daha görünür hâle gelmektedir. Örneklemdeki 1853 tarihli en erken tarihli sözlük olan *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (H.1269/M.1853) görece serbest bir ortamda ortaya çıkarken, 1880–1902 arasında yayımlanan sözlüklerin büyük bölümü II. Abdülhamid döneminin en yoğun kontrol yıllarına rastlamaktadır. II. Meşrutiyet ve 1909 Matbuat Kanunu sonrasında yayımlanan eserlerde daha geniş bir hareket alanının izleri görülse de savaş koşullarının getirdiği sınırlamalar bu dönemi de biçimlendirmiştir. Örneklemde kıyas yapmak için seçilen Cumhuriyet'in ilk yıllarında basılan Osmanlı Türkçesi sözlük olan *Yeni Türkçe Lugât* (1924) ise Osmanlı düzenlemelerinin dışına taşan yeni bir siyasal rejim ve dilsel bağlamda üretilmiştir.

Bu inceleme, sözlük önsözlerinin yalnızca teknik açıklamalar içeren metinler olmadığını; aksine sözlük yazımının dönemin entelektüel iklimi içinde giderek yaygınlaşan bir pratik hâline geldiğini göstermektedir. Trabzonlu Cûdî Efendi'nin önsözünde dile getirdiği "bir sözlük de benim olsun istedim" ifadesi, sözlük yazımının bireysel bir ilmî gayretten ziyade, paylaşılan bir kültürel eğilimin parçası olarak algılandığını ortaya koyar. Önsözlerde sıkça rastlanan eleştirel ton, özellikle Redhouse'un *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (H.1269/M.1853) örneği etrafında yoğunlaşarak sözlüklerin müellif denetiminden çıkması, piyasa koşulları içinde çoğaltılması ve "yanlışlarla dolu" biçimde dolaşıma girmesi gibi meseleleri görünür kılar. Ebûzziyâ Tevfik'in bu geleneğe yönelttiği itirazlar ise, sözlükçülüğün meşruiyetini "yerli", "dil içi" ve ecnebî aracılığından bağımsız bir zeminde yeniden kurma arzusunu yansıtır. Bu yönüyle önsözler, sadece dil tartışmalarını değil, bilgi üretiminin kaynaklarını, otoriteyi ve okur güvenini de müzakere eden metinlerdir; sözlük, "hangi dilden" ziyade "kimin adına ve hangi amaçla" yazıldığı üzerinden anlam kazanır.

Sonuç olarak bu tez, geç Osmanlı döneminde üretilen tek dilli Osmanlı Türkçesi sözlüklerinin yalnızca dilsel bir ihtiyaca cevap veren araçlar olmadığını; sözlük yazımının aynı zamanda okur kitlesi, pedagojik fayda, dilin "doğru" kullanımı ve bilgi dolaşımı gibi meselelerle iç içe geçtiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Önsözler üzerinden yürütülen söylem analizi, sözlüklerin nasıl bir dil tasavvuru kurduğunu, bu tasavvurun hangi gerekçelerle savunulduğunu ve yazarların kendilerini hangi konumlarda sunduğunu görünür kılar. *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*'nin "İlâve" kısmı üzerinden yapılan karşılaştırmalı inceleme ise, sözlüklerin dönemin kontrol pratikleriyle dolaylı temas noktalarını göstermekte; kelimelerin tanımlanma biçimlerinin, dönemin ideolojik ve kurumsal ikliminden tamamen bağımsız düşünülemeyeceğini işaret etmektedir. Böylece çalışma, Osmanlı sözlükçülüğünü dil tarihiyle sınırlı bir alan olmaktan çıkararak, geç Osmanlı entelektüel ortamında dil, bilgi ve otorite arasındaki ilişkileri tartışmaya açan tarihsel bir okuma önermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı Sözlükçülüğü, Kavram Tarihi, Dil ideolojisi, Tanzimat Dönemi, Modernleşme

ABSTRACT

Dıctıonary Inıtıatıves In The Ottoman Empıre In The Second Half Of The 19th Century

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Master's Thesis, Department of International Ottoman Studies

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Dictionaries are often regarded as technical reference works; yet, within their historical contexts, they also reflect a society's linguistic understanding, conceptual priorities, and normative assumptions. In this respect, monolingual Ottoman Turkish dictionaries published in the late Ottoman period were not merely lexical compilations but texts shaped in close engagement with contemporary linguistic, cultural, and political debates. This study examines their multilayered character by focusing on the discursive choices and conceptions of language visible in prefaces and in the structure of definitions.

Methodologically, the thesis combines discourse analysis with a conceptual-historical perspective to trace shifts in meaning across historical contexts. Prefaces are treated as discursive spaces where lexicographers justified their projects, identified intended audiences, and articulated views on how language ought to be organized and regulated. These statements are read in relation to educational concerns, expanding literacy, and the growth of print culture.

The corpus comprises fifteen monolingual Ottoman Turkish dictionaries published between 1853 and 1924 (AH 1269–1332), examined together with fifty-six lexical items from the "*İlâve*" section of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*. These works emerged under post-Tanzimat printing regulations and licensing procedures, and under the intensified mechanisms of control associated with Abdülhamid II's reign. The analysis shows that dictionaries functioned not as neutral catalogs of meanings but as texts that delineated legitimate usage and structured the

circulation of knowledge. By situating dictionary production within the late Ottoman intellectual milieu, the thesis re-evaluates the relationship between language, knowledge, and authority, emphasizing that these dictionaries also articulated the period's broader underlying intellectual tensions.

Keywords: Ottoman Lexicography, Conceptual History, Language Ideology, Tanzimat Period, Modernization

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INTRODUCTION

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the sweeping transformations within the Ottoman Empire gave rise to new approaches in the field of language [1] The modernization and reform efforts associated with the *Tanzimat* period are often presented as the principal framework behind language policies, including dictionary production.[2] However, this study adopts a context-oriented perspective that moves beyond state-centered and linear historical interpretations which explain the emergence of dictionaries mainly through Tanzimat reforms or nation-state formation.[3] Instead, it interprets these works as unique initiatives, shaped by the complex interplay of intellectual, social, and individual dynamics of the era. Accordingly, dictionaries are viewed not as mere administrative outputs, but as outcomes of linguistic intervention practices, rooted in the intellectual climate of the period and shaped by individual agency. This context prompts a reconsideration of dictionary-making not as a derivative policy outcome, but as an intentional, situated intellectual activity.

In line with this perspective, I consulted one of the foundational works in the field: Paşa Yavuzarslan's *Osmanlı Dönemi Türk Sözlükçülüğü*[4]. His book, which presents the

[1] These "new approaches" encompassed a shift toward linguistic simplification, standardization, and the institutionalization of lexicography in the late Ottoman period. Intellectuals such as Şinasi, Namık Kemal, Ali Suavi, Ziya Paşa, and Şemseddin Sâmî initiated or theorized these transformations, connecting linguistic clarity to social reform and intellectual modernization. Sâmî's essays "Lisan-ı Türkî (Osmanî)," "Lisanımızın Tahdîdi," and "Kāmûs-ı Türkî ve Kāmûs-ı Arabî" exemplify this turn toward defining Turkish as a distinct linguistic and cultural system. For comprehensive discussions, see Geoffrey Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 5–26; Tahsin Banguoğlu, *Dil Bahisleri* (İstanbul: Kubbealtı Neşriyatı, 1987); and Zeynep Korkmaz, *Türk Dili Üzerine Araştırmalar*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 1995), 537–606, 686–708.

[2] See Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (McGill University Press, 1964); and Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), — both of which interpret linguistic and educational reforms as integral components of Tanzimat modernization.

[3] For critiques of such state-centered and teleological readings, see Banu Turnaoğlu, *The Formation of Turkish Republicanism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 37–42 — who suggests that Ottoman reforms should be read not as a linear progression toward nationalism but as a multi-layered historical process in which liberal, Islamic, and republican tendencies intersected and competed— and Alp Eren Topal and Einar Wigen, "Ottoman Conceptual History: Challenges and Prospects," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 14, no. 1 (Summer 2019): 93–114, https://doi.org/10.3167/choc.2019.140105. Topal and Wigen argue that Ottoman historiography has long been dominated by linear and Orientalist meta-narratives that reduce intellectual and linguistic change to mere by-products of Westernization. In contrast, they call for a context-sensitive, multi-layered conceptual history, drawing on Koselleck's notion of *Zeitschichten* ("temporal layers") and proposing an "archaeological" rather than genealogical approach to Ottoman intellectual history.

[4] Paşa Yavuzarslan, *Osmanlı Dönemi Türk Sözlükçülüğü* (Ankara: Tiydem Yayıncılık, 2009).

historical trajectory and institutional background of Ottoman lexicography in a systematic manner, played a key role in shaping the direction of my research. Over time, methodological approaches such as discourse analysis have become increasingly central to text-based studies. These approaches encourage a reading of dictionaries as dynamic texts shaped by conceptual analyses of linguistic legitimacy, cultural authority, and the construction of symbolic value. While this thesis acknowledges Yavuzarslan's contribution, it moves beyond his framework to examine dictionaries as instruments involved in the formation of social meaning. My academic engagement with this subject developed gradually rather than incidentally. My undergraduate training in sociology shaped an early interest in how language operates not only as a communicative system but also as a carrier of collective memory, symbolic value, and social distinction. Courses in Turkish intellectual history and the sociology of language further reinforced this orientation, encouraging me to approach linguistic materials as socially situated texts rather than purely technical instruments.

This perspective deepened through my involvement in a collaborative project aimed at improving access to late Ottoman monolingual dictionaries. Sustained engagement with these works drew my attention to their internal organization, rhetorical framing, and authorial positioning. Beyond their lexical content, the dictionaries revealed patterned ways of legitimizing usage, defining audiences, and articulating norms. These observations led me to consider dictionaries not merely as historical reference tools, but as discursive interventions through which linguistic authority and cultural meaning were negotiated within a specific intellectual field.

Accordingly, this study focuses on fifteen monolingual Ottoman Turkish dictionaries published after the Tanzimat era. Although these dictionaries differ in content, authorship, and publication context, the study examines their prefaces as key sites where authors articulate purpose, audience, and linguistic assumptions. Rather than concentrating solely on definitions, it highlights the discursive structures, conceptual choices, and historical positioning that shape each preface. Dictionaries are treated as texts that register the intellectual and social landscape of their time, reflecting broader debates over language, authority, and public knowledge. This interpretive approach situates the emergence of these works within a wider historical framework: the spread of

printing technology in the Ottoman Empire,[5] post-Tanzimat educational reforms, the rise of new literacy practices,[6] and the evolving mental horizons of their authors. The proliferation of monolingual dictionaries thus corresponded to linguistic concerns as well as projects of cultural and political standardization, legitimation, and identity formation. Ultimately, this thesis approaches lexicography as a cultural practice that shapes symbolic capital, centralizes the circulation of knowledge, and structures collective memory.

Before the emergence of monolingual dictionaries in the second half of the nineteenth century, multilingual and terminological (*ıstılahî*) dictionaries were common across the Ottoman territories. They resembled the bilingual or classically based dictionaries produced in Europe during the sixteenth century. A prominent example is the *Accademia della Crusca*, founded in Florence in 1582 to produce a standardizing dictionary for Italian and to elevate the vernacular. As Lynda Mugglestone explains in *Dictionaries: A Very Short Introduction*, the academy's name—literally "Bran Academy"—symbolized its aim to sift out "impure" elements of language and preserve what was deemed pure. This interventionist model was later institutionalized through the Académie Française (1635) and the Real Academia Española (1713), both seeking to regulate language and codify national identity through lexicography.[7] A similar ideology took shape almost two centuries later in the Ottoman context, driven by the desire to eliminate expressions no longer widely used or understood in Turkish.[8] These ideas never developed under an institutional academy as in Europe. They appeared across different intellectual circles and publications, reflecting not only an interest in clarity and style but also a concern with the proper use and reform (*ıslah*) of Turkish, framed by broader debates on linguistic order and identity. This orientation became visible through monolingual dictionaries in the second half of the nineteenth century, paralleling European examples. Yet, unlike in Europe, this orientation found tangible form through monolingual dictionaries only in the second half of the nineteenth century.

[5] For a broader discussion of this issue, see Orlin Sabev, *The Adoption of Printing in the Ottoman World* (Leiden: De Gruyter Brill, 2025), https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111386621-001 .
[6] For a broader discussion of this issue, see Benjamin C. Fortna, *Learning to Read in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[7] Lynda Mugglestone, *Dictionaries: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 35-36.
[8] See Gülden Sağol Yüksekkaya, "Osmanlı Döneminde Dilde Sadeleşme," in *Osmanlı: Kültür ve Sanat,* ed. Güler Eren, vol. 9 (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999), 504–517.

The material and technical conditions of printing also shaped this process. Although non-Muslim communities had operated presses in the empire since the sixteenth century, the adaptation of the Arabic script to movable type made printing in Turkish a far more complex enterprise. The first state-licensed Turkish press capable of printing in the Arabic alphabet was established by İbrahim Müteferrika in 1727. This initiative marked a major innovation: for the first time in the Muslim world, a printing house operated with official authorization using Arabic script. Its inaugural publication, *Vankulu Lugatı* (1729), an Arabic–Turkish translation of *al-Jawharî's Sıhâh*, represented both a milestone in Ottoman printing and an early attempt to systematize linguistic knowledge.As Orlin Sabev has shown, the choice of a dictionary as the first printed work was not incidental. In the introductory treatise *(Vesîletü't-Tıbâʿa)* prefacing Vankulu Lugatı, Müteferrika explicitly framed the printing press as a necessary response to the scarcity, high cost, and unreliability of manuscript copies—problems that were particularly acute in the case of large and technically demanding works such as dictionaries. From this perspective, the press was conceived not merely as a technical innovation, but as a means of preserving written knowledge, ensuring textual accuracy, and facilitating wider access to linguistic and scholarly resources. The centrality of *Vankulu Lugatı* within this project underscores the pivotal role attributed to dictionaries in the early Ottoman print enterprise.[9]

By the second half of the nineteenth century, Turkish lexicography had begun to consolidate around a monolingual focus, reflecting broader shifts in how language, knowledge, and authority were conceived within the Ottoman intellectual field. Rather than a direct outcome of reform, this change emerged from evolving ideas of linguistic clarity and a growing need to standardize expression across educational and bureaucratic settings. This study does not interpret that transformation as a measure of progress or delay. Instead, it situates it within the cultural and administrative conditions of the empire—the authority of the manuscript tradition, the state control over printing, and the cultural hierarchy among Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. These factors shaped how language was conceptualized and how lexicography functioned as both preservation and reform.

[9] Orlin Sabev, *İbrahim Müteferrika ya da İlk Osmanlı Matbaa Serüveni (1726–1746)* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2006), 100–104.

This study focuses on Ottoman Turkish dictionaries that most closely resemble the modern definition of a general monolingual dictionary—works that explain the words of a language to its own speakers and aim to represent its standard and most widely accepted forms. Selection of texts was initially guided by Aziz Gökçe's bibliographic work *Türkiye Türkçesinin Tarihî Sözlükleri*[10], and later refined according to criteria of historical continuity and content diversity. Special attention was given to dictionary pairs that allow for internal comparison. For instance, *Kitab-ı Müntahabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (1269 AH/1853 CE) and its so-called "expanded" version *İlaveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmaniyye* (1297 AH/1880 CE), both by the same author, were evaluated together. Similarly, Dr. Hüseyin Remzi's *Lûgat-ı Ecnebiye İlaveli Lûgat-ı Osmaniye* (1298 AH / 1881 CE), a concise and portable dictionary, was evaluated alongside his more comprehensive *Lugat-ı Remzî* (1305 AH / 1889 CE). In the foreword to *Lugat-ı Remzî*, Remzi explicitly states that the work includes scientific terminology, underscoring its broader scope and ambition compared to the earlier, shorter volume. This focus on expanding scientific vocabulary also appears in Ali Seydi's *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* (1330 AH / 1912–13 CE).

Beyond these comparative pairings, several dictionaries in the corpus stand out for their unique structural or conceptual interventions. In its new edition, Ahmed Vefik Pasha's *Lehce-i Osmânî Tabʿı Cedîd* (1306 AH / 1889–90 CE) introduced a significant structural and ideological intervention by dividing the dictionary into two distinct sections: one devoted to *Türkî* words—those of Turkic origin or well-integrated Turkish usage—and the other to Arabic and Persian borrowings. This typographical partition was designed to foreground the *Türkî* lexicon and to reinforce the linguistic integrity of Ottoman Turkish. On the other hand, *Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı* (1318 AH/1901–02 CE) and *Lugat-ı Cûdî* (1332 AH/1913–14 CE) concentrated on compiling Arabic and Persian vocabulary frequently used in Ottoman Turkish. These two works may be read as comprehensive catalogues of the very lexical elements that *Lehce-i Osmânî* sought to distinguish itself from, thereby illustrating divergent approaches to monolingual dictionary-making within the same intellectual landscape. Another early work of interest is Ebûzziyâ Tevfik's *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ* (1306 AH/1889–90 CE), which is considered not

[10] Aziz Gökçe, *Türkiye Türkçesinin Tarihî Sözlükleri* (Ankara: Kebikeç Yayınları, 1998).

just one of the earliest examples, but also the first representative of Western-style Turkish lexicography.[11] This dictionary, distinguished by its symbolic abbreviations and high print quality, was never completed. Muallim Nâci's contributions are represented by two distinct editions: *Tetimme-i Lugat-ı Nâcî* (1316–1317 AH / 1898–99 CE), which features the phrase 'çocuklar içün' ('for children') at the beginning of the letter alif (ا), and *Lugat-ı Nâcî* (1318 AH / 1900–01 CE), in which the phrase is absent, suggesting a shift in intended readership.

Kâmûs-ı Osmânî (1313 AH / 1895–96 CE) was included in this study because, unlike other dictionaries, it contains a wealth of literary examples that illustrate word usage in broader cultural contexts. The most recent dictionary analysed is Yeni Türkçe Lugat (1924 CE / 1342–43 AH), published shortly after the proclamation of the Republic and considered a symbolic milestone in the transition to modern Turkish lexicography.

Specialized, technical, and encyclopedic dictionaries were deliberately omitted from the analysis; instead, the research concentrated exclusively on general-purpose monolingual dictionaries that approximate modern lexicographical standards. All selected works were fully accessible, and the processes of text simplification and English translation were completed prior to discourse analysis and comparative evaluation.[12]

[11] Yavuzarslan, *Osmanlı Dönemi Türk Sözlükçülüğü*, 183.

[12] This corpus deliberately excludes specialised, technical, and encyclopaedic dictionaries. The focus is on general-purpose monolingual works that are structurally and functionally comparable across the nineteenth century, enabling coherent intra-genre analysis of paratext, entry structure, and stated aims. By contrast, dictionaries in agriculture, botany, philosophy, or naval terminology were produced sporadically and do not sustain conceptual continuity across the period, so their inclusion would fragment the dataset and weaken comparative claims. Verse dictionaries used in schooling are likewise excluded, both because the pedagogical literature has already covered them extensively and because their instructional orientation complicates discourse analysis centred on authorial intent. Situated in a nineteenth-century landscape shaped by the spread of print and the coupling of education, bureaucracy, and publishing, the selected general dictionaries provide a continuous basis for examining how lexicographers frame purpose, audience, and language ideology in their prefaces. To trace continuity and change into the early Republic, the corpus extends to *Yeni Türkçe Lugat* (1924) as a benchmark for the transition to modern Turkish lexicography; and to avoid a strictly Istanbul-centred view while registering provincial intellectual life, it includes *Lugat-ı Cûdî* produced in Trabzon, bringing ilmiye/medrese networks into view. The principal selection criteria were: (i) general scope and monolingual design approximating modern lexicographical standards; (ii) availability of complete, legible, and citable copies (cover-to-cover, including all paratexts); (iii) the presence of a preface in which the author states motive and method (with a single exception—*Lugat-ı Nâcî*—explicitly noted in the catalogue); and (iv) comparability—allowing horizontal comparison across the same author's revised/expanded/supplemented editions and vertical comparison among different authors' works.

Lexicographical production in this period was not purely linguistic; it also reflected institutional priorities and authorial positioning. The Printing Regulation *(Matbaalar Nizamnâmesi)* of 1888 (and the 1895 revisions) required books to be examined by the Ministry of Education (*Maarif Nezareti*) before publication and to obtain a license; title pages were to record the name of the press, the date of impression, and the formula "printed with the authorization of the Ministry." Panegyrical prayers to the *sultan*—especially in the Hamidian era—appear in many prefaces; rather than a legal obligation, they functioned as a strategy of alignment useful for legitimacy, patronage, and distribution. Authorial stances were not uniform: some foregrounded pedagogical benefit and clarity of expression, while others aimed more explicitly to reshape usage through normative claims. A telling instance is *Lehce-i Osmânî*, which defines its purpose as "to facilitate the recording of derivational patterns by the *havâs* (the elite) and thus to serve as a procedural guide for teachers,"[13] disclosing an intention to direct practice as well as to describe it. The corpus intersects several political regimes that structured the print environment in distinct ways: the Tanzimat Period (1839–1876), the Hamidian Regime (1876–1909), the Second Constitutional period under the ascendancy of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) (1908–1918), the Armistice/Occupation years (1918–1922), and the early Republic (1923–1924). In this framework, censorship and licensing mechanisms were institutionalized above all under Abdülhamid II, and procedures of review and authorization expanded.

The classification of certain words and usages as "correct" or "appropriate" within these dictionaries reflects the traces of a historically contingent linguistic norm. Evaluations based on terms like *fasih* ("proper, flawless") and *galat* ("incorrect, erroneous") point to a broader concern with linguistic purification and clarity. The ideal of a "pure and correct" language often overlapped with efforts at linguistic regulation and intervention. But did these works truly respond to a need for language standardization? Answering this question, in turn, requires an investigation into whether the dictionaries shared a common orientation. What kinds of intellectual references and normative frameworks guided the authors in constructing their definitions? Who were the

[13]Ahmed Vefik Paşa, *Lehce-i Osmânî: Tabʿ-ı Cedîd* (İstanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1306 [1889–90]), 4.

lugaviyyûn mentioned in Kâmûs-ı Türkî, and what did this designation imply about the social position of lexicographers at the time?

These questions allow us to analyze dictionary-making not merely as the production of lexical content, but as a practice shaped by underlying intentions, assumptions, and cultural orientations. In approaching these texts, I have been particularly influenced by the Cambridge school's emphasis on the historical situatedness of discourse and the centrality of authorial intention. Rather than treating dictionaries as static linguistic records, I view them as historically embedded interventions—products of specific moments, shaped by the intellectual dispositions, cultural assumptions, and communicative aims of their authors. This perspective compels me to ask not only what these texts say, but why and how they say it—seeking to uncover the intentions behind their construction, and to understand their discursive role within the ideological and linguistic transformations of their time.

These interpretive commitments resonate with the critiques articulated by leading intellectuals of the time, who perceived dictionary-making as a site of ideological contestation. Prominent intellectuals of the period voiced their concerns through sharp and direct criticism. Ebûzziyâ Tevfik, in particular, targeted the widely circulated Redhouse dictionary, dismissing it as "…not a dictionary that comprehensively encompasses the *elfâz* (words) of our Turkish, but rather a mere dictionary notebook in which Arabic and Persian words—and their (often false and incorrect) translated meanings—have been compiled,.." and arguing that it imposed foreign semantic frameworks rather than reflecting Ottoman Turkish usage.[14] Şemseddin Sâmî, on the other hand, stressed the urgent societal need for a comprehensive Turkish dictionary, stating: "Our need for a perfect Turkish dictionary is so evident that there is hardly a literate person who does not feel it."[15] He criticized dictionaries published under the title *Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*, asserting that up to 80% of their content consisted of words that were neither used nor needed in Ottoman Turkish, concluding that "they are better regarded as non-existent than celebrated for their existence." These critiques reflect a broader view of lexicography not merely as the listing of word meanings, but as part of a larger effort

[14] Ebûzziyâ Tevfik, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Ebûzziyâ, 1306 [1889]), 9.
[15] Şemseddîn Sâmi, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* (İstanbul: İkdâm Matbaası, 1317 [1901]), 4.

toward linguistic purification and autonomy. Dictionary-making thus emerges not merely as a lexical enterprise but as a form of strategic linguistic intervention, anchored in ideals of simplification, *fesâhat* ("eloquence"), and linguistic preservation.

This thesis is composed of three main chapters. Chapter I examines the historical and institutional context in which monolingual dictionary initiatives emerged in the late Ottoman period. The chapter opens by situating the Tanzimat as the broader framework within which linguistic reform took shape, and proceeds to analyze transformations in education, the expansion of literacy, and the new linguistic needs that accompanied these developments. Within this context, debates surrounding language simplification and the naming of the language (Ottoman, Turkish, *Türkî*) are discussed with reference to both lexicographers' writings and the relevant scholarship. The second part of Chapter I focuses on print culture and the regulation of knowledge, addressing the legal and administrative frameworks that structured publishing activity. This section examines the Printing Regulations of 1847, 1864, 1888, and 1895, the role of the *Encümen-i Teftiş ve Muayene* as a mechanism of inspection and review, the licensing system for authored works, and classificatory distinctions between "useful" and "harmful" books. The chapter concludes with a critical review of the existing literature on the dictionaries included in the corpus.

Chapter II centers on authorial statements found in dictionary prefaces in order to clarify the motivations that gave rise to lexicographical initiatives in the nineteenth-century Ottoman context, the strategies of legitimacy upon which these initiatives relied, and the main lines of debate that became visible in the prefaces themselves. While all fifteen monolingual dictionaries in the corpus are examined, the chapter foregrounds two formative figures in order to render the problem field more analytically legible. The first section focuses on Ahmed Vefik Paşa's *Lehce-i Osmânî* (in two volumes), examining his positioning of Ottoman Turkish as a "dialect" within the historical trajectory of Turkish, his programmatic separation of Turkish-origin words, and issues of compilation technique, orthographic practice, volume constraints, typographical choices, and systems of abbreviation *(Rumûzât).* The chapter then turns to Şemseddin Sâmî's *Kâmûs-ı Türkî,* analyzing its preface as a systematic justification of the need for a monolingual dictionary and a sustained critique of earlier lexicographical traditions. This discussion addresses Sâmî's narrative of linguistic crisis, his methodological claims and evaluative criteria,

decisions regarding arrangement and publication, and the assertion of public value articulated in the section titled *Tabiʿin İfâde-i Merâmı*. The chapter also considers, in comparative perspective, the critiques directed at other dictionaries within the corpus through their respective prefaces.

Chapter III investigates the relationship between dictionary production and mechanisms of control in the Ottoman Empire. Regulation is approached not solely in terms of prohibition, but as a broader field encompassing encouragement, licensing, content review, and distribution practices. The chapter traces the production of the fifteen dictionaries across shifting political and legal contexts, from the relatively open environment in which *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (1853) was published, through the intensified control regimes of the Hamidian period, to the more flexible yet wartime-constrained context following the Press Law of 1909, and finally to the distinct political and linguistic setting of *Yeni Türkçe Lugat*, published in the early Republican era. At the core of the chapter lies a systematic comparison of the fifty-six entries included in the "Supplement" *(İlâve)* section of Ali Seydî Bey's *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* with their counterparts across the other dictionaries in the corpus. This comparison reveals patterns of circulation, exclusion, and continuity in lexical usage, and is situated in relation to the scholarly literature on "prohibited words," engaging the works of Mete Tunçay, Cevdet Kudret, François Georgeon, Louis Bazin, and other relevant studies. The chapter concludes by classifying the *İlâve* entries into three categories: vocabulary unique to *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, terms shared by a limited number of dictionaries, and concepts exhibiting sustained circulation across the corpus.

The Conclusion brings together the dictionary examples and historical contexts examined throughout the thesis in order to assess the kind of practical field formed by monolingual Ottoman Turkish lexicography. Rather than treating dictionary-making as a coherent program directed from a single center, this section approaches it as a set of fragmented initiatives shaped by differing needs and expectations across time. Accordingly, the emergence of these dictionaries is explained neither as the inevitable outcome of the Tanzimat reforms nor as the product of individual authorial choices alone. Instead, the conclusion situates lexicographical production within a process jointly shaped by education, print culture, readership, and mechanisms of regulation. By doing so, it reflects on what this multilayered process signifies for Ottoman linguistic thought

and places monolingual dictionaries within a broader historical perspective on the intellectual functions they assumed in the late Ottoman world.

This thesis argues that monolingual Ottoman Turkish dictionaries are best understood as historically situated texts shaped by competing linguistic ideals, institutional constraints, and authorial intentions, rather than as neutral repositories of meaning. Reading prefaces alongside definitional practices and tracing selected entries across different regulatory regimes, the study demonstrates how dictionary-making became entangled with late Ottoman discussions of language, knowledge, and public legitimacy.

CHAPTER I

1.1. Political–Institutional Context (Tanzimat to 1914)

The term *tanzimât* (تنظيمات), the plural of *tanzîm* (تنظيم) ("regulation," "re-ordering"), is, in the nineteenth-century Ottoman context, closely associated with the 1839 imperial proclamation and the discourse of "reorganization" that crystallized around it. In contemporary usage, the 1839 document was more commonly referred to as the *Gülhâne Hatt-ı Hümâyunu* (or simply the *Gülhâne Hattı*), whereas the label "Tanzimat Edict" appears to be a later designation, largely consolidated by subsequent historiography (especially in the twentieth century).[16]

The Tanzimat emerged within a longer trajectory of reform that began under Selim III and continued through a series of initiatives under Mahmud II. These initiatives were framed by a shared ambition to establish a "new order" in the empire. The 1839 *Gülhâne Hatt-ı Hümâyunu* articulated the reciprocal obligations of state and subjects in more explicit terms and functioned as a social compact: it promised core guarantees such as security of life (*emniyet-i can*), protection of honor and dignity (*mahfûziyyet-i ırz-u nâmus*), and protection of property (*mal*).[17] In return, the subjects were expected to fulfill civic duties such as taxation and military service, and to accept certain sacrifices in the name of public order and the common good. In this sense, the edict redefined the "raison d'être of the state" through the provision of security to its subjects. At the same time, it instituted a more legible language of responsibility for the governed.

Following the death of Mahmud II on 28 June 1839, the *Gülhâne Hatt-ı Hümâyunu* was proclaimed during the reign of Abdülmecid I on 3 November 1839, publicly read by the Minister of Foreign Affairs (*Hâriciye Nâzırı*) Mustafa Reşid Paşa. Classical narratives of the *Tanzimat* often emphasize that Abdülmecid swore to implement these reforms; that ministers, state officials, and the *ulemâ* were required to take the same oath; and that those who violated the new order were to be punished regardless of rank—motifs presented as foundational elements of the Tanzimat process.

[16] Alp Eren Topal, "Political Reforms as Religious Revival: Conceptual Foundations of Tanzimat," *Oriente Moderno* 101, no. 2 (2021): 156.
[17] Banu Turnaoğlu, *The Formation of Turkish Republicanism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 51-52.

Yet, beyond narrating the Tanzimat as a sequence of events, it is equally necessary to ask what needs generated this "reordering" and how the positions of key actors were configured. Ottoman historiography has frequently underlined that a new phase began through structural transformations in state institutions and the reorganization of the center. Within this interpretive frame, Selim III's military reforms (*Nizâm-ı Cedîd*) are seen as evolving into a broader bureaucratic trajectory, while Mahmud II's reforms are read as the Tanzimat's preparatory infrastructure—and, in some accounts, almost as its "will" or legacy.

At this point, the historiography on the Tanzimat's "beginning" tends to oscillate between two broad emphases. A widely circulated narrative treats the 1839 *Gülhâne Hatt-ı Hümâyunu* as a decisive rupture between a "classical order" and a modernizing, Western-oriented state. Within this framework, Mustafa Reşid Paşa is positioned as the principal architect who transferred "the new" into Ottoman governance through European experience. By contrast, the institutional -continuity approach associated with scholars such as Ali Akyıldız and Carter Findley proposes that the *Tanzimat* should be understood less as an abrupt ideological revolution and more as a structural transformation built upon the accumulation of centralizing and institutionalizing initiatives accelerated under Mahmud II—particularly along the axis of the Sublime Porte (*Bâbıâli*) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Nezâreti*). In this perspective, the driving force of reform becomes visible through the transformation of the bureaucracy. This transformation is often described as a shift from the *kalemiyye* tradition toward a more specialized civil-administrative *(mülkiye)* formation, accompanied by the expansion of decision-making, correspondence, and procedural regimes.[18] As Akyıldız has argued, such expansion does not merely mean institutional proliferation; it can also amplify a technical administrative rationality that operates through form, procedure, and paperwork.[19] One concrete threshold in this transformation was the reorganization of the *reisülküttâb* into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Nezâreti*) and the reframing of diplomatic/correspondence work within a more professional bureaucratic structure at the Sublime Porte (*Bâbıâli*). The Translation Bureau *(Tercüme Odası),* founded in 1821 as

[18] Carter V. Findley, *Kalemiyeden Mülkiyeye: Osmanlı Memurlarının Toplumsal Tarihi*, trans. Gül Çağalı Güven (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2011), 19–30.
[19] Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789–1922* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980); Ali Akyıldız, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teşkilâtında Reform (1836–1856)* (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1993).

the empire recalibrated its translation infrastructure in response to the Greek revolt, in turn functioned as a critical "school," training new cadres and intensifying conceptual and linguistic contact.

Such institutional and intellectual dynamics draw language directly into the practice of governance: the naming of new concepts circulating through translation, the reorganization of official written language, and the consolidation of modern bureaucratic terminology. Together, these developments nourished a search for linguistic "commonality" and "standards."[20] Within this context, initiatives such as the Council of Learned Men (*Encümen-i Dâniş*), with their ambition to coordinate scholarly production and translation, transformed the question of "which term should stabilize through which equivalent" into an institutional agenda. From the standpoint of lexicography, such endeavors can be read as part of a broader standardization climate that aimed to systematize lexical/terminological repertoires and render public language more predictable.

The historiography likewise emphasizes that Mustafa Reşid Paşa occupied a leading role in drafting and implementing the reforms; together with Mehmed Emin Âli Paşa and Keçecizâde Mehmed Fuad Paşa, he strengthened the political position of a governing elite commonly described as the "Tanzimat statesmen (*Tanzimatçılar*)." The rise of this elite is often linked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs's (*Hariciye Nezâreti*) emergence as a central bureaucratic magnet. Mahmud II's elevation of the *reisülküttâb* into the rank of "Foreign Minister" is frequently treated as a symbolic step that anchored diplomacy, negotiation, and a new bureaucratic mentality in a more institutional framework. A longer background to this shift is also traced to Selim III's establishment of permanent embassies in London, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin beginning in 1793, a move understood as an early attempt to institutionalize stability in foreign policy. This transition has been analyzed as a major threshold in the institutionalization of Ottoman modernity. The personalization of the Tanzimat through Reşid Paşa is part of this interpretive landscape: in certain narratives he appears as the "face" of reform and the carrier of a modernizing ideal, praised by rising Tanzimat bureaucrats and segments of the intellectual sphere as a figure of progress, patriotism, and probity—an idealization whose most visible emblem is the description of Reşid Paşa as "*medeniyetin resûlü*" (the

[20] Ali Akyıldız, *Osmanlı Bürokrasisi ve Modernleşme* (Istanbul: Iletişim Yayınları, 2012), 103–116.

"messenger of civilization") by Şinasi. Tanpınar, in turn, notes that Şinasi, who speaks of civilization almost as a religion in his poetry, praises Reşid Paşa "like a prophet" and frames "law" (*kanun*) as the "book" of this new faith.[21]

How, then, should the content of the 1839 edict itself be characterized? Selçuk Akşin Somel has argued that the text exhibits continuity with the traditional "circle of justice" (*dâire-i adâlet*)—a framework structured around the interdependence of state, army, taxation, welfare, and justice.[22] Halil İnalcık famously foregrounded this point by emphasizing the edict's dual character: the *Gülhâne Hattı* signals respect for *şerîʿat* and a traditional understanding of the state through conventional formulas, while simultaneously introducing modern concepts in its conception of law and governance and seeking, for practical ends, to reorganize administration. İnalcık also describes the edict as an *adâletnâme* justice ordinance—by virtue of its claim to restore order and justice through re-regulation of government.[23]

At the same time, the *Tanzimat* is frequently understood as more than a "reform program": it produced a political language shaped by the imperative to prolong the life of a multi-ethnic empire. Here, however, a recurring teleological reading requires correction. As Alp Eren Topal stresses, it is common to attribute a promise of "equality" (*müsâvât*) to the *Gülhâne Hatt-ı Hümâyunu*, yet the text does not explicitly establish equality as a concept; rather, it operates through a language of "justice for all" and the assurance of order.[24] The question of equality becomes more visible in the diplomatic debates surrounding the status of non-Muslim subjects, especially during the Crimean War (1853–1856), and it reaches a new threshold when *müsâvât* is formulated more explicitly as a political-legal agenda in the 1856 Reform Edict (*Islahat Fermanı*). In this sense, Ottomanism (*Osmanlıcılık*) can be read not only as an overarching rhetoric designed to secure unity and loyalty, but also as a search for imperial cohesion increasingly rearticulated, from the 1850s onward, through the language of law, representation, and

[21] Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *19. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (İstanbul: Çağlayan Kitabevi, 1988), 277.
[22] Selçuk Akşin Somel, *Osmanlı'da Eğitimin Modernleşmesi (1839–1908)* (Istanbul: Iletişim Yayınları, 2010), 21.
[23] Halil İnalcık, "Sened-i İttifak ve Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümâyunu," *Belleten* 28, no. 112 (October 1964): 619–622.
[24] Alp Eren Topal, "Political Reforms as Religious Revival: Conceptual Foundations of Tanzimat," *Oriente Moderno* 101, no. 2 (2021): 157.

subjecthood/citizenship.[25] The role of the Sultan as a paternal figure—producing legitimacy and reinforcing relations of allegiance—has likewise been treated as a deliberate dimension of this reformed language.[26]

Because the 1839 edict is often treated as an early textual threshold for Ottomanism, some historians have drawn an analogy with the 1215 Magna Carta, framing it symbolically as a document that inaugurates constitutional thinking. By contrast, certain legal historians (such as Tarık Zafer Tunaya) locate the beginning of Ottoman constitutional development in the 1808 *Sened-i İttifak*.[27] Whether such an analogy is necessary—or which starting point is "correct"— is a separate issue; what matters here is that taking the rescript itself as our point of departure helps us understand its nature and positioning**,** which in turn makes its historical meaning more intelligible.

Ottomanism between 1839 and 1913 is often described as a developmental line that nonetheless passed through distinct phases: (i) a Sublime Porte–centered (*Bâbıâli*), centralizing, state-rationalist Ottomanism from the 1830s to 1875; (ii) new inflections shaped by the Young Ottoman opposition (*Yeni Osmanlılar*) and constitutional pragmatism between 1868 and 1878; (iii) Ottomanism articulated within the Young Turk opposition (*Jön Türkler*) to Abdülhamid II; and (iv) the renewed experimentation with Ottomanism as a political language after the Second Constitutional Revolution (*İkinci Meşrutiyet*).[28] The most comprehensive official formulation of Ottomanism at the level of state texts is generally identified with the 1876 Constitution (*Kanûn-ı Esâsî*). In the Imperial Rescript dated 24 December 1876, the necessity of unity and solidarity among all subjects for the empire's material and economic progress is emphasized, and this is presented as achievable through the universal enjoyment of freedom, justice, and equality—forming a "civilized social whole" (*heyet-i ictimâiyye-i medeniyye*).[29]

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[25] Alp Eren Topal, "Ottomanism in History and Historiography: Fortunes of a Concept," in *Narrated Empires: Perceptions of Late Habsburg and Ottoman Multinationalism*, ed. Johanna Chovanec and Olof Heilo (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021): 77–98.

[26] Selçuk Akşin Somel, "Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlıcılık Düşüncesi (1839–1913)," in *Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi*, ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, 5th ed., *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasî Düşünce*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 94.

[27] Somel, "Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlıcılık Düşüncesi," 93.

[28] Somel, "Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlıcılık Düşüncesi," 88.

[29] A. Şeref Gözübüyük and Suna Kili, *Türk Anayasa Metinleri*, 2nd ed. (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1982), 25–26.

The dictionary corpus examined in this study (1853–1913/14) thus spans a political-institutional landscape extending from the reformist-administrative expansion under Abdülmecid I (1839–1861) and Abdülaziz (1861–1876), through the logic of intensified central rule under Abdülhamid II (1876–1909) following the constitutional threshold of 1876, and into the more visibly constitutional public sphere shaped by the restoration of the constitution in 1908 and the reign of Mehmed V Reşad (1909–1918). This arc is also marked by the repeated reconstruction of legitimacy regimes (edict/reform discourse, constitutional frameworks, representative politics) and the conceptual repertoires that accompanied them.

Oppositional movements that developed alongside official Ottomanism contributed, over time, to the formation of divergent ideological lines. While the Young Ottomans (*Yeni Osmanlılar*) cultivated a constitutional Ottomanism, they also engaged the early sources of Islamism; analyses that trace Namık Kemal's trajectory toward a stronger Islamist emphasis after the 1870s point to this ideological permeability. In a similar vein, Turkism became more visible as a different line of solution once it appeared increasingly difficult to contain nationalist dynamics within the empire through Ottomanism alone.

This political-ideological setting fundamentally transformed the channels of intellectual production and the institutions that sustained them. A key driver of this change was, as mentionned above, the Translation Bureau (*Tercüme Odası*), which operated as a de facto "language school" for the era. By training personnel for both the state bureaucracy and intellectual life, the Bureau facilitated an intensified contact with Western languages, which in turn accelerated the circulation of new concepts. Consequently, debates over modernization and Westernization moved to the center of the period's mental horizon.

Parallel to these developments, the expansion of schooling and the systemic reorganization of education following the Reform Edict (*Islahat Fermanı*) served a broader political agenda. The fact that Ottomanism generated internal oppositions, such as the Young Ottomans (*Yeni Osmanlılar*), further indicates that reform discourse was conflictual, plural, and prone to differentiation. The Young Ottoman movement (*Yeni Osmanlılar*) is often treated as among the first instances of political opposition that sought to make direct, forceful critiques of Ottoman governance publicly visible through the

period's mass communication channels. As Şerif Mardin underscores, the Young Ottomans attempted to socialize political critique via the institutions and media of the modern press.[30]

Within the historiography of the Hamidian era, the relationship between political dynamics and intellectual production has been interpreted through various lenses. In this context, Şerif Mardin draws particular attention to how the field of language intersected with political thought. According to Mardin, the specific conditions of the period led certain intellectual currents—particularly emerging strands of Turkism (*Türkçülük*)—to operate within the technical domains of linguistics and philology. In this analysis, scientific debates over naming, etymology, and the genealogy of language effectively functioned as a "linguistic guise" (*lengüistik kisve*) for arguments that might otherwise be viewed as politically sensitive. This dynamic is illustrated in Mardin's examination of Şemsettin Sâmî, who approached the nomenclature of the empire's language as a matter of historical accuracy rather than mere convention. Sâmî's rejection of the term "Ottoman language" (*Osmanlı lisânı*) in favor of *lisân-ı Türkî* is interpreted by Mardin not just as a philological correction, but as a discourse on the pre-imperial roots of the Turkish element. Mardin further situates this within a European context, noting that nineteenth-century philological works, such as those by Ferdinand Brunot (1860-1938), were often mobilized to cultivate patriotic sentiment.[31]

Similarly, the publication of *İkdam* in 1893 with the masthead "It is a Turkish newspaper" (*Türk gazetesidir*) is highlighted in this literature as a moment where cultural framing performed a broader agenda-setting role. Mardin emphasizes that while *İkdam* maintained a politically conservative stance compatible with the regime, it provided a platform for figures like Necip Asım and Veled Çelebi to explore the cultural attributes of the Turks.[32] From this perspective, dictionary writing and linguistic inquiry in the late Ottoman period appear as complex fields where technical scholarship and collective self-description were deeply intertwined.

After 1908, the reconfiguration of the political field under the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki*) intensified public debate over centralization and

[30] Şerif Mardin, *Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesinin Doğuşu* (Istanbul: Iletişim Yayınları, 2004), 11.
[31] Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895–1908* (Istanbul: Iletişim Yayınları, 2004), 114.
[32] Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 62–63.

education. This atmosphere ultimately strengthened the conditions for dictionary projects that sought to standardize the language and establish a "common" linguistic ground.

Finally, as Topal notes, historiography on the Tanzimat has diversified more visibly in the last decade, in part because long-dominant interpretive habits have been questioned. Two tendencies have often shaped earlier accounts: one places the Tanzimat within a linear modernization narrative centered on Westernization and secularization, treating modernity as "natural" and inevitable; another reads the Tanzimat teleologically as a prelude to imperial decline. Topal links the endurance of these narratives to a recurrent inclination to reduce reform politics to the intentions and ideas of a few "enlightened/modern" bureaucratic figures (for instance, Mustafa Reşid Paşa), while leaving intra-elite factionalism, conflicts, and struggles for power in the background—moves that can obscure the contentious and complex character of political reform. For Topal, a more historically grounded understanding of the Tanzimat requires close attention to the conceptual world of the period. To construct a more accurate conceptual history of the Tanzimat, he proposes distinguishing three interwoven layers: (1) the conceptual framework of the 1839 edict and a semantic analysis of the text in light of preceding shifts in meaning; (2) the ways the Tanzimat was adopted by elites and broader publics throughout the nineteenth century and stabilized as a "concept" within bureaucratic memory; and (3) the accumulation of historical narratives and popular myths over a century and a half.[33]

For the purposes of this study, despite competing readings of the Tanzimat (rupture versus continuity, "great men" versus institutional transformation, internal dynamics versus external pressures), several pressures converged to intensify the need for standardization in administrative and intellectual domains: the pursuit of imperial integrity within a multiethnic polity; the reordering of center–province relations (including the problem of local notables); fiscal-administrative constraints (especially the limits of *iltizam* and the state's revenue-extraction capacity); and the pressures of the empire's integration into the global economy. The production and circulation of dictionaries constitutes one of the most visible technical instruments of this

[33] Alp Eren Topal, "Political Reforms as Religious Revival: Conceptual Foundations of Tanzimat," *Oriente Moderno* 101, no. 2 (2021): 156.

standardization drive in the domain of language, a point developed further in the following sections (especially 1.2 and 1.3).

This political-institutional arc did not merely provide a chronological backdrop; it dictated the functional requirements of the lexicographical works produced within it. Similarly, the peak of the Hamidian era's centralizing drive and the rise of a distinct "cultural Turkism" are crystallized in Şemsettin Sâmî's *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, a work that attempted to stabilize the empire's linguistic identity at a moment of profound ideological flux. By examining a corpus that includes the major dictionary initiatives of the era, in the following pages I treat these dictionaries not as neutral word-lists, but as primary sites where the 'reordering' of the Ottoman mind was both recorded and contested.

1.2. Education, Literacy, and New Linguistic Needs

With the advent of the Tanzimat, the Ottoman state's engagement with education cannot be explained simply as an effort to expand schooling or eliminate ignorance. Rather, this engagement should be read as part of a broader attempt to reestablish political and administrative stability. Following the Reform Edict of 1856, this effort acquired a more explicit legal and ideological framework, while the international pressures that intensified after the Crimean War[34] and growing internal competition transformed education into a domain directly linked to state capacity. In this context, education was redefined not merely as a pedagogical concern, but as one of the instruments through which the population could be regulated, loyalty cultivated, and administrative rationality disseminated.

Benjamin C. Fortna's conceptualization of this process as a form of "restoration" captures both its conservative dimension and its contested nature.[35] As Fortna emphasizes, education was closely tied to the empire's imperative of self-preservation. Ottoman educational reforms, therefore, should be understood not as a series of technical adjustments, but as political and ideological interventions intertwined with the mechanisms through which power sought to reproduce itself.

[34] See Selçuk Akşin Somel, "Kırım Savaşı, Islahat Fermanı ve Osmanlı Eğitim Düzeninde Dönüşümler," in *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, ed. Mehmet Seyitdanlıoğlu and Halil İnalcık (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2010), 45–60.
[35] Benjamin C. Fortna, *Mekteb-i Hümayûn: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Son Döneminde İslam, Devlet ve Eğitim*, trans. Pelin Siral (Istanbul: Iletişim Yayınları, 2005), 52–55.

This transformation was not unique to the Ottoman case. Throughout the nineteenth century, particularly in the French context, education came to be seen as the primary remedy for social problems. What Fortna terms a "remarkable optimism" rested on the assumption that order, prosperity, and political stability could be achieved through the education of the populace.[36] While this outlook led scholars to characterize the era globally as an "Age of Education,"[37] the expansion of schooling rarely produced ideological consensus. On the contrary, educational modernization almost everywhere unfolded amidst conflict and rivalry across different contexts.

In the Ottoman case, these tensions were especially pronounced. According to Fortna, Western missionaries, regional propaganda networks, and local minority actors emerged as rival forces in the educational sphere, complicating the reform process through their institutional capacity and organizational reach. As a result, Ottoman educational reforms developed along a dual trajectory: while new forms of education drew on instruments borrowed from Europe, they were simultaneously designed as mechanisms to address local needs and to counter external influence. Ottoman educational reform thus cannot be reduced either to mere imitation or to an entirely endogenous transformation, and its logic becomes visible only when these pressures are read together; it should instead be understood as a hybrid field shaped at the intersection of local dynamics and global pressures.[38]

At this point, the crucial question is why education increasingly came to be organized around language, texts, and terminology. Certain early regulations predating the Tanzimat already point to education's capacity to function as a tool of social discipline. Sultan Mahmud II's decree of AH 1239–1240/CE 1824–1825 mandating religious instruction, often interpreted solely as a religious measure, can also be read as an early attempt to extend literacy and to bring the population under administrative and moral supervision. This initiative is significant insofar as it directs attention away from educational content alone and toward the forms and instruments through which education operated.

[36] Fortna, *Mekteb-i Hümayûn*, 52.
[37] Fortna, *Mekteb-i Hümayûn*, 67.
[38] Fortna, *Mekteb-i Hümayûn*, 69.

This tendency became more systematic with the establishment of the *Mekâtib-i Maʿârif-i ʿAdliyye ve Ulûm-u Edebiyye* in AH 1255 /CE 1839. These institutions aimed to train a new type of civil bureaucrat and foregrounded *kitâbet*, correct expression, and written communication techniques, thereby rendering visible the need for a functional and standardized language suited to administrative purposes. The *Meclis-i Umûr-ı Nâfıʿa Lâyihası* prepared in the same year by the Council of State (*Şûrâ-yı Devlet*) explicitly defined education as the "source of wealth" (*menbaʿ-ı servet ve ganâ*), framing ignorance not only as a moral failing but also as an economic problem. The central issue, therefore, was no longer the mere expansion of education, but the linguistic means through which "useful and practical knowledge" could be transmitted.[39]

As Selçuk Akşin Somel demonstrates, discussions surrounding this lâyiha revealed deep concerns within the Council of State (*Şûrâ-yı Devlet*) and the Council of Education (*Meclis-i Maʿârif*): students trained only in Qurʾanic recitation and basic catechism were deemed unable to follow the *ilm-i lugat* and moral texts intended for the *selâtin* schools. The underlying assumption was that written language required a specific grammatical foundation. Accordingly, officials argued that instruction should begin with Arabic *sarf* and *nahv*, reflecting a widespread conviction that Ottoman Turkish could not be properly comprehended without a grounding in Arabic and Persian grammar. Simultaneously, the state required instructors to demonstrate competence not just in grammar, but in ilm-i lugat, inşâ, moral texts, and calligraphy.[40] This emphasis indicates that the goal of language instruction extended beyond grammatical proficiency toward the production of a correct, regulated, and normatively defined written language. In this respect, *ilm-i lugat* emerges as an early and distinct point of contact between pedagogical practice and lexicographical logic.

To understand this emphasis, it helps to recall the older pedagogical place of *ilm-i lugat* within the *medrese*. Given that the Ottoman Empire was an Islamic state, its lexicographical tradition is generally understood to have originated from the Arabic model. As Arabic occupied the position of the "language of authority" in scholarly discourse, the principal textbooks and sources of the Islamic sciences taught in Ottoman medreses were written in Arabic. Advancement or specialization in these fields was

[39] Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire 1839–1908* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 57-59.
[40] Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education*, 31–32.

therefore inconceivable without a solid command of Arabic. This centrality made the teaching of Arabic a fundamental concern of both the Ottoman educational system and scholarly authors.[41] Before proceeding to grammar or textual interpretation, the expansion of students' vocabulary was regarded as a prerequisite—indeed, as a necessity considered "essential within religion" (*din içre elzem*).[42] For this reason, *ilm-i lugat* (the science of vocabulary) occupied a place among the introductory subjects of the *medrese* curriculum.

A brief clarification concerning the functioning of Ottoman *medreses* is warranted here. As noted by İsmail Erünsal and Bilgin Aydın, from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries there existed no standardized curriculum or fixed set of textbooks in the medrese system; educational practice was largely determined by the discretion of the *müderris*. A limited number of treatises outlining curricular sequences—most notably Tokadî İshak b. Hasan's *Nazmü'l-ʿUlûm* and Erzurumlu İbrahim Hakkı's *Tertîbü'l-ʿUlûm*—have survived. These works summarize the order in which various branches of knowledge were taught and indicate the position of *lugat* within this sequence. Although direct documentary evidence on curricula remains scarce, the circulation of textbooks and lecture series can be reconstructed through indirect sources such as biographical literature, *icâzetnâmes*, and *vakfiye* records. These sources demonstrate that, despite curricular variation, the study of *lugat* and the authoritative status of Arabic were consistently maintained.[43]

Concrete evidence for the role of dictionaries in Ottoman education can be found in estate inventories (*terekes*) examined by Bilgin Aydın and İsmail Erünsal. Drawing on *tereke* records from the Kısmet-i Askeriye Court (*Mahkeme-i Kısmet-i Askeriyye*) and other Istanbul court registers, their study identifies books owned by students in Ottoman medreses. Among sixty-four student estates dated between AH 1089–1322/CE 1678–1904, works on *fıkıh* (Islamic jurisprudence), grammar, *belâgat* (rhetoric), and *lugat* appear most frequently.

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[41] Betül Can, "Osmanlı Medrese Müfredât Programlarında Arapçanın Yeri (XVII.–XVIII. Yüzyıl)," in *Osmanlı Medreseleri: Eğitim, Yönetim ve Finans*, ed. Fuat Aydın, Mahmut Zengin, Kübra Cevherli and Yunus Kaymaz (İstanbul: Mahya Yayıncılık, 2019), 149.

[42] Şükran Fazlıoğlu, "Ta'lîm ile İrşâd Arasında: Erzurumlu İbrahim Hakkı'nın Medrese Ders Müfredatı," *Divan: Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, no. 18 (June 2005): 166.

[43] Bilgin Aydın and İsmail E. Erünsal, "Tereke Kayıtlarına Göre Osmanlı Medrese Talebelerinin Okuduğu Kitaplar (XVII–XX. Yüzyıllar)," in *Osmanlı Medreseleri: Eğitim, Yönetim ve Finans*, ed. Fuat Aydın, Mahmut Zengin, Kübra Cevherli and Yunus Kaymaz (Istanbul: Mahya Yayıncılık, 2019), 96.

The most commonly recorded dictionary in these inventories is *Ahterî-i Kebîr*, comprising approximately forty thousand entries and serving as a basic reference work for more than a century. This is followed by *Vankulu Lugatı*, which appears in two inventories. Among Persian–Turkish dictionaries, *Tuhfe-i Şâhidî*, composed in verse by Muğlalı Şâhidî in AH 921/CE 1515–1516 to facilitate the reading of the *Mesnevî*, is the most prevalent. Other dictionaries—including *Lugat-ı Ferişte*, *Lugat-ı Türkî*, *Lugat-ı Fârisî*, and *Lugat-ı Mirkât*—appear only sporadically. Dictionaries intended for language instruction were also used beyond the medrese, extending into Ottoman elementary schools (*sıbyan mektepleri*). In this context, *Tuhfe-i Vehbî* appears in one estate record, while *Sübha-i Sıbyân*, written for children's Persian instruction, appears in another. Several inventories list dictionaries under the generic title *Kâmûs* without identifying an author, while *Burhân-ı Kâtıʿ* appears only in a record dated H. 1322 / CE 1904. Whether the two works recorded under the name *Burhân* correspond to *Burhân-ı Kâtıʿ* remains unclear.[44] Despite these bibliographic ambiguities, the material record nonetheless indicates that dictionaries were indispensable instruments for navigating the empire's text-centered educational universe. Yet, the nineteenth century marked a qualitative shift: whereas previous centuries relied on multilingual dictionaries primarily to decode authoritative texts, this new era—driven by fresh educational and bureaucratic imperatives—witnessed the emergence of a distinct desire and necessity for a "monolingual" dictionary for the first time.

1.3. Print Culture, Censorship and Governance of Texts

The first printing press founded by Turks in the Ottoman Empire began operating in CE 1727 through the joint initiative of Sait Çelebi (the son of Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi) and a Hungarian convert to Islam known as İbrahim Müteferrika. This press produced its first major publication in CE 1729 with the *Vankulu Lugatı*.[45] Yet even this "first initiative" needs to be read together with an early logic of permission and limitation. In Fatmagül Demirel's account, the establishment of the press was accompanied by a *fetva* stating that there was no religious objection to printing, while restrictions concerning printed content—especially religious works—were articulated at the same time. The appointment of specific individuals for textual correction (*tashîh*) likewise

[44] Aydın and Erünsal, "Tereke Kayıtlarına Göre," 101–112.
[45] Selim Nüzhet Gerçek, *Türk Matbaacılığı* (İstanbul, 1939), 111.

suggests that print entered Ottoman life not as "free reproduction," but as a regulated form of production.[46]

For this reason, reducing the institutional trajectory of print to the CE 1727–1729 line risks sidelining the expanding documentary regime of the nineteenth century and the new printing needs it generated. Moreover, as Ali Birinci notes, the *Müteferrika* Press soon fell into inactivity, and printing acquired a durable "demand rationale" more clearly after the *Nizâm-ı Cedîd*, when the press came to be tied to official and military requirements. One concrete expression of this shift was the state's purchase of printing equipment in 1797 and the establishment of the Mühendishâne press.[47]

Mehmet Erken's perspective places the nineteenth century on firmer ground. Rather than leaping directly from 1727 to the era of *nizamnâmes*, Erken foregrounds the intervening need for the printing of official documents. He therefore proposes beginning the story from the production of documents that became visible with institutions such as the *Takvimhâne* and the *Mekteb-i Harbiye* presses, and treating this as a new form of relationship between the state and printing.[48] In this framing, the press no longer appears merely as "a place where books are printed." It becomes a technical component of an administrative circulation that kept expanding.

At the same time, Birinci identifies a critical threshold that opened printing not only to the state's internal needs but also to the demands of private individuals and booksellers. A decree dated 27 December 1839 made it possible for anyone to have a book printed at the *Tabhâne-i Âmire* on the condition that they paid the costs.[49] In the following period (24 September 1852), the practice of presenting two copies of each printed book to the sultan—often accompanied by rewards such as promotion, salary increases, rank, or decorations—shows that publishing expanded through mechanisms of patronage and encouragement, not simply through market demand.[50]

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[46] Fatmagül Demirel, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kitap Basımının Denetimi," *Recent Period Turkish Studies* 5, no. 2 (2008): 90.
[47] Ali Birinci, "Osmanlı Devletinde Matbuat ve Neşriyat Yasakları Tarihine Medhal," *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi (TALİD)* 4, no. 7 (2006): 293–94.
[48] Mehmet Erken, "Geç Osmanlı Döneminde Matbaa ve Kitap Yayıncılığı (1857–1888)" (PhD diss., Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf Üniversitesi, 2023), 17–23.
[49] Birinci, "Medhal," 295.
[50] Birinci, "Medhal," 297.

Against this backdrop, 1857 marks a turning point not because it represented a "first opening," but because it described print life, for the first time, in explicit terms of a licensing/permission regime. As Birinci explains, the nine-article *Matbaalar Nizamnâmesi* of 15 February 1857 (AH 20 Cemaziyelâhir 1273)[51] linked both the opening of a press and the printing of works to administrative investigation and authorization procedures. In Istanbul, the application route ran through the Council of Education ***(Meclis-i Maârif)*** and the *Zaptiye Nezâreti*, while in the provinces, the procedure required a chain of approval that tied local printing to the center. One of the stated criteria was the judgment that a work carried *"mülken ve devleten bir gûnâ mazarratı olmadığı."* The regulation also routed applications by foreign subjects through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Nezâreti*) and specified measures such as confiscation and closure for unauthorized or noncompliant printing. In short, the question was no longer only "what is being printed?" The state also asked, in a formalized way, "who may print?"[52]

While this licensing regime took shape in 1857, the legal status of authorship and reproduction developed along a parallel track. Birinci notes that the *Matbaalar Nizamnâmesi* was soon followed by the 3 March 1857 regulation on book printing "*Kitap tab'ı hakkında nizamnâme*". This text clarified issues such as ending the obligation to print in the state press, securing authors' rights, and attaching administrative and penal provisions to matters like the transfer of rights and unauthorized overprinting beyond contractual limits. Birinci also records that the Penal Code of 9 August 1858 strengthened sanctions for opening a press without authorization and for unauthorized printing; that the regulation was re-adopted and expanded with additional clauses on 11 September 1872; and that it was completed with an additional regulation dated 28 March 1875.[53] Taken together, these two lines—licensing the press and defining the legal status of what the press produced—make clear that print culture was not merely undergoing "technical growth." It was simultaneously becoming a domain managed and recorded by the state.

Birinci's second major threshold is the forty-one-article *Matbaalar Nizamnâmesi* of CE 22 January 1888 (R 10 *Kânun-ı sânî* 1303). This regulation laid out the location of presses, printing procedures, and mechanisms of inspection in far greater detail. For book

[51] See Server İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat Rejimleri* (Istanbul: Matbuat Umum Müdürlüğü, 1939), for an early comprehensive account of Ottoman press regimes.
[52] Birinci, "Medhal," 297–98.
[53] Birinci, "Medhal," 298–99.

printing, it designated the Ministry of Public Education *(Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nezâreti)* as the licensing authority in Istanbul and provincial governors in the provinces; for religious books, it defined communal leaders as the competent authority. It also required printed works to state the press's full address and described a more systematic chain of reporting, documentation, and (when needed) litigation in cases of violation.

The same trajectory became even more visible supplementary measures introduced in June 1892. Birinci notes that the penalties for publications deemed contrary to public morals (*âdâb*) increased; beyond punishment, the state introduced temporary professional bans for those who printed, distributed, stored, or sold such works. The same period also brought harsher penalties for texts deemed to "incite the public" or "encourage sedition." This shift indicates a move beyond a purely moral frame toward a more explicit logic of public order and political security.[54]

According to Birinci, the most comprehensive pre-1908 regulation was the forty-seven-article *nizamnâme* of CE 30 December 1894, which governed publishing life until CE 24 July 1908. It specified details ranging from notification deadlines when a press relocated to the requirement that books carry the press's name and full address; it clarified inspection powers and the distribution of responsibility between printer and author in cases of unauthorized printing. One of its most consequential features was the institutionalization of publishing around the delivery of copies and the verification that the printed text matched the authorized original. Before release, the publisher had to submit a declaration stating the number of copies printed and to provide a set number of copies; if the printed text matched the authorized one, the printer received a sealed document certifying "*aslına mutâbakat*" and granting permission to publish. The 1894 *Nizamnâme* also established a broad confiscation and import-ban framework for printed material brought from abroad, and its clause allowing the cancellation of an entire work on the grounds that *"birkaç sayfası muzır"* (some of this pages are harmful) captures the regime's insistence on total control through partial fault.[55]

You can trace how this regulatory regime shaped the economy of texts not only through legal language but also through concrete cases. Demirel offers an example in

[54] Birinci, "Medhal," 299.
[55] Birinci, "Medhal," 298-300.

which a text serialized in a newspaper required a separate permit from the Commission for Inspection and Examination *(Encümen-i Teftiş ve Muayene)* when its author sought to publish it as a book—and the commission could refuse that permit. This suggests that inspection concerned not only "content," but also "format" and "mode of circulation."[56] The point matters for dictionaries as well. Since the printing, circulation, and import of dictionaries entered the same licensing–inspection–confiscation regime in practice, dictionaries cannot be read only as technical instruments serving linguistic standardization. They also belonged to a controlled economy of "authorized circulation" produced by the print regime itself. In your thesis, the debates you track through prefaces—authority, utility, legitimacy, and linguistic boundaries—gain a more concrete footing precisely where they touch this regulatory field.

The quantitative growth of Ottoman print and the increasing diversity of publications signaled more than a cultural transformation; it pointed to the institutionalization of a new governance logic structured around the production, circulation, and legitimacy of knowledge. In this sense, explaining the emergence of printing regulations (*nizamnâmeler*) and inspection bodies solely as the outcome of a "prohibitionist" reflex falls short.[57] The process took shape alongside the expanding bureaucratic needs of the modern state, its concern with delineating the boundaries of the public sphere, and its determination to define publishing within a licensing regime.

As the field of print expanded, the state produced norms that regulated the boundaries of knowledge in circulation. Printing thus evolved from a relatively free sphere of activity into a field of regulation woven together by legal provisions and inspection networks. The legal framework established from 1857 onward was reinforced by regulations issued throughout the 1860s; under Abdülhamid II—particularly with the *Matbaalar Nizamnâmesi* of 1888 and 1894—inspection acquired a more detailed, extensive, and technical character. What is striking here is that these regulations were not confined to a narrow censorship logic targeting only overtly political content. The state constructed a broad field of pre-inspection that extended from the physical conditions of printing houses and the mandatory information to be included in printed works, to the

[56] Fatmagül Demirel, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kitap Basımının Denetimi," *Recent Period Turkish Studies* 5, no. 2 (2008): 90.
[57] Şükrü Hanioğlu, "Sunuş," in *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Sansür*, by Fatmagül Demirel (Istanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 2007), 11.

legal status of booksellers and to practices of distribution and circulation. In this framework, censorship did not operate merely as an intervention that banned individual texts; it functioned as a mechanism of knowledge governance that reorganized the operation of the print sphere from the outset and set the conditions under which knowledge could circulate.

As print expanded, the burden and form of inspection also changed. In earlier phases, control appeared primarily along the axis of licensing and correction, but from the second half of the nineteenth century onward, inspection evolved into a multilayered structure that involved various institutions and cadres of officials. In this period, the Ministry of Public Education (*Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nezâreti*) and its subordinate Inspection and Examination Committee (*Encümen-i Teftiş ve Muayene*) occupied a central position; the Police Ministry *(Zaptiye Nezâreti)* took charge along the axis of public order and security; in the provinces, governors and local administrations intervened; when foreign subjects and imported materials were at issue, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs *(Hariciye Nezâreti)* became involved. Censorship therefore ceased to be the one-off decision of a single authority and instead took the form of a chain of administrative procedures generated at different stages.

In the regulations and implementing documents, harmfulness was not defined through an abstract, modern notion of "public order." Rather, it was articulated through formulae such as publications that "contain harmful opinions" *(efkâr-ı muzırra derc eden),* are "against the laws and regulations of the exalted state" *(kavânîn ve nizâmât-ı devlet-i ʿaliyyeye aleyhinde olan),* are "contrary to the essential interests of the imperial government" *(hükûmet-i seniyyenin menâfi-i esâsiyesine mugayir bulunan),* or "touch upon discipline/public order" *(inzibâta dokunacak).* These expressions reveal how political, moral, and administrative dimensions of control were interwoven, yet they do not offer sharply delimited categories; instead, they produce a language that remains open to interpretation.

What we encounter here is not simply a lack of standards, but a structural tension between procedural clarity and semantic indeterminacy in the assessment of content. The system became increasingly standardized at the procedural level while remaining ambiguous at the level of meaning. Technical stages—such as licensing, the submission of copies, stamping, and the registration of the printing house address—were

progressively specified in detail; yet the boundaries of what counted as a "pernicious" opinion, an "offence against discipline," or a statement deemed "contrary to state regulations" were never defined with comparable precision. On paper, the steps of the process grew ever clearer—license, copy, stamp, address—yet what would be classified as harmful did not attain the same degree of clarity. The same word or allusion could lead to different outcomes in different hands.

This configuration neither reduces inspection to purely personal discretion nor allows us to conceive of it as a fully mechanical process. Censorship appears instead as a regulatory practice that operated within a framework of institutional continuity, yet, by virtue of its reliance on vague concepts, left room for divergent applications. Although this intensification became more visible under Abdülhamid II, the structure in question did not break with earlier logics of licensing and inspection; it rather represented a phase in which these logics were implemented in a more detailed and expansive manner.[58]

The findings of this study, based on dictionaries, show that this regime of control operated not only on explicitly political texts but also on genres that were regarded as relatively "innocent," namely "technical and reference work" types. Lexical choices, modes of definition, and strategic silences in dictionary entries suggest that the target of intervention was often not the text as a whole, but discrete signs—a particular association or conceptual charge. From this perspective, censorship should be read not only as a mechanism that imposes bans, but as a regulatory practice that narrows the range of meaningful possibilities, steers authors and publishers toward a cautious linguistic register, and thus encourages self-censorship.

Ultimately, the Ottoman regime of print inspection cannot be reduced to a linear narrative that explains press history solely through repression and bans. The expansion of legal regulation and the technicalization of inspection must be considered together with the modern state's attempts to regulate the public sphere and classify knowledge. By focusing on dictionaries, this analysis sheds light on everyday inspection practices that are often neglected in the literature and aims to make visible how censorship functioned as one of the internal tensions of a modernizing regulatory regime.

[58] Hanioğlu, foreword, 11–13; Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Sansür*, 153.

1.4. Review of Scholarship on the Dictionaries in the Corpus

The literature on the dictionaries examined within the scope of this thesis can generally be grouped into three main strands: studies in Turkology and lexicography that evaluate dictionaries according to lexicographical criteria; research that situates dictionary production within the history of the press, with particular attention to print regulations, licensing, and restrictions; and works that approach dictionaries through the biographies of their compilers, reading them as part of an intellectual life trajectory. Within this framework, the first comprehensive source that makes it possible to survey all fifteen dictionaries included in this study together is the bibliographical work of Aziz Gökçe. Gökçe presents the historical development of these dictionaries, their publication details, and the printing houses in which they were produced in a systematic and traceable manner, thereby allowing the lexicographical corpus to be viewed as a coherent whole.[59]

The second major work adopting a holistic perspective on dictionaries is Paşa Yavuzarslan's *Ottoman-Period Turkish Lexicography*. Rather than limiting his analysis to lists of works, Yavuzarslan examines lexicography through the aims and methodological statements articulated in dictionary prefaces and assesses the extent to which these claims are reflected in the dictionary entries themselves. This approach continues to stand as one of the foundational studies that evaluates Ottoman lexicography in terms of internal textual consistency and lexicographical practice.[60]

Within this broader framework, alongside studies that approach dictionaries through lexicographical criteria, there are also works based on quantitative analyses of lexical composition. Mustafa Bıyıklı's comparative study of Turkish dictionaries in Arabic script and Latin script is a representative example of this latter approach. Bıyıklı includes in his sample several dictionaries that are also examined in this thesis—such as *Kâmûs-ı Türkî, Lugat-i Nâcî, Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı, Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî,* and *Yeni Türkçe Lugat*—and presents tables showing the total numbers and percentages of lexical items of Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Western-language origin. However, because the study does not clearly specify which editions of these dictionaries are taken

[59] Aziz Gökçe, *Türkiye Türkçesinin Tarihî Sözlükleri* (Ankara: Kebikeç Yayınları, 1998).
[60] Paşa Yavuzarslan, *Osmanlı Dönemi Türk Sözlükçülüğü* (Ankara: Tiydem Yayıncılık, 2009).

as its basis, it becomes difficult to pursue detailed comparative analyses in relation to their historical context.[61]

Within this general framework of the literature, it appears necessary to address the studies conducted on the fifteen dictionaries and their twelve compilers included in this thesis by taking into account the historical trajectory of the dictionaries themselves. For this reason, in the sections that follow, the dictionaries forming the corpus will be examined according to their dates of publication, while also considering how they have been positioned within the existing literature.

Within this literary map, studies on Redhouse have largely been shaped not around his dictionaries, but around his personality and intellectual positioning. Debates concerning Redhouse's orientalist identity, whether he was a Freemason, claims that he converted to Islam, or his proximity to the British state have featured prominently in the biographical literature; these discussions have, in turn, provided an indirect background for understanding the historical and institutional environments in which his dictionary projects were produced.[62] One of the intellectual resonances of this perception in Turkey can be clearly observed in the writings of Cemil Meriç, who described Redhouse as "the greatest lexicographer of our language." While evaluating Redhouse's lexicographical identity through the lens of his service to Turkish culture, Meriç also refers to Carter Vaughn Findley's biography of Redhouse and outlines his life in broad strokes.[63]

Carter Vaughn Findley's *Sir James W. Redhouse: The Making of a Perfect Orientalist?* occupies a distinct place within this biographical literature and is widely regarded as a principal reference work on Redhouse.[64] Although the study does not offer a detailed lexicographical analysis of *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*, it provides a

[61] Mustafa Bıyıklı, "Osmanlıca Açısından Arap Harfli ve Latin Harfli Türkçe Lügatlerde ve Sözlüklerde Kelimelerin Karşılaştırmalı Analizleri," *38. ICANAS (Uluslararası Asya ve Kuzey Afrika Çalışmaları Kongresi), Ankara, 10–15 Eylül 2007, Bildiriler: Dil Bilimi, Dil Bilgisi ve Dil Eğitimi*, c. 1 (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Yayınları, 2011), 265–289.

[62] For more detailed biographical discussions, see Harun Tuncer, *İhanetle Sadakat Arasında: James William Redhouse* (Istanbul: Rumuz Yayınları, 2020), 83–99.

[63] Cemil Meriç, "Dilimizin En Büyük Lügatnüvisi: Redhouse," *Türk Edebiyatı*, no. 100 (February 1982): 4.

[64] Carter Vaughn Findley, *Sir James W. Redhouse: The Making of a Perfect Orientalist?* (Istanbul: American Board Library Occasional Publications; Sev-Yay, 2006), 15–18.

strong contextual framework by rendering visible the bureaucratic and intellectual environment in which the dictionary was produced.

According to Findley, Redhouse completed his lexicographical work focusing on the Arabic and Persian elements of Ottoman Turkish through sustained effort beginning in 1842; the costs of transcription were covered by several English figures present in Istanbul at the time, and the manuscript copy was submitted to the sultan for publication. This account offers an illuminating framework for understanding the background of *Kitab-ı Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye,* which was published without naming its compiler and was later reprinted multiple times.[65] Findley further emphasizes that Redhouse's early connections with Ottoman bureaucratic circles can be traced. Within this milieu were figures such as Keçecizade Fuad Paşa and Ahmed Vefik Paşa, and Findley notes that Redhouse was personally known to Ahmed Vefik Paşa and that their relationship continued until the end of their lives. This contact is noteworthy in that it suggests dictionary writing may be read not only as a philological endeavor, but also as an activity situated within the networks of state service and interpersonal relations of the period.[66]

One of the independent studies focusing specifically on Redhouse's lexicographical activity belongs to Şermin Kalafat. While evaluating Redhouse's understanding of lexicography, Kalafat briefly addresses *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye,* moving beyond prevailing assumptions by identifying the target audience of the dictionary as students and clerks, and clearly defining its purpose as facilitating use in schools and councils. These observations are significant in that they demonstrate Redhouse's adoption of a conscious design approach that took the intended readership into account during the process of dictionary production. Kalafat's assessments are largely based on dictionary prefaces.[67]

Another study by Kalafat addresses the debate surrounding Redhouse's lost Turkish dictionary. In this article, attention is drawn to the limited scope of studies on Redhouse, and gaps within the literature are explicitly identified. In a similar vein, Harun

[65] Findley, *Sir James W. Redhouse*, 128
[66] Findley, *Sir James W. Redhouse*, 119, 124–125.
[67] Şermin Kalafat, "Türk Sözlükçülüğünde Sir James William Redhouse'un İzdüşümleri," *Geçmişten Geleceğe Türk Sözlükçülüğü*, Elginkan Vakfı 3. Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Kurultayı (Istanbul, 2010), 70.

Tuncer also emphasizes that research on Redhouse remains limited in both quantity and scope. Taken together, these evaluations reflect a shared scholarly assessment that the literature on Redhouse constitutes a relatively narrow corpus.[68]

Thesis studies focusing on Redhouse's life and intellectual activities also constitute a significant portion of the literature. Among these, Harun Tuncer's master's thesis titled *Doğu ile Batı Arasında Bir Köprü: James William Redhouse* stands out.[69] In this work, Tuncer examines Redhouse as a multifaceted figure within the contexts of translation, history, and English language and literature; this study was later expanded and published under the title *İhanetle Sadakat Arasında*.[70] The section of the book devoted to Redhouse's works is particularly noteworthy for its capacity to situate the dictionaries within a broader contextual framework.

Among these theses, Efecan Karagöl's study titled *Sir James William Redhouse and Teaching Turkish to the English* approaches Redhouse from the perspective of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, while Zafer Fışkınlı's thesis, *Redhouse, A Lexicon, English and Turkish (A–B): Textual Analysis,* examines the bilingual dictionary *A Lexicon, English and Turkish* using a text-analysis methodology. Together, these studies are complementary in highlighting the different functional domains of Redhouse's dictionaries.[71]

Another study focusing on Redhouse's intellectual stance and scholarly relationships belongs to Nagihan Gür. By examining the correspondence between Redhouse and Elias John Wilkinson Gibb, Gür analyzes the exchange of knowledge and experience between the two figures through archival documents. This study adds a distinct dimension to the literature by evaluating Redhouse's efforts to introduce Eastern

[68] Şermin Kalafat, "Bir Sözlüksel Bilmece: Redhouse'un Kayıp Türkçe Sözlüğüne Ne Oldu?" *Bilig* 82 (August 2017): 2; Harun Tuncer, *Doğu ile Batı Arasında Bir Köprü: James William Redhouse* (MA thesis, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, 2012), 2–4.
[69] Harun Tuncer, *Doğu ile Batı Arasında Bir Köprü: James William Redhouse* (MA thesis, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, 2012).
[70] Harun Tuncer, *İhanetle Sadakat Arasında: James William Redhouse* (Istanbul: Rumuz Yayınları, 2020).
[71] Efecan Karagöl, *Sir James William Redhouse ve İngilizlere Türkçe Öğretimi* (MA thesis, Abant İzzet Baysal University, 2011); Zafer Fışkınlı, *Redhouse, A Lexicon, English and Turkish (A–B): Metin-İnceleme* (MA thesis, Pamukkale University, 2012).

culture and to confer academic legitimacy upon Eastern languages and literatures through his relationships within orientalist circles of the period.[72]

Overall, scholars share the view that studies on Redhouse remain limited in number. This situation leaves room for reconsidering Redhouse's lexicographical activities and dictionary projects within different analytical frameworks.

One of the dictionaries examined in this thesis, *Lehce-i Osmânî*, was authored by Ahmed Vefik Paşa**,** a figure well known for his bureaucratic career, during which he served in various ranks of the Ottoman administration. He worked for many years at the Translation Office (Tercüme Odası) and, coming from a well-established family, occupied a visible position within the intellectual and bureaucratic circles of his time. Nevertheless, several studies suggest that *Lehce-i Osmânî* did not receive the level of recognition expected at the time of its publication and was subject to various forms of criticism.[73]

Scholarly work on *Lehce-i Osmânî* can generally be grouped into several thematic strands. These include studies that examine the dictionary through its lexicographical structure and organization; analyses focusing on words described as "*mülevved*"[74]; research addressing the issue of the closed *e* vowel from a phonetic and orthographic perspective;[75] studies centered on verb entries in the dictionary; as well as works that identify and classify the foreign-origin vocabulary contained in the text.[76]

Within this body of literature, Tuğba Meral Türkmenoğlu's master's thesis stands out for its detailed lexicographical analysis of the first edition of *Lehce-i Osmânî*, thereby making a significant contribution by addressing a notable gap in the field. Türkmenoğlu also contextualizes the dictionary by supporting contemporary evaluations of the work

[72] Nagihan Gür, "J. W. Redhouse ve E. J. W. Gibb'in Entelektüel Paylaşımları ve Osmanlı Kültürünü Anlama Çabaları," *Hacettepe University Journal of Turkic Studies (HÜTAD)*, no. 29 (2018): 103–124.
[73] Fevziye A. Tansel, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa'nın Eserleri," *Belleten* 28, sy. 110 (Nisan 1964): 249–55, https://doi.org/10.37879/ttkbelleten.1208630; Dilek Çetindaş, "Dil Çalışmaları Ekseninde 'Ne Yüzüğe Takılan Ne Sokağa Bırakılan' Kıymet: Ahmed Vefik Paşa," *Journal of Turkish Studies* (2014): 490–94.
[74] Kaan Yılmaz and Ali Rıza Tosun, "Lehçe-i Osmânî'de Müvelled Olarak Nitelenen Kelimeler," *Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi* 8, no. 20 (2021): 39–57.
[75] Tuğba Meral Türkmenoğlu, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî Adlı Sözlüğünde /è/ Ünlüsü," *Sanal Türkoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2, no. 4 (2017): 48–56.
[76] Hüseyin Yıldız, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî'si ve Batı Kaynaklı Kelimeler," *Türk Dili* 88, no. 634 (2004): 355–65.

with references to various publications from the period.[77] Another important study that moves beyond a mere repetition of existing information on *Lehce-i Osmânî* and seeks to clarify Ahmed Vefik Paşa's intellectual trajectory is Halis Sünnetci's master's thesis.[78] Similarly, studies that position Ahmed Vefik Paşa as an "Ottoman intellectual" and discuss *Lehce-i Osmânî* within the context of nineteenth-century Ottoman lexicography,[79] as well as articles examining the lexical choices in the *Dictionnaire Turc-Français* through Meynard's introduction, further contribute to this intellectual background.[80]

Among the dictionary authors examined in this study, Hüseyin Remzi is one of the figures about whom relatively little information is available and whose work has been addressed only to a limited extent in the existing scholarship. As noted by Birinci**,** he is among the "unknown yet noteworthy" figures of Ottoman print culture.[81] Trained as a medical doctor, Hüseyin Remzi's lexicographical undertaking is examined in this thesis through two different editions. In the first edition, *Lûgat-ı Ecnebiyye İlâveli Lûgat-ı Osmâniyye*, he explicitly states that the dictionary was prepared with ease of use in mind and was primarily intended for students, while also announcing his intention to expand the work in a subsequent edition. The second edition, published in two volumes under the title *Lugat-ı Remzî*, represents an expanded version with a substantially larger scope and a broader repertoire of scientific terminology. It is also known from Özyıldırım's study[82] that Hüseyin Remzi printed the dictionary at his own press and supported its publication with an advertising campaign.

Work that focuses directly on *Lugat-ı Remzî* is scarce. The main study in this area is Halim Bilgin's lexicographical analysis.[83] Bilgin also produced a Latin-script

[77] Tuğba Meral Türkmenoğlu, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî Adlı Sözlüğünün 1876 ve 1889 Tarihli Baskıları Üzerine Sözlükbilimsel Bir Değerlendirme" (MA thesis, Hacettepe University, 2019).
[78] Halis Sünnetci, "An Analysis of Ahmed Vefik's Political Thought: A Turkist Pasha?" (MA thesis, Sabancı University, 2022).
[79] Gülay Sarıçoban, "Bir Osmanlı Aydını: Ahmet Vefik Paşa," *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 40 (2018): 279–89; Hanifi Vural ve Tuncay Böler, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa ve Türk Diline Katkıları," *Atatürk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi (TAED)*, no. 46 (2011): 1–24.
[80] İrem Işıl Altun, "Meynard'ın Lehce-i Osmani'yi Tanıtımından Hareketle Dictionnaire Turc-Français'deki Sözlüksel Tercihlerin Kaynağı," *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı - Belleten*, no. 77 (2024): 153–76, https://doi.org/10.32925/tday.2024.115.
[81] Ali Birinci, "Lügatci Doktor Hüseyin Remzi'nin Serencâmı," *Müteferrika*, no. 31 (2007): 55.
[82] Ali Emre Özyıldırım, "Lugat-i Remzi'nin Reklam Amaçlı Taşbaskı İlanı ve Osmanlı Matbu Kitap Tarihi Açısından Önemi," *Müteferrika* (2023).
[83] Halim Bilgin, "Lügat-i Remzi (Sözlükbilimsel İnceleme, Metin)" (PhD diss., Anadolu University, 2019).

transcription of the entire dictionary, which has made the text easier to use in current research.

Ebûzziyâ Tevfik is the founder of the Matbaa-i Ebûzziyâ, known for his work in the press and for his reformist contributions; he was already the subject of various contemporary assessments during his lifetime, and his family later continued his printing-house legacy. Nevertheless, it is striking that the existing scholarship lacks an independent and comprehensive study devoted specifically to *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, a dictionary project that Ebûzziyâ was unable to complete. Although some accounts claim that, following his exile to Konya, the printing house was looted and the remaining parts of the dictionary were lost, the absence of research that directly addresses the work's production process, the reasons for its incompletion, its lexicographical approach, and its place within the period's language–press relations points to a clear gap in the literature**.**

Mehmed Salâhî—known for including extensive verse exempla (*manzum misaller*) in his dictionary—has been the subject of only a limited number of studies. He is also notable not only as a lexicographer but as the author of some of the earliest biographical sketches (*hâl tercümeleri*) written on Muallim Nâci and Mustafa Reşid Paşa**.**[84]

Within the existing scholarship on the dictionary, Murat Küçük's article, "*The Lexicographical Structure of Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*,"[85] stands out as one of the key studies examining the work's overall organization and lexicographical design. A similarly brief but directly relevant contribution is Ahmet Tanyıldız's review study,[86] which also addresses the dictionary's general structure. The most comprehensive study focusing specifically on the dictionary's verse section is Ayşe Yılmaz's doctoral dissertation.[87]

Ali Seydî Bey—known for preparing textbooks, particularly moral instruction books (*ahlâk*), and for his distinctive intellectual profile—is another figure who has

[84] Mehmed Salâhî, *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, facsimile ed., vol. 1 (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2019), 43, preface.
[85] Murat Küçük, "Kâmûs-ı Osmânî'nin Sözlükbilimsel Yapısı," *Modern Türklük Araştırmaları Dergisi (Journal of Modern Turkish Studies)* 16, no. 2 (2019): 390–438.
[86] Ali Tanyıldız, "Sözlük Bilimi Açısından Mehmed Salâhî Bey'in Kâmûs-ı Osmânî'si," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on the History of Islamic Science and Fuat Sezgin (15–17 February 2019, Diyarbakır)* (Diyarbakır: 2019), 2–13.
[87] Ayşe Yılmaz, "Mehmed Salâhì'nin Kāmūs-ı Osmānì'si ve Eserdeki Divan Şiiri Unsurları" (PhD diss., Marmara University, 2018).

received relatively little scholarly attention. The literature on Ali Seydî's dictionary is likewise quite limited: apart from the assessments by Paşa Yavuzarslan, which I have cited frequently, the dictionary is also briefly mentioned in an article by Şükrü Halûk Akalın,[88] where it is noted in the context of Ali Seydî's lexicographical approach and evaluated only in general terms.

[88] Akalın, Şükrü Haluk. "Ali Seydi Bey ve Sözlükleri." *Sanal Türkoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi (Journal of Virtual Turkology Studies)* 2, no. 1 (2017): 1–7.

CHAPTER II

In this chapter, focusing on the authors' statements in dictionary prefaces, we aim to understand the motivations behind dictionary initiatives in the Ottoman sphere in the 19th century, the legitimacy strategies on which these initiatives were based, and the areas of debate that emerge in the prefaces. While all fifteen monolingual dictionaries comprising the collection were examined, two founding figures were highlighted in particular to clarify the key points of the debate. First, Ahmed Vefik Pasha's Lehce-i Osmânî (two volumes), which positions Ottoman Turkish as a "dialect" within the historical course of Turkish and clearly brings to the fore the idea of separating Turkish words in dictionary order, will be examined. Next, we will examine the preface to Kâmûs-ı Türkî by Şemseddin Sâmî (Fraşerî), who most strongly justified the need for a monolingual dictionary and, by criticizing existing dictionaries in terms of content and organization, established his own work as a more comprehensive and functional model.Ahmed Vefik Pasha, with the methodological approach he pioneered for dictionaries written after him and his "dialect-centered" classification initiative; and Şemseddin Sâmî, with his more mature lexicographical design and his systematic treatment of the language–authority–utility debates in his preface, provide a representative foundation. The problem area outlined in these two prefaces will provide a framework for the comparative reading that will be spread across all fifteen dictionaries in the remainder of the chapter. In order to better explain the reasons behind the authors' choice of definitions, their target audience assumptions, and normative distinctions such as "correct/incorrect usage," the third chapter will comparatively examine the dictionaries' shared conceptual repertoire and discourse patterns.

2.1. Ahmed Vefik Pasha and His Dictionaries

In Ottoman culture, it is quite appropriate to understand the representation of the period as a statesman through Ahmed Vefik Pasha.[89] To understand Paşa's intellectual

[89] The literature on Ahmed Vefik Paşa's multifaceted intellectual profile may be traced along three main axes: (i) personal life and character, (ii) ideological positioning, and (iii) works and technical contributions. For studies focusing on Paşa's personal life and the formation of his character, see F. Abdullah Tansel, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın Şahsiyetinin Teşekkülü, Husûsî Hayatı ve Muhtelif Karakterleri," *Belleten* 29, no. 113 (January 1965): 121–175; Gülay Sarıçoban, "An Ottoman Intellectual: Ahmet Vefik Paşa," *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 40 (2018): 279–289; and Hanifi Vural, *Ahmet Vefik Paşa: Hayatı, Şahsiyeti, Eserleri* (İstanbul: Kesit Yayınları, 2016). Paşa's ideological stance and his position within Turkish nationalism—often situated in the scholarship under "cultural Turkism"—are addressed in Halis Sünnetci, "An Analysis of Ahmed Vefik's Political Thought: A Turkist Pasha?" (MA

background and personality, it is necessary to consider lexicography, language reform, historiography, translation, and the political conditions of the period together. During the era of the empire's dissolution and the emergence of nationalism, he stands out as an intellectual who, while serving the state with loyalty, attempts to reconstruct his identity based on culture. Later generations tend to consider him one of the "first Turkish nationalists." As Halis Sünnetci[90] also argues, Pasha represents cultural rather than political Turkish nationalism: he remained loyal to the multi-ethnic Ottoman structure, but emphasized the Turkish identity in language and historical consciousness. From today's perspective, publishing a Turkish dictionary purged of Arabic and Persian elements is a silent but powerful gesture of linguistic nationalism; linking Ottoman dynastic history to broader Turkish history is a conscious departure from the classical dynasty-centered narrative. His contemporaries may not have fully appreciated his scholarly value due to political biases; his sharp temperament in the bureaucracy generated hostilities. Nevertheless, he was respected as a statesman known for his honesty and contentment. His intellectual legacy is clearly significant: In Akün's summary, he "pioneered work in the fields of history, language, and even theater from a national perspective, in addition to his political service."[91] He made fundamental contributions to each of the three fields of language, history, and literature.

thesis, Sabancı University, 2022); Hanifi Vural and Tuncay Böler, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa ve Türk Diline Katkıları," *Atatürk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi (TAED)*, no. 46 (2011): 1–24; and Mehmed Zeki Pakalın, *Ahmed Vefik Paşa* (İstanbul: Ahmet Sait Matbaası, 1942). For Paşa's corpus of works, his practices of translation and adaptation, and his understanding of history, see F. Abdullah Tansel, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın Eserleri," *Belleten* 28, no. 110 (April 1964): 249–283; and Atila Şahiner, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa'nın Tarih Anlayışı" (MA thesis, Atatürk University, 2007). Lexicographical studies centered on *Lehce-i Osmânî*, particularly those offering comparative analyses of different editions and phonological or technical observations, include Tuğba Meral Türkmenoğlu, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî Adlı Sözlüğünün 1876 ve 1889 Tarihli Baskıları Üzerine Sözlükbilimsel Bir Değerlendirme" (MA thesis, Hacettepe University, 2019); Tuğba Meral Türkmenoğlu, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî Adlı Sözlüğünde /ė/ Ünlüsü," *Sanal Türkoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2, no. 4 (2017): 48–56; Kaan Yılmaz and Ali Rıza Tosun, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa'nın Lehçe-i Osmânî'sinde Tanımı Bulunmayan Maddeler Üzerine," *Motif Akademi Halkbilimi Dergisi* 14, no. 33 (2021): 401–409; and Kaan Yılmaz and Ali Rıza Tosun, "Lehçe-i Osmânî'de Müvelled Olarak Nitelenen Kelimeler," *Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi (OMAD)* 8, no. 20 (March 2021): 111–125.

[90] Halis Sünnetci, "An Analysis of Ahmed Vefik's Political Thought: A Turkist Pasha?" (MA thesis, Sabancı University, 2022), 3.

[91] Ömer Faruk Akün, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa," in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 2 (Istanbul: TDV İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1989), 143–56.

The first paragraph of the preface to the 1293 edition of *Lehçe-i Osmânî*[92] not only defines the scope of the dictionary, but also reveals Vefik Pasha's understanding of lexicography and his reasons for writing this work. In the first sentence of the introduction, the phrase "When Arabic and Persian words commonly used in the Ottoman language are completely excluded..." (*Lisân-ı Osmanî'de müstâmel bulunan Arabî ve Farisî el-asl lugatlar büsbütün istisna olundukta…)* consciously leaves out the vocabulary belonging to the classical lexical tradition. Paşa classifies terms not only based on their origin but also on their circulation and function within Ottoman Turkish: "Terms borrowed from Arabic and Persian, sometimes altered in meaning, have been included in the dictionary." This approach demonstrates that Paşa evaluates words not only based on their etymology, but also in the context of internal linguistic transformation and localization processes. Another noteworthy element in the same sentence is the phrase "Turkish and foreign Ottoman words" (*Türkî ve ecnebî olan elfâz-ı Osmaniyye)* In this context, the term *"Ecnebi"* (foreign) can be understood to encompass elements originating from languages other than Arabic and Persian, most likely including Western languages such as French and Italian. This emphasis demonstrates the dictionary's intention to recognize the multi-layered structure of the Ottoman language and to reflect this plurality, albeit to a limited extent.[93] The phrase "this work is respectfully submitted

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[92] For a comprehensive evaluation that examines the *Lehce-i Osmânî* (1293) edition together with its second edition, *Lehce-i Osmânî Tabʿ-ı Cedîd* (1306), from a lexicographical perspective and—unlike other studies—focuses on the first volume, see Tuğba Meral Türkmenoğlu, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî Adlı Sözlüğünün 1876 ve 1889 Tarihli Baskıları Üzerine Sözlükbilimsel Bir Değerlendirme" (MA thesis, Hacettepe University, 2019). For previous studies on *Lehce-i Osmânî*, see also Bahriye Çeri, "XIX. Yüzyıldan Osmanlıca Bir Sözlük Lehçe-i Osmânî," *Kebikeç*, no. 6 (1998); Recep Toparlı, "Lehçe-i Osmânî'deki Atasözleri," *TÜBAR* 15 (2004); Recep Toparlı, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî'sindeki Müvelled Kelimeler," in *IV. Uluslararası Türk Dili Kurultayı (24–29 Eylül 2000) Bildiriler II* (Ankara: TDK Yayınları, 2007); and Hüseyin Yıldız, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî'si ve Batı Kaynaklı Kelimeler," *Türk Dili* 88, no. 634 (2004). For the Latin-script transcription of the *Lehce-i Osmânî Tabʿ-ı Cedîd* (1306) edition, see Recep Toparlı, *Lehce-i Osmânî* (Ankara: TDK Yayınları, 2000).

[93] In the first edition of *Lehce-i Osmânî* dated 1293, foreign-origin words were presented within a single alphabetical arrangement alongside words of Turkish, Arabic, and Persian origin. However, in the second edition dated 1306, the author introduced a structural distinction by collecting words of Arabic and Persian origin under the title *cüz-i sânî* (second section). Nevertheless, it is observed that the foreign-origin words listed in Hüseyin Yıldız's study titled "Ahmet Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî'si ve Batı Kaynaklı Kelimeler" appear dispersed across both sections without regard to this distinction. A noteworthy point is that certain words such as "pilav (پلاو)," "atlas (آطلس)," "harita (خَريطه)," and "paydos (پايدوس)" are defined in both the *cüz-i evvel* (first section) and the *cüz-i sânî*. Yet, in Yıldız's study, such repetitions are not specifically marked, nor is an explanatory evaluation provided regarding these placement preferences. This situation suggests that the structural separation in the second edition rests not solely on an etymological

to the gracious attention of the noble companions of generosity" (*iş bu ucâle-i ashâb-ı himmetin nazar lütfuna arz olunur*) at the end of the paragraph clearly reveals the ethical dimension and the author's intention in writing the text. Such formulations are not merely rhetorical; they are also internal textual supports that legitimize the work. The presentation of the dictionary not as a technical product but as an effort born of "*himmet*," that is, conscious and selfless endeavor, is a common usage in post-Tanzimat dictionary writing, emphasized in the authors' prefaces as having been created through individual effort. The second paragraph clarifies the dictionary's arrangement system and the principle of word selection. The author states that "words of Turkish origin still in use in the Ottoman language" (*hâlâ lisân-ı Osmanî'de geçer olan Türkiyyü'l-asl kelimeler)* are arranged "in alphabetical order." (*hurûf-u hecâ sırasında*). The term *"hurûf-u hecâ"* here refers to the order of letters in the Arabic alphabet, that is, the alphabetical sequence. This method differs from the root-based or thematic arrangement style common in classical Arabic lexicography or Ottoman madrasa dictionaries. For example, in Ahterî-i Kebîr, which was influential in Ottoman education from the 16th century onwards, words are arranged according to their Arabic-Persian roots. In instructional texts written in the same century, such as Tuhfe-i Şâhidî, thematic and rhyming arrangements are prominent. Vefik Pasha, in contrast to this tradition, placed words directly in alphabetical order.

In the continuation of the paragraph, it is stated that the dictionary includes not only Turkish (*Türkî*) words but also Arabic and Persian words that are "considered permissible for use in Ottoman" (*Osmanî'de istimâli câiz olan*). Here, the author adopts a criterion grounded not in absolute purification, but in functional legitimacy within the Ottoman written language. The phrase *tabîrât-ı muğlakanın tenkîhine ikdâm olunup* further indicates that the dictionary assumes a role beyond mere description, actively filtering out ambiguous usages. This emphasis renders the dictionary's normative dimension explicit. Finally, expressions such as *kelimelerin tarîfâtı asla havale kılındı* and *cümle müştakkâtın bir yerde îcazen târîfî* suggest that words are to be evaluated within their root structure and derivational system. Taken together, these remarks point to an effort to reconcile the

foundation, but was also shaped by the scope of usage and the degree of integration of words within Ottoman Turkish, and that the lexicographer endeavored to apply these criteria, particularly among Arabic, Persian, and Turkish words.

derivation-centered (*işţikak*) orientation of the classical *lugat* tradition with a more modern principle of arrangement.

Certain methodological principles are preserved across both editions of *Lehce-i Osmânî*. In both, headwords are arranged according to *hurûf-u hecâ*, Arabic and Persian synonyms are included in definitions, etymological information is provided, and special signs are used for the letters *kef* and *vav* to indicate correct pronunciation. In this respect, the two editions reflect not a methodological rupture but the continuity of a distinct lexicographical approach.

In the *Lehce-i Osmânî Tabʿ-ı Cedîd* (1306) edition, Ahmed Vefik Pasha situates Ottoman Turkish within a broader linguistic family. In his extended account of the historical diffusion of Turkic languages, he begins with the Oghuz branch—described as *Elsine-i Türkî'de en mukaddem münteşir olan Oğuz şu'besi*—and proceeds to list the Turkmen, Khalaj, Kipchak, Uyghur, and Chagatai branches, outlining their historical mobility and interrelations. Particularly noteworthy is the statement that the Oghuz branch *mürûr-ı zamân ile lehce-i Osmânîyi tevlîd ettiği*, that is, "...over time gave rise to the Ottoman dialect." This formulation clearly demonstrates that the author does not conceptualize Ottoman Turkish as an independent language, but rather as a dialect formed within the historical trajectory of the Turkic languages.

Within this framework, Pasha considers Ottoman Turkish alongside other Turkic languages and, by stating that *lisânımızın şu'belerinin ihtilâfâtı anlaşılmalıdır*, implies that the dictionary serves not only to represent the Ottoman written language but also to facilitate an understanding of the internal diversity of the Turkic linguistic sphere. In this context, the title *Lehce-i Osmânî* emerges not merely as a naming preference, but as a deliberate conceptualization that situates Ottoman Turkish within the broader unity of the Turkish language.

2.1.1. Compounds (*Mürekkebât*), Orthographic Technique, and Volume Constraints

The third paragraph of the shared preface in both dictionaries offers significant insight into the internal organizational strategies and formal preferences of *Lehce-i Osmânî*. In this paragraph, Vefik Pasha states that compound expressions (*mürekkebât*), that is, structures consisting of more than one word, are explained only once in the

dictionary. Although repeating the same expression under different headwords is a common practice in Ottoman *lugat*s, Pasha deliberately limits such repetition in the interest of functionality and clarity. The examples provided to concretize orthographic preferences—*yapağı* ("wool"), *çukur* ("hollow; pit"), and *yanaşmak* ("to approach; to come alongside")—reflect a distinctive approach to vowel articulation and orthographic variation in Turkish. In Turkish, when two vowel sounds occur consecutively, the second may be pronounced separately; this can yield multiple spelling variants. While Vefik Pasha acknowledges alternative spellings such as يانشمق ،چقور ،بياغى as valid, he generally opts for simplification in order to prevent such variation from unnecessarily expanding the scope of the dictionary. Indeed, the expression *"teksîr-i sevâd hatadan ictinâben çoğunda bu tekellüften vaz gelindi"* explicitly conveys an effort both to avoid semantic confusion and to limit artificial repetition. This approach suggests that *Lehce-i Osmânî* was conceived as a reference work governed by a technical concern for orthographic systematization, phonological consistency, and derivational structure.

2.1.2. Phonetic Distinctions, Typography, and the *Rumûzât* System

In the preface of *Lehce-i Osmânî*, a brief yet technically dense statement—*"Kelimâtın doğru okunulması içün kâfın enva'ına ve damme alameti olan vavların ecnâsına işarât-ı mahsûsa vaz'..."*—indicates that the author adopts a differentiated orthographic system based on both the varieties of the letter *kâf* and the distinct phonetic values of *vav* as a marker of *damme*. This approach aims to enable the correct reading and differentiation of words that share the same written form but diverge in pronunciation. For this reason, a *rumûzât cedveli* (table of signs) is placed at the beginning of the dictionary. The table includes not only markers for word classes (such as noun, adjective, intransitive verb, and transitive verb), but also technical symbols indicating specific forms of vowels and certain consonants. For example, the sign "ڤ" [94]represents the emphatic *kef* that shifts to *yâ* in pronunciation, corresponding to a hard "g," while "ڭ" is used for *sağır nûn*, that is, the nasal "n." In addition, four distinct *zammes* defined through *vav* are identified: *zamme-i mufahhama* (ۏ) ("thick"), *zamme-i memdûde* (ۏٖ) ("lengthened"), *zamme-i mabsûta* (ۏٰ) ("extended"), and *zamme-i maksûra* (ۏٟ) ("shortened"). This

[94] The letter symbols given in parentheses have been reproduced in accordance with the work's original list of abbreviations (*Rumûzât*). This marking system reflects Ahmed Vefik Pasha's distinctive orthographic choices, developed to indicate phonetic distinctions, and it is common to both editions discussed here.

detailed system of symbolization demonstrates that the dictionary provides its users not only with lexical meanings but also with tools for accurate reading and pronunciation. In this respect, *Lehce-i Osmânî* stands out as a highly technical and systematically constructed example of lexicographical practice within its period. The *rumûzât cedveli* thus represents an attempt, grounded in philological sensitivity, to impose order upon the linguistic complexity of the language in question.

2.1.3. Simplification, Criteria of Exclusion, and Dictionary Volume

Ahmet Vefik Pasha's *Lehce-i Osmânî* is not merely an individual lexicographical endeavor; it constitutes one of the rare concrete manifestations of the ideas of "language reform" (*dil ıslahı*) and "terminological classification" (*terminoloji tasnifi*) that took shape among nineteenth-century Ottoman intellectuals. The institutional projection of this intellectual ground was the *Encümen-i Dâniş* (1851–1862).[95] Announced through its founding decree in June 1851, the *Encümen* included Ahmet Vefik Pasha among its forty founding members and aimed to improve the Ottoman educational system, encourage scholarly writing and translation, and, in particular, to address and develop the Turkish language in a systematic manner. In this respect, it represents the first institutional initiative through which language was subjected to regulation by the state.

In essence, this process began when the *Meclis-i Muvakkat*, formed in response to Sultan Abdülmecid's criticisms regarding educational reforms in 1845, proposed the establishment of a *Dârülfünun* and the formation of a scholarly committee named *Encümen-i Dâniş* to prepare the textbooks to be taught there. This proposal is significant insofar as it demonstrates that, among the intellectuals of the period, the *Encümen-i Dâniş* had begun to be conceived as a "language institution."

This institutional vision of the *Encümen-i Dâniş* also found expression in the agendas discussed during its initial deliberative meetings. According to Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's account in *Tezâkir*, one of the earliest issues addressed in the discussions following the

[95] In the literature, the *Encümen-i Dâniş* has been variously evaluated within the conceptual spectrum of an academy versus an institute. For detailed discussions regarding this subject in terms of institutional structure, scientific objectives, and institutional capacity, see Osman Zahit Küçükler, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Eğitimde Modernleşme ve Encümen-i Dâniş" (PhD diss., Ankara University, 2019), 55–62 (Regulations), 66–72 (the academy debate).

establishment of the *Encümen-i Dâniş* was the desire to determine the structural rules of language and to classify its vocabulary. Cevdet Pasha conveys this objective as follows:

> "...According to Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's account in *Tezâkir*, after the *Encümen-i Dâniş* was formally inaugurated, it began to convene once a month at the *Dârü'l-Ma'ârif*. One of the first points raised in these early deliberations was that the grammatical rules of the Ottoman language had already been codified through the *Kavâ'id-i Osmâniyye*. It was further proposed that a dictionary be compiled, in which the Arabic, Persian, and other foreign words that had become commonly used (*zebân-zed*) in Ottoman should be regarded as belonging to the language itself, clearly identified and delimited, while the use of rare and unfamiliar words (*elfâz-ı garîbe*) lying outside this scope should be abandoned. To this end, it was decided that a commission be formed to compile such a *Lûgat-ı Osmâniyye*." *(Cevdet Paşa, Tezâkir, 40-Tetimme).*[96]

In this context, the *Kavâ'id-i Osmâniyye* referred to by Cevdet Pasha was in fact co-authored in Bursa by Ahmed Cevdet Pasha and Mehmed Fuad Pasha prior to the official establishment of the *Encümen-i Dâniş*. The aim of this work was to teach the grammar of the Ottoman written language without requiring a full mastery of Arabic and Persian, despite the mixed nature of Ottoman Turkish. *Kavâ'id-i Osmâniyye* was presented to the Sultan on the very day the *Encümen* was inaugurated and received great acclaim. It was subsequently published as the first official work of the *Encümen-i Dâniş*.[97]

The second objective that followed was the classification of Arabic, Persian, and other foreign elements that had become embedded within Ottoman Turkish. Within this framework, words that were in common use among the populace and whose meanings had been socially internalized were to be "counted as belonging to our language" (*lisânımızdan add olunarak*) and thus included in the dictionary. By contrast, words that lacked currency among the public, were semantically remote, or had fallen out of use

[96] Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, Tezâkir (40-Tetimme), ed. Cavid Baysun (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), 57–58. "Encümen-i Dâniş ber-vech-i meşrûh küşâd olunduktan sonra ayda bir kerre Dârü'l-Ma'ârif'de in'ikâda başladı. Evvel-i emirde cereyân eden müzâkerelerden biri bu idi ki Kavâ'id-i Osmâniyye ile lisânımızın kavâ'idi zabt olundu. Bir de lugat kitâbı yapılıp ve lisânımızda zebanzed olan Arabî ve Fârsî ve sâ'ir ecnebî lafızlar kendi lisânımızdan add edilerek ta'yin ü tahdîd edilip de hâricde kalan elfâz-ı garîbe isti'mâlinden vaz geçelim denildi ve öyle bir Lûgat-ı Osmâniyye kitâbı te'lîf olunmak üzere bir komisyon teşkîl edildi."

[97] Osman Zahit Küçükler, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Eğitimde Modernleşme ve Encümen-i Dâniş" (PhD diss., Ankara University, 2019), 158.

were to be filtered out as *elfâz-ı garîbe*. To this end, a special commission was established within the *Encümen* to prepare a *Lûgat-ı Osmâniyye*.

However, despite the information provided by Cevdet Pasha, there is no direct evidence that the work of this commission was completed or resulted in a finalized dictionary text, nor is there an extant dictionary corresponding to this initiative from the same period. In other words, this lexicographical project appears to have remained at the level of planning and was not implemented in practice. Nevertheless, the initiative is significant insofar as it demonstrates that the *Encümen-i Dâniş* sought to develop not only educational and translation activities, but also a language policy aimed at defining the normative framework of Ottoman Turkish.

The first concrete manifestation of this collective vision on an individual level is the first edition of Ahmet Vefik Pasha's dictionary *Lehce-i Osmânî*, published in Hijri 1293 / CE 1876. The statement included in the preface—*"bir lisanın mükemmel lugat kitabının meydana gelmesi behemehâl el birliğiyle yapılmasına menûttur"* [the creation of a perfect dictionary for a language is necessarily dependent on collective effort]—is not merely a conventional expression of modesty, but rather an individual response to the ideal of collective dictionary-making that had taken shape within the *Encümen*. In this sense, *Lehce-i Osmânî* may also be read as a completed individual extension of the institutional intentions that the *Encümen* itself was unable to realize.

The fifth and final paragraph of the first edition's preface clarifies the deliberately limited scope of *Lehce-i Osmânî* and explains why the author deemed this restriction necessary. Vefik Pasha notes that derivatives formed according to the rules of *sarf* but lacking a distinct semantic value (*mânâ-yı mahsûs*), that is, whose meanings did not diverge significantly from their roots, were excluded from the dictionary. In this context, verbs such as *tertîblemek* ("to arrange"), *rastlamak* ("to encounter"), *nizâmlamak* ("to regulate"), *perdelemek* ("to conceal"), and *destelemek* ("to bundle") were omitted because they did not exceed the semantic boundaries of their base forms. This selectivity constitutes not merely a technical exclusion, but a conscious policy of simplification intended to prevent the uncontrolled expansion of the dictionary's volume. The author explicitly states that approximately twenty thousand words were excluded from the dictionary for this reason. As a result, *Lehce-i Osmânî* was conceived not as a fully comprehensive *kâmûs*, but as a reference work designed to be small in size yet rich in

utility (*"hâcmi sağir, fevâid-i kesîr"*). Pasha thus regards this lexicographical endeavor as a component of an ongoing process toward the production of a truly comprehensive dictionary.

Paşa conceives this lexicographical endeavor as part of an ongoing process toward the production of a truly comprehensive dictionary. The statement appearing in the final sentence—*"bir lisânın mükemmel lugat kitabının meydana gelmesi behemehâl el birliğiyle yapılmasına menûttur"* [the creation of a perfect dictionary for a language necessarily depends on collective effort]—makes clear that he understands the comprehensive construction of language not as an individual undertaking, but as a collective one. At this point, the emphasis on collectivity in the second edition is accompanied by an equally strong emphasis on competence: *"Bir lisânın ehl-i himmet cemâatinin ittifâkıyla mükemmel lûgat kitâbının meydâna gelmesi… bu kâr-ı hayra cehele karışmamasına menûttur"* [the production of a perfect dictionary through the consensus of a devoted and capable community depends on preventing the involvement of the unqualified in this virtuous undertaking].[98] This formulation makes explicit that while dictionary-making requires "collective effort," such collectivity should not amount to an indiscriminate crowd, but rather to a consensus among the *ehl-i himmet*, that is, those who are competent and committed.

In the same passage, Vefik Paşa also links the marking of specific phonetic values in writing to this principle of qualified consensus: *"Eğer üdebâ ittifak birle fetha-i murakkakaya dahı bir alâmet-i münâsebe vaz' ederlerse resm-i harfin artık eksiği kalmaz"* [if men of letters were to agree upon assigning an appropriate sign to the *fetha-i murakkaka*, no deficiency would remain in the written form of the letters].[99] Here, the issue of *fetha-i murakkaka*[100] is not presented as a minor technical detail, but as an intervention capable of completing a deficiency in the *resm-i harf*. Moreover, the fact that this intervention is explicitly conditioned upon the "consensus of the *üdebâ*" reflects a

[98] Ahmed Vefik Paşa, *Lehce-i Osmânî Tab'ı Cedîd* (Istanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1306 [1889–90]), 6.
[99] Paşa, *Lehce-i Osmânî Tab'ı Cedîd*, 6.
[100] The issue of the existence of the closed /ė/ sound, accepted as the ninth vowel in General Turkish, occupies a significant place in discussions regarding the historical phonology of the Turkish language. Considering the relationship this sound establishes—particularly with Eastern Turkic—and its reflections within Ottoman Turkish, its representation in the *Tabʿ-ı Cedîd* edition (1306 [1889–90]) of *Lehce-i Osmânî* requires careful examination. For a detailed evaluation regarding the systematic use of the sound in question, the differences in its transmission via the Arabic script system, and how and in which words Ahmed Vefik Pasha marked this sound, see Tuğba Meral Türkmenoğlu, "Ahmed Vefik Paşa'nın Lehce-i Osmânî Adlı Sözlüğünde /ė/ Ünlüsü," *Sanal Türkoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2, no. 4 (2017): 48–56.

clear tendency to regulate orthography not through individual preference, but through the shared decision of a qualified intellectual circle.

From this perspective, the more explicit articulation of the target audience in the second edition (*Lehce-i Osmânî Tabʿ-ı Cedîd*) also gains significance. In the preface, it is stated that the dictionary facilitates not "the common people" (*avâm*), but rather "the learned" (*havâs*)[101] in mastering the principles of derivation (*usûl-i iştikâk*). Furthermore, the aim of providing teachers with a *düstûrü'l-ʿamel* is explicitly declared, and the work is described as having been dedicated to *"lisân-âşinâyân-ı havâs"* [those among the learned who are well-versed in language]. These expressions establish a clearly delimited framework for the dictionary's intended readership: its audience is not the *avâm* but the *havâs*, and its sphere of use is defined by an instructional horizon oriented toward linguistic practice and grammatical training.

In sum, *Lehce-i Osmânî* emerges as a modern lexicographical prototype constructed through conscious limitation in terms of content, scope, and method—one in which the author presents his own *hisse-i âcizâne* [modest personal contribution] within a broader, collective vision of dictionary-making.

2.2. Şemseddin Sâmî and the Kâmûs-ı Türkî

Şemseddin Sâmî is the lexicographer on whom the most extensive body of scholarship has been produced among the dictionary writers examined in this study, owing to his multifaceted intellectual profile. In contemporary academic literature, Sami's legacy is increasingly approached through a more neutral and holistic perspective. Recent studies published in both Turkey and Albania tend to move beyond reductive portrayals that confine Sami to a single identity—either as a "Turkish linguist" or as an "ideologue of the Albanian national awakening"—and instead seek to assess his work within the broader framework of his dual intellectual positioning and the multilingual Ottoman context in which his production took shape. One of the most influential examples of this tendency can be found in the work of Bülent Bilmez[102], who examines

[101] Paşa, *Lehce-i Osmânî Tab'ı Cedîd*, 6.
[102] For detailed discussions, see Bülent Bilmez, "Shemseddin Sami Frashëri (1850–1904): Contributing to the Construction of Albanian and Turkish Identities," in *We, the People: Politics of National Peculiarity in Southeastern Europe*, ed. Diana Mishkova (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009), 341–71;

how Sami's writings were canonized within both Turkish and Albanian national narratives—that is, how selective readings transformed them into "foundational" and "representative" texts. In a similar vein, Uğur Sezer[103] approaches Sami as an Ottoman intellectual situated between two languages and cultures, emphasizing the need to reconsider this fragmented legacy—long read separately within Turkish and Albanian studies—within a more integrated analytical framework. Taken together, this body of scholarship moves beyond earlier patterns of unilateral appropriation or exclusion, rendering more visible Sami's role in the construction of two distinct national imaginaries.

In the *İfâde-i Merâm*, Sâmî opens by defining the nature of the dictionary itself: "A dictionary is, in effect, the treasury of a language." This metaphor positions the dictionary as a foundational structure responsible for preserving a language's lexical wealth. In the continuation of the text, language is described as a system composed of words, whose capacity to produce meaning depends on their inflection and combination according to rules specific to each language. Within this framework, words constitute the material basis of language, while its operative mechanisms are identified as the rules of *sarf* (morphology) and *nahv* (syntax). From the very first paragraph, Sâmî thus treats the dictionary and grammar as two fundamental components that must be considered together in relation to the preservation of language.

In the later part of the text, it is stated that no individual can possibly know all the words of a language or speak it entirely in accordance with its rules. Over time, this leads to the forgetting of words, the spread of incorrect usages, and the loss of linguistic *fesâhat*. Sâmî encapsulates this process with the phrase "a language that was once expansive and eloquent, but has become narrow and galat" (*geniş ve fasih iken, dar ve galat bir lisân*)[104]. Here, *galat* does not denote isolated mistakes, but rather a disruption affecting the general functioning of the language as a whole.

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and Bülent Bilmez, "Sami Frashëri or Šemseddin Sami? Mythologization of an Ottoman Intellectual in the Modern Turkish and Socialist Albanian Historiographies based on 'Selective Perception'," *Balkanologie* 7, no. 2 (2003): 19–46.

[103] Uğur Sezer, "İki Dil ve Kültür Arasında Bir İsim: Şemsettin Sami," *FSM İlmi Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi*, no. 24 (December 2024): 241–66, https://doi.org/10.16947/fsmia.1609852.

[104] Şemseddin Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* (Istanbul: İkdâm Matbaası, 1317 [1899–1900]), 1.

At this point, Sâmî draws attention to the role of "literature" (*edebiyat*) in the preservation of language and directly associates this role with the responsibility of the *üdebâ*. The service of the *üdebâ* in this regard begins with safeguarding both the words of the language and the rules that ensure its *fesâhat*. As explicitly stated in the text, such preservation can only be achieved through two works: "a perfect dictionary encompassing the entirety of a language's vocabulary" (*lisânın kâffe-i lugatını hâvî mükemmel bir kâmûs* and "a well-ordered book of morphology and syntax encompassing its grammatical rules" (*kavâid-i sarfiyye ve nahviyyesini cami' muntazam bir sarf ve nahiv kitabı*).[105] In this way, the dictionary and grammar are defined as the foundational ground upon which literary language rests.

Among Ottoman monolingual dictionaries, one of the works that establishes this relationship most explicitly at the textual level is the *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*. The author defines his dictionary as a literary compilation containing thousands of examples drawn from the poetic and prose works of renowned Ottoman men of letters, thus positioning the *kâmûs* as a domain of linguistic preservation constructed directly through the testimony of literary production. […"a literary compendium containing thousands of literary examples cited from the poetic and prose works of renowned Ottoman men of letters"][106] Indeed, the literature likewise notes that Mehmed Salâhî rendered visible—through concrete examples—the usage of the Arabic and Persian words and constructions included in his dictionary as attested in historical literary texts.

At this point, the *İfâde-i Merâm* presents a comprehensive diagnosis regarding the current state of Ottoman Turkish. *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* emerges as an initiative set forth following this diagnosis; it is positioned at the center of the effort to reassemble the vocabulary of the language and to preserve it within a written and literary order.

2.2.1. The Branches of Turkish and the Narrative of Linguistic Crisis

In this section of the *İfâde-i Merâm*, Şemseddin Sâmî begins by situating Turkish within a broad linguistic family. Turkish is defined as one branch of the *elsine-i Turâniyye* spoken in northern Asia, and it is stated that one branch of this language gradually moved

[105] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 1.
[106] Mehmed Salâhî, *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* (İstanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1313 [1895–96]), 3. *"…meşâhîr-i üdebâ-i osmânîyye'nin asâr-ı manzûme ve mensûrelerinden istişhâd olunan binlerce emsile-i edebiyyeye hâvî bir mecmûa-i edebiyyat.."*

westward, giving rise to the Ottoman Turkish spoken in Anatolia and Rumelia. At this point, the designation "Ottoman" is presented as a term corresponding to Chagatai; however, Sâmî deliberately prefers the expression *Western Turkish* (*garb Türkçesi*), emphasizing that this language does not constitute a structure detached from Turkish itself.

One of the most striking aspects of the text is the manner in which the difference between Eastern Turkish and Western Turkish is measured. Şemseddin Sâmî does not compare this difference to that between distinct languages such as Italian and Latin or French and Spanish; instead, he likens it to the differences among German dialects or Arabic vernaculars. This analogy clearly reflects an approach that conceives Ottoman Turkish as a historical and geographical branch of Turkish rather than as a separate language. The central claim of this section is expressed unequivocally in the statement: "Eastern Turkish and Western Turkish are a single language; both are Turkish" (*Şark Türkçesiyle Garb Türkçesi bir tek lisândır, ikisi de Türkçedir*).[107]

However, Sâmî does not construct this emphasis on unity through an abstract discourse of linguistic proximity. On the contrary, he develops a narrative of historical rupture. He states that for seven to eight centuries, contact between the two branches was severed, and that each progressed independently, unaware of the other in terms of orthography, expression, and writing practices. This prolonged period of neglect caused the two branches of Turkish to appear, *vehleten*—that is, at first glance and through a superficial view—as two separate languages. In the text, this appearance is not presented as a division arising from the nature of the language itself, but as a historical perception produced by "eight hundred years of neglect, tolerance, and ignorance."[108] The author explicitly maintains that this perception would disappear once differences in orthography were eliminated and the two branches were subjected to proper and thorough examination (*bihakkın tedkik ve ta'mik*).

At this point, the text poses the question directly: "Which of these two branches has undergone greater change since the point of separation, and which has remained closer to

[107] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 2.
[108] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 2.

its original state?"[109] In responding to this question, Şemseddin Sâmî identifies a historical asymmetry between Eastern and Western Turkish. He states that Eastern Turkish has largely remained faithful to its earlier form, whereas Western Turkish has "undergone radical transformations from generation to generation, eventually acquiring its present state" (*karndan karna küllî tebeddülata uğrayıp, nihayet şimdiki hâli kesbettiğini*).[110]

The discussion is immediately deepened by a second question: "Should we describe this transformation, which belongs exclusively to our side, as progress or as decline? This is the essential issue."[111] This transformation is not evaluated through a single, unidirectional judgment. On the one hand, the refinement and elegance (*zarâfet ve letâfet*) that Western Turkish has acquired in pronunciation and expression, as well as the lexical expansion (*vüsʿat*) gained through words borrowed from Arabic, Persian, and "other languages" (*elsine-i sâire*), are regarded as forms of progress. On the other hand, its partial departure from the principle of harmony—defined as the "fundamental and general rule of the Turanian languages" (*elsine-i Turaniyyenin kaide-i umûmiyye-i esasiyyesi*)[112]—along with its adoption of words and expressions incompatible with this harmony, the relegation of thousands of genuinely Turkish words to "corners of oblivion" (*gûşe-i nisyân*), and its reliance on other languages with a sense of dependency (*arz-ı iftikâr*), are all recorded as signs of decline. Within this framework, the text advances toward a striking conclusion: "In principle and in essence, Eastern Turkish is correct, whereas ours is flawed." (*Kaideten ve esâsen şark Türkçesi doğru, bizimki ise galattır.*)[113]

Şemseddin Sâmî renders this diagnosis concrete through a four-point comparison. In this comparison, the strongest evidence for linguistic unity is identified as the "unity of the rules of morphology and syntax" (*kavâid-i sarfiyye ve nahviyye ittihadı*): the grammatical rules of Eastern and Western Turkish are essentially the same, and the differences between them do not justify treating them as separate languages. Once differences in orthography and pronunciation are eliminated, it is stated that the majority

[109]Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 2. "*Bu iki şubenin, mebde-i iftirâklarından beri, hangisi ziyâde tebeddül ve tegayyur etmiş, ve hangisi hâl-i aslîsinde kalmıştır?*"
[110] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 2.
[111] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 2. "*İmdi, sırf bizim tarafa aid olan bu tebeddüle terakkî mi yoksa tedennî mi diyeceğiz? İşte asıl mes'ele bundadır.*"
[112] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 2.
[113] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 3.

of the words contained in the two branches are shared. Many words found in Chagatai, Sâmî notes, are either present in the Ottoman literary heritage or continue to live on in Anatolia.

Rejecting the designation of such words as "Chagatai" as erroneous, Sâmî refers to them as "pure and unadulterated Turkish words" (*hâlis ve sâfî Türkçe kelimeler*) and emphasizes that, although they have been "neglected and forgotten on our side" (*bizce ihmal olunup unutulduğu hâlde*), they have been preserved in Turkestan. He presents the reintroduction of these words into use as a task that "every person of patriotic sensibility would desire" (*her sahib-i hamiyyetin*).[114]

In the final point of the comparison, Sâmî observes that Western Turkish contains many words that are not understood by their counterparts in the East. He notes that most of these words are borrowed from foreign languages or belong to what he calls "newly formed vocabulary" (*lugat-ı müvellededen*), and he directly links this fragmentation to the absence of "a perfect dictionary" (*mükemmel bir kâmûs*) and "a well-regulated grammar" (*mazbut bir sarf ve nahv*).[115]

This argument—that a Chagatai dictionary cannot serve as a substitute for a Turkish dictionary—had already been articulated by Ebûzziyâ before Sâmî, in the preface to his own dictionary. Ebûzziyâ states that Ottoman Turkish, being composed predominantly of Arabic words and partly of Persian words, while also containing its own native vocabulary, would—even hypothetically—face an unresolved difficulty: even if the problems posed by Arabic and Persian were successfully addressed through the dictionaries of those languages, one would still be left with the question of which dictionary should be consulted for Turkish itself. He explicitly rejects the Chagatai dictionary for this purpose, arguing that the difference between that dictionary and Ottoman Turkish, both in wording and in meaning, is as great as the difference between Latin and Italian, or between Persian and Kurdish.[116]

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[114] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 3.
[115] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 3.
[116] Ebûzziyâ Tevfik, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Ebûzziyâ, 1306 [1889–90]), 5.
"Lisânımız ise ekseriyet üzre elfâz-ı Arabiyye ve kısmen elfâz-ı Farsiyye ile mahlût bulunduğu gibi, bir de kendi kelimâtımızın hâvî olduğundan, farz-ı muhal olarak, Arabî ile Farsî de tesaduf edeceğimiz müşkilâtı o lisanların lugat mütercimeleriyle halluhu muvaffak olsak bile asıl Türkçe içün hangi lugata müracaat

The parallel arguments constructed in the prefaces of Ebûzziyâ and Sâmî demonstrate that both figures shared a common problem space regarding the language question and positioned dictionaries within a similar ideological and functional framework. Their having worked together in practice within the same publishing milieu during the 1870s further suggests that this discursive convergence was not coincidental, but rather indicative of a shared conception of language shaped within the contemporary practices of the press and publishing world.

Within this framework, Şemseddin Sâmî's approach—constructed through the distinction between Eastern and Western Turkish—can be seen to display a certain parallelism with the dialect-oriented perspective adopted by Ahmed Vefik Paşa in *Lehce-i Osmânî*. Although the very title of Ahmed Vefik Paşa's dictionary and his frequent use of the designation *lisân-ı Osmânî* in the preface may give the impression that the Ottoman linguistic sphere is being positioned as a separate category under the heading of "dialect," Şemseddin Sâmî's orientation moves in the opposite direction, deliberately relegating the label *lisân-ı Osmânî / Ottoman* to the background. By consistently foregrounding the terms "Turkish" and *lisân-ı Türkî* in his writings, Sâmî designates the Ottoman linguistic sphere as a branch of Turkish (Western Turkish), and he articulates this claim of unity explicitly with the assertion "Eastern Turkish and Western Turkish are a single language; both are Turkish" (*Şark Türkçesiyle garb Türkçesi bir tek lisândır, ikisi de Türkçedir*).

Ahmed Vefik Paşa's presentation of his dictionary under the heading of "dialect" thus constitutes a mode of naming that allows Ottoman Turkish to be conceived as a branch within the historical trajectory of Turkish. Şemseddin Sâmî's association of Eastern Turkish with what is "correct in principle," and Western Turkish with *galat*, is likewise grounded in an understanding that frames the transformation of Ottoman Turkish not as a natural rupture, but as the cumulative outcome of prolonged disconnection, neglect, and the accumulation of orthographic differences.

Among Tanzimat-era intellectuals, Ahmed Vefik Paşa stands out as the earliest figure to bring to the fore the idea of turning toward Chagatai Turkish and other Central Asian branches of Turkish. In the literature, this orientation is often linked to Paşa's

edeceğiz? Elbette aslı olan Çağatay Lugatı'na değil, zirâ bizim şive-i tekellümümüzle o lugat arasındaki fark, lafzan ve mana Latince ile Italyanca veya Farsî'yle Kürtçe beynindeki fark kadar azîmdir."

interest in Turkological studies during his service in Europe, an interest that directed his attention in particular toward the Chagatai sphere. His translation of three sections of the *Şecere-i Türk* and their publication in *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* are frequently cited as concrete evidence of this engagement. With the circulation of the *Şecere-i Türk*, Tanzimat intellectuals increasingly drew upon explanations that traced the origins of the Turks to Central Asia, a tendency that in turn reinforced the inclination to regard Chagatai Turkish—then a vibrant written language in Central Asia—as the "original" form of Turkish. In some texts, this inclination even extended to judgments that evaluated Ottoman Turkish as a "corrupted" or *galat* variant in relation to the Chagatai sphere.

In this context, what renders Ahmed Vefik Paşa particularly noteworthy is that, despite identifying the importance of the Chagatai sphere at an early stage, he framed the issue through a more accurate classification in the preface to *Lehce-i Osmânî*. By dividing the Turkish language into three principal branches—Oghuz, Kipchak, and Uighur—Paşa articulated a perspective that was more precise than the view that singled out Chagatai Turkish alone as the "original" language, and one that continues to retain its validity today.[117]

In the continuation of the preface, Şemseddin Sâmî directs his critique not toward an abstract conception of dictionaries, but toward the dictionaries circulating within the Ottoman sphere and the assumptions these works had come to establish among readers. The passage introduced with the expression "most strangely of all" (*en garibi şurası ki*) makes clear that Sâmî regards the prevailing lexicographical practice not as a mere shortcoming, but as a fundamentally misguided orientation. According to Sâmî, works whose contents consist of "eighty percent of words that are never used in our language and for which there is no need" (*hâvî oldukları kelimelerin yüzde sekseni aslâ lisânımızda kullanılmayan ve kullanılmasına da ihtiyaç olmayan*) are nonetheless put into circulation under the title *Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*. By contrast, the recording and explanation of "purely Turkish words" (*sırf Türkçe kelimelerin zabt ve tefsiri*) is treated as "informing what is already known" (*ma'lûmu i'lâm*) and therefore dismissed as "unnecessary and useless"

[117] Mesut Şen, "Tanzimat Aydınlarının 'Çağatay Türkçesi'ne Bakışı ve Şemseddîn Sâmî'nin Tesiri," *Turkish Studies* 9, no. 9 (Summer 2014): 96.

(*lüzumsuz ve faidesiz*). It is precisely this inversion of priorities that Sâmî insists must be subjected to critique.[118]

Although the preface does not explicitly name the authors or dictionaries targeted by these remarks, the criticism is clearly directed at an established lexicographical practice within the Ottoman domain. More concrete indications of the context in which this discourse was formulated can be traced in Şemseddin Sâmî's article entitled *Lisânımızın Tahdîdi*. There, Sâmî explicitly targets—through the example of Redhouse—dictionaries circulated under the title *Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* whose scope excludes Turkish lexical material. As he states, "..even the most reasonable among the dictionaries published under the title *Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*—namely, Redhouse's well-known work—contains not a single word that may be regarded as genuinely Turkish, yet it includes more than thirty thousand entries." [119]

This critique does not remain limited to the defense of Turkish words; rather, Sâmî deliberately carries the issue onto a comparative plane. He opens this comparison with the assertion that "every people is in need of recording and explaining the vocabulary of its own language" (*Her kavim kendi lisânının lugatlarını zabt ve tefsire muhtaç olmaya idi*), thereby questioning whether the assumptions entrenched within the Ottoman domain possess any universal validity. The author then explicitly names monolingual dictionaries prepared for Arabic, Persian, and French: for Arabic, the *Kâmûs*, *Sıhâh*, *Lisânü'l-Arab*, and *Muhîtü'l-Muhît*; for Persian, the *Burhân* and various *Ferheng*s; and for French, *Bescherelle*, *Larousse*, and *Littré*. This enumeration renders untenable the notion that Ottoman Turkish constitutes an exception with regard to the need for a dictionary when placed alongside established lexicographical practices both in the Islamic world and in Europe. At the same time, it demonstrates that Sâmî closely followed contemporary lexicographical activity and consciously situated his own undertaking within this broader field.[120]

Following this comparison, Sâmî formulates a clear and binding criterion concerning the scope of a dictionary. According to him, "the dictionary of a language must encompass

[118] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 3.
[119] Şemseddin Sâmî, "Lisânımızın Tahdîdi," *Sabah*, no. 3188 (1316 [1898–99]), 3. *"Mesela Lugat-ı Osmâniye unvânıyla neşrolunan lugatlerin en makulü olanı Redhouse'un mâlum eseri asıl Türkçe olarak hiçbir kelimeyi havi olmadığı halde 30000'den ziyade lügat havidir!.."*
[120] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 3.

all the words actually used in that language and must be free of words that are not in use" (*Bir lisânın kâmûsu, o lisânda müsta'mel kâffe-i lugatı cami' olmalı ve o lisânda kullanılmayan kelimelerden ârî bulunmalıdır.*).[121] This definition neither reproduces a restrictive approach limited solely to words of Turkish origin nor reiterates the older lexicographical tradition centered primarily on Arabic and Persian elements. Rather, the principle of *"inclusive of all that belongs and exclusive of all that does not"* operates here as a normative measure to be applied in lexicographical practice.

A similar usage-based principle of delimitation is also articulated in the preface to *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, where it is stated that "no word has been admitted other than those predominantly in use in our language" (*"Evvelen, lisânımızda gâliben müsta'mel olan kelimâtın hâricinde hiçbir lafz kabûl olunmamıştır."*)[122]. By contrast, some dictionaries of the same period construct a different justification by explicitly centering the lexicon on Arabic and Persian elements. *Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı*, for instance, grounds its scope in the perceived need for dictionaries that "explain and interpret the meanings of Arabic and Persian words in accordance with our usage" (*...kelimât-ı Arabiyye ve Fârisiyye'nin ma'ânîsini bizim istimâlimize göre izâh ve tefsîr edecek lugat kitablarına...*).[123] Although the dictionaries of the period differ in terms of their scope and the segments of the lexicon they prioritize, these texts collectively reveal that a usage-oriented conception of dictionary writing—one that seeks to define language through actual practice—constitutes one of the principal shared foundations of lexicographical thought in this period.

In explaining why this criterion has not yet been implemented, Sâmî also makes his own position and sense of responsibility explicit. He notes that the fact that the language has long been deprived of such a work is now "universally acknowledged" (*lisânımızın böyle bir kitâbdan mahrumiyyeti artık cümlece müsellemdir*), while at the same time emphasizing that the compilation of such a dictionary requires "a particularly arduous effort and determination" (*pek zahmetli bir sa'y u ikdama muhtaç*).[124] This prioritization closely aligns with the views Sâmî articulated in his 1315/1899 article

[121] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 4.
[122] Tevfik, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, 10.
[123] Ali Nazimâ and Fâik Reşad, *Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı* (Dersaadet: A. Asaduryan Şirket-i Mürettibiye Matbaası, 1318 [1901–02]), 3.
[124] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 4.

entitled *"Kâmûs-ı Türkî ve Kâmûs-ı Arabî,"*[125] published in *Servet-i Fünûn*. In that text, he underscores that the most urgent need of "our national language" (*"lisân-ı millîmiz"*) is a "national dictionary" (*"lugat-ı millî"*), arguing that the science of lexicography—long neglected in the Ottoman domain—has now become an indispensable necessity. Within this framework, he presents his decision to prioritize *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* over *Kâmûs-ı Arabî*, despite having already begun work on the latter, as a deliberate and reasoned choice.

Indeed, Sâmî observes that lexicographical labor of this kind had not yet been institutionalized in the Ottoman sphere, noting that "no one had undertaken to engage seriously in this discipline, and as a result the words of our language have remained in an unregulated state" (*...biz de bu ilimle tevaggul etmeyi kimse düşünmeyip lisânımızın kelimâtı hemen gayr-ı mazbut bir hâlde kalmış olduğundan*)[126]. He further stresses that the production of a truly comprehensive dictionary cannot be achieved solely through the examination of written texts. Rather, it requires what he describes as an empirically grounded and field-based process of compilation: "not contenting oneself merely with tracing all written works in Turkish, but traveling for extended periods across all regions where this language is spoken, conversing with diverse groups of people well acquainted with the language, and recording and registering all words, down to even the rarest ones" [127]

At this point, the regime of labor Sâmî outlines in describing the compilation of a dictionary reveals a striking affinity with the large-scale lexicographical projects that emerged in nineteenth-century Europe. He explicitly states that a perfect dictionary cannot be completed through the efforts of a single individual, but can only reach completion over time through the collective labor and sustained commitment of successive lexicographers (*"birbirini takib edecek lugaviyyûn"*). This emphasis points to

[125] For more detailed information regarding this article, see Saleh Jaradat, "Şemseddin Sâmî'nin *Servet-i Fünun*'da Yayımladığı *Kamus-ı Türkî* ve *Kamus-ı Arabî* Adlı Makale ve Onun Sözlükçülük Anlayışı," *Uluslararası Türkçe Edebiyat Kültür Eğitim (TEKE) Dergisi* 9, no. 4 (2020): 1381–94. For evaluations specifically concerning the *Kamus-ı Arabî*, see also Saleh Jaradat, "Şemseddin Sâmî'nin *Kamus-ı Arabî* Adlı Sözlüğünün Sözlük Bilimi Açısından İncelenmesi," *Uludağ Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 21, no. 39 (2020): 1269–1300.

[126] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 4.

[127] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 4. *"...Türkçede muharrer kâffe-i asarın tetebbuʿıyle iktifa olunmayıp bu lisânın söylendiği memâlikin cümlesine tul-i müddet seyahat ve lisânlarını iyi bilen sunûf-ı muhtelife-i ehâli ile sohbet edilerek, en nâdirlerine varıncaya kadar kâffe-i lugat zabt ve kayd olunmak iktizâ eder."*

a conception of the dictionary not as an individual act of authorship, but as a collective and long-term process of knowledge production.

Şemseddin Sâmî's discourse in *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* can thus be situated within the broader intellectual climate that followed the rise of normative dictionary authority associated with language academies in eighteenth-century Europe, and that increasingly foregrounded historical and evidence-based lexicography in the nineteenth century. In this context, while the dictionary continued to be conceived as an authority that regulates and delimits language, growing emphasis was placed on constructing the lexicon through usage examples, systematic examination of historical texts, and extended editorial labor. Sâmî's persistent emphasis in the preface on "recording and registering" (*zabt ve kayd*), "systematic examination" (*tetebbu*ʿ), "travel and conversation" (*seyahat ve sohbet*), and the idea of gradual completion over time through the labor of successive lexicographers (*"mürûr-ı zamanla tekemmül"*), positions the dictionary not as a singular and prescriptive declaration of authority, but as a social and historical process of knowledge production.[128]

Two prominent examples that concretize the classification of words within the Ottoman linguistic sphere are *Lehce-i Osmânî* and *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*. In the second fascicle of *Lehce-i Osmânî*, Ahmed Vefik Paşa sharpens internal lexical classification and responds to the question of "how it should be" through a more delimiting and prescriptive framework, situating Ottoman Turkish within a historical context through his account of the Turkish branches. Şemseddin Sâmî, by contrast, carries a similar historical orientation onto a broader and more continuous plane: he distributes the trajectory of words, lost elements, the possibility of revival from the Eastern sphere, and the legitimacy of usage across the entirety of the dictionary. As a result, in *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, the declaration of

[128] For a long time, the dominant model of dictionary making in Europe was the normative lexicographical tradition shaped around language academies. The publication of the first edition of the *Académie française*'s dictionary (founded in 1635) in 1694, followed by new editions in 1718 and 1740, demonstrates that language was envisioned as a fixable and regulatable structure. Similarly, the *Real Academia Española*, founded in 1713, institutionalized the claim of purifying and regulating the language with the *Diccionario de la lengua castellana* published between 1726 and 1739. This normative ideal is also evident in Samuel Johnson's 1747 dictionary plan; while Johnson initially advocated that English should be "fixed" and "purified," in the preface to his dictionary published in 1755, he admitted the unsustainability of this claim and likened the attempt to chain the language to "lashing the wind." In the nineteenth century, under the influence of philology and as emphasized by Franz Passow, a historical and descriptive approach to lexicography based on chronological citations came to the fore. This approach was embodied in collective, evidence-based projects such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the Brothers Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, and Émile Littré's *Dictionnaire de la langue française*. See Lynda Mugglestone, *Dictionaries: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 38–41.

method does not remain confined to the preface, but is transformed into a consistent logic of evidence and usage (*kanıt ve istimâl*) that permeates the dictionary as a whole.

Sâmî's explicit mention in the preface of contemporary French dictionaries such as *Bescherelle*, *Larousse*, and *Littré* suggests—if not direct engagement with these works—that he at least conceptualized his own dictionary within a comparable lexicographical horizon. With this awareness, Sâmî presents his work not as a final authority, but as an initial undertaking whose deficiencies are to be completed in the future. He grounds this position in two proverbial maxims: "What cannot be fully attained should not be entirely abandoned" *(*"ما لا يدرك كله لا يترك كل"*)*, and "How much have the predecessors left for those who come after?" *(*"كم ترك الاول للاخر"*)*[129]. These expressions indicate that *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* is conceived as an enterprise that is both conscious of its limits and unwilling to retreat from responsibility despite those limits.

Across nearly all fifteen dictionaries examined in this study, the existence of monolingual Arabic and French dictionaries and the necessity of a dictionary for Ottoman Turkish are articulated as a shared problem. In parallel, the early modern view—particularly prevalent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—that the dictionary constitutes the "gateway to knowledge" continues to be echoed in the prefaces of later lexicographers. Hüseyin Remz

î, for instance, states in his preface that "the preservation of a language depends upon compiling and arranging the words that constitute and adorn it into a collection; without such a collection, attempting to attain scholarly aims is akin to trying to open a locked door without a key" [130]

Similarly, in the preface to *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, Mehmed Salâhî observes that "since it is self-evident that explaining how words, through their modes of usage and specific constructions, signify particular meanings would bring both ease and benefit, the need for an explanatory and example-based dictionary specific to Ottoman Turkish

[129] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 4.
[130] Hüseyin Remzi [Altınbilek], *Lugat-ı Remzî* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hüseyin Remzi, 1305 [1889]), 2. *"…bir lisan muhafazası o lisanı teşkîl ve tezyîn eden elfâzın cem' ve tertîbîyle bir mecmûa tanzîmine vabestedir; bu mecmûa olmadan ilimce olan maksada vusûl, kilitli bir kapıyı anahtarsız açmaya kalkmak kabilindendir."*

is universally acknowledged"[131] Within the same problematization, Salâhî further argues that most existing dictionaries, by providing only the Arabic meanings of words while neglecting their Ottoman-specific senses and usage examples, generate confusion rather than utility for their users.

Ali Seydî joins this line of argument in the preface to *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* (1330), asserting that "if a language did not require explanation and interpretation through that very language, then the Arabs, the Persians, and the Europeans would not have possessed—each exclusively for their own languages—hundreds of *kâmûs***,** *muhît***,** *ferheng***,** and dictionaries"[132]

Sâmî's approach to Arabic and Persian elements is notably more cautious. While he characterizes the revival of *pure Turkish words* actively used in Eastern Turkish as "the most particular of aspirations" (*ehass-ı âmâlim*), he nonetheless acknowledges that a sufficiently broad audience willing to prefer these words over their Arabic and Persian equivalents solely out of "affection for ethnicity and lineage" (*kavmiyyet ve cinsiyyet mahabbeti*) does not yet exist. This acknowledgment marks one of the fundamental points at which Şemseddin Sâmî diverges from Ahmed Vefik Paşa: rather than adopting a purist stance, Sâmî seeks a usage-centered and gradual balance. For this reason, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* encompasses both words of Turkish origin and Arabic, Persian, and other foreign elements that are in actual use within the language. The contexts in which words are employed, as well as whether their usage is deemed necessary or superfluous, are explicitly indicated. In this respect, the work positions itself not merely as a dictionary that collects words, but as a measured and interventionist lexicographical project—one that seeks to determine the status each word should occupy within Ottoman Turkish.

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[131] Salâhî, *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, 2. *"…tarz-ı istimâlleriyle bunların terkîbât-ı husûsa ile nasıl ve hangi mânâlara delâlet etmekte bulunduklarına dâir suhûlet ve menfaati mûcib olacağı bedihî bulunduğundan, lisân-ı Osmânî'ye mahsûs îzahlı misalli bir lugat kitabına fevkalâde lüzûm ve ihtiyac görüldüğü cümlece müsellemdir."*

[132] Ali Seydi Bey, *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* (Istanbul: Darü'l Hilâfeti'l Aliyye Matbaası, 1330 [1912-13]), 11. *"Bir lisânı; yine aynı lisân ile tefsîr ve tâbîre ihtiyâç olmamış olsa idi, Arapların, Acemlerin, Frenklerin – sırf kendi lisânlarına mahsûs olmak üzre – yüzlerce kamusları, muhîtları, ferhengleri, diksiyonerleri olmamak lâzım gelirdi."*

2.2.3. The Nature of the Dictionary, Criteria of Legitimacy, and a Critique of the Earlier Tradition

In this section of the preface to *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, Şemseddin Sâmî frames the discussion of lexicography not primarily around the selection of words, but directly around the question of "What a dictionary is?" The issue thus shifts from the problem of which words should be included or excluded to the more fundamental matter of the criteria by which a dictionary becomes a functional work of reference. For Sâmî, the value of a dictionary cannot be measured solely by the sheer quantity of words it contains; questions of arrangement (*tertib*) and method (*usûl*) constitute the very conditions of usability. At this point, the author turns to earlier dictionaries with explicit reference and a clear distinction, stating that "it is well known among specialists that, in works of this kind, mere abundance and breadth of content are not sufficient; rather, proper arrangement and an adopted method are of great importance"[133]

Following this general principle, Sâmî considers the Arabic and Turkish lexicographical traditions together. He explicitly acknowledges the scholarly value of works such as Firûzâbâdî's *Kâmûs*, its commentary *Tâcü'l-ʿArûs*, *Lisânü'l-ʿArab*, and Ahmed Vefik Paşa's *Lehce-i Osmânî*. Yet he circumscribes this value by raising the question of intended audience, observing that "these works are not arranged in a manner useful to all who consult dictionaries, but rather according to a method and arrangement that can serve only those who wish to compile dictionaries themselves"[134]

The expression *kâffe-i eshab-ı murâcaat* refers here to the broader readership—users who turn to a dictionary for everyday purposes of reading, writing, and comprehension. Sâmî emphasizes that these dictionaries are, in effect, technical works written primarily for lexicographers and are not readily accessible to ordinary users. His critique, however, is not limited to the question of audience; it is directed equally at the structure of arrangement itself. As he states, "not only are dictionaries not organized according to an arrangement that allows for easy retrieval, but their meanings are not

[133] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 5. *"Erbâbının ma'lûmudur ki bu kabilden kitablarda mündericatın kesret ve vüs'atı kâfi olmayıp, hüsn-i tertib ve usûl-i müttehazenin dahi ehemmiyyeti pek büyüktür."*).
[134] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 5. *"Bunlar kâffe-i eshab-ı murâcaatın değil, belki yalnız lugat tertib etmek isteyen lugaviyyûnun işine yarayabilecek bir usûl ve tertibtedir."*

clearly distinguished from one another; they are not properly explained or illustrated with examples, and instead are presented in a confused manner, all thrown together at once"[135]

For this reason, Sâmî argues that only "those with specialized expertise" (*erbâb-ı ihtisas*) can benefit from such works, and even they can do so only "with great difficulty and through many complications" (*kemâl-i zahmetle ve nice müşkilâtla*). It is precisely at this point that the central claim of *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* becomes visible: to render the dictionary a tool not merely for the *lugaviyyûn* but one that a broad community of users can consult.

This framework is then completed by a more fundamental principle concerning the scope of the dictionary. Sâmî evaluates the words used in Ottoman Turkish not according to their origins, but according to their actual usage. For this reason, the issue of words of Arabic origin that have acquired different meanings in Ottoman Turkish occupies a special place. The author finds it problematic to treat words that either have no equivalent in Arabic dictionaries or do not rest on Arabic rules as automatically belonging to "Arabic words" (*kelimât-ı Arabiyye*), and he poses the question directly: "Can we call words that are neither Arabic in form nor Arabic in meaning, and that are not found in any Arabic dictionary, 'Arabic words'?"[136]

From this question, he proceeds to define the concept of *lugat-ı müvellede*. According to Sâmî, *lugat-ı müvellede* may be used for words that arise among the speakers of a language itself, whereas for those invented by outsiders, "no designation other than 'galat' can possibly be appropriate" (*o lisânın yabancıları tarafından icad olunanlarına 'galat'tan başka hiçbir sıfat yakışamaz.*)[137] Here, *galat* does not function as a call for absolute exclusion; rather, Sâmî proposes differentiating such words according to their spheres of usage. Indeed, he states**:** "As for such vocabulary, we should regard those used among the common people as Turkish words taken from Arabic through the

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[135] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 5.*"Lugatlar kolay bulunabilecek bir tertibde sıralanmış olmadıktan başka, mânâları dahi birbirlerinden ayrılmayıp, ve lâyıkı vechile tefsir ve misallerle izah olunmayıp, karmakarışık ve hepsi birden atılmıştır."*

[136] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 5. *"İmdi lâfza'n veya ma'n'en Arabî olmayan ve hiçbir kâmûs-ı Arabîde bulunmayan bu kelimelere 'kelimât-ı Arabiyye' namını verebilecek miyiz?"*

[137] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 5.

route of *galat***;** but those confined solely to the scientific and literary language should be corrected or replaced, and we should not employ them as *galat***.”**[138]

In line with this principle, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* is designed neither as a restrictive purist enterprise limited only to words of Turkish origin (*Turkiyyü'l-asıl*), nor as a compilation filled—under the title *lugat-ı Osmâniyye*—with rare *garâib-i Arabiyye ve Fârisiyye* that are scarcely used even in Turkish. Sâmî states explicitly that the dictionary must encompass all words genuinely used in Ottoman Turkish, and at this point he draws the following analogy: “Moreover, a dictionary that includes only the Turkish-origin words of our language but does not contain the commonly used and familiar vocabulary and technical terms borrowed from Arabic and Persian would resemble, for example, a dictionary of English that fails to include the words borrowed from French—that is, a dictionary that does not contain nearly half of that language’s lexicon.”[139]

For this reason, the title *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* is itself a deliberate choice. According to Sâmî, “our language is Turkish” (*“lisânımız lisân-ı Türkîdir”*), and the words used within this language—regardless of their origins—are to be counted as Turkish insofar as they satisfy the condition of actual usage (*istimâl*). In this way, the dictionary is positioned not in order to “purify” or “narrow” the language, but to define, delimit, and—when necessary—correct it on the basis of usage. This positioning can be observed more clearly within the dictionary itself. For instance, in the definitions of words such as *çığırmak, gerdek, gezlik, kez,* and *setrî*, Sâmî formulates his entries in a comparative dialogue with the lexicographical works of his own period, indicating that he does not agree with “the late Ahmed Vefik Paşa” (*“Ahmet Vefik Paşa merhumun”*) and remarking, for example, that Paşa “counts it as *galat***,** but…” (*galat addediyorsa da..*).[140]

Sâmî describes himself as a lexicographer in the following terms: “Especially in works of reference of this kind, in observing the indispensable and necessary rules and methods required for finding the sought word with ease and determining its meaning

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[138] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 5. *“Bu gibi lugatların beyne'l-avam müsta'mel olanlarına galat tarikiyle Arabîden me'huz lugat-ı Türkiyye nazariyle bakmalıyız; mücerred lisân-ı fennî ve edebîye münhasır bulunanlarını ise tashih veya tebdil edip, galat kullanmamalıyız.”*

[139] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 5. *“Bundan mâada lisânımızın Türkiyyü'l-asıl olan kelimâtını câmi' olup da Arabî ve Fârisîden me'huz lugat ve ıstılâhât-ı müsta'mele ve me'nuseyi hâvî olmayan bir lugat kitabı, meselâ İngilizcenin Fransızcadan müstear kelimâtını ya'ni bu lisânın hemen nısf-ı lugatını hâvî olmayan bir lugat kitabına benzer.”*

[140] Engin Çetin, “*Kamus-ı Türkî*’de *Lehce-i Osmânî*’ye Eleştiriler,” *Türk Dili* 73, no. 868 (April 2024): 81.

without difficulty, I can claim—by virtue of my twenty years of engagement in compiling dictionaries, and thus my specialization in the science of lexicography—that this work is without fault." [141]

For this reason, he seeks—on the basis of his own experience—to establish, in lexicographical terms, the most accurate arrangement possible regarding *galat* usages and their correct forms, neglected words that ought to be revived, and the question of which items should be considered *lugat-ı müvellede* (newly formed vocabulary). How successful—or how unsuccessful—this effort is has been examined comparatively, across several dictionaries, in Engin Çetin's review study.

2.2.4. Arrangement and Publication in Kâmûs-ı Türkî

In the final part of *İfâde-i Merâm*, Şemseddin Sâmî aims not so much to teach grammatical details as to explain how the dictionary is to be read, how it should be used, and according to which principles it has been arranged. This section should therefore be read less as a technical grammar manual than as an effort to secure the usability of the dictionary itself.

Within this framework, Sâmî first returns to the question of alphabetical arrangement and explicitly states that in *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* "the order of the letters has been observed from the first to the last letter of each word" (*lugatın ilk harflerinden son harflerine varıncaya kadar hurûf-ı hecâ tertibine riâyet olunduğunu*).[142] By contrast, he emphasizes that vowel marks and so-called "imagined signs" (*"mevhum işarât"*) have not been taken as the basis for ordering entries. This choice constitutes a direct objection to a mode of arrangement frequently encountered in earlier dictionaries, one that distances users—especially those unfamiliar with a word's pronunciation—from the very entry they seek. Indeed, Sâmî had previously criticized the absence of vowel marking and the inconsistent indication of phonetic distinctions in writing, noting that these practices make it difficult to locate words. Here, however, he presents his solution: pronunciation is not fixed in the ordering of entries, but is clearly specified within the entries themselves,

[141] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 6. *"Hele bu gibi mürâcaat kitablarında aranılacak kelimenin kolaylıkla bulunup, ma'nasının suhûletle ta'yini için elzem ve lâbüd olan kaide ve usûle riayet hususunda, yirmi seneden beri lugat kitabları tertibiyle tevaggulüm ve bu veçhile fenn-i lugata ihtisasım yardımıyla, bu eserin kusursuz olduğunu iddia edebilirim."*
[142] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 6.

thereby ensuring that "no room is left for doubt or hesitation in pronunciation" (*"sûret-i kıraatte şübhe ve tereddüde mahal bırakılmadığını"*).

This approach demonstrates that the dictionary was conceived as both reader-friendly and attentive to linguistic clarity. Following the same logic, the differentiation of words borrowed from Arabic and Persian, the indication—by special signs—of the grammatical category (*aksâm-ı kelime*) to which each word belongs, and the inclusion of explanations concerning derivation (*iştikâk*) or compounding (*terkip*) serve not the purpose of grammatical instruction per se, but rather that of facilitating accurate comprehension. Sâmî's aim here is not to classify words for their own sake, but to render visible the function each word performs within Ottoman Turkish.

Preferences concerning the organization of meaning proceed in the same direction. The ordering of "multiple meanings" (*maânî-i muhtelife*) according to frequency of use, and the separation of synonyms and examples through distinct signs, transforms the dictionary into not merely a definitional tool but a guide to usage. The separate marking of scholarly and technical terminology (*ilmî ve fennî ıstılâhlar*), and the indication of cases in which a word shifts its grammatical category by means of an (=) sign, should likewise be read as precautions designed to prevent the dictionary from presenting the reader with a misleading uniformity.

At this point, although Sâmî enters into details regarding Arabic and Persian words, these explanations aim less at teaching grammar than at eliminating confusions that had become established in earlier dictionaries. His insistence—particularly with regard to Arabic *maṣdar*s—that the semantic changes produced in Turkish when these verbal nouns combine with auxiliary verbs should not be confused with the *maṣdar*'s meaning "in itself" (*"hadd-i zâtındaki"*) reflects a stance against unnecessary proliferation and mental confusion. This approach continues the guiding principle visible throughout *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*: the avoidance of *"tatvîl-i makal ve teşvîş-i ezhân"* that is, avoiding undue length and the bewilderment of minds.

On the question of scientific and scholarly terminology, Sâmî draws a clear boundary. He notes that each discipline possesses its own specialized terms and that it is not possible to gather all of them into a single dictionary. For this reason, he states that only those terms that are "generally known and commonly used" (*"umûmca ma'lûm ve*

müsta'mel") have been included, while field-specific and specialist terminology has been deliberately excluded. This choice can be read as a declaration that limits the scope of *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* while simultaneously making its claim realistic.

All of these technical preferences form part of what Sâmî describes as an effort to produce a dictionary that is perfect "according to the present state of our language and to the degree that is possible today" (*lisânımızın şimdiki hâline göre ve bugünkü günde mümkün olabilecek derecede*)[143]. Here, "perfection" (*mükemmeliyet*) signifies not an absolute completeness, but rather the capacity to respond to the needs of its own time.

This approach also manifests itself in the issue of publication. Sâmî initially considered publishing the dictionary on his own account; however, considering the "*tâkat-fersâ*""(exhausting) burden of the publication process and the matter of continuity, he accepted the proposal of Ahmed Cevdet Bey, the owner of the *İkdam* newspaper. This decision was not merely a practical preference; it was a conscious move aimed at ensuring the dictionary was published under the guarantees of speed, order, and completion. Thus, the potential problems arising from combining authorship and publishing in the same person were averted.

The nature of these problems is directly related to the transformation of printing into an independent commercial activity and the rapid complexification of the technical infrastructure during the post-Tanzimat period, as Mehmet Erken emphasizes in his study.[144] A book was no longer merely a text originating from the author's mind; it was the product of a collective manufacturing process—ranging from the selection of typefaces (*hurûfât*) to paper adjustments, and from bureaucratic applications to distribution networks—requiring various forms of expertise, such as compositors (*mürettib*), machine operators, and proofreaders (*musahhih*), at every stage.[145] As Erken notes, by the 1880s, the emergence of specialized actors such as the *nâşir* (publisher) and *tabiʿ* (printer)—the counterparts to the European 'editor'—made it nearly impossible for a single individual to manage this operational process alone.[146] Sâmî's description of this burden as '*tâkat-fersâ*' reflects the necessity of delegating the publication to the security

[143] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî,* 7.
[144] Mehmet Erken, "Geç Osmanlı Döneminde Matbaa ve Kitap Yayıncılığı (1857–1888)" (PhD diss., Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, 2021), 205.
[145] Erken, "Geç Osmanlı Döneminde Matbaa," 199–200.
[146] Erken, "Geç Osmanlı Döneminde Matbaa," 242, 246–48.

of a professional intermediary institution. Ultimately, as Orlin Sabev discusses through the example of Müteferrika, this choice serves the fundamental goal of the printed work: the ideal of conveying information to a wide audience in the most appropriate manner. The success of such an endeavor depends as much on the power and capacity of the publisher to present the content in accordance with traditional or new reader expectations as it does on the content itself.[147]

2.2.5. The Printer's Statement (İfâde-i Tâbiʿ): The Public Value of Kâmûs-ı Türkî

The *İfâde-i Tâbiʿ*, which completes the author's *İfâde-i Merâm*, reinforces the public and ideological positioning of *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* in a concise yet emphatic manner. Here, the dictionary is no longer presented merely as a technical reference work, but as an undertaking directly connected to the regulation of the *national language* (*lisân-ı millî*) and to the progress of the country itself.

In the printer's text, this relationship is articulated through a clear chain of causality. It is emphasized that the order of a language depends upon the "gathering and integration of its existing vocabulary to the greatest extent possible" (*"mümkün mertebe cemʿ ve telfîkine"*); this linguistic order, in turn, is said to foster the advancement of literature, and the advancement of literature is presented as directly serving the progress of the country. Within this framework, the publication of a dictionary is defined not as a purely scholarly activity, but explicitly as a public duty: "Thus, publishing the dictionary of the national language constitutes a service to the progress and advancement of the country, and this can only be made possible through a lofty devotion."[148]

While the presence of such a *himmet-i âliye* in Şemseddin Sâmî is especially underscored, the *İfâde-i Tâbiʿ* simultaneously makes it clear that major dictionary projects cannot be realized through the effort of the author alone. At this point, the text explicitly frames dictionary publication as a matter of division of labor and collective effort, linking this understanding to publishing practices in Europe: "Nevertheless, no matter how lofty the devotion and how sustained the effort, the emergence of such major and weighty works likewise depends upon the existence of a printer who has adopted diligence and

[147] Orlin Sabev, *İbrahim Müteferrika ya da İlk Osmanlı Matbaa Serüveni 1726–1746* (Istanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2006), 187.
[148] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 9. *"Demek ki lisân-ı millînin lugatnâmesini neşr etmek, memleketin terakkî ve teâlîsine hizmettir ki, bu da ancak bir himmet-i âliye ile imkân-pezîr olur."*

effort as his guiding principle. Even in Europe, the greatest authors cannot dispense with the assistance of printers."[149]

This brief yet meaningful reference situates the publication of *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* beyond a purely local necessity, placing it instead within the broader lexicographical and publishing practices of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the text establishes this division normatively by stating that "the author should concern himself with writing, while the printer should concern himself with printing and dissemination" (*"Müellif tahrîr ile, tâbiʿ tabʿ ve temsil ile meşgul olmalıdır"*), and explicitly warns that when the author undertakes both writing and publishing, "difficulties multiply" (*"müşkilât-ı tezâʿuf eder"*).

Within this context, the *İfâde-i Tâbiʿ* also positions the role of *İkdam* Newspaper—responsible for the printing and publication of *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*—not merely as a technical publishing operation, but as a form of public service. Ahmed Cevdet, the proprietor and editor-in-chief of the newspaper, describes assuming responsibility for the printing and publication of the dictionary as "rendering a serious service to the country" (*"memlekete ciddî bir hizmet ibzâ etmek"*). In this way, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* emerges, through the collaboration between author and publisher, as a collective cultural project that is both scholarly and ideological in character.

2.3. Criticism of Other Dictionaries in Dictionary Prefaces

Between the publication of the earliest dictionary in 1853—James Redhouse's *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*—and the first edition of *Lehce-i Osmânî*, printed in 1876, there lies an intermediate period of nearly twenty-three years. During this interval, Redhouse's dictionary was reprinted numerous times, in more than ten different versions. We know, moreover, that these later editions were produced with unauthorized alterations and significant errors, as Hüseyin Remzî explicitly states in the preface to *Lugat-ı Remzî* (1305/1889). There, he notes that although the dictionary originally circulated under the title *Müntehab-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* had been arranged in a manner suitable for public use, it is regrettable that the newer copies circulated among the public over the past ten to fifteen years consisted merely of wrongly printed editions issued by ignorant

[149] Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, 9. *"Mâmâfih himmet ne kadar âlî, gayret ne kadar mütevâlî olursa olsun, bu gibi âsâr-ı mühimme-i cesîmenin sâha-i vücûda gelmesi kezâlik saʿy u gayreti kendine rehber ittihâz etmiş bir tâbiʿin vücûduna vabestedir. Avrupa'da bile en büyük müellifler tâbiʿlerin muʿâvenetinden müstağnî olamazlar."*

booksellers, motivated solely by personal profit and indifferent to whether their actions served the public good or caused harm. He concludes that it would be more appropriate to regard the existence of such a misleading object as nonexistent rather than to acknowledge it as a valid dictionary.[150] For this reason, James Redhouse's *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* became one of the most frequently cited—and most heavily criticized—dictionaries in later dictionary prefaces.

A similar critical stance can be observed in the writings of Ebûzziyâ Tevfik. In the preface to his dictionary, he begins with a striking remark: "We do possess a dictionary, which we call *Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*! Yet when we open it, we cannot even understand the meaning of the word *vicdân***,** which we use today to mean 'conscience' **(***zamîr***).** Then we encounter a word such as *vahf***,** supposedly in the *hafv* pattern, a word that has never been used in Turkish at all."[151] He continues by observing that whenever one consults the dictionary for any given word, one finds the meanings explained in works such as the *Kâmûs* or *Burhân*, but transmitted in a confused and distorted manner. Such a work, he argues, cannot be regarded as a dictionary that encompasses the vocabulary of Ottoman Turkish—or, more precisely, of Turkish itself—but rather as a mere notebook that assembles Arabic and Persian words along with their mistranslated meanings.[152]

Ebûzziyâ is careful to clarify that his intention is not to censure the book known as *Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* itself, but rather to criticize those Ottomans who accept such a work

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[150] Remzî, *Lugat-ı Remzî*, 2.
"Avamın istifâde edeceği surette tertîb edilmiş olup Müntehâb-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye nâmıyla elde bulunan lugat mecmuâsına gelince – bunun dahi ihtiyâcata kâfî olacak derecede münderecatı olmaktan ma'âda teessüf olunur ki on on beş seneden beri iyâde-i nâs'ta tedâvul eden cedîd nüshaları menafi'-i umumiyeyye hidmet etmek maksad ve hatırasına mâlik olmayan ve başkasına zararı olup olmayacağını düşünmeyerek yalnız menfa'at-ı zâtiyyesini istihsâla hasr-ı sayu ihtimam eden bir takım cehele-i sahhâf marifetleriyle yanlış tab'u neşr olunmuş nüshâlardan ibâret olduğundan tağlî-i ezhânı mûcib olan böyle bir mevcûdu var demekten ise yok diye yâd eylemek daha münasibdir zan ederim."
[151] Tevfik, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, 8–9.
"*..Elde bir lugatımız vardır, ki adına Lugat-ı Osmâniyye diyoruz! Halbuki açup baktığımızda "zamîr" mânâsına olarak elyevm istimâl eylediğimiz "vicdân" kelimesinin mânâsını anlayamıyoruz. Sonra "Hafv" vezninde "Vahf" diye Türkçe'de kat'â istimâl olunmamış bir kelime görüyoruz. Ve herhangi lafza bakacak olsak kâmûsta, Burhan'da müfesser mânâları, fakat müşevveş bir yolda nâkil buluyoruz. Bu ise Osmanlıların ve tabîr-i assahla Türkçemizin elfâzını câmi' bir lugat değil, Arap ve Acem kelimeleriyle mânâ-i mütercimelerini (yalan yanlış) cem' etmiş bir lugat defteri demek oluyor. Merâmımız [Lugat-ı Osmâniyye] denilen kitabı muâheze değildir. Belki o lugatı, lugat diye kabûl edup de maksada hizmet içün kâfî gören Osmanlıları muâhezedir. Bâhusûs bu kitab "Redhouse" nâmında bir İngiliz tarafından bundan otuz sene evvel cem' edilmiş bir şey olduğundan, efrâd-ı Osmaniyye içün bu zamanda onunla hal işkâli, ayniyle bir ecnebîden irtikâb-ı suâl mertebesinde kerîh görüyoruz."*
[152] Tevfik, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, 8-9. *"…bu ise Osmanlıların ve tabîr-i assahla Türkçemizin elfâzını câmi' bir lugat değil, Arap ve Acem kelimeleriyle mânâ-i mütercimelerini (yalan yanlış) cem' etmiş bir lugat defteri demek oluyor."*).

as a dictionary and deem it sufficient for their purposes.[153] He further emphasizes that this dictionary was compiled some thirty years earlier by an Englishman named Redhouse, and that, in his view, relying on it at the present time to resolve linguistic difficulties for Ottoman readers is as objectionable as posing one's questions directly to a foreigner (*…ayniyle bir ecnebîden irtikâb-ı suâl mertebesinde kerîh görüyoruz.*)[154]

This critical trajectory continues in a more systematic and exclusionary form in the preface to Mehmed Salâhî's *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*. The author emphasizes that earlier dictionaries neglected the meanings Arabic-derived words had acquired within Ottoman Turkish, and that these meanings were supported neither by usage examples nor by literary attestations. For this reason, he argues that such works do not serve "the benefit of those who consult them" (*erbâb-ı müracâatın istifâdesi*), but rather lead to "the confusion of minds" (*tağlît-i ezhânı mûcib*). As Paşa Yavuzarslan has noted, the phrase "two incomplete but widely favored works"[155] mentioned in the *ifâde-i merâm* section most likely refers to Ebûzziyâ Tevfik's *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ* (1306) and to Muallim Nâcî's unfinished *Lugat-ı Nâcî*, later completed by Müstecibzâde İsmet according to the same method and published for children under the title *Tetimme-i Lugat-ı Nâcî* (1306). By contrast, works such as *İlaveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (1297), *Lehce-i Osmânî* (1293), *Lehce-i Osmânî Tabʿ-ı Cedîd* (1306), *Lûgat-ı Ecnebiye İlaveli Lûgat-ı Osmâniyye* (1298), and *Lugat-ı Remzî* (1305) are explicitly characterized by Mehmed Salâhî as inadequate and misleading.

In the preface to *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* (1330), this discourse is reformulated as a more overtly hierarchical comparison, articulated through the question of scientific terminology. While the author acknowledges that the compilers of *Lugat-ı Remzî* and *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* rendered a valuable service to the language by including "one or two hundred technical terms" (*bir iki yüz kadar ıstılâh*), he nevertheless contends that this contribution was not commensurate with the growing scientific and technical needs of the period. In contrast, he underscores that his own dictionary incorporates approximately

[153] Tevfik, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, 9. *"Merâmımız [Lugat-ı Osmâniyye] denilen kitabı muâheze değildir… belki o lugatı lugat diye kabûl edup de maksada hizmet içün kâfî gören Osmanlıları muâhezedir."*).
[154] Tevfik, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, 9.
[155] Salâhî, *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, 2.

two thousand scientific, technical, and industrial terms, explicitly stating that this was done "without excess or deficiency" (*min gayri haddin cebr u noksân*).[156]

Another lexicographer, İbrahim Cûdî, acknowledges in the preface to *Lugat-ı Cûdî* the appearance of "newly published dictionaries" during the period, yet notes that only a few of them possess "reliable source authority" (*me'haziyyet itimâdını hâiz*). He describes the verification of each word by grounding it in "authoritative primary sources" (*ümmühât-ı muʿtebere*) as a "grave and demanding task" (*emr-i azîm*),[157] and states that this principle was observed in his own dictionary—indeed, that hours of meticulous verification were spent on certain entries. In this sense, the preface to *Lugat-ı Cûdî* articulates not only a critique of the quantitative insufficiency of earlier dictionaries, but also an explicit claim to establish a lexicographical norm in terms of scholarly reliability, source discipline, and sustained labor of verification.

In conclusion, the nineteenth-century Ottoman world witnessed not only a quantitative increase in publications with the spread of the printing press, but also a distinct boom in dictionary production. İbrahim Cûdî's explicit statement in his preface—"I wished that there should also be a dictionary of mine in the hands of the *umma*" (*...ümmet elinde bir lugatım da benim bulunsun dedim*)[158]—demonstrates that dictionary writing in this period had become not merely an individual scholarly endeavor, but a collective tendency shaped by the broader intellectual climate of the age. Cûdî, however, does not regard this proliferation as a defenseless repetition or an unnecessary accumulation; on the contrary, he conceptualizes the increase in dictionary production as an integral process of *tekkemül* (intellectual maturation) inherent to the nature of scholarly knowledge.

According to Cûdî, human dispositions, capacities, and fields of specialization are inherently diverse, and each individual approaches truth from a different angle. For this reason, he considers it plausible that some minds might raise the question, "In this abundance of dictionaries, what was the purpose of compiling this one?" (*Bu lugat bolluğunda, bu lugatın mânâ-yı tedvîni ne idi?*).[159] Yet he finds such a question

[156] Ali Seydi, *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, 11.
[157] İbrahim Cûdî, *Lugat-ı Cûdî* (Trabzon: Kütüphane-i Hamdi, 1332 [1913–14]), 2.
[158] Cûdî, *Lugat-ı Cûdî*, 1.
[159] Cûdî, *Lugat-ı Cûdî*, 2.

incompatible with *justice and fairness* (*hak ve insâf*). For him, perfection in the sciences does not arise from a single, definitive work; rather, it emerges through the multiplication of written works, their mutual completion, and their cumulative convergence over time. The written corpus of any discipline constitutes the completion of its means and foundations (*esbâb ve vesâil*); the more it expands, the more the signs of intellectual maturation unfold, broaden, and shine forth. Each of these works necessarily complements the others by eliminating excess (*tarh-ı zevâid*), adding benefit (*zamm-ı fevâid*), correcting errors (*ıslâh-ı sehviyyât*), compensating for omissions (*telâfî-i mâfât*), dispelling ambiguity (*izâle-i ibhâm*), clarifying intent (*tavzîh-i merâm*), and probing truths and subtleties through investigation (*istiksâ-yı hakâik* and *istikrâ-i dakâik*).

From this perspective, Cûdî argues that the question itself becomes null and void; indeed, he rhetorically inverts the objection by remarking that asking "What sense does educating people make in a world already overflowing with human beings?" (*Bu kadar insân bolluğunda insân yetiştirmenin mânâsı ne?*)[160] would be even stranger and more absurd.

This approach situates dictionaries at the intersection of the political, cultural, and administrative transformations of the post-Tanzimat period, where debates over language, education, identity, and knowledge production converged. When read through the authors' own prefatory statements, dictionaries thus emerge not as products of individual inclination, but as texts that carry and articulate a multilayered conception of historical *tekkemül*, reflecting a cumulative and process-oriented understanding of intellectual and cultural formation.

Within this context, certain works assumed a central position by virtue of both their widespread use and their capacity to generate debate. From this perspective, Redhouse occupies a simultaneously central and contentious place in the history of Ottoman lexicography. The repeated reprinting of *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* by printers—often, as Remzî notes, "riddled with errors"—suggests that dictionaries increasingly slipped beyond the control of their authors and became more exposed to the dynamics of the publishing market. Moreover, Redhouse's intellectual exchanges with Gibb and his indirect connections with Ahmed Vefik Pasha make visible a circulation of

[160] Cûdî, *Lugat-ı Cûdî*, 2.

knowledge in which Ottoman lexicography was shaped through contact with European Orientalist circles.

It is precisely this network of contact and circulation that generated, among Ottoman authors, a sense of unease regarding the boundaries of engagement with external sources. In this light, Ebûzziyâ Tevfik's critical interrogation of the Redhouse tradition can be read as more than a personal objection: it constitutes an attempt to establish a locally grounded, language-internal lexicographical approach, aimed at liberating the dictionary from dependence on "consulting a foreigner." Consequently, the critiques articulated in dictionary prefaces do not merely target individual works; they also expand into a broader reflection on the grounds of lexicographical legitimacy—raising fundamental questions about who writes dictionaries, on the basis of which sources, and in response to whose needs.

CHAPTER III

Ottoman print and publication were subject to a changing set of regulatory institutions and procedures, which oversaw the inspection, authorization, and circulation of printed materials in the press (matbuat), including reference works such as dictionaries. These mechanisms were not limited to prohibition and rectification; they also encompassed licensing procedures, incentives, content auditing, and the regulation of distribution channels. Collectively, these practices defined the institutional conditions under which language, knowledge, and the public sphere could circulate. Consequently, regulation did not operate solely as one-directional suppression but generated a dynamic of negotiation shaped between the state's concern for public order and integrity and the demands of intellectuals for expression and circulation.

The fifteen monolingual Ottoman dictionaries that constitute the core corpus of this thesis are situated within this broader regulatory environment. While the earliest example, *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (1853), emerged in a relatively permissive setting with limited institutional oversight, dictionaries published between the 1880s and 1902 coincided with the most intensive regulatory phase of the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II. These works were shaped not only by the linguistic preferences of their authors but also by the ideological and institutional constraints of their time. Dictionaries published around 1900–1902, when catalogues of prohibited publications were compiled, are therefore noteworthy for understanding the conceptual sensitivities of the period, insofar as they allow us to observe which terms became contested and which conceptual boundaries were implicitly negotiated.

Dictionaries published after the Second Constitutional Era (II. Meşrutiyet) and the promulgation of the 1909 Press Law (Matbuat Kânunu) reflect the relatively more liberal atmosphere of this period; nevertheless, wartime conditions introduced new forms of restriction that continued to shape publication practices. The final dictionary examined in this study, *Yeni Türkçe Lugat* (1924), was produced outside the framework of Ottoman legal regulations, within the distinct political and linguistic context of the early Republic.

Following the Tanzimat reforms, Ottoman press regulations established a legal and institutional framework that affected not only newspapers and journals but also reference works such as dictionaries. Regulations initiated by the 1857 Printing

Regulation *(Matbaa Nizamnâmesi)* and later institutionalized through the 1888 and 1895 regulations during the Hamidian era shaped the conditions under which monolingual Ottoman Turkish dictionaries were produced and circulated. Accordingly, the Hegira dates of the fifteen dictionaries examined in this study were converted into Gregorian dates using the method of the Turkish Historical Society, and each dictionary was situated within its specific regulatory context.

The first dictionary, *Kitâb-ı Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (1853), appeared prior to the introduction of significant legal restrictions. *Lehce-i Osmânî* (1876), by contrast, was published during the implementation of a pre-publication control decree enacted in the same year as the declaration of the First Constitutional Era. The majority of dictionaries produced between 1880 and 1902—including *İlâveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*, *Lûgat-ı Ecnebiyye İlaveli Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*, *Lugât-ı Remzî*, *Lehce-i Osmânî (Tabʿ-ı Cedîd)*, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, *Tetimme-i Lugat-ı Nâcî*, *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, *Lugat-ı Nâcî*, and *Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı*—coincided with the most restrictive phase of the Abdülhamid period. *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* and *Lugât-ı Cûdî*, published between 1912 and 1914, were prepared under the more permissive conditions following the 1909 Press Law, although they were still shaped by the limitations imposed by wartime circumstances. The final dictionary, *Yeni Türkçe Lugât* (1924), was produced within the distinct political and linguistic context of the Republic.

The "Supplement" section of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* was first introduced into scholarly discussion by Mete Tunçay and Cevdet Kudret in *Abdülhamid Devrinde Sansür* and was later examined in greater detail by François Georgeon in his article "Forbidden Words: On a Document Concerning Ottoman Censorship at the Beginning of the 20th Century," published in *A Tribute to Mete Tunçay*.[161] Georgeon identifies the words listed in Ali Seydî Bey's supplement and situates them within the broader framework of censorship policies and ideological sensitivities of the period. In this context, he also refers to Louis Bazin's comparative study of different editions of *Kâmûs-ı Fransevî*,

[161] François Georgeon, "Yasak Kelimeler: XX. Yüzyılın Başındaki Osmanlı Sansürüyle İlgili Bir Belge Üzerine," in *Mete Tunçay'a Armağan*, ed. Mehmet Ö. Alkan, Tanıl Bora, and Murat Koraltürk (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), 191–202.

which explores whether certain lexical items were excluded due to political connotations.[162]

Additional scholarship, including Çağrı Çalışkan's master's thesis on censorship practices during the reign of Abdülhamid II, has examined prohibited publications through legal regulations and constitutional debates, drawing on the works of François Georgeon, Cevdet Kudret, and Bülent Tanör.[163] These studies, alongside historical accounts such as Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw's *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, note that terms including *anarşi*, *ihtilâl*, *suikast*, *sosyalizm*, and *dinamit* were subject to restriction in certain contexts.[164] Fatmagül Demirel, in *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Sansür*, notes that no official list composed solely of prohibited words has been identified to date; what survives instead are lists of banned or confiscated books and newspapers—suggesting a censorship apparatus that operated primarily through publications rather than through a centralized, word-level blacklist.The appearance of some of these terms in the supplement of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* suggests that the dictionary was produced within a period marked by heightened ideological sensitivity, rather than serving as a direct or exhaustive record of prohibited vocabulary.

In light of these studies, the supplement of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* can be approached as a historically situated textual component shaped by its period, without reducing it to a mere instrument or index of censorship. Accordingly, this study does not evaluate the words listed in the supplement solely in terms of their alleged "prohibited" or "objectionable" status. Instead, it examines how these words are represented, defined, and positioned in relation to other monolingual Ottoman dictionaries. Through this approach, dictionaries are considered not only within the framework of regulatory

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[162] An international symposium entitled "Economy and Society in the Ottoman Empire" was held in Strasbourg from July 1 to 5, 1980, organized by the National Center for Scientific Research (*Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*, CNRS) in Paris. The proceedings of this conference were published in the following volume: *Economie et Sociétés dans l'Empire Ottoman, fin du XVIIIe–début du XXe siècle* [Economy and Society in the Ottoman Empire, Late 18th – Early 20th Century], edited by Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and Paul Dumont (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1983). One of the papers presented at the symposium was by Louis Bazin: Louis Bazin, "Censure ottomane et lexicographie: le Kamus-i Fransevî Sâmi Bey," in the same volume, 203–206. This article was later translated into Turkish by Server Tanilli: Louis Bazin, "Osmanlı Sansürü ve Sözlük Yazarlığı: Sami Bey'in Kamus-ı Fransevî'si," trans. Server Tanilli, *Tarih ve Toplum* 4, no. 19 (1985): 203–206.

[163] Çağrı Çalışkan, "II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Kitaplar Üzerinde Sansür Uygulamaları (1876–1909)" (Master's thesis, Pamukkale University, 2019).

[164] Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye* (Istanbul: E Yayınları, 2010), 306.

practices but also as sites of lexical negotiation, authorial choice, and symbolic positioning within the broader field of knowledge production.

The words on the Supplementary List are as follows: English Equivalent, Ottoman Script (Original),Transliteration (Modern Turkish Reading)

Arsenic – آرْسَه نيكْ (Arsenik), White precipitate (Mercuric chloride) – آقْ سُلْمَنْ (Ak sülmen), Anarchy – آنارْشی (Anarşi), Revolt (Upheaval/Disorder) – اخْتِلالْ (İhtilâl), Reaction (Regression/Reactionism) – اِرْتِجاعْ (İrticâ‘), Suspicion (Doubt) – اِرْتيٰاب (İrtiyâb), Despotism (Tyranny/Absolute Rule) – اِسْتِبْدادْ (İstibdâd), Spiritism (Spiritualism) – اِيسْپِيرْتِيزمْ (İspirtizm), Explosion (Blast) – اِنْفِلاقْ (İnfilâk), Extinction (Disappearance) – اِنْقراضْ (İnkirâz), Revolution – اِنْقلابْ (İnkılâb), Obstruction (Filibuster) – أُبْستروقْسيون (Obstrüksiyon), Opportunist – أُوپورْتُو نِستْ (Opurtunist), Oligarchy – أُولِيغا رْشی (Oligarşi), (Plant: *Lamium galeobdolon*) – بٰاللی بٰابٰا (Ballı baba), Bomb – بُومْبٰا (Bomba), Parliamentarism – پٰارْلمانْتٰار يزمْ (Parlemantarizm), Parliament – پٰارْلمانْتو (Parlamento), Pan-Hellenism – پان ئه له نيزم (Panhelenizm), Pan-Turkism – پان تور كيزم (Pantürkizm), Pan-Germanism – پان جرمانيزم (Pancermânyizm), Pan-Islamism – پان اسلاميزم (Panislamizm), Psychology – پسيڤُولوجيا (Psikolojiya), Sigh (Moan) – تأوُّه (Te’evvüh), Punitive reprisal (Exemplary punishment / Removal) – تَنْكِيلْ (Tenkîl), Society (Association) – جَمْعيَتْ (Cem‘iyyet), Public (People) – جُمهُورْ (Cumhûr), Freedom (Liberty) – حُرّيَتْ (Hürriyet), Sünbülî script (calligraphic style) – خَطْ سُنبُلی (Hatt-ı Sünbülî), Spy (Secret agent/Informer) – خَفِيَه (Hafiye), Dethronement (Deposition) – خَلعْ (Hal‘), Mortar (Bomb-shell) – خُمْبَره (Humbara), Darwinism – داروينيزم (Darvinizm), Democrat – دَمُوقْراتْ (Demokrat), Discipline – ديسِيپلين (Disiplin), Dictator – ديكْتاتورْ (Diktatör), Dynamite – دِيناميتْ (Dinamit), Radical – را د يقالْ (Radikal), Rendezvous (Appointment) – راندە وو (Randevu), Poison – زَهِرْ (Zehir), Censorship – سانْسُورْ (Sansür), Socialism – سُوسِيَالِيزمْ (Sosyalizm), Council of State (State Council) – شُوراي دَولَتْ (Şûrâ-yı Devlet), Rebellion (Revolt/Uprising) – عِصْيانْ (‘İsyân), Common people (Masses/Laymen) – عَوامْ (‘Avam), Clerical – قَله ريقٰال (Kalerikal), Appearance (Attire) – قِيلِيقْ (Kılık), Conservator (Restorer/Conservative) – قُنْسَرْواتُورْ (Konservâtör), Popliteal fossa (Knee joint) – مأبضْ (Meʾbâz), Senate (House of Lords/Chamber of Notables) – مَجْلسْ اعيٰانْ (Meclis-i A‘yân), General Assembly (General Parliament) – مَجْلسْ عُمُومی (Meclis-i ‘Umûmî), Absolutism (Absolute monarchy) – مُطْلَقيتْ (Mutlakiyet), Predatory animal – مُفتَرِسْ (Müfteris), Memorandum – مه موراندوم (Memorandum), Nihilist – نِهليستْ (Nihilist), Veto – وه تُو (Veto).

	Dictionary Title	Hicrî Year	Gregorian (Miladî) Year	Context of Control Mechanism / Censorship Regime
1	*Kitâb-ı Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*	1269	1853	A comparatively liberal environment preceding the 1857 Printing Regulation (Matbaa Nizamnamesi); general press regulation was not yet in effect.
2	*Lehce-i Osmânî*	1293	1876	"Coincided with the promise of ""press freedom"" under the *Kanûn-i Esâsî* (Constitution); however, a pre-censorship decree was issued in the same year (May 11, 1876).
3	*İlâveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*	1297	1880	Reign of Abdülhamid II, during the years when the Parliament was suspended.
4	*Lugat-ı Ecnebiyye İlaveli Lûgat-ı Osmaniye*	1298	1881	Abdülhamid II era; characterized by de facto stringent control.
5	*Lugat-ı Remzî*	1305	1889	Post-1888 Printing Houses Regulation (Matbaalar Nizamnamesi); under the supervision of the Inspection Committee (Encümen-i Teftiş).
6	*Lehce-i Osmânî* (Tabʿ-ı Cedîd)	1306	1889–90	Same control framework; implementation period of the 1888 Regulation.
7	*Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*	1306	1889–90	Abdülhamid censorship regime, requiring license from the Ministry of Education (*Maarif Nezareti).*
8	*Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*	1313	1895–96	Following the 1895 Regulation on Printing Houses and Booksellers (*Matbaa ve Kitapçılar Nizamnâmesi).*
9	*Tetimme-i Lugat-i Nâcî*	1316–17	1898–99	The most restrictive years of Abdülhamid's control.
10	*Kâmûs-ı Türkî*	1317	1899–1900	Period coinciding with the compilation of catalogs of prohibited books (1900).
11	*Lugat-ı Nâcî*	1318	1900–01	Same period as the 1900 catalog of banned books.
12	*Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı*	1319	1901–02	Coincided with the 1902 catalog of banned books.

13	*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*	1330	1912–13	Relative liberalisation following the 1909 Press Law; however, subject to de facto pressures from the Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki) and censorship imposed by the Balkan Wars."
14	*Lugat-ı Cûdî*	1332	1913–14	İttihat ve Terakki in power, post-Bâb-ı Âli Raid. Wartime censorship was operational
15	*Yeni Türkçe Lugât*	—	1924	Early Republican period. The 1909 Press Law was technically in force, but the new regime applied de facto restrictions against the opposition press. Published before the Alphabet Reform, this dictionary should be viewed independently of Ottoman censorship regulations, within the context of the Republic's new identity construction.

3.1. Words in the Supplementary Section of the Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî

When we compare the words in the supplementary section of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* with the other fourteen dictionaries we have selected, it is possible to say that the main reason for their removal is that they express a subjective and ideological opposition or critical stance towards the current Abdülhamid government. Of the 56 words on this list, 29 are of foreign origin (as the author notes, "ecnebî," most of them French); 4 are Turkish, and 22 are Arabic. One word, *Hatt-ı Sünbülî*, is the name of a specific type of *kûfî* script, whose root is not specified.

In this section, we will examine the definitions of the words in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî's* supplement section in other dictionaries and how these words are treated in their historical context, using a comparative approach. In order to conduct the analysis systematically, the words have been divided into three groups. First, only words found in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* will be evaluated. The second group will include words that have equivalents in several dictionaries. In the final section, words that are not covered in the previous sections but are defined in a similar way in most of the dictionaries included in the study will be examined using a holistic approach. The words in the third group are important in terms of showing continuity in the language and the common conceptual orientation of lexicographers during the period from the Tanzimat to the

Republic. The footnotes prepared for each word will provide the relevant entries from the fifteen selected dictionaries in their original Latinized form.

3.1.1. The Distinctive Lexicon of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*

One of the words found only in *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî (RKO)* and not in other dictionaries is "spiritism" *ispirtizm* (ايسْپيرْتيزم)[165]. This word briefly expresses the belief that it is possible to communicate with the spirits of the dead and that they can be seen. The definition clearly contains subjective expressions. It states that it is quite natural to be surprised that there are "intellectuals who believe in spiritism nonsense" "even in Europe." Although the word does not directly criticize the sultan or the system, it may have been removed from the first edition out of concern for religious sensitivities and preserving the fundamental moral values of society. This situation is consistent with the understanding of "protecting against religious misinformation" and "preserving the moral structure of society," which were frequently emphasized among the reasons for prohibition at the time. [166]

Another noteworthy point is the phrase "even in Europe." While Europe was idealized as the "center of reason, progress, and science" at the time, the author's surprise at the existence of minds believing in such "superstitions" even in European society shows how closely the image of Europe in Ali Seydi Bey's mind was associated with a high degree of rationality. This expression also reflects how deeply internalized the ideal of "civilized Europe" was among Ottoman intellectuals of the period. In *Yeni Türkçe Lugat (YTL)*, the word is defined under the entry for "spiritism" (إسپيريت).[167] The definition is short, technical, and neutral. The fact that the word is written as ispirtizma (إيسپريتيزمه) rather than ispirtizm in this dictionary is a typical example of the spelling differences seen in Western-derived words with the suffix -izm in the early Republican period. Particularly

[165] Spiritism (ايسْپيرْتيزمْ) [Foreign. i.] The belief that the spirits of the dead can be summoned and made visible: It is not surprising that even in Europe there are minds that trust in spiritistic practices. "*[Ecnebi. i.] Spritisme Ölmüşlerin rûhunun celb olunabilmesi, ve göze görünür bir hâl alması i'tikâdı: Avrupa'da bile ispirtizm masharalıklarına i'timâd eden 'ukûlun bulunduğuna hayret etmemek mümkün değildir*. (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*
(Commonly accepted forms were preferred for the transliteration of abbreviations. Where the original abbreviation was ambiguous, clarifying equivalents (e.g., 'Ecnebî.') were provided to ensure comprehensibility)

[167] Spiritist (إسپيريت) [Foreign. n.] A person who claims to be in contact with the spirits of the dead; one who practices spiritism. "*İspirit [Ecnebi.] Ölülerin ruhlarıyla münasebette bulunduğunu iddia eden, ispiritizma ile uğraşan kimse. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

during the transition from the Tanzimat to the Republic, different forms such as "*-izm*" and *"-izma"* were used in the Turkish adaptation of the French suffix "-isme" for . Today, however, the official and established form is "ispritizma." The *Turkish Language Association's Contemporary Turkish Dictionary* ((TDK, GTS))also includes only this form, defining the word as "the belief that the spirits of the dead can be summoned and contact can be made with them; spiritualism". Therefore, although the forms *"ispirtizm"* and *"ispirtizma"* were used together throughout history, with the advent of the Republic, the standard and legitimate form of the word was established as *"ispritizma."*

The word *nihilist* (نِهلیستْ) in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*[168] *(RKO)*[169] is defined in the *YTL* as *nihilizma* (نیهیلیزم).[170] Although the definitions come from the same root, they reflect the different ideological atmospheres of the late Ottoman and early Republican periods. In the RKO, nihilist is defined as "a supporter of constitutionalism and true freedom in Russia"; this reflects a positive political idealism consistent with the Second Constitutional Era's discourse of freedom, constitutionalism, and freedom of thought. In contrast, in the YTL, nihilism is defined as "a kind of Russian anarchism that seeks to destroy all existing institutions without replacing them with anything," and is thus negatively portrayed as a destructive ideology, in line with the emphasis on social order and stability in the early years of the Republic. Thus, the meaning of the concept evolves from the anti-regime ideal of freedom in the late Ottoman period to an understanding of freedom based on order within the regime in the early Republic; the discourse of freedom does not disappear entirely, but changes its direction and context.

The other word that appears only in RKO is opportunist (اُوپورْتُونِستْ).[171] RKO defines the word as someone who leans toward whichever side power and the government

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[168] Nihilist (نِهلیستْ)[Foreign. i.] In Russia, a supporter of constitutionalism and true freedom. The Nihilist faction. "*Nihilist [Ecnebi. i.] Rusya'da meşrutiyet ve hürriyet -i hakikat tarafdârı. Nihilist fırkası.*(*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[169] Dictionary titles in this study are hereafter cited using abbreviations formed from the initial letters of their original titles (e.g., *RKO* for *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, *YTL* for *Yeni Türkçe Lugat*). A full list of these abbreviations and their corresponding titles is provided in the bibliography.

[170] Nihilism (نیهیلیزم) A type of Russian anarchism that seeks to destroy all existing institutions without replacing them with anything. A nihilist is a supporter of nihilism. *"Nihilizma Mevcut bütün müessesâtı yerlerine hiçbir şey ikâme etmeksizin yıkmak isteyen bir nevi Rus anarşistliği. Nihilist nihilizma taraftarı olan.* (*Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

[171] Opportunist (اُوپورْتُونِستْ) [Foreign. i.] Opportunist. A person who aligns themselves with whichever faction or individual holds power and government. "Opurtunist *[Ecnebi. i.] Opportuniste Kuvvet ve hükümet hangi fırkada ya adamda ise o fırkaya veya adama müteveccih ve meyl olan kimse.* (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*)"

are on. In YTL, the word appears as opportunism (اوپورتونیزمه)[172] , which is the general term for those who have this politicized understanding. In YTL, the author expresses his own opinion in a tone that clearly indicates he does not find it ethically correct: "...the policy of those who believe it is necessary to mitigate the severity of principles: opportunism supporters." The 1883 *Littré & Devic Dictionnaire de la langue française (Supplément)*[173] defines "opportunism" as "behavior suited to opportunities and circumstances; opportunistic policy." This definition makes the concept both a political stance and a morally controversial form of behavior. During the same period, this understanding was also reflected in Ottoman lexicography. In the RKO, the word appears as "a person who leans toward whichever side power and government are on"; this definition carries an explicit moral criticism by prioritizing individual gain. Its equivalent in the YTL is "the politics of those who think principles should be softened in difficult situations." This expression politicizes the concept but maintains an ethical distance. Both dictionaries define "opportunism" as an indicator of the tension between individual interest and principle. This similarity shows that lexicographers in the late Ottoman period and early Republican years followed the debates on "opportunisme" in Europe and maintained the same moral tone.

Another word found only in the RKO and not in other dictionaries is Obstruction (اُبْستروقْسیونْ)[174] . The RKO defines the word as the behavior of avoiding participation in parliamentary debates. This definition shows that the concept expressed more of a passive protest at that time. Abraham and Hawthrey's *Parliamentary Dictionary*[175] explains "obstruction" as the delaying or blocking of legislative activities opposed by members of parliament through the use of their rights to speak or propose motions. Iba also states that the concept describes a strategy of deliberately blocking or slowing down the legislative process. Thus, the meaning of the word has expanded from a passive attitude of "refusal"

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[172] Opportunism (اوپورتونیزمه)Foreign. The policy of those who believe that, in order to achieve their goals more reliably by taking advantage of suitable opportunities, it is necessary to relax the strictness of principles in difficult circumstances: An opportunist. *"Oportünizma Ecnebi. Münâsib fırsatlardan istifâde ederek maksada daha emin bir sûrette ulaşmak için müşkil ahvalde prensiplerin şiddetini tahfîf eylemek lâzım geldiğini zannedenlerin politikası: Oportünizma taraftarı. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

[173] Émile Littré and L. Marcel Devic, *Dictionnaire de la langue française. Supplément. Ce supplément est suivi d'un dictionnaire étymologique de tous les mots d'origine orientale* (Paris: Hachette, 1883), 248.

[174] Obstruction (اُبْستروقْسیونْ)[Foreign. noun.] Obstruction Refusal to participate in parliamentary debates and discussions "*Obstrüksiyon [Ecnebi. mastar.] Obstruction Parleman(t) müzâkere ve münâkaşasında istirâkden imtinâ'(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[175] Şeref İba, "The Concepts of Obstruction and Guillotine in Parliamentary Law," *Ankara University Law Faculty Journal* 52, no. 1 (February 2003): 147, quoting Abraham and Hawthrey.

to an active method of "resistance and obstruction." How the word appeared in foreign-language dictionaries of the period allows for different interpretations of this issue from a political history perspective.[176] Thus, the meaning of the word has expanded from a passive attitude of "refusal" to an active method of "resistance and obstruction." In order to determine which source Ali Seydî used when explaining the word, it is necessary to examine "obstruction" in foreign-language dictionaries of the period or in which context it appeared. François Georgeon notes that the dictionary author took some of the words in RKO's from the political discourse of the Third Republic. Obstruction is among these words. The words mentioned by the author are "parliamentarism, opportunist, obstruction, oligarchy, anarchy, democrat, democracy, conservative, and clerical."[177]

In this section, which Georgeon mentions in the same context, we will discuss another term: kalerikal (قَلَه ریقال)[178] . This entry in the RKO was written to introduce Ottoman readers to the debates on cléricalisme in Europe. The phrase "the side of the popes, monks, and clergy" reflects a secular perspective that criticizes the influence of religious authority on political power. In this respect, the entry should be evaluated within the discourse of secularization and modernization during the Second Constitutional Era. Ali Seydî's examples—"clericalism still prevails in Spain" and "the richest political party in France is the clerical party"—show that the concept is defined through religion-based political parties in Europe. This suggests that the author not only defines a concept related to the relationship between religion and politics in the West, but also indirectly touches upon discussions of the public sphere and authority in the Ottoman Empire.

In the same context, another word is conservative (قُنْسَرْواٰتُورْ)[179]. The entry for conservative in the RKO is defined as "belonging to the conservative faction or profession." This definition shows that the language of political party formation in Europe entered Ottoman lexicography directly. However, the absence of this word in later

[176] Ibid., 147.
[177] Georgeon, "Yasak Kelimeler," 197–98
[178] Clerical (قَلَه ریقال) [Foreign. noun.] (Clérical) Priests, monks, clergymen, and those who are fanatical in their profession and beliefs: The clericals still rule in Spain; in France, the richest political party is the clerical party. *"*Kalerikal *[Ecnebi. i.] (Clérical) Papaslar, râhibleri rûhâniler ve havâss-ı müteaasibe meslek ve efkârına tarafdâr olan: İspanya'da hâlâ hüküm süren kalerikâllerdir Fransa'da en zengin fırka-i siyâsiyye kalerikâller fırkasıdır.(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*
[179] Conservative (قُنْسَرْواٰتُورْ) (Conservatuer) [Foreign. noun.] Belonging to the conservative faction or profession. *(Conservatuer) "*Konservâtör *[Ecnebi. i.] Muhafazakarlar fırkasından veya mesleğinden olan.(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

dictionaries can largely be explained by the spread of the word *muhafazakâr*, which carries the same meaning, and the tendency to reduce foreign elements in the language. This situation reflects the conscious choices of lexicographers of the period to preserve and simplify the language. Similarly, Georgeon attributes Kelekyan's decision not to include such new political terms (obstruction, opportunist, conservative) in his 1911 Turkish-French bilingual dictionary, not to censorship concerns, but to the adequacy of the existing equivalents in the dictionary. However, Georgeon adds that these words may have been considered "dangerous" from the perspective of the Hamidian regime due to their political connotations.[180] Therefore, the entry for "conservateur" can be seen as an example that reflects both the lexicographical approach of simplification and the political caution of the period. Similarly, the entry memorandum (مه موراندوم)[181] may not have been included in later dictionaries because, while it does not carry a direct reason for censorship, it can be replaced by established terms such as *muhtıra, lâyihâ,* and *müzâkere* in terms of meaning. This situation shows that the circulation of Western-origin diplomatic words within Ottoman Turkish remained limited.

Another word found in the RKO is radical (رادیقالْ). The definition of the word coincides with the liberal reformist understanding in Western politics of the period. The phrase "faction by the Islahat-ı Mutlaka" positions the concept as reformist, seeking radical change but not revolutionary. In 19th-century Europe, the word "radical" also defined progressive movements advocating the expansion of democratic rights. Today, however, the word carries connotations that vary depending on the context: while it still retains the meaning of "desiring fundamental change" in political discourse, in everyday usage it has sometimes taken on a more negative tone, describing "extreme," "radical," or "harsh" attitudes. The reason for removing the word was probably these political connotations. Around 1914, the Ottoman Empire was on the brink of war, and concepts such as "radical," which implied fundamental reform or change, could be perceived as potential criticism of state authority. Therefore, the removal of the word can be seen less as a direct ban and more as a choice to prevent a tone of opposition that the regime did not want to be associated with in an environment of political instability.

[180] Georgeon, "Yasak Kelimeler," 197.
[181] Memorandum (مه موراندوم) (Memorandum) [Foreign. noun.] A political communiqué summarizing the current state of a particular issue. "Memorandum [Ecnebi. i.] Muhtıra bir meselinin hâl-i hazır hülâsa eden tebliğnâme-i siyasi.(*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

The term "absolutism" (مُطْلَقيتْ) in the RKO[182] also reflects a distinct meaning established in the political terminology of the period. After being defined as "unconditional, arbitrary (as one pleases)," the word is completed with the explanation "absolutism of administration: despotism" . This definition shows that the concept of absolutism was not merely a form of government but evoked the idea of unlimited authority and arbitrary rule in the common political language of the period. While the phrase *"keyfe mâyeşâiyet"* (arbitrariness) unlimited the ruler's will, the use of the word "istibdâd" (despotism) as an explanatory counterpart highlights the negative connotations of the concept. In this respect, the article reflects the equivalence of absolutism = despotism established in Ottoman political discourse at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, rather than defending or criticizing any particular regime.

The entry for censorship (سانْسُورْ)[183] in the RKO contains one of the most direct political references of the period. The definition not only explains the word as "an official who reviews works to be published or staged in the theater and removes objectionable parts"; it also establishes a direct constitutional and historical context with the sentence "The practice of censorship was abolished with the proclamation of the Constitution." This statement emphasizes that the institution of censorship was abolished after the Second Constitutional Era, alluding to the atmosphere of freedom at the time the dictionary was published. However, the sentence that immediately follows, "Even if people are freed from government censorship, they cannot escape the censorship of public opinion," draws attention to the social stratification of the period, suggesting that the concept cannot be resolved solely by changes in administrative management. The second sentence suggests that it is a form of control that is also perpetuated by the collective

[182] Absolutism (مُطْلَقيتْ) [Arabic] Unrestrictedness. Doing as one pleases. Absolute rule: Despotism. *"*Mutlakiyet *[Ar. i.] Kayd ve şartsızlık. Keyfe mâyeşâiyet (Nasıl isterse). Mutlakiyyet-i idâre: İstibdâd.*(*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*)"

[183] Censorship (سانْسُورْ) [Foreign. noun.] Censor An official who examines works to be published or staged in the theater and censors passages that touch on sensitive subjects: The practice of censorship was abolished with the proclamation of the Constitution. Even if one escapes the censorship of the government, one cannot escape the censorship of public opinion.
"Sansür *[Ecnebi. i.] Censeur Müfettiş, basılacak veya tiyatroda sahneye vaz' edilecek âsârı tedkîk eden ve zülf-ü yâre dokunan yerlerine tayy eden me'mûr: Sansür (Censure) usûlü, Kânûn-u Esâsî'nin ilânıyla lağv olundu. İnsan hükümetinin sansüründen kurtulsa da avâm havâsın sansüründen kurtulamaz.* (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

judgment and traditional norms of society. In this respect, the censorship clause has a double-layered discourse that reflects the general tendency of the RKO: on the one hand, it criticizes old practices in line with the Constitutional Monarchy's ideal of "freedom of the press and thought"; on the other hand, it accepts that freedom cannot be absolute and that society's value system always draws an invisible line.

In the RKO, Pan-Turkism (پان توركيزم) is defined as "Turkish unity" ([184]). The definition reduces the concept to a general idea of unity, without any ideological or political connotations. It is noteworthy that, although the *YTL* from the Republican era includes entries for Pan-Islamism, Pan-Hellenism, and Pan-Germanism under the prefix "pan" ((پان, Pan-Turkism is absent, and there is no reference to this concept in the entry for "unity" (ittihâd). This situation suggests that in the early Republican period, there was a conscious effort to distance oneself from the ideological connotations of the concept of "Turkish unity" or that the concept was excluded from the dictionary as a political term.

Another politically and ideologically based word is veto (وه تُو)[185] . While the word initially focuses on its origin and meaning, the statement at the end that "...Veto Right: The right to reject: The ruler has the right of veto at all times and in all forms of government" does not treat the concept merely as a technical political term. It shows that the ruler used it in a narrative that emphasized his authority as an absolute right. This approach reflects the effort to maintain the symbolic legitimacy of the sultan's authority in the political language of the period.

The entry for Hatt-ı Sünbülî (خَطْ سُنبُلی)[186] appears to merely define a new type of calligraphy; however, the phrase in the last sentence, "...it could not be included among

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[184]Panturkism(پان توركيزم) [Foreign. i.] Turkish union. "*Pantürkizm* [Ecnebi. i.] *Türk ittihâddı.*(*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[185] Veto (وه تُو) (Veto) [Foreign. i.] A Latin word meaning "I oppose" or "I am not satisfied." Right of veto: The power to reject: The ruler always has the right of veto in any form of government.
"Veto [Ecnebi. i.] Latince bir kelimedir, ki "Muhâlefet eder" "Râzı değilim" demekdir. Veto Hakkı: Reddetmek salâhiyyeti: Hükümdârın her zman, ve her türlü şekl-i hükümetten veto hakkı mevcuddur.")(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"

[186] Hatt-ı Sünbülî (خَطْ سُنبُلی) In the Hijri year, by the renowned calligrapher, the serhat calligrapher of the Imperial Printing House, Ibnü'l Hamza Ârif Hikmet Bey, arranged and composed, and Veliyullâh-u 'izâm, buried in Kocamustafapaşa, was named after Sünbül Efendi Hazretleri and drawn according to the shape of the hyacinth. The aforementioned script was created by extracting elements from the Islamic scripts Kufi and Siyakat and Divani, and since it appeared in the beginning and end of our dictionary, it could not be displayed among the Islamic scripts. "*Hatt-ı Sünbülî Sene-i hicriyesinde müşâhir hattâtînden Matbaa-i Âmire serhattatı İbnü'l Hamza Ârif Hikmet Bey tarafından tertîb ve ihtirâ' ve Veliyullâh-u 'izâmdan Kocamustafapaşa'da defn-i hâk attarnâk Sünbül Efendi Hazretlerinin isimlerine izâfen tevsîm ve şekl-i sünbüle göre tersîm edilmişdir. Hatt-ı mezkûr hutût-u İslâmiyye'den hatt-ı Kûfî ile siyâkat ve hatt-ı*

the Islamic scripts," implies that this script was not permitted to be included in the publication. This situation clearly demonstrates the institutional caution against innovation in the press environment of the period. Although the phrase "could not be included" does not directly indicate a ban, it effectively means a lack of approval and a protective stance against innovation. Thus, this article in the RKO reflects the continuity of the calligraphy tradition on the one hand, while on the other hand implying that state control extended to the form of writing and typographic order.

Finally, the word under this heading, *Darwinism* (داروینیزم), is defined as "[187] ." The word is defined as "the scientific doctrine of the English naturalist Charles Darwin." This definition refers to the scientific debates of the period and, by using the term "doctrine," places the theory of evolution in a religiously connotative framework. The removal of the concept from the dictionary or its absence in subsequent dictionaries is most likely related to the conflict between the idea of biological evolution and the religious and moral sensibilities of the period. Therefore, despite its emphasis on scientificity, the entry Darwinism should be considered a term that could be deemed ideologically problematic.

Apart from the entries discussed above in terms of historical change and possible reasons for removal, there are two words that we cannot associate with any ideological, religious, or political justification. Ballı Baba (بالّلی بابا)[188] and Meʾbaz (مأبضْ)[189] are entries that remain difficult to explain in this context.

3.1.2. Common Words with Limited Circulation (2–5 Dictionaries)

This section examines words that appear in the supplementary section of the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* but have only two to five dictionary entries in the study's sample. The fact that these words appear to have limited circulation in dictionaries does not mean that they were ineffective in the discourse of the period. On the contrary, it is likely that they were among the concepts that were cautiously handled or directly removed

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dîvânîden istihrâc ederek kâmûsumuzun tab‘ ve nihâyetlerinde meydana geldiğinden hutût İslâmiyye meyânında bi'lmecbûr irâ’e edilememiştir. (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)”*

[187] Darwinism(داروینیزم) Darwinism The scientific doctrine of the English naturalist Charles Darwin. The work titled "Darwinism".
“Darvvinisme İngiliz tabîiyyûnundan Çârls Darvin'in mezheb-i ilmiyyesi. "Darvinizim" unvânlı eser. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)”

[188] Ballı baba (بالّلی بابا) [Turk. noun.] Ebhire-i ebyaz. It is a plant belonging to the Zât-ü'lfülfulteyn family and the Şefeviyye genus._*“[Türk. i.] Ebhire-i ebyaz. Zât-ü'lfülfületeyn şu‘besinden şefeviyye kusyâsına mensûb bir nebâttır.)(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)”*

[189] Popliteal fossa (Knee joint) (مأبضْ) [Arabic noun] Human calf. *“*Me'baz [Ar. i.] *1. Adale-i veteriyyet'ünnâs; 2. Adale-i gışâiyye-i'l nısf; 3. Adele-i hıyâtiyye; 4. Adale-i zâtü'l?; 5. Adale-i nevâhiyye-i vahşiyye; 6. Tevemiyye-i ünsiyye; a. Fahz; b. Kasaba; s. Azm-i şaziye.* (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)”*

from public discourse due to censorship policies. Therefore, the aim here is not so much to examine the prevalence of the word, but rather to reveal the semantic boundaries and level of linguistic caution of the period through the ways in which lexicographers included such concepts.

In this context, we will focus on the word anarchy (آنارْشی), one of the words that can be associated with the concepts of political authority, social order, and public security. The word anarchy appears in only two dictionaries, *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* and *Yeni Türkçe* Lugat, but there is a clear difference between these two definitions that reflects the transformation in the political language of the period. In the RKO, the word is defined as"[190] "(lack of government; absence of security and order, chaos), thus placing the concept entirely within a security-oriented and order-centered framework. As noted in the author's preface, this word was deemed objectionable by the inspector and censor in the first edition and removed, only to be included in the Supplement section during a period when the political climate had relatively softened. In contrast, in the 1924 edition of the *YTL*[191], anarchy was defined as "a political and social doctrine that accepts the free development of the individual, free from any form of government guardianship"; thus, it was addressed as a political doctrine for the first time. This definition directly refers to the concept's origins in European political philosophy. The influence of anarchist movements in 19th-century France and England, which defended individual freedom and voluntary social order against state authority, is now also felt in the Turkish lexicon. However, the phrase "the state of a headless nation... chaos" at the end of the definition shows that the concept still carries negative connotations. This difference can be interpreted as a reflection in the dictionary language of the ideological tension between the concepts of "authority" and "freedom" during the transition from the late Ottoman Empire to the early Republic: Anarchy, perceived as a threat to state order in the *RKO*, is now defined in the early Republican period as a European-derived political thought, but it is still not legitimized.

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[190] Anarchy (آنارْشی) [Foreign. n.] Anarchie or anarhiyâ: Lack of government; absence of security and order, chaos. "Anarşi [Ecnebi. i.] Anarchie yâhud anarhiyâ: Hükümetsizlik; emniyet ve asâyiş yokluğu, fevzaviyyet. *(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[191] Anarchy (آنارْشی)Foreign. n. A political and social doctrine that accepts the free development of the individual, free from any form of government guardianship. Lack of government. The state of a leaderless nation where government influence has been reduced to nothing or has become ineffective. "Chaos. (*Anarşi Yabancı. i. Ferdin, hükümetin her türlü vesâyetinden âzâd olarak serbestce inkişâfını kabûl eden meslek-i siyâs'i ve ictimâ'î. Hükümetsizlik. Başsız bir milletin hâli ki hükümet nüfûzu hiçe inmiş veyâ te'sirsiz kalmışdır. Kargaşalık*. (*Yeni Türkçe Lugat*)"

Another politically charged word on the list is oligarchy (أولِيغارْشى). In the Illustrated Ottoman Dictionary (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı* Osmânî),[192] "is defined as "a system of government in which power and influence are in the hands of a few families," and the concept is explained directly with an emphasis on social stratification and lineage-based power. This is consistent with the concepts of "family" and "influence" in the Ottoman political language of the period, particularly in their implication of local power centers opposed to central authority.

In contrast, the *Yeni Türkçe Lugat* defines oligarchy as "a form of government in which all power and influence are exclusively in the hands of a small group of powerful individuals."[193] In this definition, the element of "family" has completely disappeared, replaced by a structural form of government rather than an emphasis on lineage and status-based power. Thus, the concept is no longer explained in terms of personal influence or family privilege, but is now addressed in the context of political theory. This change demonstrates that Western political terminology was internalized in a more theoretical and ideological manner in the Turkish lexicon during the transition from the late Ottoman Empire to the early Republic. Oligarchy no longer defines a specific family or circle, but rather points to a systematic style of governance. Therefore, the evolution of the concept in the dictionary, as in the example of anarchy, points to the redefinition of the "personal power"-centered conception in Ottoman political language at the level of "forms of governance" with the Republic.

Similarly, the word dictator appears only in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*[194] and the *Yeni Türkçe Lugat*[195]. The definition in the RKO, "a person who acquires royal power

[192] Oligarchy (أولِيغا رْشى) [Foreign. n.] Oligarchy A form of government where power and influence are concentrated in the hands of a few families. *"Oligarşi [Ecnebi. i.] Oligarchie Hüküm ve nüfûzun birkaç aile elinde bulunduğu idâre. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[193] Oligarchy (أولِيغا رْشى) A form of government in which all power and influence are exclusively in the hands of a small group of powerful individuals. *"Oligarşi Öyle bir şekl-i hükûmet ki orada bütün kuvvet ve nüfûz münhasıran zî-kudret küçük bir zümrenin elinde bulunur.* (*Yeni Türkçe Lugat*)*"*

[194] Dictator (ديكْتاتورْ) [Foreign. n.] Dictateur A person who acquires sovereign power and influence, gathers all governmental power in his hands, and rules affairs as he sees fit. *"Diktatör [Ecnebi. i.] Dictateur Bir kuvvet ve nüfûz-u hükümdârâne iktisâb iden kimse, kâffe-i kuvây-ı hükümeti elinde toplayub bildiği gibi idâre-i umûra pençezen olan adam.(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[195] Dictator (ديكتاتورْ) [Foreign. n.] A person who gathers all power in himself. *"Diktatör [Ecnebi. i.] Bütün kuvvetleri nefsinde cemʿ eden kimse.* (*Yeni Türkçe Lugat*)"

and influence...", evokes the idea of the absolute rule of a single person who gains influence in a "royal" manner, with personal authority at the center. The phrase "...the man with the claw" further emphasizes the coercive and arbitrary nature of this power . Thus, a figure of a ruler who "takes everything into his own hands, controls everything, and allows no one else a say" is depicted. To prevent readers from associating this depiction with the current government, the word was likely removed from the first edition. In the YTL, the definition is extremely brief: "A person who gathers all power in himself." This expression has been simplified using more neutral language, indicating that the concept refers to structural governance rather than a critique of personal authority.

It would be useful to briefly examine the historical transformation of the word despot in dictionaries, which is used today as the equivalent of "dictator," and whether a similar contrasting tone exists in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*. In the Byzantine tradition, despotes (δεσπότης) means "master, ruler, owner," and is generally a title given to members of the dynasty or close relatives of the emperor. The Ottomans continued to use this word neutrally in the diplomatic and administrative terminology they inherited from Byzantium; it often appeared in the sense of "local ruler" or "bishop." Indeed, terms such as "Despot of Morea," "Despot of Albania," and "Despot of Wallachia" frequently appear in Ottoman chronicles and archival documents. This usage indicates that the word did not carry any negative connotations at the time, but rather referred to an administrative status or religious position.

This historical meaning continues in the dictionaries examined. In seven of the eight dictionaries in the sample, except for the *Yeni Türkçe Lugat,* the word despot means *"*Greek psychopos*" or "*Orthodox metropolitan*"* (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî, Kâmûs-ı Türkî, Lehce-i Osmânî, Lehce-i Osmânî Tab ʻı Cedîd, Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ, Kâmûs-ı Osmânî, Lugat-ı Nâcî)* the word despot is defined as "Greek psychopos" or "Orthodox metropolitan." One of the earliest examples of this meaning is the school dictionary titled *Türkçe Lugat*, published in 1912 (H.1330) by Sancakciyan Matbaası, written by Bahaeddin Toven, author of *Yeni Türkçe* Lugat. (The author's preface states, "This small dictionary was written especially for schoolchildren.") In *Türkçe* Lugat, despot is defined as "Greek metropolitan," and despotism as "Greek bishopric."[196] However, in the same

[196] Despot د سپوت or despot ده سپوت A ruler who governs according to his own whims: Nero was the most cruel despot. The bishop or metropolitan of Rome. despot- hâne: The home and residence of the bishop of

author's New Turkish Dictionary (*Yeni Türkçe* Lugat) from 1924, published during the early Republican period, a new layer was added to this definition: "A ruler who governs according to his own whims: Nero was the most cruel despot." Thus, the word despot is no longer merely a religious title but has also become a modern political term equivalent to "dictator," establishing itself in the Turkish lexicon during the early years of the Republic.

Another word on the list that allows us to observe how a word's meaning can change within political contexts is *irticâʿ* (اِرْتِجَاعْ). In the dictionaries we examined, it is defined in its basic sense as "to return, to retreat"; however, by the early 20th century, the concept's semantic field had become distinctly politicized. While *Lugat-ı Remzî* and *Kâmûs-ı* Osmânî give it a neutral meaning, simply "to return," *Lugat-ı Nâcî*[197] deviates from this line and adds an explanation in the form of *"iâde-i istibdâd tarafdârı olmak"* (to be a supporter of the restoration of the sultanate and despotism). Thus, *irticâʿ* was associated directly with a political orientation for the first time.

The strongest ideological tone is seen in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Os*mânî[198] . Here, the entry begins with "returning to the past or expressing a tendency towards it" and then makes a clear reference to the March 31 Incident: "The people of *irticâʿ*, using religion as a tool and saying 'we want sharia...' wanted to restore the power of despotism." This expression codes the word *irticâʿ* not only as "return" but also as "political reactionism" and defines it as opposed to the attempt to reestablish despotism. Considering that the 31 March Incident had not yet occurred when the dictionary was first published, this part must have been added in the 1909 edition.

Rome. "*Despot* د سپوت *veya despot* ده سپوت *Kendi keyfine göre idare eden hükümdar: Neron en zalim bir despot idi. Rum piskoposu veya metropolisi. despot- hâne: Rum piskoposunun evi ve dairesi. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat*)"

[197] Reaction (اِرْتِجاعْ) Ar. Although it means to return, it has come to be used in the sense of supporting the restoration of despotism. *(İrticâʿAr. Geri dönmek demek ise de iâde-i istibdâd tarafdarı olmak mânâsında kullanılmağa başlanılmışdır.) (Lugat-ı Nâcî)*

[198] Reaction (اِرْتِجاعْ) [Arabic verb.] To return to the past or to express a desire to do so. In the reactionary events of March 31, the reactionaries, using religion as a tool and demanding Sharia law, sought to establish absolutism, which is contrary to both religion and Sharia, and to restore the power of despotism. "*İrticâʿ [Ar. mastar.] Mâzîye avdet etmek veya buna meyl-i izhârı. 31 Mart vâkıʿa-i irticâiyyesinde ehl-i irticâʿ dîni âlet ederek ve şeriʿat isteriz diyerek dînin de, şeriʿatın da zıddı olan mutlakiyyeti tahkîm ve istibdâd kuvvetini iʿâde etmek istediler.* (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

By the time of the Republic, *YTL*[199] defined the same word as "anything moving in the opposite direction" and "the movement of those who oppose progress and want to relive the past." The sentence at the end of the definition, "*irticâʿ* must be crushed," reveals that the concept is no longer explained in a neutral manner, but has been transformed into a warning sentence that supports the Republic's ideology of progress and directs the reader towards a specific way of thinking. Thus, while *irticâʿ* was a term denoting supporters of despotism in *Lugat-ı* Nâcî, it became an ideological concept defining a threat opposed to modernization in the *YTL*.

The historical trajectory of the concept reveals that irticâʿ is not merely an act of "regression," but rather an ideological concept that represents the reflex to preserve the legitimacy of political authority in different periods. During the Second Constitutional Era, it was an accusatory term implying the reestablishment of despotism, while in the early years of the Republic, it became a discourse tool defining "opposition to progress." Over time, this layer of meaning became embedded in official discourse, and the word irticâ became a permanent element of discourse defining ideological threats to state security. Thus, the ideological weight of the word was preserved even when the regime changed; only its target and context changed.

Among the words with limited circulation, three words appear to have been removed due to their association with assassination: *bomba* (bomb), *dinamit* (dynamite), and *arsenik* (arsenic). The word bomba appears in four of the fifteen dictionaries. In two of these (*LO* and *LOTC*), the word is used as a geographical place name meaning "a disaster center in Benghazi." In the other two dictionaries (*RKO* and *YTL)*, the term is used to mean explosive material. In RKO, it is defined as "an iron sphere filled with explosive material," while in YTL, it is defined as "a bomb filled with gunpowder and a fuse." Dynamite appears in three dictionaries (*RKO*, *YTL*, and *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)*; while *RKO* and YTL explain its chemical composition, *Kâmûs-ı* Osmânî defines it only as "one of the most powerful types of explosive materials." The word arsenic is also found in

[199] Reaction Ar. n. Returning. Conversion. mec. n. Anything moving in the opposite direction: Political reaction. The movement of those who oppose progress and seek to revive the past: Reaction must be crushed. *"İrticâʿ Ar. i. Geri dönme. İhtidâ. mec. i.Muhâlif cihete hareket eden her şey: İrticâʿ-i siyâsî. Terakkiye muhâlefet ederek mâzîyi tekrar yaşatmak isteyenlerin hareketi: İrticâʿ mutlaka ezilir. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

three dictionaries (*RKO, YTL,* and *Kâmûs-ı Türkî)* and is given the meanings "rat poison" or "mouse poison" in all of them. Although none of the three words carry any anti-regime or ideological meaning in the RKO, they were considered sensitive due to their reference to explosive and poisonous substances and were therefore removed from the first edition of the RKO.

The supplementary list includes three concepts that evoke the idea of union: Panhellenism, Pan-Germanism, and Pan-Islamism. These words appear in only two dictionaries, the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* and the *Yeni Türkçe* Lugat. In the RKO, these terms are simply defined as *"İttihâd-ı Yunâniyyân"* (Greek union), *"Alman ittihâdı"* (German union), and *"İttihâd-ı İslâm"* (Islamic union), and the entry for Pan-Islamism also includes the explanation "Party, faction." These brief but direct expressions show that the words carry not only a terminological meaning but also a connotation of political unity. In the YTL, the definitions are expanded and take on a more systematic form: Pan-Islamism is explained as "a system for the formation of a state by all Muslims," Pan-Germanism as "the formation of a single state by all those of German race," and Pan(h)ellenism as "a system that seeks to unite all Greeks in the Balkans and the islands." These statements show that in the early Republican period, these concepts were now being addressed within an ideological framework, as doctrinal systems. In contrast, the removal of these words from the first edition of the RKO was probably not due to any criticism of the regime, but rather to concerns that associations with national or religious unity could have political consequences.

Following regime criticism and political discourse, concepts defining new forms of governance constitute one of the most visible areas of ideological transformation in Ottoman dictionaries. In this context, the concept of socialism (سوسیالزم) appears in only two dictionaries, and even this limited presence clearly reveals the ideological perception of the word during the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic.[200] The *Resimli Kâmûs-ı* Osmânî defines the concept in a detached manner: "The system, the profession of those who seek to change property rights through universal participation." Here,

[200] Socialism (سُوسیَالِیزمْ) [Foreign. n.] A system, a profession of those who seek to change property rights through universal participation. A path called (Socialism). *"Sosyalizm [Ecnebi. i.] Bir iştirâk-ı âlem-i şümûl ile hukuk-u mülkiyeti değiştirmek isteyenlerin sistemi, mesleği. (Sosyalizm) unvânıyla bir tarîk. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

socialism is defined as a "system" that aims to collectivize property; however, the definition contains no value judgment. This style is an example of the cautious encyclopedic language frequently seen in dictionaries of the period: the concept is introduced but not legitimized.

The definition in the *Yeni Türkçe Lugat*[201] records the word "socialism" as "sosyalizma." It explains socialism as a system that aims to fundamentally transform the economic structure of society, without limiting it to the meaning of property sharing. According to the definition, socialism is a way of thinking that aims to make the means of production the property of society, to transfer goods and production resources to a social committee, to establish a production system based on collective labor, and to distribute consumer goods equally to everyone. Furthermore, the emphasis on the "democratic control" of industry positions socialism as an economic order based on social control. The statement in the last sentence, "Karl Marx is one of the founders of modern socialism," shows that the definition was written from an information-centered perspective rather than an ideological one. Thus, the concept ceased to be a political threat during the Republican era and became an element of modern intellectual history.

The "Socialism" entry in the RKO was likely removed from the first edition for regime and ideological reasons. The phrase "the system of those who seek to change property rights through universal participation " was considered a threat to the property order and state authority in the political climate of the time. The removal of the article can be interpreted as a deliberate intervention to control the revolutionary connotations of the concept. Consequently, while the concept of socialism is conveyed in the RKO as a foreign idea stripped of its ideological connotations, in the YTL it has become an information article with defined historical and conceptual dimensions. This difference suggests that it reflects a new form of discourse in which explaining ideology legitimizes

[201] Socialism (سوسیالیزمه) Means and sources- The profession of those who seek to transform human society into a completely different form by making the means of production communal property, returning property to the social collective, distributing common labor and consumer goods to everyone, and placing industry under democratic control. Karl Marx is one of the founders of modern socialism. *"Sosyalizma Vesâit ve menâbi-yi istihsâliyyeyi cemaate mal, emvâli hey'et-i ictimaiyyeye iyade, mesâ'i-i müştereke ve mevadd-ı istihlâkiyyeyi herkese taksim ederek, sanayîi de demokratik bir kontrol altına alarak cem'iyet-i beşeriyyeyi bambaşka bir şekle sokmak isteyenlerin mesleği. Karl Marks asrî sosyalizmanın müessislerinden biridir.(Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

itself in the knowledge system of the early Republic, rather than signifying a shift from political distance to intellectual neutrality.

One of the concepts that defines new forms of government and establishes the idea of representation at the linguistic level is the word parliament (پارلمنتو). In the dictionaries examined, this entry clearly shows the reflections of the idea of constitutionalism in the Ottoman language. In *Lehce-i Osmânî (Tabʿ-ı Cedîd)* [202], the word is defined as "the place of speech in Italian, the consultative assembly of the *millet-i mebûsan* and *aʿyân."* This expression shows that the concept was intended to be adapted to the idea of political representation by being directly associated with the tradition of consultation, beyond being a meeting place or a speaking assembly.

A similar orientation is seen in *Lugat-ı* Ebûzziyâ[203] (LE): "From Italian, *meclis-i şûrâ-yı ümmet, şûrâ-yı mebûsân*, especially the British House of Commons and House of Lords." This definition places the concept in both a Western and a local context. The phrase "*meclis-i şûrâ-yı ümmet*" (parliament) links parliament to the Islamic tradition of consultation, giving the concept local legitimacy. The inclusion of the example of "England's avâm and zâdegân assemblies" in the definition suggests an attempt to reconcile the Western form of representation with the Ottoman concept of shura.
The same approach is continued in the *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* (KO)[204] , which states that *"hükûmât-ı meşrutanın hususıyla İngiltere devletinin 'avâmm ve aʿyân mecâlisi heyetleri demekdir"* (it refers to the assemblies of the commoners and notables of the constitutional governments, particularly the British state). This definition, similar to *LE*, explains parliament using the example of England; however, it gives the concept a clearer constitutional framework with its emphasis on "constitutional." The preference for the

[202] Parliament (پارلامنتو) n. Italian word for the place of speech, the consultative assembly of the people's representatives and dignitaries. *"Parlamento i. İtalyanca söz mahalli, millet-i mebûsanın ve aʿyânın encümen-i meşvereti (Lehce-i Osmânî Tabʿ-ı Cedîd)"*
[203] Parliament (پارلامنتو) Political Terminology. From Italian, the Consultative Assembly of the Nation. The Consultative Assembly of Deputies, specifically the House of Commons and House of Lords in England. *"Parlamento İstilâhât-ı Siyâsiyye. İtalyancadan Meclis-i Şûrâ-yı ümmet. Şûrâ-yı Mebûsan, hassaten İngiltere ʿavâm ve zadegân meclis-i heyetleri. (Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ)"*
[204] Parliament (پارلامنتو) from Italian Refers specifically to the assemblies of the House of Commons and House of Lords in England, the constitutional government. *"Parlemento İtalyanca'dan Hükümât-ı meşrutanın hususuyla İngiltere devletinin ʿavâmm ve aʿyan mecâlisi heyetleri demekdir.(Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

English example in both dictionaries reflects a tendency to present the concept as politically "harmless" information while preserving its Western origins.

Despite these similar definitions, it is noteworthy that *LE* and *KO* were not censored, while "parliament" was removed from the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*. This difference suggests two possibilities. First, the political context of the periods in which these dictionaries were published is different. During the Abdülhamid period, when *LE* and *KO* were compiled, the concept of "parliament" was seen as an institution specific to the West and distant from the Ottoman political order. Therefore, the example of "the assemblies of the commoners and notables of the British state" in both dictionaries, while evoking the idea of constitutionalism, may have been perceived as a neutral statement of fact that did not directly refer to the regime. In the LE, the concept was localized within the Islamic tradition of consultation with the expression *"meclis-i şûrâ-yı ümmet"* (council of the community), thus providing a local and moderate interpretation of the concept; in the KO, on the other hand, it referred to the Western model in a completely didactic style. In contrast, the *RKO*[205] defined the as "the body that constitutes and exercises legislative power," emphasizing legislative power and the bicameral structure (*a'yân* and *mebûsân*) with the example of the French parliament. It has now acquired a quality that is reminiscent of the Ottoman constitutional regime, beyond an abstract explanation. For this reason, it may have produced a more sensitive expression in terms of control during the Abdülhamid period.

Secondly, the country examples chosen by the three dictionaries also produced different connotations. In *LE* and KO, the example of the "British Parliament" serves as a neutral Western model because it represents a stable constitutional monarchy. Since England was a symbol of established order for 19th-century Ottoman intellectuals, the example recalls the idea of constitutionalism but does not directly mirror the Ottoman regime. In contrast, the RKO's example of the "French parliament" evoked the idea of popular sovereignty and revolutionary representation, and therefore may have produced a more political meaning when combined with expressions referring to "the government

[205] Parliament (پارلمانتو) [Foreign. i.] The body that constitutes and exercises legislative power: The French parliament consists of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. *"Parlemento [Ecnebi. i.] Kuvve-i teşri'yyeyi teşkîl ve icrâ eden hey'et: Fransa parlementosu a'yân ve mebûsan meclislerinden müteşekkildir.(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

and the legislative power *(hükûmete ve kuvve-i teşrî'iyyeye)."* Therefore, the removal of the parliament entry from the first edition may have been targeted by censorship due to the regime equivalence evoked by the concept. Its reappearance in the supplementary list indicates that such concepts could only be included in the dictionary during periods when censorship was relaxed.

Yeni Türkçe Lugat[206] simplifies the definition: "The assembly representing legislative power." With this definition, parliament is no longer defined as the institution of a specific country, but as a general governing body. The dictionary removes the term, which had become synonymous with the constitutional monarchy period, from its status as a political symbol and turns it into a neutral component of the regime. Thus, the concept of parliament undergoes a shift in meaning from consultation to representation during the period from the Tanzimat to the Republic, and subsequently to legal institutionalism. Introduced in Ottoman dictionaries as an element of Western politics, this term becomes a neutral concept in the Republican era, corresponding to an established state organ. This transformation once again demonstrates the power of dictionary language to redefine political concepts in parallel with regime changes.

Another political concept that complements the example of the parliament is the Şûrâ-yı Devlet; in dictionaries, this term refers to an administrative structure that defines consultative bodies affiliated with the executive branch. Shura-yi Devlet (شورای دولت) appears only as an entry in the *Resimli Kamus-i* Osmani, while in *the Kamus-i* Turki it is explained within the entry for shura. In the *Lugat-ı Cûdî, Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ*, and *Mükemmel Osmanlı* Lugatı, it is only mentioned within the entry for shura.

In KT[207], şûrâ is defined as "place of deliberation, assembly," followed by *"Şûrâ-yı Devlet: Bâb-ı Âlî'de müteaddit dairelere ayrılmış büyük meclis"* (State Council: a large

[206] Parliamento (پارلامنتو) or (پارلمانتو) parliament. The assembly representing the legislative power. *"Parlamento veya parlamento. Kuvve-i teşri'iyyeyi temsil eden meclis.* (*Yeni Türkçe Lugat*)"

[207] Shura (شورا) or شور , feminine noun. Ar. Place of deliberation, assembly: to hold a shura agreement || Shura-yi Devlet = The grand assembly divided into multiple departments in the Sublime Porte. || Dâr-ı Shura-yı Askerî = Formerly, a general military council dedicated to discussing military affairs within the military department || Şûrây-ı Bahriye = A council dedicated to discussing shipyard affairs. "*Şûrâ İsm-i Müennes. Ar. Müzâkere mahalli, meclîs: akd-i şûrâ etmek || Şûrâ-yı Devlet = Bab-ı âlî'de müteaddit devâire münkasim meclis-i kebîr. || Dâr-ı Şûrâ-yı Askerî = Mukaddemâ dâire-i askeriyede umûr-ı*

assembly divided into multiple departments in the Sublime Porte), *"Dâr-ı Şûrâ-yı Askerî: askerî işlerin görüşüldüğü genel meclis"* (Military Council: the general assembly where military affairs are discussed), and *"Şûrâ-yı Bahriye: tersane işlerinin müzakeresine mahsus meclis"* (Naval Council: the assembly dedicated to the discussion of shipyard affairs). This usage positions the concept of shura within the administrative terminology of bureaucratic modernization; here, the concept refers not to a political but to an institutional consultative assembly.

In the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, the Council of State (Şûrâ-yı Devlet) [208] is defined as "the most important department of the executive power, consisting of multiple departments in relation to the legislative power"; The same entry also includes the phrase "Shura-yi Ummet: a consultative assembly formed by the people themselves." Although this second phrase refers only to the political representation of the people, it is also the name of a political newspaper published in the early 1900s by the Committee of Union and Progress, which was identified with the opposition press of the time. Therefore, the article must have contained sensitive content in terms of censorship, both because of its constitutional terminology emphasizing the separation of executive and legislative powers and because of its connection to the opposition press of the period. It can also be associated with its reminder of an oppositional discourse in the political atmosphere of the period.

Similarly, the word democrat (دَمُوقْراتْ) in the Additional List refers to the sovereignty of the people and alludes to the new regime. Among the dictionaries examined, it appears only in *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*[209] and *Yeni Türkçe* Lugat[210] . The definition in RKO uses an expression close to the political terminology of the period:

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askeriyenin müzâkeresine mahsûs meclis-i umûmî-i askeri || Şûrây-ı Bahriye = Tersâne işlerinin müzakeresine mahsûs meclis. (*Kâmûs-ı Türkî*)"

[208] State Council (شُورای دَولَتْ) [Turk. i.] The important department of the executive power that constitutes the legislative power. Shura-yi ummet: A consultative assembly formed by the people themselves. *"Şûrâ-yı devlet [Türk. i.] Kuvve-i icrâiyyenin kuvve-i teşri'yyesine teşkîl eden mute'addidleri bulunan dâire-i mühimmesi. Şûrâ-yı ümmet: Âhâlinin bizzât teşkîl ettiği meclis-i meşveret(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[209] Dèmocrate (دَمُوقْراتْ) Pertaining to democracy, i.e., the principle of popular sovereignty. Democracy: Démocratie A government based on popular sovereignty. *"Dèmocrate Demokrasiye yani hâkimiyet-i ahâli prensibine merbût olan. Demokrasi: Démocratie Hâkimiyet-i ahâli üzerine müesses hükümet.* (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[210] Dèmocrate (دَمُوقْراتْ) Foreign. i. Related to the principles of democracy. *"Demokrasi Yabancı. i. Demokrasi esasâtına merbût olan. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

"...pertaining to democracy, that is, the principle of sovereignty of the people. Democracy: Démocratie - A government based on the sovereignty of the people." This explanation directly emphasizes the principle of popular sovereignty with the phrase "sovereignty of the people." In Ottoman political culture, the expression "sovereignty of the people" was a concept that was in tension with the centralist administrative understanding of the period. Therefore, the definition in the dictionary produces a political discourse that implies a new regime, beyond simply providing the equivalent of a foreign term.

The equivalent in the YTL dictionary is significantly simplified: "bound to the principles of democracy." This definition completely removes the emphasis on popular sovereignty; the removal of the phrase "sovereignty of the people" neutralizes the political content of the concept. Since "democrat" became synonymous with the fundamental principle of the state during the Republican era, such terms have acquired a function of confirmation rather than definition in dictionaries.

Another word on the list, psychology (پسیقُولوجیا/ پیسقولوژی), appears only in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmân*[211] and the *New Turkish* Dictionary[212] among the dictionaries examined. In the RKO, the word is defined as "The science of the nature and states of the soul, the science of the soul, the state of the soul: I know his psychology." This expression creates a discourse that conveys "psychology" both as the scientific "fenn-i rûh" and in its everyday usage, as in "I know his psychology." The definition attempts to localize the concept by using native equivalents such as ilm-i rûh and fenn-i rûh when translating a Western concept into Ottoman Turkish. This is an example of the tension between "term importation and term localization" frequently seen in post-Tanzimat dictionaries.

In the *YTL*, however, the definition takes on a more philosophical and systematic form: "The part of philosophy that deals with the soul and its states is ilm-i ahvâli rûh. A psychologist is someone who deals with psychology." Here, the concept is no longer classified as a Western-origin term but as a sub-branch of philosophy. This change may have stemmed from a cautious approach to the foreign origin of the term psychology, as

[211] Psychology(پسیقُولوجیا) [Foreign. n.] Psychology The science of the nature and conditions of the soul, the science of the soul, the state of the soul: I know his psychology. *"Psikolocyâ [Ecnebi. i.] Psychologie Mâhiyet ve ahvâl-i rûhdan bahseden ilm-i rûh, fenn-i rûh, hâlet-i rûhiye: Onun psikolocyasını ben bilirim. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[212] Psychology (پیسقولوژی) The part of philosophy that deals with the soul and its states, the science of the states of the soul. A psychologist is someone who deals with psychology *"Psikoloji Felsefenin rûhtan ve ahvâlinden bahseden kısmı, ilm-i ahvâli rûh. Psikolog psikoloji ile uğraşan (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

well as from the view that the use of terms in the first edition of the RKO without Arabic and Ottoman equivalents was objectionable from a censorship perspective. The similarity of the form "Psikolocyâ" to the French spelling (psychologie) and its lack of a Turkish equivalent appear to have been grounds for its removal in the context of the Ministry of Education's "sensitivity to foreign words" at the time. This example demonstrates how scientific terminology was restricted by state control during the modernization process and how the "language of science" was viewed as an area of cultural and ideological debate.

One of the words defined for the first time in the first edition of the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* that had not previously appeared in dictionaries is disiplin (دیسیپلین). Among the dictionaries examined, it appears only in *the RKO* and the *Yeni Türkçe Lugat*. In the RKO[213], the entry for is defined as follows: "*İnzibât*; a collection of laws and procedures specific to the administration and maintenance of order in certain bodies or institutions: The *Mekteb-i Sultâniyye* has its own specific discipline." In this definition, discipline is presented as an administrative principle that ensures institutional order. The example of the "Mekteb-i Sultâniyye" shows that the word is used specifically in the context of educational institutions, that is, within formal structures created by the state. Thus, the concept has been incorporated into the Ottoman institutional language along with the military and administrative connotations of the word "discipline" in Western languages.

In the YTL[214], the word is defined in a much broader context: "Order and regularity, mental, moral, and physical training and education, refinement, discipline to ensure and establish strict obedience; knowledge, practice..." Here, discipline is associated with the individual's mental, moral, and physical education, moving beyond institutional order. The definition broadens the concept as a modern pedagogical and moral value. In the RKO, the word is limited to administration and order, i.e., it is

[213] Discipline (دیسیپلین) [Foreign. n.] A set of rules and procedures specific to the administration and organization of certain bodies or institutions. The Sultanate School has its own specific discipline. *"Disiplin Dicsplin [Ecnebi. i.] İnzibât ba'zı hey'et veya müesselerin idâre ve te'mîn intizâmına mahsûs kavânin ve usûlün mecmu'a Mekteb-i Sultâniyye'nin husûsî disiplini vardır. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[214] Discipline (دیسیپلین) Foreign. n. Order and organization, mental, moral, and physical training and education to ensure and establish strict obedience; refinement, correction; knowledge, practice. Control and restraint, order. *"Disiplin Yabancı. i. Nizam ve intizam, sıkı bir itaat temîn ve te'sîs etmek için zihnî ahlâkî ve cismânî talim ve terbiye, tehzip, tedip; malûmat, temrîn. Zapt ve rabt, intizâm. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

positioned as institutionally centered. This positioning has evolved in the YTL towards the idea of individual education and internal discipline.

This article in the RKO is an early example of the process of adapting Western-derived terms to Ottoman institutions. The reason for intervening in the word is not due to political content or political discourse. It is likely that it was removed because there was no need to express a concept that has synonyms in the language (such as discipline, order, training, education, refinement, and correction) with a foreign word.
Consequently, the word discipline, which was a foreign term denoting institutional order in late Ottoman lexicography, became a cultural concept acquiring the meaning of moral and individual education in the Republican era.

The word Randevu (راندە وو) was also removed, probably because it has an equivalent in Turkish and is considered to be of foreign origin, but was later added to the Supplementary List. Among the fifteen dictionaries examined, this entry, which appears only in *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*[215] and *Yeni Türkçe* Lugat[216] , does not carry any ideological or moral implications in terms of content.

3.1.3. Concepts Showing Continuity and Common Usage (6+ Dictionaries)

This section examines concepts that appear in at least six of the fifteen dictionaries in the study's sample and thus demonstrate historical continuity, selected from the words in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı* Osmânî's supplement section. First, the historical and ideological reasons behind the possibility of these words being removed from the dictionary are discussed; then, their equivalents in the fifteen dictionaries in the sample are examined, and points showing continuity, differentiation, or convergence in meaning are evaluated.

In this regard, the first concept to be examined is *istibdâd* (اِسْتِبْدادْ), which can be directly linked to censorship policies and the political constraints of the period.

[215] Appointment (راندەوو) [Foreign. n.] Rendezvous. Meeting time. I made an appointment. *"Randevu [Ecnebi. i.] Rendez_vous Mev'id-i mülâkât. Randevu verdim. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*
[216] Appointment (راندەوو) Foreign. n. A place to meet. An agreement between two or more people to meet at the same time and place. Meeting time, appointment. *"Randevu Yabancı. i. Buluşulacak mahal. İki veya ikiden ziyâde kişinin aynı saat ve aynı mahalde buluşmak üzere sözleşmesi. Mev'id-i telâkî, mev'id-i mülâkât. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

Istibdâd (اِسْتِبْدآدْ)[217] appears in eleven of the fifteen dictionaries examined. The meanings given to the word in the dictionaries fall into two main trends. The first group consists of dictionaries that focus on the shorter and more neutral meaning of "being independent," emphasizing "being self-sufficient". These are: *Kitab-ı Müntahabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* (1269)[218] , *İlaveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmaniyye* (1297)[219] , *Lugat-ı Ecnebiye İlaveli Lugat-ı Osmaniye*[220] , *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ* (1306)[221] .

The definitions in the second group represent uses that emphasize "arbitrariness and lawlessness" in addition to the meaning of independence, thus implying a negative connotation in the semantic field.[222] *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* also gives the word a similar basic meaning; however, the phrase *"Kaldır istibdâdı mesʿûd eyle mülk-ü milleti"* (Remove despotism and make the nation's realm prosperous) included in the entry provides an example that directly refers to the political atmosphere of the period. This couplet, whose author is unknown, carries a tone that foreshadows the intellectual climate of the Second Constitutional Era, as it reflects an anti-despotism and libertarian discourse. In this respect, it can be considered one of the most plausible explanations for the word's removal from the dictionary.

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[217] Istibdâd (اِسْتِبْدآدْ) [Arabic] Tyranny, arbitrary action, lawless style of administration and behavior: "Remove tyranny and make the nation's realm prosperous. *"İstibdâd [Ar. i.] Zorbalık, keyfî hareket, kânunu olmayan tarz-ı idâre ve hareket: "Kaldır istibdâdı mesʿûd eyle mülk-ü milleti". (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[218] Istibdâd To be independent and self-sufficient. *"İstibdâd Müstakil ve başlı başına olmak. (Kitab-ı Müntahabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye)"*

[219] Istibdâd To be independent and self-sufficient. "*"İstibdâd Müstakil ve başlı başına olmak. (İlâveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmaniyye)"*

[220] Istibdâd Ar. To be independent and self-sufficient. *"İstibdâd Ar. Müstakil ve başlı başına olmak. (Lugat-ı Ecnebiye İlaveli Lugat-ı Osmaniye)"*

[221] Istibdâd Ar. To be independent and self-sufficient. *"İstibdâd Ar. Müstakil ve başlı başına olmak. (Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ)"*

[222] Istibdâd Ar. verb. To rule arbitrarily, without being subject to any law. -kârâne: In a manner befitting istibdâd, befitting a despot *"İstibdâd Ar. mastar. Hiçbir kânuna tâbiʿ olmaksızın keyfe göre hükmetmek. -kârâne: İstibdâdla, müstebidde yakışır sûrette. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

Istibdâd Masculine noun. Poetry. (Verb form from "bedd". Istifʿâl) To rule independently and without being subject to any order or law. *"İstibdâd İsm-i Müzekker. Şiir. ("bedd" den mastar. İstifʿâl) Kendi başına ve hiçbir nizâm ve kânuna tâbiʿ olmaksızın hükmetmek. (Kâmûs-ı Türkî)"*

Istibdâd Transitive verb. To rule arbitrarily and unjustly - To disregard laws - The government is definitely lawless. *"İstibdâd Müteaddi fiil. Zulmen istiklâl-i keyfî hükümet-Kânun dinlememek- Hükümet mutlaka kanûnsuz. (Lehce-i Osmânî Tab'ı Cedîd)"*

Istibdâd ؞ (In Müntehâb, with additional meaning) To be independent and self-sufficient, acting arbitrarily without recognizing anyone else. *"İstibdâd ؞ (Müntehâb'da olup ziyade mana içeren) Müstakil ve başlı başına olmak kimseyi tanımayarak hodserâne hareket etmek (Lugat-ı Remzî)"*

The meaning acquired by despotism during this period cannot be understood solely through Ottoman internal dynamics. It is also closely related to the transformation the concept underwent in European political thought. In her article "Despotism in Ottoman Political Thought," Banu Turnaoğlu considers the word *"istibdâd"* as the equivalent of "despotism." The concept of "despot" carries a neutral meaning of "master" in Ancient Greek, and the modern political meaning of the word took shape in the 18th century. Montesquieu was the one who systematized this transformation of meaning. In his work *De l'esprit des lois* (1748), Montesquieu defined "despotism" as a form of government based entirely on the arbitrary will of the ruler, without regard for laws and rules, giving the term a modern, negative, and political connotation. However, this definition was constructed not so much as an abstract political theory, but rather directly through the governance form of Eastern societies—particularly the Ottoman Empire. Montesquieu characterized the Ottomans as "the most extreme example of despotism," presenting it as a regime based on fear, lawlessness, and the embodiment of absolute power.[223] Thus, while the Ottoman Empire became the archetype of despotism in European thought, the word "despot" also became established throughout the 19th century in European languages and, indirectly, in Ottoman Turkish, with the meaning of "oppressive, arbitrary ruler."

Montesquieu's description indirectly permeated the intellectual world of Ottoman intellectuals in the early 20th century. Particularly after the Tanzimat period, the term *istibdâd* acquired a political and ideological meaning that corresponded to the European concept of "despotism"; during the reign of Abdülhamid II, it became the symbolic equivalent of an "oppressive regime." Initially a European critique directed at the Ottoman Empire, this conceptualization gradually transformed into a self-critical political discourse within Ottoman thought.

One of the notable definitions in the second group is the definition of *Lugat-ı* Cûdî.[224] While the work generally presents a neutral vocabulary for language teaching,

[223] Banu Turnaoğlu, "Despotism (Istibdad) in Ottoman Political Thought," *History of Political Thought* 41, no. 1 (Spring 2020): 17–18. In this article, the author examines the transformation of the term *istibdâd*, the Ottoman equivalent of the concept of despotism, from its neutral meaning in early Islamic politics to an ideological concept during the Tanzimat and Abdülhamid II periods.

[224] Istibdâd To be independent and self-sufficient, to be unique: The foundation of istibdâd was destroyed by the generosity of the brave. Example: Men istebedde birey'ihi fakad heleke: Those who want to be independent in their opinions will surely perish. *"İstibdâd Müstakil ve başlı başına olmak, teferrüd etmek:*

the entry for *"istibdâd"* deviates from this general trend and carries a distinct value. The definition's verse, *"Yıkıldı himmet-i merdân ile bünyâd-ı istibdâd"* means "The structure of tyranny was destroyed by the efforts of the brave." This expression implies that the regime of oppression and tyranny was eliminated through the efforts of virtuous individuals; it positions tyranny as a structure that must be destroyed. The term *"merdân"* (brave men) in the verse refers to the liberal circles of the period, particularly the Army of Movement that entered Istanbul after the 31 March Incident of 1909 and those who identified themselves as freedom fighters associated with this event. In this context, the verse produces a discourse that glorifies the end of the despotic regime symbolized by the deposition of Abdülhamid II. This example given by the author shows how the political events of the period seeped into the language and how the ideological tone could even be echoed in dictionary entries.

The proverb that follows, "Men istebedde birey'ihi fekad heleke (من استبد برأيه فقد هلك)" means "He who insists on his own opinion is doomed." This proverb evaluates the individual's absolutization of their own opinion as moral blindness and thus negates the concept of despotism at the individual attitude level. Following an apparently neutral grammatical explanation, İbrâhim Cûdî indirectly makes his criticism of the concept of despotism visible through this verse and proverbs.

The word despotism generally carries a negative political connotation in other dictionaries, meaning "arbitrary and unlawful rule," but *the Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*[225] deviates from this tendency. In the work, the word is defined as "to be independent, to exist independently"; in the example given, *"Vikâye-i şân ve şevket-i istiklâl ve istibdâd ümniyyelerini zâmin ve mütekeffil oldukları* (The Turkish nation, which is independent and sovereign, is the guarantor and protector of the dignity and power of independence and autocracy)", autocracy, together with the concept of independence, has a positive meaning. Thus, Mehmed Salâhî distances the concept from the meaning of arbitrary rule and presents it within a more cautious and diplomatic framework.

Yıkıldı himmet merdân ile bünyâd-ı istibdâd. Mesel: Men istebedde birey'ihi fakad heleke: Re'yinde müstakil olmak isteyen mutlaka helâk olur. (Lugat-ı Cûdî)"

[225] Istibdâd Ar. To be independent, to be autonomous. (Vikâye-i şân ve şevket-i istiklâl ve istibdâd ümniyyelerini zâmin ve mütekeffil oldukları- Count Nesselrode Letter- Pertev Pasha
"İstibdâd Ar. Başlı başına olmak, müstakil bulunmak. (Vikâye-i şân ve şevket-i istiklâl ve istibdâd ümniyyelerini zâmin ve mütekeffil oldukları- Kont Nesselrode Mektub- Pertev Paşa) (Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"

At this point, examining the positioning of the word istiklâl, which is not included in the list of additional words in the RKO, in other dictionaries reveals the semantic axis of the istibdâd–istiklâl relationship. In dictionaries, istiklâl is generally used in the sense of "being independent" or "not being attached to a place." However, the word does not only emphasize individual autonomy. It refers to the idea of "being able to exist without being attached to a state or authority."

This situation shows that the "freedom–*istibdâd*" opposition in 19th-century Ottoman discourse also had a philological dimension. In one, the subject exists by relying on its own power, while in the other, it maintains its power by excluding others; thus, the two opposite moral aspects of the same root have taken shape as two politically antonymous terms in the language.

The term "*müstebid*," which is semantically related to the concept of istibdâd, should also be evaluated in this context. By examining whether the word müstebid is included in dictionaries, we can reveal how the concept is indirectly represented. Among the dictionaries examined, the words müstebid are not included in *Lehce-i Osmânî, Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı*, and *Tetimme-i Lugat-ı* Nâcî. Of the dictionaries that do not include the entry *"istibdâd",* only *Lugat-ı* Nâcî (*LN*)[226] mentions the word "müstebid". It is defined as "one who acts arbitrarily, without listening to anyone; in a manner befitting a despot." The definition explains the word both as a practical attitude (acting independently) and as a moral quality (not considering the opinions of others). It is particularly noteworthy that Nâcî's dictionary does not treat istibdâd as an independent entry but includes it within the word müstebid. This choice becomes even more meaningful when we remember that other dictionaries, apart from *LN*, clearly include the entry for istibdâd. On the other hand, in all other dictionaries that include the entry for *istibdâd*, *müstebid* is explained as "one who is tyrannical, arbitrary, independent, and self-willed." This situation shows that even if the concept is not directly transferred between dictionaries, it is preserved within a similar semantic field and that the idea of *"istibdâd"* is represented at the individual level.

[226] Müstebid (مستبد) Ar. One who acts arbitrarily, acting independently without listening to anyone; in a manner befitting a despot. *"Müstebid Ar. İstibdât eden, kimseyi dinlemeyerek başlı başına hareket eden; müstebidâne, müstebit olana yakışacak sûrette. (Lugat-ı Nâcî)"*

One of the most visible manifestations of the concept of despotism can be traced in terms related to the regime's control mechanisms. In this context, one of the notable words on the list is *hafiye* (خَفِيَه). Synonymous with repressive governance, this word carried the meaning of "secret agent of the state" in the official language of the period; among the people, however, it was understood to mean "secret informant" or "spy." Described as "officials of despotism" in Ottoman political discourse, hafiyes went beyond being an administrative title and became a symbol representing a culture of surveillance, fear, and obedience.

The entry for *hafiye* in thirteen of the dictionaries in the sample shows two tendencies in meaning. In the dictionaries in the first group, the word is explained in neutral terms such as "secret, hidden, mystery." (*Lugat-ı Cûdî, Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye, İlaveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye, Lugat-ı Remzî*, and *Lugat-ı Ecnebiye İlaveli Lugat-ı Osmaniye)*. In the second group, the word is defined in a more formal context as "an official tasked with investigating the government's secret affairs" or "a police officer." The explanation in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı* Osmânî differs from the others: "*Casus*, an official tasked with secretly investigating the affairs and movements of others." The term *tecessüs* (to secretly investigate, to probe into the private affairs of others) in the definition gives the word a distinctly negative tone. Thus, Ali Seydî presents the muhaberât, who carried out the work, not as a state official providing intelligence, but as a morally questionable figure embodying the social control of the autocratic regime.

Another word on the additional list is *ihtilâl* (اخْتِلالْ). The word appears in twelve dictionaries, most of which include meanings such as "chaos, disorder, causing strife and corruption, disorderliness, opposition, causing unrest." In the *Resimli Kamus-ı Osmani*[227] , it is defined as "disorder, uprising, the people's uprising against the government." The phrase "uprising against the government" in the definition is a risky emphasis when considering the political situation of the period. The phrase *"...ihtilâli haydudluk şeklini geçmez"* in the dictionary frames this action not as a legitimate political uprising, but as a public order problem that threatens the system. Thus, the word "revolution" implies a

[227] Revolt (اخْتِلالْ) [Arabic verb.] Disorder, uprising, the people rising up against the government. ... the revolution does not go beyond banditry. Revolution of consciousness: Insanity. "İhtilal [Ar. mastar.] Karışıklık, ayaklanma, ahâlinin hükümete karşı ayaklanması. ... ihtilâli haydudluk şeklini geçmez. İhtilâl-i şu'ur: Delilik. (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*)"

"state of unrest" that disrupts the state order. The explicit mention of the idea of the people rising up against the government in the dictionary must have been perceived as a direct threat to the regime in terms of the censorship policies of the period.

The word "revolt" ihtilâl (اِخْتِلالْ) does not appear in *Lehce-i Osmânî, Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı, or Kâmûs-ı* Türkî. The omission of this word from KT, considered the most systematic dictionary in terms of scope and lexicography, is a meaningful silence reflecting the political caution and censorship sensitivity of the period.

Similarly, another word on the list, *inkırâz* (اِنْقراضْ), does not appear in *Lehce-i Osmânî, Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı, or Kâmûs-ı* Türkî. This situation shows that dictionaries of the period consciously avoided concepts that could evoke social collapse or the end of the regime. Therefore, the common absence of the words "revolut" and "extinction" reveals that linguistic choice in post-Tanzimat lexicography also functioned as a form of political self-censorship.

In dictionaries, the word *inkırâz* is generally defined as "the extinction of a sect or generation, to become extinct, to perish, the end of a generation." The definitions are mostly explained with the example of *"inkırâz-ı nesil"* (extinction of a generation), and the concept is used in the sense of biological or social extinction. In the first edition of the *Resimli Kamus-ı Osmani*[228], the word was defined as "to sink, perish, fall silent, cease to exist in relation to states and families." Although this explanation does not directly contain any objectionable expressions, the example of "the collapse of states" may have been considered sensitive because it carried an implication that could undermine the survival of the empire within the framework of the censorship understanding of the Abdülhamid II period.

In *Lugat-ı Cûdî*[229], the word *inkırâz* is explained with the example "Our state was established upon the collapse of the Seljuk government." Here, collapse does not imply destruction but supports the historical idea of continuity that legitimizes the emergence

[228] Extinction(اِنْقراضْ) [Arabic verb.] Regarding states and families: to sink, to perish, to become extinct, to fall silent, to cease to exist. *"İnkırâz [Ar. mastar.] Devletler ve aileler hakkında batmak, mahvolmak, inkırâz bulmak, sukût etmek, artık mevcûd kalmamak. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[229] Extinction (اِنْقراضْ) To become extinct, to be reduced to a single member of its original body: Our state was founded upon the extinction of the Seljuk government. That family is now extinct. *"İnkırâz Bitüb tükenmek, erkânından ferd-i vâhid kalmak üzere ardıkesilmek: Devletimiz hükümet-i Selcukiyye'nin inkırâzı üzerine teʾsîs eylemişdir. O âile bugün rehîn inkirâzdır. (Lugat-ı Cûdî)"*

of the Ottoman Empire after the Seljuk Empire. Therefore, the inclusion of the word in Cûdî is directly related to the ideological orientation of the example sentence, which emphasizes the legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire. However, even though *Lugat-ı Cûdî* was published during a relatively more liberal period, a cautious and regime-compliant example was still attached to the word; this shows that self-censorship continued to influence dictionary writing even during years when censorship had eased.

The same cautious approach is also seen in the word *inkılâb* (إنْقلابْ) on the list. The word does not appear in *Lehce-i Osmânî, Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı, or Kâmûs-ı Türkî*. It is mostly used in dictionaries to mean "to be cast into another mold, to change, to transform, to change methods." In the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı* Osmânî,[230] is defined as "..to pass from one state to another suddenly." Transitioning to a form of government: The Great French Revolution. The most compelling work on the Great French Revolution is that of Thomas Carlyle. The Revolution of July 11: The revolution that ended the reign of Abdulhamid's despotism." This definition and example distinguish it from other dictionaries. Explaining the transition to another form of government using the example of the French Revolution would carry an implication that could undermine the existing authority, so it is highly likely that the word was removed from previous editions. Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881), referred to as "Tomas Karlâyl" in Ottoman sources, was a Scottish thinker, historian, and essayist. He gained prominence in this field with his comprehensive work on the French Revolution, *The French Revolution: A History*; this study, which addresses the 1789 Revolution in a multifaceted manner, attracted attention not only for its historical writing but also for its narrative style. The dictionary's description of Carlyle's work as *"en câzip"* (most appealing) suggests not only that it followed the Eurocentric historical sources of the period, but also that it adopted an approach to the concept of revolution through emotional or evocative narration. Carlyle's interpretation of history is not merely a factual chronology, but a moral and rhetorical reconstruction.

[230] Revolution [Arabic verb] To change abruptly from one state to another. To transition to a form of government: The Great French Revolution. The most compelling work on the Great French Revolution is that of Thomas Carlyle. The Revolution of July 11: The revolution that ended the reign of Abdulhamid. *"İnkılâb [Ar. mastar.] Bir hâlden başka bir hâle fakat birdenbire geçmek. Bir şekl-i hükümete geçmek: Fransa İnkılâb-ı Kebîri. Fransa inkılâb-ı kebîri hakkında en câzip eser (Tomas Karlâyl)'ın eseridir. 11 Temmuz İnkılâbı: Abdülhamid ahd-i istibdâdına hâtime veren inkılâb. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

On the other hand, the common point between *Lugat-ı* Cûdî[231] , and *RKO* is that both refer to the Second Constitutional Era. Unlike dictionary authors who contributed to the education system of the period, such as İbrahim Cûdî, the statement by an author whose direct connection to authority is unknown, "our revolution coincides with the fiscal year of July 10, 1324," is noteworthy. The fact that the dates July 10 and 11 appear in different forms in relation to the history of the Constitutional Monarchy *in the RKO* and *LC* is probably due to either a printing error or a technical day difference related to the date the proclamation came into effect. Ibrahim Cudi's characterization of the constitutional monarchy as an "inkılâb-ı hayr" (revolution of good) does not provide definitive evidence of the author's personal political orientation, but it does show that the dictionary adopted a framework of meaning that was consistent with the discourse of this period of political restructuring.

Indeed, the declaration of July 10, the day the Second Constitutional Monarchy was proclaimed, as a public holiday called *'İyd-i Millî* is another example of how political transformation was ritualized in the social memory, parallel to the choice of words. This practice reinforced the regime's legitimacy while also creating a new shared time and meaning in the construction of mass political identity. As Sanem Yamak emphasizes in her article[232] , these celebrations were designed to make the idea of "nation" real in different social segments of the empire. Such holiday strategies bear structural similarities to the practices of modern European states before World War I to mobilize the public. According to Hobsbawm's conceptualization of "invented tradition," modern states reproduce certain behavioral patterns through rituals and symbols in order to ensure social cohesion and reinforce political legitimacy. Although presented as belonging to the past, such practices are actually forms of social consensus constructed in the recent past.[233] In this context, the *'Iyd-i Millî* celebrations held in Trabzon after the proclamation of the Constitutional Monarchy became a symbolic practice that reinforced the new regime's

[231] Revolution (اِنْقلابْ) To turn, to change, to be cast into another mold: The revolution of circumstances, the revolution of administration, the revolution of our good fortune coincided with the fiscal year of July 10, 1324. *"İnkılâb Dönmek, değişmek, başka kalıba dökülmek: İnkılâb-ı ahvâl, inkılâb-ı idâre, inkılâb-ı hayrımız 10 temmuz 1324 sene-i mâliyesine müsâdifdir. (Lugat-ı Cûdî)"*

[232] Sanem Yamak, "Meşrutiyetin Bayramı:' 10 Temmuz İd-i Millisi'", *Istanbul University Faculty of Political Sciences Journal*, no. 38 (November 2011): 324.

[233] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1–14.

idea of social unity. The newspaper of the period, *"Trabzon'da Meşveret,"* published examples of how this holiday was celebrated with great enthusiasm by the people.[234]

Another word on the list is the removal of sovereignty and the term *hal'* (خَلْعْ), which means 'to be deposed'. This word, found in ten dictionaries, appears in seven of them (*Kitab-ı Müntahabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye, İlaveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmaniyye, Lehce-i Osmânî Tab'ı Cedîd, Tetimme-i Lugat-ı Nâcî, Lugat-ı Nâcî, Lugat-ı Remzî, Lugat-ı Ecnebiye İlaveli Lugat-ı Osmaniye*) it means "to strip, to dismiss from service, to disown, to reject, to 'remove'". Three dictionaries (*Lugat-ı Nâcî, Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî, Lugat-ı Cûdî)* include the meaning of removing the ruler from the throne. In *Lugat-ı* Cûdî,[235] , this meaning is added to create a neutral text.

The entry for *hal*ʿ (خلع) in both dictionaries contains a clear reference to the deposition of Sultan Abdülhamid II. In *Lugat-ı* Nâcî, the phrase [236] "The cruel sultan Hamîd-i Sânî was finally deposed and removed from the caliphate" is historically an early usage, considering the 1318 (1900–1901) edition of the work. This expression may refer not directly to the 1909 deposition, but to a political aspiration or figurative expression circulating in constitutionalist circles at the time. Nâcî's use of this example in a grammatical sentence may have allowed him to indirectly express a constitutionalist implication. It is also noteworthy that this word was not removed from the dictionary during the inspection.

The example of halʿ in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı* Osmânî[237] points to a different possibility. The dictionary contains the phrase "To dismiss a ruler, to remove him from

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[234] For more detailed information on the documents related to the celebrations in Trabzon, see Volkan Aksoy, "Trabzon'da 'On Temmuz' Bayramı Kutlamaları / Celebrations for 10 July in Trabzon," *Karadeniz İncelemeleri Dergisi* 13, no. 13 (February 2012): 49–58.

[235] Hal'(خَلْعْ) The removal of a person from the caliphate or imamate by means of revocation of allegiance. Since Filasl means "to remove clothing," halʿ is understood to mean "the removal of the caliphate and imamate."
"Halʿ Bir zâtı hilafetten veya imâretten ref'-i itaat sûretiyle ıskât, Filasl "Ellbise makûlesi şeyleri çıkarmak" manasına olmağla "halʿ" de "Nezʿ-i hilʿat hilafet ve imâret" manasına tasavvur olunur. (Lugat-ı Cûdî)"

[236] Halʿ (خَلَعْ) Ar. 1. To strip, to be stripped: Hal'-i sevb. Libâsın hal'i. 2. To dethrone a ruler, to remove from the throne: Hamîd-i Sânî, a cruel sultan, was finally halʿed and removed from the position of caliphate. *"Halʿ Ar. 1.Soyup çıkarmak, soyulup çıkarılmak: Hal'-i sevb. Libâsın hal'i. 2. Hükümdârı tahtından indirmek, saltanattan infisâl ettirmek: Hunhar bir padişah olan Hamîd-i Sânî ennihâye hal olunarak makâm-ı hilâfetten teb'îd edilmiştir. (Lugat-ı Nâcî)"*

[237] Halʿ [Arabic verb.] To dismiss a ruler, to remove him from the throne. Sultan Abdülhamid was halʿ and Sultan Mehmed Reşad was iclâs. To be removed from one's position halʿ-i mefâsıl. *"Halʿ [Ar. f.] Bir*

the throne: Sultan Abdülhamid was *halʿ* and His Highness Sultan Mehmed Reşad was *iclâs*." However, the dictionary's license year is 1905; Abdülhamid was still on the throne at that time. Therefore, it seems more reasonable that the relevant example was added to the text later, during the publication of the dictionary's 1909 supplement list. It would have been impossible to write such a direct meaning as "deposed from the throne" and the name of the sultan in 1905 under strict censorship conditions. However, its inclusion in the text in the new edition published in 1909 is historically consistent. The RKO directly mentions Abdülhamid, but the historical context of the example given, "...to dethrone Sultan Abdülhamid and Sultan Mehmed Reşad were enthroned," does not fit with a dictionary licensed in 1905. It is likely that this part was added later.

The absence of the word halʿ in *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* can be interpreted as a choice related to self-censorship or the official control mechanisms of the period, as I mentioned in the previous words. The absence of the word in the *Yeni Türkçe* Lugat may also be attributed to a conscious choice, likely within the framework of simplification and Turkification policies, to convey the same meaning through another Turkish word.

Thus, the absence of the word creates a meaningful divergence that reflects the linguistic and ideological orientations of two different periods.

Another word containing political discourse in the list is ‘*isyân* (عصيان). In the dictionaries examined, it has been used in the sense of individual moral deviation and political rebellion. This dual structure becomes clear in the definitions at the end of the 19th century: on the one hand, in a religious context, it is explained as "disobedience to orders, opposition to divine commands," and on the other hand, on a social level, as "disobedience, not submitting to the government." In *Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* and *İlaveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmaniyye*, the word is defined as "refusal to obey orders and disobedience" or "the opposite of obedience"; here, rebellion is seen as an individual behavior. In *Lugat-ı Remzî, Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, and *Tetimme-i Lugat-ı* Nâcî, the word is explained as "rebelliousness" or "opposition to orders" and is framed more in moral terms.

hükümdârı ‘azl etmek, tahtından ettirmek Sultan Abdülhamid halʿ ve Sultan Mehmed Reşad hazretleri iclâs olundu. Yerinden çıkmak halʿ-i mefâsıl. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)”

In *Lehce-i Osmânî (Tabʿ-ı Cedîd)*, 'rebellion' is defined explicitly as a political act for the first time: "Raising one's head, i.e., insubordination, disobedience, uprising, raising one's hand." The phrase "rebellion and raising one's hand" shows that the concept has evolved from individual disobedience to collective resistance. *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* continues this line of thought but places the word within a religious framework. "Rebellion, disobedience to God, transgression, rebellion, defiance, failure to carry out the commands of God *(evâmir-i İlâhiyye)*." Thus, the concept is redefined not as political but as spiritual "disobedience."

In the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*[238], the entry for is '*isyân* (rebellion) goes beyond the abstract definitions found in earlier dictionaries and takes on a direct political and historical framework. Following the phrase "no longer subject to the government," the definition includes examples such as "The Malisya Rebellion was crushed with bloodshed. The Albanian Rebellion was fueled by the issue of the acceptance or rejection of the Latin alphabet." These sentences relate the word to concrete historical events and position rebellion not merely as a moral failing but as a political movement. The expressions "Albanian Rebellion" and "Latin alphabet" show that issues debated in the public sphere at the time were directly transferred into the dictionary language. This entry both criminalizes the concept by defining rebellion against state authority and turns the dictionary into a kind of political memory by recording events.

In the *Yeni Türkçe Lugat*[239], the definition of is '*isyân* has been reorganized, and all examples have been removed: "Rebellion, insurrection, insubordination; not obeying orders and revolting, rising up against the government and its officials. Sin." This new definition transforms 'rebellion' into an abstract, example-free, and normative form; it frames opposition to the state as both a political and moral crime. The word's trajectory

[238] Rebellion (عِصْيانْ) [Arabic n.] Disobedience, insubordination, refusal to obey the government: The Malayan Rebellion was crushed with bloodshed. The Albanian Rebellion was fueled by the issue of accepting or rejecting the Latin alphabet. 'Ale'l-ıtlâk refusal to obey and 'ilân refusal to be satisfied: What I fear is the rebellion of my conscience. *"'İsyân [Ar. i.] İtaat etmeyiş, itaat ve infiyâde, hükümete artık tâbi' olmayış: Malisya 'İsyân kanla söndürüldü. Arnavutluk İsyânı Latin hurûfâtının kabûl ve adem-i kabûlü meselesinden alevlendi. 'Ale'l-ıtlâk adem-i itâat ve 'ilân adem-i hoşnudî: Korkduğum vicdânımın isyânıdır. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[239] Rebellion (عِصْيان) Ar. i. Being rebellious, revolting, being unruly; not obeying orders and rising up, revolting against the government and its officials. Sin. Noun. *"'İsyân (عِصْيانْ) Ar. i. Asî olma, tuğyan, serkeşlik; evâmire itaat etmeyip ayaklanma, hükûmete ve memurlarına karşı kıyam. Günah. İsm. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

evolves from individual disobedience to social uprising in Ottoman dictionaries, and then to a forbidden act directed against state authority in Republican dictionaries. This transformation demonstrates how dictionaries became ideological tools that reinforced the legitimacy of the regime. Thus, while regulating language, the dictionary was also able to redefine the boundaries of the political.

The next word on the list is *hürriyet* (حُرّيَتْ), which is found in almost all dictionaries. It appears in thirteen dictionaries, except for *Lehce-i Osmânî* (first edition) and *Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı*. The concept is defined in most of these dictionaries with basic meanings such as "freedom, liberty, independence; not being a prisoner or slave, but being one's own master." *Lugat-ı Cûdî*[240] and *Lugat-ı Nâcî* [241] Quoted the verse "How enchanting you are, ah, face of freedom / We became prisoners of love, though we were freed from slavery"[242] from Namık Kemal's "*Hürriyet Kasîdesi"* under the pen name Kemâl Bey. The inclusion of a verse by Namık Kemal, whose works were heavily censored and repeatedly banned during the reign of Abdülhamid II, in dictionaries can be seen as a cautious reference made with an awareness of the risks posed by the censorship regime of the time, rather than an aesthetic choice based on selecting a less risky passage from the poem. The metaphor "*esîr-i aşk*" (captive of love) in the verse addresses the theme of freedom not directly as political criticism but within a symbolic language of love. This indirect expression seems to have allowed the verse to pass censorship, as the censorship understanding of the period prioritized sensitivity to "explicit discourse" rather than "explicit political allusion." Thus, the concept of freedom becomes less of an individual state and more of a literary reflection of a collective desire intertwined with the social tensions of the period. This example is noteworthy in that it shows that dictionary writers took not only a linguistic but also an ideological and cultural position.

[240] Freedom (حُرّيَتْ) Liberty, independence: "How enchanting you are, oh face of freedom / Though we are prisoners of love, we are free from bondage" -Kemal Bey. *"Hürriyet âzâdelik, serbestî: 'Ne efsunkâr imişsin ah ey dîdâr-ı hürriyyet / Esîr-i aşkın olduk gerçi kurtulduk esâretden'-Kemâl Bey. (Lugat-ı Cûdî)"*
[241] Freedom ((حُرّيَتْAr. Freedom: O queen, O prisoners / Shouldn't my freedom be sacrificed? "How enchanting you are, ah, O face of freedom / We became prisoners of love, though we escaped captivity" (Kemal Bey). *(Lugat-ı Nâcî)*
[242] *"Ne efsunkâr imişsin ah ey dîdâr-ı hürriyyet / Esîr-i aşkın olduk gerçi kurtulduk esâretden" (Hürriyet Kasîdesi)*

However, the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*[243] cannot escape censorship with the example it gives for the word. While the dictionary's definition of the word is quite neutral, it gives the example: "They took freedom beyond the borders of the homeland. They chained those who wanted freedom."[244] Although the poet's name is not mentioned, these verses are from a poem by Abdullah Cevdet, known for his opposition to Abdülhamid II, in his work *Kahriyât* (1897/1908).[245]

With this example, the dictionary is positioned within a rhetoric of resistance against direct political pressure. Considering the climate of censorship during the reign of Abdulhamid II, the inclusion of this verse in the dictionary can be seen not only as an attempt to enrich its meaning but also as an example of discursive courage.

The definition of the concept of freedom in the *Yeni Türkçe Lugat* [246] expresses the individual's will as "the power to act or not to act, to choose; independence..." Thus, the word moves away from connotations of political rights or social resistance and becomes more of an indicator of individual ability and moral maturity. This approach moves away from the meaning of a demand for freedom against the administration in the late Ottoman period and redefines it as a power possessed by the individual within their own limits. During the Second Constitutional Era, "freedom" was a symbol of resistance

[243] Freedom (حُرّيَتْ) [Arabic n.] Not being a prisoner, not being a slave or concubine, liberty, independence. Not being bound by anything other than one's conscience. "What a friend we were, ah, my dear." Freedom of conscience: The freedom to choose one's religion; Freedom of speech: The ability to say whatever one wishes within the bounds of law and decency. "They took freedom beyond the borders of the homeland. They chained those who wanted freedom."
"Hürriyet [Ar. i.] Esir olmamak, köle, câriye olmamak, serbestlik âzâdelik. Kavânînden gayrı bir şey ile mukayyed olmamak. 'Ne yâr cân imişsek âh ey dîdâr.' Hürriyet-i vicdâniyye: İnsan mezhebi intihâbda hür olmak; Hürriyet-i kelâm: Kânûn ve adâb dahilinde her istediğini söyleyebilmesi. 'Hürriyeti hudûd-u vatandan çıkardılar. Hürriyet isteyenleri zincire sardılar.'" (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)
[244] Merve Nur Güneş, "Abdullah Cevdet'in II. Abdülhamit'e Duyduğu Nefretin Kahriyât Adlı Kitabına Yansımaları ve Bu Nefretin Sembollerinden Hüseyin Necati Efendi," *Ana Dili Eğitimi Dergisi* 6, no. 1 (2018): 141–142.
[245] There is an extensive literature on Abdullah Cevdet's intellectual and political life. For the main sources in this field, see M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönem*i (Istanbul: Üçdal, 1981) for biographical and ideological analyses; Frank W. Creel, *The Program and Ideology of Dr. Abdullah Cevdet: A Study of the Origins of Kemalism in Turkey* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1978). For intellectual history and the Young Turk context, see Şerif Mardin, *The Political Ideas of the Young Turks*: 1895–1908 (Ankara: TTK, 1964); Niyazi Berkes, *Modernization in Turkey*. For Cevdet's critique of religion and discourse on secularization, see Necati Alkan, "'The Eternal Enemy of Islām': Abdullah Cevdet and the Baha'i Religion," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 68, no. 1 (2005): 1–20.
[246] Freedom (حُرّيَتْ) Ar. n. To act or not to act, to exercise power; independence; the opposite of slavery; liberty: Freedom is not given, it is taken. *"Hürriyet Ar. i. Hareket etmek veya etmemek, ittihâb eylemek iktidarı; istiklâliyet; esâretin zıttı; azatlık: Hürriyet verilmez, alınır. (Yeni Türkçe Lugat)"*

against the absolutist regime; in the early years of the Republic, the concept lost its oppositional weight and became integrated with the ideals of legality, order, and citizenship defined by the state. Therefore, this definition in the YTL is important evidence showing that the concept of freedom evolved from a political struggle discourse to a legal and citizenship-based understanding. This change also confirms the viewpoints in the literature that argue that the early Republic's understanding of freedom was transferred to an individual, legal, and state-centered framework . The subsequent phrase "...Freedom is not given, it is taken" appears to emphasize individual will; however, the historical background of the phrase extends back to the Committee of Union and Progress era. With the proclamation of the Constitutional Monarchy, this phrase became a symbol of the understanding of "rights obtained by the nation through its own power"; in the early Republican period, the same phrase came to mean "a nation that determines its own destiny" or "an individual who exercises his will."

Another word on the list, *cemʿiyyet* (جمعیت), appears in all fifteen dictionaries examined, but shows different orientations in terms of its semantic field. These differences stem not so much from chronological development as from the ways in which dictionary authors position the word in social, moral, or political contexts. In the first group, *Kitâb-ı Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye, İlâveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye, Lugat-ı Remzî, Lugat-ı Cûdî*, and *Lugat-ı Ecnebiye İlaveli Lugat-ı Osmaniye*, the word is used in the sense of "to gather, not to be scattered, to be in mental or spiritual *(cemʿiyyet-i hâtır)".* These definitions indicate that the concept refers more to the idea of individual or social harmony.

The second group includes *Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*, *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ, Lugat-ı Nâcî, Tetimme-i Lugat-ı Nâcî, Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı*, and *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*, where cemʿiyyet is now "cemʿiyyet-i ilmiyye" (scientific society), "cemʿiyyet-i tıbbiyye" (medical society), and "cemʿiyyet-i beşeriyye" (human society). This usage can be considered the linguistic equivalent of institutional structures such as associations, scientific societies, and professional societies that emerged in the post-Tanzimat period.

In the third group, the concept becomes distinctly politicized. The inclusion of examples such as *"İttihâd ve Terakkî Cemiyeti"* (Union and Progress Society), *"Etibbâ-yı Mülkiye Cemiyeti"* (Civil Servants' Medical Society), and especially *"Cemʿiyyet-i hafiye*"

(Secret Society) in the entry for [247] (Secret Society) in the *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* gives the word a direct political connotation. It is likely that the word was removed from the first edition because these expressions conflicted with the censorship policies of the period. Indeed, the phrase *Cemʿiyyet-i Hafiye* draws attention with its connotation of "secret organization," which was a sensitivity of the state's inspection system.

By the Republican era, *Yeni Türkçe Lugat.* had redefined the word as neutral, defining it as "community, assembly, human society." Thus, while *cemʿiyyet* was a word associated with surveillance and suspicion in the late Ottoman period, it became an expression of legitimate institutionalism within the Republican understanding of public order. This multi-layered journey of meaning reflects the discursive repositioning of the concept, which shifted from the idea of social unity in the post-Tanzimat period to the meaning of organized community and political society, and then to a neutral term of institutional modernization.

Another word on the list, *cumhûr* (جمهور), follows an increasingly broad conceptual trajectory in the dictionaries examined, ranging from community and people to form of government. *In* early dictionaries, particularly *Kitâb-ı Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye* and *İlâveli Müntehabât-ı Lugat-ı Osmâniyye*, the word is defined as "a community without a sultan, whose rulers are elected". This explanation preserves the classical Arabic meaning of "cemaat-i kesîre" (multitude, crowd) while expanding towards the idea of representative government and building a bridge between the Islamic tradition of consultation and modern political imagination.

In *Lehce-i Osmânî (Tabʿ-ı Cedîd)*, *cumhûr* is defined as "a leaderless crowd, the public"; however, the first explicit use of the word "republic" in the same article is noteworthy. The phrase "government with a representative head. Republic" is important in that it shows the transition of the concept from an idea of a consultative community to

[247] Cem‘iyyet (جَمْعِيَتْ) [Arabic noun] A group of people united in following the same program: İttihâd ve Terakkî Society, Etibbâ-yı Mülkiye Society. Not being disorganized, orderly and coherent: He spoke in a coherent manner. Society and memory. Clarity of mind. The memory being calm and clear. Secret society: A society that does not submit a declaration in accordance with the law on societies and remains secret. *“Cem‘iyyet [Ar. i.] Bir ve aynı program tâkib etmekte müttehid kimselerin hey’eti: İttihâd ve Terakkî Cemiyeti, Etibbâ-yı Mülkiye Cemiyeti. Perişân olmamak, intizâm ve insicâm: Cemiyetli bir söz söyledi. Cemiyet ve hâtır. Zihin berrâkiyyeti. Hâtırın âsûde ve berrâk olması. Cemiyyet-i hafiye: Cemiyetler kânununca beyânnâme vermeyen ve gizli kalan cemiyet. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)”*

a form of government based on popular sovereignty. In Hüseyin Remzî's *Lugat-ı Remzî* and its pocket version, *Lugat-ı Ecnebiye İlaveli Lugat-ı* Osmaniye, the word is defined as "a large mass of people whose rulers are elected and who are a community and state without a sultan." These definitions show that the idea of "majority" and the concept of election-based governance began to be included in the dictionary language.

In Şemsettin Sâmî's *Kâmûs-ı* Türkî, *cumhûr* is addressed at three levels: "people, public, general" (social meaning), "group, assembly" (institutional meaning), and "assembly governed in the form of a republic" (political meaning). This structure shows that the word now represents not just a crowd, but a political community whose legitimacy is based on the will of the people. Similarly, Ebüzziyâ Tevfik's *Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ* includes the definition "a society that forms a government administered by a leader elected by the people"; along with examples such as *"reis-i cumhûr"* (president) and *"hükûmet-i cumhûriyye"* (republican government), the concept is brought to the same level as the Western terms république and président. This usage reflects the republican discourse that matured in the liberal press circles of the Constitutional Era in the lexical language.

Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî was published in the early 20th century[248] now gives the word a fully political status. Defined in the entry as "a form of government," the republic is directly linked to modern state systems with examples such as "France" and "the Argentine Republic." *Yeni Türkçe Lugat*, a dictionary from the early Republican period, simplifies the concept and defines it as "people, populace, tribe"; with the phrase "cumhûrî: belonging to the nation, the common people," it reveals that the word has now been equated with national identity. Thus, cumhûr underwent a conceptual transformation in post-Tanzimat dictionaries, moving from meanings of community and crowd to become associated with representative government, popular sovereignty, and the concept of nation. This transformation demonstrates that Ottoman lexicography created a discursive space that encoded not only the meanings of words but also the changing

[248] Public (جُمهُورْ) [Arabic adjective.] Group, congregation, large congregation: Opposition to the cumhûr is a force of error.Cumhûr üdebâ: The group of writers. "There is no one who is not destroyed by the blow of the cumhûr." Republic: A system of government; a government administered by this system; the head of government is elected and appointed by the people or their representatives for a fixed term. French Republic, Argentine Republic. "*Cumhûr [Ar. s.] Zümre cemâat, cemât-i kesîre: Cumhûra muhâlefet kuvve-i hatadandır.Cumhûr üdebâ: Edîbler zümresi. "Darbe-i cumhûr ile bir olmayan yok tarumâr" Cumhûriyet: Bir usûl-ü hükümet bu usûl ile idâre olunan hükümet reîs-i hükümet ahâli veya vekilleri tarafından müddet-i muayyene içün intihâb ve ta'yîn olunur. Fransa Cumhûriyeti, Arjantin Cumhûriyeti.* (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*)"

understanding of political legitimacy.
The most likely reason for the absence of the entry for *cumhûr* in the first edition of the RKO is the phrase *"Darbe-i cumhûr ile bir olmayan yok tarumâr"* (There is no destruction without the blow of the public) in the dictionary. This sentence defines the unity and collective power of the people through the metaphor of *"darbe"* (clash, shock); thus, it gives the concept of *cumhûr* the meaning of a political subject capable of action, rather than an ordinary crowd. In the political atmosphere of the Abdülhamid II era, such an expression was dangerous enough to be interpreted as a potential threat to the existing power structure from the will of the people. Since the phrase *darbe-i cumhûr*" pits the actual intervention of the people against monarchical legitimacy, it must have been considered by the press censorship of the time as an allusion against the regime.

No political or ideological justification for the removal of the words *"te'evvüh"* and "irtiyâb" listed in the document has been identified. This situation can be explained by the negligence of the official conducting the review process or by a superficial examination of the text. The word *irtiyâb* (اِرْتِيَاب)[249], meaning "to suspect," appears in fourteen dictionaries and is defined in a neutral manner in all examples except *Lehce-i Osmânî,* without any negative or political connotations. Similarly, the word *te'evvüh* (تَأَوُّه)[250] is given in seven dictionaries as meaning "to sigh"; it does not contain any judgment or value attribution at the level of meaning.

The bomb attack attempt against Abdulhamid II on July 21, 1905, went down in history as the Yıldız Assassination. Following this event, the state's security sensitivity increased significantly, leaving a noticeable shadow on the definitions of words such as infilâk and zehir in dictionaries. Indeed, as Georgeon notes in his book, [251] Ali Seydî obtained a license from the Ministry of Education for his *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* on September 26, 1905, just two months after the Yıldız Assassination. This historical proximity demonstrates that even an educational endeavor such as dictionary writing, aimed at language transmission, could not remain independent of the political atmosphere of the time.

[249] Suspicion (اِرْتِيَاب) [Arabic verb.] Doubt, hesitation, uncertainty, and suspicion. "İrtiyâb [Ar. mastar.] Şüphe, tereddüd, reyb ve gümân üzre olmuş. (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)*"
[250] Sihh (Moan) (تَأَوُّه) ([Arabic verb.] To sigh. *"Te'evvüh [Ar. mastar.] Âh etmek. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*
[251] Georgeon, "Yasak Kelimeler," 194.

The word *infilâk* (اِنْفِلاقْ) appears in nine of the fifteen dictionaries we selected. Except for the RKO the word is defined in the other dictionaries as "to split, to open, to crack, to break apart, infilâk-ı sabah." RKO expands this framework by adding the following definition: "...to explode. Explosive materials: dynamite and similar explosive compounds." This entry stands out as the first example among the monolingual Ottoman dictionaries we examined where the meaning "to explode" is explicitly stated. This finding requires a comparison of different types of sources to understand whether the meaning of the word underwent a technical and physical expansion in the early 20th century. Indeed, in the 1880 *Redhouse's Turkish* Dictionary, the equivalent is "..to split or burst lengthwise." In Şemseddin Sâmi's *Resimli Kâmûs-ı* Fransevî,[252] , the French word "explosion," which means "to burst," does not contain *infilâk*. Nor do the words patlama and infilâk appear together in the entries. The word *infilâk* cannot be found as the equivalent of *"patlamak"* in the bilingual dictionaries of the period that are considered authoritative.

The word "poison" (زَهِرْ) was likely removed because it evokes the idea of assassination. Defined in thirteen dictionaries as *"Semm, ağu, öldüren madde"* (poison, venom, deadly substance), the word is similarly explained in the RKO as [253] but expanded with expressions characteristic of the author's personal style. Given that the assassination attempt [referring to the 1905 Yıldız assassination attempt] took place in 1905, the absence of this word in the first edition of the RKO—the dictionary closest to that date—can be attributed to the sensitive political climate of the era. However, in the subsequent edition published approximately seven years later, the word was included in the supplementary section. Consequently, the fact that current events influenced the lexicographical process suggests that dictionaries are texts deeply intertwined with the social pulse of their time.

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[252] Explosion [Feminine noun.] Ignition, eruption, explosion. ‖ (med.) Sudden onset of illness.
(Şemseddin Sâmi, *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Fransevî: Fransızcadan Türkçeye Lugat Kitabı / Dictionnaire français–turc illustré de 3000 gravures*, 4th ed. (Istanbul: Mihran Matbaası, 1905), 1016.)

[253] Poison (زَهِرْ) [Turk. n.] Venom, poison, a substance that gradually or immediately destroys life when ingested. All alcoholic beverages are moderate and gradually lethal poisons; smoking tobacco is inhaling poison. "We ate poison and swallowed blood, and it got worse."
"Zehir [Türk. i.] Ağu, sem, bedene dâhil olunca hayatı tedrîcen veya derhâl mahveden madde. İçkilerin cümlesi mutedil ve tedrîcî öldüren zehirdir tütün içmek zehir teneffüs etmekdir. 'Beter oldu zehir yedik kan yuttuk.' (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"

Another word we assume was censored because it evokes assassination and violence due to its proximity to the historical process is *humbara* (خُمْبَره). This word, whose meaning is given in all dictionaries, is also the equivalent of the modern word *"kumbara"* (money box), so in four dictionaries (*Lugat-ı Ebûzziyâ, Tetimme-i Lugat-i Nâcî, Lugat-ı Nâcî, Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı)* it only contains the meaning "a container in which children save money". In all other dictionaries, humbara is defined alongside lumbara as "a war device filled with explosive material."

The word *ak sülümen*, (mercuric chloride) which refers to a toxic substance formed by the combination of mercury and chlorine, is also included in the list. The word, found only in *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* [254] and *Kâmûs-ı Türkî*[255] , is briefly defined in both dictionaries. While it is explained in KT as "highly toxic," this emphasis is not present in the RKO. However, it is likely that the word was removed due to the sensitivity surrounding the "assassination" debates of the period.

The last concept that appears consistently in our sample from the supplementary list is tenkîl (تَنْكِيلْ), which is found in fourteen dictionaries, excluding Lehce-i Osmânî. In twelve of the dictionaries examined, the meaning is generally "to punish someone as a lesson to others who deserve it." In *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* [256] this definition is given second, with the first meaning being "..removal, banishment..." RKO[257] adds meanings not found in other dictionaries: "to turn back, to repel; to suppress, to destroy." The origin of this expansion of meaning in Ali Seydî Bey's dictionary can be found in the almost exact correspondence with the word "refouler" in the *Kâmûs-ı Fransevî* [258] , which means "to suppress." In the *Kâmûs-ı Türkî,* published in 1317 AH, the dictionary of Şemseddin

[254] Mercuric chloride (آقْ سُلْمَنْ) [Turk. n.] The common name for the chemical substance known as chlorine monoxide. *"Ak sülmen [Türk. i.] Klor müsenna-i zîbak denilen madde-i kimyâiyyenin beyn'el avâm ismidir. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[255] Mercuric chloride (آقْ سُلْمَن) n. chemistry. A salt with a high specific gravity, composed of mercury and chlorine. *"Ak sülümen i. kimya. Cıva ile klordan mürekkeb hâssa-i semmiyyesi ziyâde bir tuz. (Kâmûs-ı Türkî)"*

[256] Punitive reprisal (تَنكيل) Noun. Ar. 1. Removal, expulsion: he expelled and removed the bandits. 2. Imposing a punishment that will serve as a warning to others. *"Tenkîl İsm-i Müzekker. Ar. 1.Uzaklaştırma, teb'id: eşkıyâyı def ve tenkil etti. 2. Emsâline ibret olacak bir mücâzât verme. (Kâmûs-ı Türkî)"*

[257] Tenkîl (تَنْكِيلْ) [Arabic verb.] To turn back, to repel; to crush, to destroy: He is the one who serves the tenkîl-i eşkıyâ: He had repelled his attack. *"Tenkîl [Ar. mastar.] Geri döndürmek, geri püskürtmek; basdırmak,tahrîb etmek: Tenkîl-i eşkıyâ da hidmet eden odur: İ'dâsını tenkîl eylemişdi.(Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

[258] Refouler [ft.] To press down and crush again. To push in, to block. To repel, to drive back and destroy. = [fl.] To flow or turn back. (*Resimli Kâmûs-ı Fransevî p.1855)*

Sâmî, author of both dictionaries, the word does not appear with the meaning "to suppress, to repel," but in the final edition of the *Kâmûs-ı* Fransevî, dated 1322 AH, this usage appears.

This expansion of meaning requires us to reconsider the distinct difference between *Kâmûs-ı Türkî* and *Kâmûs-ı Fransevî* in terms of Şemseddin Sâmî's intellectual position. Three possibilities come to mind here: First, the author may have changed his political stance over time; second, the censorship in force at the time the KT was compiled may have directly limited his conceptual preferences; third, he may have developed a conscious self-censorship mechanism due to his close relations with the state.

Indeed, the fact that political concepts such as revolution, reaction, decline, and reform, which we examined above, were censored during the same period, and that these words are not included in KT, supports these possibilities. Thus, the dictionary becomes a text that reflects the tension between authority and intellectual autonomy, beyond being a linguistic work.

The word that has no direct connection to the political or opposing terms listed, but is clearly excluded due to its usage in the example, is *müfteris* (مُفتَرِسْ). This entry, found in nine dictionaries, is defined in eight of them as "predatory, destructive, wild animal." These dictionaries are, in order, *Lugat-ı Remzî, Kâmûs-ı Osmânî, Tetimme-i Lugat-i Nâcî, Lugat-ı Nâcî, Mükemmel Osmanlı Lugatı, Kâmûs-ı Türkî, Lugat-ı Cûdî*, and *Yeni Türkçe Lugat.*

The definition of Müfteris (مُفتَرِسْ)[259] in the RKO deviates from this generality. Here, the word is explained with the example, "the lion is the king of predatory animals." Considering the political sensitivities of the period, the word "king" in the example must have been deemed objectionable from a censorship perspective.

The entry for *müfteris* indicates that the politics of meaning can surface even in the most neutral-looking areas of language. In a context where monolingual lexicography had not yet crystallized into a shared method, dictionaries were shaped both by individual intellectual dispositions and by the institutional and discursive environments in which they were produced. What becomes visible here is not the suppression of a term, but the boundaries drawn through exemplification. Crucially, these boundaries are not merely the

[259] Müfteris (مُفتَرِسْ) [Ar. n.] To tear apart: The lion is the king of the müfteris animals. *"Müfteris [Ar. i.] Parçalayub beyn: Hayvânât müfterise arslan hayvanât-ı müfterisenin padişâhıdır. (Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî)"*

result of external constraint, but also reflect a sensitivity that the lexicographer felt the need to explicitly mark and frame within the text itself. The selection or omission of metaphors thus establishes limits on what can be said, how it can be said, and to whom. In this respect, the dictionary functions not only as a pedagogical reference work, but also as a site where linguistic legitimacy is mediated and authority is exercised. The treatment of *müfteris* demonstrates how the political and cultural tensions of the late Ottoman period could register even at the most elementary level of lexical representation.

Conclusion

This section has examined the trajectories of certain concepts from the late Ottoman period through the "Supplement" section of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî*. When assessed within their historical context, the entries added to the dictionary at a later stage offer significant insights into the political and social transformations of the period. Rather than constituting a simple "list of prohibited words," the supplement represents a cross-section of the era's conceptual sensitivities, indicating which concepts were regarded as controversial, which gained legitimacy only belatedly, and which were framed with caution.

As demonstrated throughout the analysis, the absence of a concept from a dictionary does not necessarily indicate its absence from public circulation. Concepts often entered usage through the press—particularly newspapers, journals, and magazines—before being incorporated into dictionaries; Orhan Koloğlu's study of Western concepts and words entering Ottoman Turkish through early newspapers (1828–1867) makes this point especially clear. In this respect, dictionaries differ from periodical publications in that they do not record momentary linguistic experimentation but rather register meanings that have achieved a certain degree of stability and consolidation. Dictionary inclusion therefore signals not the emergence of a concept, but the crossing of a threshold of institutional recognition and normalization.

The intentions, preferences, and ideals of lexicographers undoubtedly played a role in shaping dictionaries; however, these orientations cannot be traced uniformly across the entire lexical body. Rather, they become legible above all in certain critical or sensitive entries, where competing understandings of legitimacy, propriety, and authority converge. What ultimately determined the boundaries within which language could

circulate was thus not individual authorial will alone, but its interaction with the regulatory, ideological, and institutional conditions of the period. Dictionaries should therefore be read not merely as reference tools, but as historical documents that indirectly record the relationship between language, authority, and society.

At the same time, the history of political and social concepts cannot be confined to a single period. Scholarship that traces the longue durée of political concepts in the Ottoman context—including Yusuf Ziya Karabıçak's article "Why Would We Be *Liberté*? *Liberté* in the Ottoman Empire, 1792–1798," Alp Eren Topal's *Cumhurdan Cumhuriyete*, and Einar Wigen's independent contributions—has shown that meanings are shaped through extended processes of translation, debate, and rearticulation across different regimes and media. The aim of the present study, however, has not been to reconstruct a comprehensive and uninterrupted semantic history of these concepts, but to understand what monolingual Ottoman Turkish dictionaries sought to articulate at specific historical moments and how they positioned concepts within particular boundaries of legitimacy.

From this perspective, the supplement of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* makes visible not only which words were incorporated into the lexicon, but also which were deferred, cautiously framed, or left at the margins. This approach enables comparative readings with dictionaries published in the early Republican period, making it possible to trace both continuities and ruptures in language policies and in conceptions of the state and society. Ultimately, this study argues that dictionaries functioned as sites of lexical negotiation under shifting regimes of regulation and control, rendering them indispensable sources for examining the conceptual history of late Ottoman and early Republican political language.

CONCLUSION

This study has approached monolingual Ottoman Turkish dictionaries produced from the late Ottoman period to the early Republican era not merely as auxiliary texts explaining word meanings, but as a literary practice that regulated the legitimacy, circulation, and "acceptable" use of language. Dictionaries are often read as repositories in which linguistic material is stored; yet the corpus examined here demonstrates that the dictionary simultaneously functions as a project of ordering knowledge and as an attempt to establish normative boundaries for public language. Accordingly, the central question guiding this thesis has not only been what dictionaries say, but under what conditions, to which audience, and with what claims to authority they articulate their statements.

This perspective became visible along two main axes. The first concerns dictionary prefaces, which reveal that dictionary writing in this period was less a technical undertaking than a discursive field in which legitimacy was actively constructed. In defining their readership, authors simultaneously imagine a "language community"; in asserting public benefit, they also determine for whom such benefit is intended; and in emphasizing "correct usage," they implicitly claim the authority to define correctness and signal the sources from which that authority derives. The critical tone that emerges in many prefaces—particularly in debates surrounding Redhouse—should therefore not be read merely as polemic, but as a negotiation over who may write dictionaries, on whose behalf, and on what grounds. Ebûzziyâ Tevfik's objection to "consulting a foreigner," alongside Şemseddin Sâmî's framing of the need for a monolingual dictionary as a social necessity, relocates dictionary-making from a simple act of word collection to a field structured by concerns of linguistic autonomy, public utility, and accessibility.

The second axis concerns the fact that the production and circulation of dictionaries took place within a broader publishing regime shaped by post-Tanzimat press regulations. This regime cannot be reduced to a single act of "prohibition"; rather, it defined the conditions of public linguistic circulation through licensing procedures, inspection, the regulation of distribution channels, classifications of useful and harmful publications, and institutional forms of authorization. What proves decisive here is not regulation as a one-directional mechanism of suppression, but the operation of the publishing field within a tension between the state's concern for public order and the

demands of intellectual circles for expression and circulation. This tension is traceable—sometimes quietly, sometimes quite visibly—in dictionaries, which are not periodicals but nevertheless intersect with the educational and bureaucratic domains.

Within this framework, the "Supplement" section of *Resimli Kâmûs-ı Osmânî* emerged as one of the sites where the conceptual thresholds of the study became most clearly legible. What matters here is not whether individual words were "prohibited," but how they were represented in the dictionary: with what tone, within what boundaries, and with what degree of caution. The supplement may thus be read as a threshold text that captures the conceptual tensions of the period within the dictionary's own language. Some terms attain legitimacy only belatedly, others are defined hesitantly, while still others become visible only at the margins. In this way, rather than imposing "prohibition" as a central explanatory category, the study traces how linguistic legitimacy is constructed through definitional strategies, choices of examples, tonal differences, and comparative patterns of inclusion and omission.

At this point, a crucial distinction becomes clear: the absence of a word from a dictionary does not imply its absence from public circulation. Dictionaries are not media that record momentary usage in the way newspapers and journals do; concepts often enter circulation through the press before dictionaries register them, which typically occurs only once a certain degree of stability and definability has been achieved. Orhan Koloğlu's work on the circulation of Western-origin concepts in the early Ottoman press offers a concrete illustration of this process. Dictionary inclusion therefore points less to a word's first appearance than to its movement toward normalization and legitimacy. The comparison of the supplement entries with other dictionaries renders this threshold especially visible: the issue is not simply whether a word is present or absent, but within what semantic frame and with what legitimacy it is articulated.

Another significant finding of this study is that late Ottoman monolingual lexicography did not rest upon an established institutional or methodological tradition of lexicography. How entries were collected, according to which criteria they were selected or excluded, which sources were prioritized, and through what editorial processes texts passed are rarely made explicit within the dictionaries themselves. While this opacity complicates analysis, it is also analytically productive, as it requires us to conceptualize the dictionary not merely as linguistic material, but as a site of production shaped by

historical actors, institutions, and publishing conditions. Although a single author's name appears on the title page, it is evident that texts of this scale and density depended on numerous invisible contributors—typesetters, correctors, printers, publishers, and teacher–reader networks. Even today, dictionary writing demands immense labor and coordination; in the late Ottoman context, the production chain itself directly shaped a dictionary's scope, form, and limits. This thesis traces such invisible labor through signals embedded in the text and, in doing so, points toward a future research agenda that treats dictionaries not only as texts, but as practices of production and circulation.

This perspective also shows that norm-setting functions can be traced even in the smallest details of dictionaries. Definitions provided at the beginning of alphabetic sections—such as the exclusion of the letter "P" from the abjad system in *Yeni Türkçe Lugat* on the grounds that it is "originally Persian"—are not merely technical notes. They articulate boundaries of linguistic belonging and exclusion. Likewise, material conditions such as a dictionary's size, layout, typographical design, and printing possibilities directly shape what can be included and how it is presented. Dictionaries must therefore be read not only as records of meaning, but as historical texts formed through labor, material constraints, and authority relations.

Beyond these findings, the study also addresses a notable gap in the literature by offering a macro-historical perspective on monolingual Ottoman Turkish lexicography. While bibliographic descriptions of individual dictionaries and limited readings of specific works exist, studies that examine texts of the same genre within a shared framework across the period from 1853 to 1924 remain scarce. By reading dictionaries as a literary practice shaped at the intersection of education, bureaucracy, and the press, this thesis seeks to render visible the historical profile of monolingual dictionary initiatives. This macro perspective necessarily opens new research pathways: debates over linguistic legitimacy traced through dictionary texts also sharpen questions concerning the intellectual positions and cultural capital of the actors who produced them.

In this respect, it is important to recall several dictionary authors who, despite being recognizable figures in their own time and traceable through primary sources, have received relatively little scholarly attention: Bahaeddin Toven, Ali Seydî, Ali Nazîma, Faik Reşad, Mehmed Salâhî, and—particularly significant for rethinking center–periphery relations—the Trabzon-based figure İbrahim Cûdî Efendi. Questions

concerning the intellectual circles with which these figures interacted, the reading practices they presupposed, the institutions they aligned with or distanced themselves from, and the motivations through which they justified dictionary writing render visible the intellectual intersections and cultural capital of Ottoman lexicographers. At the same time, the striking increase in dictionary production cannot be explained solely through narratives of "need." The repeated reprinting of the same dictionaries and the simultaneous circulation of competing works indicate that dictionaries must also be understood in relation to market dynamics and commercial expectations. Within the constraints of the period, "quality" and "user-friendliness" were determined not only by content, but by layout, access architecture (alphabetic precision, symbol systems, abbreviations), portability, print quality, price, accessibility, and alignment with target audiences. This framework allows dictionaries to be read not only as sites of linguistic debate, but also as indicators of the economy of print culture and the differentiation between readers and writers.

In conclusion, this thesis proposes reading monolingual Ottoman Turkish dictionaries as accumulation sites of linguistic capital and linguistic authority circulating within the triangle of education, bureaucracy, and the press. These works do not constitute a unified tradition of institutionally coordinated "official dictionaries"; rather, they represent a fragmented field of practice shaped by competing methods, rival initiatives, and divergent conceptions of readership. Yet it is precisely this fragmentation that enhances their historical value, as it reveals that the boundaries of language, the acceptability of usage, and the legitimacy of concepts were not imposed through centralized decisions, but were negotiated within and between texts. From this perspective, dictionaries offer conceptual history not merely material to be analyzed, but a methodological caution as well: dictionaries do not simply record language—they actively construct it through the very modes of its recording.

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