

**THE LATE OTTOMAN QUEST FOR A LANGUAGE OF
PHILOSOPHY AND RIZA TEVFIK'S HERMENEUTIC RESPONSE**

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ABSTRACT

In the present thesis, I offer an account on the formation of modern philosophical terminology in the Ottoman Empire in the 1910s. With this intention, I explore the working of the Commission on Scientific Terminology. The Commission was established in 1913 by the Ministry of Education to conventionalize Turkish terminology which would adequately convey the meaning of modern concepts. As the investigation of the members' views and the terminological recommendations of the Commission indicate, the Commission took Arabic as the source language from which the modern Turkish terminology was to be derived.

Analyzing the reasons behind the linguistic criteria prevailed in the Commission, I present that the preference of Arabic was based on the contention that Arabic is the classical language for Ottoman, analogous to Greek and Latin for European languages. Since French gradually replaced Arabic as the prestige language of the Ottoman *literati* over the second half of the nineteenth century, I suggest that late Ottoman intellectuals refashioned Arabic from being the language of actual intellectual production to a historicized language of the origin of the Ottoman intellectual tradition.

I present Rıza Tevfik's elaborations on Arabic's being the classical language for Turkish. My close analysis of Rıza Tevfik's *Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy* aims to show that his genealogical readings of Ancient and Classical Arabic philosophers in the *Dictionary* were intended to connect the modern Ottoman philosophical terminology to Ancient Greek via Arabic philosophy.

NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

Ottoman Turkish words are transliterated according to the system employed in *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary* (1991). Arabic words and proper names are transliterated according to the system adopted by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES).

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INTRODUCTION

The Turkish Language Association (*Türk Dil Kurumu*), the vanguard institution of the Turkish language reform (*Dil Devrimi*),¹ published a slim glossary in 1942. *Felsefe ve Gramer Terimleri* (*The Philosophy and Grammar Terminology*) contained the terms recommended by the Association. Some of the terms were suggested to translate foreign words. Peculiar as it might sound, the majority of the recommended terms were intended to translate some other Turkish terms. The glossary was based on one criterion: if a Turkish term is derived from Arabic or Persian, it must be replaced by a Turkic neologism, or if needs be, a word borrowed from French.

Sociologist and scholar of Turkish intellectual history Hilmi Ziya Ülken's review article on the Glossary reveals the conviction of the purifiers:

Turkish society as a nation must attach itself to European civilization [*Avrupa medeniyeti*], rather than the old civilizations it passed through. [European civilization] does not consist of only machines, industry and technology; with its art, science and philosophy, it is materially and spiritually a whole. Being a nation implies that we partake in this whole, and embrace it together with its roots, that is, endorse the humanism of this civilization. As we become European, this is why we want to go back to Greek and Latin and enthusiastically struggle to translate [the classics] with arduous labor. Greek-Latin words will play a great role in the creation our own intellectual language [*düşünce dilimizi*]...²

The present thesis traces the history of the terms the abovementioned glossary tried to replace; it also intends to show that similar concerns for classical culture and classical language had a different purport and implication only three decades ago. The Ottoman thinkers in the 1910s coalesced around the view that Arabic is the classical language for

¹ For an informed and attentive account on the Turkish language reform, see: Geoffrey Lewis, *The Turkish language reform : a catastrophic success*, Oxford: OUP, 1999.

Turkish, just as Latin and Greek are for modern European languages. The idea that Arabic is the source language, from which modern philosophical terminology should be derived, prevailed among the members of the *Istilahât-ı İlmiye Encümeni* (Commission on Scientific Terminology).

The Commission on Scientific Terminology was established in 1913 by the Ministry of Education with the purpose of conventionalizing Turkish terminology which would aptly convey the meaning of modern concepts. The immediate reason that prompted the formation of the Commission was the increasing number of translations mainly from French. Over the second half of the nineteenth century, translations into Turkish of scientific and philosophical texts proliferated. The introduction of mandatory philosophy courses into the high school curricula and the establishment of the chairs for philosophy at Istanbul University (*Darülfünun*) created a pressing need to write and translate textbooks for these classes. The decades long experience of translations also created a more informed and interested audience for philosophy books.

The Commission convened to produce Turkish terminology translating the French counterparts. It will be argued that the practical concern of settling the correspondences between French and Turkish words was addressed in connection with a broader consideration: philosophical reflection is inherently embedded in the linguistic medium, that is, the particular language it is articulated in. Ottoman Turkish needs to have its own philosophical terminology, not only to facilitate translations, but to create original works in Turkish.

The terms recommended by the Commission and the opinions of the members reveal that the Commission chose Arabic as the reference language. This thesis will explore the

² Hilmi Ziya Ülken, “Türk Felsefe Dilinin Gelişmesi,” *Felsefe Tercüme Dergisi*, no. 1 (1947): 141-143, p. 140. Cited in İsmail Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak: Modern Felsefe ve Bilim Terimlerinin Türkiye’ye Girişi* (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2001).

reasons of the preference for Arabic. Pointing at the fact that almost the entire intellectual vocabulary of Ottoman was from Arabic, the members argued that the classical Arabic philosophy and science constitute the origin of the Ottoman intellectual tradition. The modern terminology in Turkish, therefore, should be derived from Arabic, as the French terms are derived from Latin and Greek.

The last aim of this thesis is to present Rıza Tevfik's contribution to the formation of the modern philosophical terminology in Turkish. Rıza Tevfik elaborated on the reasons for Arabic to be taken as the classical language of Turkish. Arabic has been the language of cultivation in the Islamic intellectual tradition. A close analysis of Rıza Tevfik's *Mufasssal Kamus-ı Felsefe* (Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy) will show his contention that Classical Arabic works provide the means of relating to Greek Antiquity, as the ninth century Arabic translations from Greek constituted the historical connection between Ancient philosophy and Classical Arabic philosophy. The investigation of linguistic and interpretive methods employed in the *Dictionary* will present Rıza Tevfik's genealogical readings of Ancient, Medieval Latin, Classical Arabic and Modern philosophers.

Although being one of the prominent intellectuals of the late Ottoman period, Rıza Tevfik was particularly overlooked, if not completely ignored, till recently. In Turkish historiography, Ülken's extensive *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi* (*History of Modern Thought in Turkey*)³ had for long remained to be the standard reference on Rıza Tevfik's intellectual products. The part on Rıza Tevfik provided in this book is, though, confined to biographical information and synoptic presentation of some of his works.

This negligence in the scholarship was primarily due to Rıza Tevfik's political involvement in 1919-1922. He was among the critics of the Nationalist Movement during

³ Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi* (İstanbul: Ülken Yayınları, 2005). This book was first published in 1966.

the War of Independence. That he was in the delegation to sign the Treaty of Sèvres as the head of the last Ottoman Senate provided the pretext for him to be included in the infamous list of 150 *personae non gratae* (yüzellilikler) declared by the Republican Government. Consequently, he had to spend the following two decades in exile and returned to Turkey in 1943 after the general amnesty of 1938.

Within the last two decades, a considerable amount of Rıza Tevfik's works have been republished. Abdullah Uçman's efforts to restore Rıza Tevfik's legacy had a major part in reintroducing Rıza Tevfik's literary and philosophical works. In addition to editing Rıza Tevfik's memoirs,⁴ Uçman published two extensive studies on Rıza Tevfik. *Rıza Tevfik'in Şiirleri ve Edebî Makaleleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma* (An Investigation on Rıza Tevfik's Poems and Literary Articles)⁵ is a monograph on Rıza Tevfik's literary products. This book contains a well-researched biography of Rıza Tevfik and a comprehensive bibliography of Rıza Tevfik's publications. The present thesis benefits from the valuable information provided in this book.

The other book by Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Sanat ve Düşünce Dünyası*⁶ (Portrait of Rıza Tevfik as an Intellectual and Artist), is a collection of articles. A short article “*Rıza Tevfik'in 'Mufasssal Kamus-ı Felsefe' Adlı Lügatı*”⁷ (Rıza Tevfik's Encyclopedia called the Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy) contained in this volume offers a review of Rıza Tevfik's *Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy*. However, this article provides only a scanty analysis of the content. With the purpose of filling this gap in the scholarship, this thesis presents an investigation of linguistic and interpretive methods employed in the *Dictionary*.

⁴ Cited below in footnote 45 on page 16.

⁵ Abdullah Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Sanat ve Düşünce Dünyası* (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2012).

⁶ Abdullah Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Şiirleri ve Edebî Makaleleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma* (İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2004).

⁷ Ibid, 303-309.

Until İsmail Kara's meticulous study *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak: Modern Felsefe ve Bilim Terimlerinin Türkiye'ye Girişi* (Constituting a Language of Philosophy: The Entry of Modern Philosophical and Scientific Terminology into Turkish)⁸ only a meager research was done on the Commission on Scientific Terminology.⁹ In this book, Kara evaluates the member of the Commission Babanzâde Ahmet Naim's views on translating philosophy and the philosophical terminology in Ottoman. This study locates Babanzâde's ideas and terminological suggestion in the context of the formation of modern terminology in Ottoman. It is the aim of this thesis to complement Kara's study by investigating the same issue in relation to Rıza Tevfik's contributions.

Having the purpose of offering an account of the Commission on Scientific Terminology and Rıza Tevfik's contributions to the formation of the modern philosophical terminology, this thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents the history of proliferating translations from French and Arabic starting from the 1850s. The second chapter is devoted to the biography of Rıza Tevfik and provides information on his philosophical works. The Commission's formation, members, linguistic criteria and publications are addressed in the third chapter. Rıza Tevfik's *Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy* is analyzed in the last chapter.

⁸ See above footnote 2.

⁹ The author of the present thesis found only two articles preceeding Kara's study: Rıza Kardaş, "II. Meşrutiyet devrinde felsefe ıstılahları ile ilgili kaynaklar hakkında bir deneme," *Türk Kültürü* 234 (October 1982): 769-779, Abdullah Uçman, "II. Meşrutiyet'ten sonra ilmi terimlerin tespitinde önemli bir teşebbüs: İstılahât-ı İlmiyye Encümeni," *Türk Dili* 536 (August 1996): 769-779. These articles provide valuable but only descriptive information about the Commission.

CHAPTER I. LATE OTTOMAN TRANSLATIONS OF FRENCH AND ARABIC WORKS OF PHILOSOPHY: THE DOUBLE SOURCES FOR MODERN TERMINOLOGY

Translation prompting Transformation

In *The Task of the Translator*, Walter Benjamin suggests that “the essential quality of [translation] is not statement or the imparting of information. Any translation which intends to perform a transmitting function cannot transmit anything but information – hence, something inessential.”¹⁰ A translation which aims at more than conveying bare information is an interpretation of the translated text and rearticulation of it in the target language. Since translation is not a “sterile equation of two dead languages,” translations transform the target language.¹¹

By the 1910s, the Ottoman experience accumulated in the second half of the nineteenth century led to a heightened awareness on translation. Translations were not perceived merely as rendering a text accessible in another language, but a significant mean of and for cultural and intellectual transformation. In this regard, as a model and trope, the ninth century translation movement from Greek to Arabic was invoked.

Professor of Philosophy at the *Darülfünun* (İstanbul University) and member of the *İstilahât-ı İlmiye Encümeni* Mehmet Ali Aynî likens contemporary Ottoman endeavor of translation to the Abbasid translations into Arabic of Greek texts. In order to have good translations of modern philosophical works, he argues, there is a need for a diligent and repeated attempt to translate the same text: “This situation was the same when philosophy [books] were translated into Arabic from Greek. A book was translated over and over again,

¹⁰ Walter Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator” *Illuminations*, tr., Harry Zohn, ed., Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 69-83, especially 69.

and each time the previous translations were corrected and perfected [*tashîh ve ikmâl*]. This will be the case for us too.”¹²

This chapter addresses the translations activities of the preceding period. As it will be seen, Ottoman translations of the nineteenth century were focused on works in particularly two languages: French and Arabic.

Translation and Reception of Modern Philosophy¹³

With the establishment of *Tercüme Odası* [Translation Bureau] in 1821, the Ottoman state endeavored to offer a state-sponsored education of foreign languages. Having the primary purpose of training the bureaucratic cadres, the bureau had an effect on philosophical and scientific translations only indirectly. Edhem Pertev Paşa, an instructor at the bureau, translated two dialogues by Voltaire, Montesquieu (1868) in addition to an essay denouncing suicide by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (in the journal *Mecmua-i Fünun*¹⁴ in two installments, 1864 and 1866).¹⁵

The demand of textbooks for the primary and secondary schools made it essential for the state to be actively involved in translation. The Ministry of Public Education took the initiative of commissioning “the original and translated (*telif ve tercüme*) books and treatises

¹¹ Ibid., 73.

¹² Mehmet Ali Aynî, *İntikad ve Mülâhazalar: Dinî, Felsefî, Tasavvufî, Ahlakî ve Edebî* (İstanbul: Kütüphane-i Sûdî, 1339 [1923]). Cited in Rıza Kardaş, “II. Meşrutîyet devrinde felsefe ıstılahları ile ilgili kaynaklar hakkında bir deneme,” *Türk Kültürü* 234 (October 1982): 771.

¹³ Needless to say, this chapter does not aim at presenting an exhaustive account of the translations into Ottoman of philosophy books in the nineteenth century. For a more comprehensive treatment of the translations in the period, see: Ali Utku and M. Cüneyt Kaya, “Türkiye’de Modern Felsefe Tarihi Yazımının Serencamı: Geç-Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Bir Literatür Değerlendirmesi,” *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 9, no. 11 (2011): 11-48; Mustafa Ülger, “19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı’da Felsefî Tercüme Faaliyetlerine Bir Bakış,” *Fırat Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 13, no. 2 (2008): 297-306, and Remzi Demir, *Philosophia Ottomanica: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Dönemi’nde Türk Felsefesi: Yeni Felsefe* (Ankara: Lotus Yayın Grubu, 2007).

¹⁴ On the *Mecmua-i Fünun*, see further below.

¹⁵ Demir, *Philosophia Ottomanica*, 61-4.

required for the public schools, and expedient books on various disciplines (*fünun*) in Turkish language.”¹⁶

More than the official institutions, though, civil associations and the thriving Ottoman press played an important role in the translation, publicizing, and adaption of philosophical and scientific subjects. The *Cemiyet-i İlmiye-yi Osmaniye* [Ottoman Scientific Society] (founded in 1861) was a notable agent in this process. Münif Paşa (1830-1910) was the founder of the society and the editor of its official journal *Mecmua-i Fünun* [the Journal of Sciences] (Istanbul, 1862-1867, 42 issues). As he explained in the first issue of the journal, the society consisted of “some men of great learning (*erbab-ı malumat*),” established “with the auspicious intent of publishing and disseminating sciences and learning (*ulûm ve fûnun*) ... in the Ottoman Empire.”¹⁷

Münif Paşa’s first translation was a collection of eleven dialogues by French Enlightenment thinkers. *Muhaverât-ı Hikemiye* [Philosophical Dialogues], published in 1859, comprised of eight dialogues by Voltaire, two by François Fénelon, and one by Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle.¹⁸

The article “*Tarih-i Hükemâ-yı Yunan*” [The History of the Greek Philosophers],¹⁹ Münif Paşa serialized in *Mecmua-i Fünun* in 1863, was exemplary of the Tanzimat era (1839-1876) popularization of various intellectual subjects. Heavily relying on the Turkish translation of François Fénelon’s *Abrégé de La Vie des Plus Illustres Philosophes de*

¹⁶ “... mekâtib-i umumiyyeye muktezî kütüb ve resâil ile lisan-i Türkîde fûnûn-ı mütenevviaya dair lazım gelen kitapları vaktile ve sırasıyla telif ve tercüme etmek ve ettirmek” *Telif ve Tercüme Nizamnamesi* (The Regulations for Authoring and Translation [of Books]), Matbaa-yı Amire, 1870. Cited in İsmail Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 24.

¹⁷ “Sermaye-yi saadet derin olan ulûm ve fûnun-u nafiânın Memalik-i Mahrusa-i Şahane’de neşr ve te’minine say’ eylemek niyet-i hayriyesiyle mukaddemce bazı erbab-ı malumattan mürekkep olmak üzere Dersaadet’te ‘Cemiyet-i İlmiye-yi Osmaniye’ unvanıyla bir cemiyet teşekkül etmiştir.” Münif Paşa, “Mukaddime,” *Mecmua-i Fünun* 1 (1862 – 1279 AH). Cited in Mehmet Ö. Alkan, “Türkiye’nin İlk Felsefe Dergisi: Felsefe Mecmuası,” *Tarih ve Toplum* 66 (July 1989): 49-56, especially 50.

¹⁸ Münif Paşa, *Muhaverât-ı Hikemiye* (İstanbul: 1859). More on the titles and contents of the dialogues, see Demir, *Philosophia Ottomanica*, 35-37.

L'Antiquité by Cricor Chumarian (1854),²⁰ this article is a general introduction to Ancient Philosophy. Emphasizing the importance of the Greek philosophers and their ideas, Münif Paşa indicated that “it is not a secret that these Greek philosophers [*hükema-yı Yunan*] were held in high respect and esteem among the learned men of Islam [*ulema-yı İslam*], the majority of [Greek philosophical] writings had been transmitted and translated into Arabic during the reign of the Abbasid Caliphs.”²¹

This article on Ancient Greek philosophy was the harbinger of a series of translations and treatises on the history of philosophy. In 1883, Beşir Fuad serialized the translation of certain parts from George Henry Lewes’s biographical *History of Philosophy from Tales to Comte* (1866) in the journal *Envâr-ı Zekâ* (The Lights of Intelligence). This translation contained articles on Ancient philosophers, Anaxagoras, Heraclitus, and Socrates.²²

Fatma Aliye Hanım’s *Terâcim-i Ahvâl-i Felâsife* [Biographies of Philosophers] (İstanbul, 1899)²³ was a notable example of the Ottoman philosophy books of the period, not only because the book shows that the engagement with philosophy was not limited to male intellectuals; it also presents an account of history of philosophy which puts an emphasis on the connection between Ancient Greek and Classical Arabic thought. In three sections, Fatma Aliye offered biographical information about first Ancient, then Arabic

¹⁹ Münif Paşa, “Tarih-i Hükemâ-yı Yunan,” *Mecmua-i Fünun* (1863): 13-45. Cited in Utku and Kaya, “Türkiye’de Modern Felsefe Tarihi,” 15.

²⁰ Recent scholarship suggests that the first translation of a philosophy book from French was Turkish-French bi-lingual edition of François Fénelon’s *Abrégé de la Vie des Plus Illustres Philosophes de L’Antiquité Avec leurs Dogmes, leurs Systèmes, leur Morale, et un Cerueil de leurs plus belles Maximes: Evvel Zamanda A’zâmü’ş-şân Olan Feylesofların İmrâr Etmiş Oldukları Ömürlerin İcmâlidir*, tr., Cricor Chumarian (İzmir: Imprimerie Daveroni et Sougiolli, 1270 [1854]). Utku and Kaya, “Türkiye’de Modern Felsefe Tarihi,” 12.

²¹ “Hafî olmadığı vechile işbu hükema-yı Yunan ulema-yı İslam beyninde dahi mazhar-ı kemal-i itibar u ihtiram olup, Hülefa-yı Benî Abbas zamanında esker müellefatları dahi Arabi’ye nakl ü terceme kılınmıştır.” Münif Paşa, “Tarih-i Hükemâ-yı Yunan,” 31. Cited in Utku and Kaya, “Türkiye’de Modern Felsefe Tarihi,” 15.

²² Ibid., 18.

philosophers. The last and the longest section of the book was devoted to Muslim theologians (*mütekellimûn*).²⁴ In the *Biographies of Philosophers* Arabic philosophers and *Kalām* thinkers are framed as drawing on and further enhancing the thoughts of Ancient philosophers. This suggests her attempt to reinvigorate the indigenous intellectual tradition as an integral part of the history of philosophy.²⁵

As I will address in the third chapter, there is a notable change in the quality and scope of translations following the promulgation of the Second Constitution (1908). The introduction of mandatory philosophy courses on the secondary and higher levels of education created a demand for philosophy books, and also paved the way for a more informed and interested audience. Baha Tevfik and Ahmed Nebil's translation of Alfred Fouillée's popular textbook *Histoire de la Philosophie* was the complete translation of the book.²⁶ In this respect, this project differed from the selective and incomplete translations of the previous period.²⁷

Reformulating the Tradition through Translations from Arabic

The second half of the nineteenth century did not only witness the proliferation of translations from French. The notable feature of the vibrant translation activities of the

²³ This work has been recently reissued in transliteration with contemporary Turkish translation: Fatma Aliye Hanım, *Terâcim-i Ahvâl-i Felâsife (Filozofların Biyografileri)*, ed., Ali Utku and Uğur Köroğlu (Konya: Çizgi Kitabevi, 2006). Cited in Demir, *Philosophia Ottomanica*, 135.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ The contention that an engagement with classical Arabic philosophy would prove fruitful was contested by Baha Tevfik. In an article published in *Felsefe Mecmuası* (1912), the editor Baha Tevfik claimed that “philosophy in the Orient [*şarktaki felsefe*]” is a “deformed [*şekli bozulmuş*], imperfect [*tekâmül ettirilememiş*], weak copy [*kadidî*]” of ancient philosophy. Cited in Alkan, 53. Yet the philosophical terminology published in *Felsefe Mecmuası* was almost entirely from Arabic roots. This shows that Baha Tevfik and other writers associated with the *Felsefe Mecmuası* did not have any objection to deriving terms from Arabic. Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 35.

²⁶ Alfred Fouillée, *Tarih-i Felsefe* 1, tr., Baha Tevfik and Ahmed Nebil (İstanbul: Nişan Babikyan Matbaası, 1911); Alfred Fouillée, *Tarih-i Felsefe* 2, tr., Baha Tevfik and Ahmed Nebil (İstanbul: Manzume-i Efkâr Matbaası 1912).

²⁷ Utku and Kaya, “Türkiye’de Modern Felsefe Tarihi,” 22.

period was that numerous Arabic philosophical works were translated into Ottoman Turkish for the first time.²⁸

Although translations of Arabic works did not begin in the nineteenth century, they reached an unprecedented proportion in this period. An earlier and noteworthy instance of translations of Arabic philosophers was the eighteenth century Ottoman *Şeyhülislam* and scholar Pîrîzâde Mehmed Sahib's translation of the first five chapters of Ibn Khaldûn's *Muqaddimah* (1730). Pîrîzâde's translation was published in Cairo (1859). The remaining sixth chapter was translated by the *Tanzimat* statesman and historian Cevdet Paşa. The complete translation of the *Muqaddimah* combining both Pirizade's and Cevdet's was published in three volumes in Istanbul (1861).²⁹

Ottoman historians had long been drawing on Ibn Khaldûn's sociological analysis and etiology of the decline of states. The warning tone of decline and the concomitant call for the restoration of "the Golden Age" prevailed in the treatises of the sixteenth century scholar Mustafa Âlî. In line of a number of Ottoman thinkers, including the sixteenth century polymath Katip Çelebi and historian Naîmâ, "the last Ottoman disciple of Ibn Khaldûn" was the famous *Tanzimat* statesman and historian Cevdet Paşa. Cevdet Paşa readily acknowledged his debt to Ibn Khaldûn's theories in the preface of his monumental history of the Ottoman Empire, *Tarih-i Cevdet* (12 volumes 1854-1884).³⁰

Ibn Sînâ's undeniable impact had survived in the Ottoman intellectual tradition through commentaries and super-commentaries. The sheer number of the manuscripts of Ibn

²⁸ "In the field of literature and philosophy the *Tanzimat*, as a whole, was an era during which translations into Turkish of Islamic literature reached unprecedented portions. Any survey of the modernization of the Ottoman Empire which does not take into account this reaction falls short of an accurate description. Conversely, no translations from European thinkers, philosophers, *littérateurs* were undertaken in Turkey in the first half of the nineteenth century." Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: a Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 203.

²⁹ Ejder Okumuş, "İbn Haldûn'un Osmanlı Düşüncesine Etkisi," *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi* 15 (2006): 141-185, especially 142.

Sīnā's works that remain in Istanbul libraries testifies to the continuous interest of Ottoman literati on him.³¹ In the second half of nineteenth century Ibn Sīnā's original works were printed and translated into Ottoman. In the collection *Rumuzü'l-Hikem* (Symbols of Wisdom) (1862), Abdurrahman Sami Paşa published the Ottoman prose rendering of Ibn Sīnā's poem on the soul with the Arabic original. Harputlu Hoca İshak translated parts of *Shifā'* dealing with theology (never published).³² Abdülkerim Efendi's translations of Ibn Sīnā's biography by his pupil Abū 'Ubayd al-Jūrjānī (d.1070) was published in 1862.³³ It is also pertinent here to mention Maraşlı Mustafa Kamil's biographical book *İbn Sina* (1891).³⁴ This book contained an annotated selection from Ibn Sīnā's works.³⁵

Among the classical Arabic philosophers, Ibn Sīnā, al-Ghazālī,³⁶ Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn Rushd were received with special regard by Ottoman intellectuals of the period as contemporary Ottoman studies on these philosophers evince. In addition to the above mentioned articles and treatises on Arabic philosophers, Rıza Tevfik's two monographs can be mentioned: *İbn Rüşd El-Endülüsî* [Ibn Rushd of Andalusia], serialized in the journal *Mekteb* (1894), and *İbn Haldun ve Hikmet-i Tarih* [Ibn Khaldūn and the Philosophy of History], serialized in the journal *Maarif* (1895).³⁷ Musa Kazım Efendi's comparative

³⁰ Okumuş's attentive article presents a host of Ottoman historians and scholars from fifteenth to twentieth century attesting Ibn Khaldūn's impact on Ottoman social thought. See Ibid.

³¹ More on the Ottoman translations and commentaries on Ibn Sīnā as well as extant manuscripts in Turkey, see: Ömer Mahir Alper, "İbn Sina (Eserleri)" *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, v. 20, 337-345.

³² Since Harputlu Hoca İshak died in 1892, this translation should be dated heretofore.

³³ Abdülkerim Efendi, *İbn Sina'nın Terceme-i Hali* [The Life of Ibn Sīnā] (İstanbul: Tasvir-i Efkâr Matbaası, 1279 [1862]).

³⁴ Maraşlı Mustafa Kamil, *İbn Sina* (İstanbul, 1891).

³⁵ Mustafa Ülger, "19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı'da Felsefî Tercüme Faaliyetlerine Bir Bakış," *Fırat Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 13, no. 2 (2008): 297-306, especially 302-3.

³⁶ Ghazālī's theological and philosophical treatises had been repeatedly translated into Ottoman Turkish since the sixteenth century. On these translations and bibliography on the extant (published or manuscript) translations of Ghazālī, see Hilmi Ziya Ülken, "Gazali'nin bazı eserlerinin Türkçe tercümeleri" *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 9, no. 1 (1961): 59-79.

³⁷ For the full bibliographic information on these articles, see Abdullah Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Şiirleri*, 394-5.

study³⁸ on al-Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd focused on the former's rational skepticism in *Incoherence of the Philosophers (Tahāfut al-Falāsifa)*, and the latter's renowned response in defense of philosophy in *the Incoherence of the Incoherence (Tahāfut al-Tahāfut)*.

Refashioning Arabic

The increasing number of translations from Arabic coincides with the fact that French gradually replaced Arabic as the prestige language of the Ottoman *literati* over the second half of the nineteenth century. The public perception of the benefits speaking French brought was an important factor in this process.

The Tanzimat reforms on education initiated the establishment of state sponsored western-style education. The school curricula planned by the reformers were designed to encourage learning French; yet at the same time, they aimed at preserving Arabic as an integral part of the education. Arabic grammar and syntax classes were taught at the primary schools (*mekteb-i iptidai*), and Arabic classes were mandatory for the further levels (*mekteb-i rüşdiye*, *idadi*, and *sultanî*). The Hamidian policy makers put a special emphasis on the education of Arabic. In 1877, the reforms at the Imperial Academy (*Galatasary Sultanîsi*) increased the hours of Arabic, Persian and Turkish instruction at the expense of Latin.³⁹ The outcome, though, fell short of the expectations of the educational bureaucracy. The shortage of well-qualified Arabic teachers undermined the project to balance the growing prominence of French with Arabic, i.e. the “language of Islam [*lisan-ı İslamiye*].”⁴⁰

³⁸ Musa Kazım Efendi served as the *Şeyhülislam* for four times between 1910 and 1917. Musa Kazım Efendi, “İbn Rüşd’ün Meslek-i Felsefî’si ve İmam Gazzalî ile Bazı Mesail Hakkında Münazarası,” *Külliyyat-ı Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım, Dini, İctimaî Makaleler* (İstanbul: 1920), 139-196. Cited in Demir, *Philosophia Ottomanica*, 111. As the aforementioned study was published as a part of his collected works, the original publication date must be before 1920. However, the author of the present thesis could not ascertain the original publication date of this article.

³⁹ Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 108-110.

⁴⁰ Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 71.

In the course of the nineteenth century, intellectual and bureaucratic elites were less and less versed in Arabic. Parallel to the decrease in the number of Ottoman elites who knew Arabic well, the role and the perception of Arabic also changed. As I will extensively discuss in the third chapter, the active interest in Classical Arabic philosophy squares with the refashioning of Arabic as the classical language of Ottomans. From being the language of cultivation that the intellectual elites had to learn, Arabic turned into the language of the origin that one was expected to know enough to be familiar with the classical Arabic literature.

CHAPTER II. RIZA TEVFIK'S BIOGRAPHY AND PUBLICATIONS

A medical doctor by training, Rıza Tevfik (Bölükbaşı) (1868, Cisir-i Mustafapaşa (today Svilengrad in Bulgaria) – 1951, Istanbul) was a poet, historian of literature, member of the Ottoman parliament, and later became Senator.⁴¹ Famous for his poems inspired by traditional mystical poetry (*tekke edebiyatı*), some of which are still taught in primary schools, Rıza Tevfik was also a scholar on Turkish literature. His first publication “*Étude sur la Religion des Houroufis*”⁴² was a review in French of the history of the mystical sect Hurufism (*Hurûfiye*) of the 14th-15th centuries and its influence on Ottoman poetry.

Étude must have made Rıza Tevfik known as a literary scholar among European orientalist and led the British orientalist Edward G. Browne to commission him to finish Elias John Wilkinson Gibb's monumental *A History of Ottoman Poetry* (six volumes 1900-1909), of which only the first volume was published during Gibb's life. Browne prepared the remaining five volumes for publication, and entrusted the completion of the planned seventh volume dealing with “the New School [*Edebiyat-ı Cedide*]” to Rıza Tevfik. Though a substantial portion of the volume on the poetry of *Edebiyat-ı Cedide* was written, Rıza Tevfik had to abandon the project because of his obligations in the Parliament.⁴³

⁴¹ This chapter benefits especially from the information provided in Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Şiirleri*, 1-29, and Rıza Tevfik's memoirs, Rıza Tevfik (Bölükbaşı), *Biraz da Ben Konuşayım* [Let me Speak at Last] ed., Abdullah Uçman (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993).

⁴² Rıza Tevfik, “*Étude sur la Religion des Houroufis*,” *Textes Houroufis*, ed., Clément Huart (Leiden: Brill, 1909), 220-313.

⁴³ For more on this project, see Abdullah Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Sanat*, 195-209. On the personal relationship between Browne and Rıza Tevfik, see Peter Chelkowski, “Edward G. Browne's Turkish Connexion,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 49, no. 1 (1986): 25-34.

Rıza Tevfik's primary intellectual interest was in philosophy as much as in literature. Because of his sustained and vigorous engagement with philosophy, Rıza Tevfik gained the nickname "*feylesof*," the philosopher. Unlike the majority of late Ottoman intellectuals who were literate only in French, he could speak and write French and Persian, had a good command of English and Arabic, and knew Italian⁴⁴ and Greek.⁴⁵ Being versed in these languages enabled him to read philosophical works in the original languages and thus to be attentive to linguistic subtleties as Rıza Tevfik's French-Ottoman encyclopedia of philosophy *Mufasssal Kâmus-ı Felsefe*⁴⁶ attests to.

Rıza Tevfik was born in 1869 in Cısr-ı Mustafapaşa (today Svilengrad in Bulgaria) where his father Mehmet Tevfik Efendi was the district governor (*kaymakam*). After resigning from his job, Mehmet Tevfik Efendi moved to İstanbul with his family and started to work as a Turkish and Arabic instructor at the Sion Mektebi of *Alliance Israélite Universelle*. Sion Mektebi was Rıza Tevfik's first primary school. In addition to learning French and Hebrew at the school, he was taught Arabic and Persian by his father.⁴⁷

Upon finishing the primary school, Rıza Tevfik entered the *Galatarasay Sultanisi* in 1882. Due to low school performance, though, he was dismissed two years later. After an intermission of two years spent in Gelibolu where his family lived at the time, he enrolled in the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* [College of Administration] in 1886. There he read the works of Charles Darwin and the materialist thinker Georg Büchner as well as the Young Ottoman

⁴⁴ Syed Tanvir Wasti, "Feylesof Rıza," *Middle Eastern Studies* 38, no. 2 (Apr., 2002): 83-100, especially 83. Wasti also adds Albanian and Armenian among the languages he knew. Since Rıza Tevfik studied for few months in an Armenian school in İznik and his father was an ethnic Albanian, he plausibly had some familiarity with these languages.

⁴⁵ In his memoirs, Rıza Tevfik mentions that he could speak Greek well enough to deliver a public lecture. "Urla was a nice, thriving coastal town then. Majority of the inhabitants were Greeks. As they received me favorably and I spoke their language..." Rıza Tevfik (Bölükbaşı), *Biraz da Ben Konuşayım*, 100.

⁴⁶ On the *Kâmus*, see further below.

⁴⁷ Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Şiirleri*, 4-5.

writers, especially Namık Kemal and Ziya Paşa. Upon the Palace informant's accusations that he propagate subversive ideas, he was expelled from the school in 1899.

After his dismissal, he later switched to the *Mekteb-i Tıbbîye-i Mülkiye* [Civil College of Medicine] in 1891. For delivering a talk on socialism and materialism in a local cafe, he was arrested and kept in custody for a month. With another interruption spent in jail, he finally managed to graduate in 1899 at the age of thirty three, yet the school administration did not issue his diploma immediately, for the administration considered him a political suspect.⁴⁸

Rıza Tevfik's turbulent political involvements continued. He joined the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in 1907. He gained fame as an ardent defender of the 1908 Revolution in public speeches, and was elected to the Parliament as CUP deputy of Edirne in 1908. As the Unionist policies became increasingly militarist and totalitarian, he joined the liberal opposition. He run for a second term for the Freedom and Accord Party (*Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*) ticket in the 1912 parliamentary elections, notoriously rigged by the Unionist; he was not re-elected.⁴⁹ Under close police surveillance and intimidation, he toured towns in Anatolian and Balkans, giving public lectures against the Turkish entry into the First World War.⁵⁰

Following the Ceasefire of Mudros in 1918, he returned to active politics. He served as a Minister of Education in the short Tevfik Paşa cabinet, and then became a member of the last Ottoman Senate. He was in the Ottoman delegation that signed the Treaty of Sèvres, and severely criticized the Nationalist movement in Ankara during the Turkish War of Independence. Due to his critical stance and being in the delegation, the government in Ankara declared him *persona non grata* after the Treaty of Lausanne. In consequence, he

⁴⁸ Ibid., 6-11.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 13-19.

lived for almost two decades in exile. He spent most of his exile years in Jordan and Lebanon. After the general amnesty of 1938, he returned to Turkey in 1943, six years before he died.⁵¹

Works

A prolific writer, Rıza Tevfik published numerous articles in magazines and journals, among other subjects -like folklore, philology, and current politics- on various topics pertaining to philosophy or literature.⁵² Together with the first three books listed below, his study on the late Ottoman poet Abdülhak Hâmid (1918) and the collections of his poems and articles are republished recently.⁵³ These republications testify to a reviving interest on Rıza Tevfik. In order to present his ideas and contribution on philosophical terminology, the present study closely engages with the following works:

1- *Biraz da Ben Konuşayım*: published posthumously in 1993.⁵⁴ This is Rıza Tevfik's autobiography. This extensive volume mostly covers his political involvement in 1918-1922. His memoirs were originally serialized in the daily *Yeni Sabah* in 1948. Abdullah Uçman compiled and edited these memoirs and published in a book format for the first time in 1993.

2- *Darülfünûn Ders Notları* [Darülfünun Lecture Notes]: compilation of four lectures notes published in 1919-1921.⁵⁵ This book contains the following lecture notes Rıza Tevfik delivered at *Darülfünun* where he taught at the rank of professor of philosophy and aesthetics:

⁵⁰ Rıza Tevfik, *Biraz da Ben Konuşayım*, 101-2.

⁵¹ Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Şiirleri*, 19-21, 26-29.

⁵² This sub-chapter gives detailed information only on the philosophical works by Rıza Tevfik. For the most comprehensive list of Rıza Tevfik's publications, see, Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Şiirleri*, 387-430.

⁵³ For these recent republications of Rıza Tevfik's books, see Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Sanat*, 22-5.

⁵⁴ Cited above in footnote 45 on page 16.

⁵⁵ Rıza Tevfik, *Darülfünûn Ders Notları*, ed., Erdoğan Erbay and Ali Utku (Konya: Çizgi Kitabevi Yayınları, 2005).

- i. Maba'dü'ttabiiya derslerine ait vesaik [Lecture notes on metaphysics] (İstanbul: Darülfünun Matbaası, 1335 [1919]).
- ii. Ontoloji mebahisi [Treatise on ontology] (İstanbul: Darülfünun Matbaası, 1336 [1920]).
- iii. Estetik [Aesthetics] (İstanbul: Darülfünun Matbaası, 1336 [1920]).
- iv. Bergson Hakkında [On Bergson] (İstanbul: Darülfünun Matbaası, 1337 [1921]).

In 2005, Erdoğan Erbay and Ali Utku transliterated and supplemented these notes with informative footnotes.

3- *Felsefe Dersleri* [Philosophy Lectures]:⁵⁶ first published in 1919. These are the lecture notes of the philosophy classes Rıza Tevfik taught at the Rehber-i İttihad-ı Osmânî high school in 1913. These notes were reworked and edited by Rıza Tevfik before publication. The book offers a general introduction to the history of philosophy. M. Münir Dedeoğlu prepared this for republication with partially updated language (*sadeleştirilmiş*).⁵⁷

4- *Mufasssal Kâmus-i Felsefe* [Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy]:⁵⁸ the first volume was published in 1916, and the second in 1920. This is a product of Rıza Tevfik's efforts in the *Commission on Scientific Terminology*. Despite the modest title, the *Dictionary* is an extensive encyclopedic work. The published two volumes of the planned ten or eleven consisted of 211 entries, each volume being approximately 800 pages. The articles in the *Dictionary* are in French, followed by Ottoman Turkish translation, and equivalents in other European languages - English, German, Italian - are usually included.

⁵⁶ Rıza Tevfik, *Felsefe Dersleri* [Philosophy Lectures] (İstanbul: Kanaat Kütüphanesi, 1335 [1919]).

⁵⁷ Although there is a slight risk that nuances and subtleties in the original might get lost in *sadeleştirilmiş* versions, due to limitations of accessibility, I had to consult this version: Rıza Tevfik, *Felsefe Dersleri*, ed., M. Münir Dedeoğlu (Ankara: Altınpost Yayıncılık, 2012).

⁵⁸ *Mufasssal Kâmus-i Felsefe*, vol.1 [Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy] (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1332 [1916]); *Mufasssal Kâmus-i Felsefe*, vol.2 (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1336 [1920]).

CHAPTER III. COMMISSION ON SCIENTIFIC TERMINOLOGY: ESTABLISHING MODERN TERMINOLOGY THROUGH TRADITION

Therefore there is a need for settling scientific terminology before translating works. Unless the terminology is decided and confirmed the confusion in our language would not disappear.⁵⁹

Babanzâde Ahmed Naim

The idea of convening an official body to constitute conventional and authoritative translations of modern scientific terminology was on the agenda of the Minister of Education Emrullah Efendi in 1912. With the resignation of Emrullah Efendi in the same year, his successor Şükrü Bey took upon himself to realize this plan. The Commission on Scientific Terminology was established by the Ministry of Public Education (*Maarif-i Umumiye Nezareti*) in 1913 as a part of the Department of Authored Books and Translations (*Telif ve Tercüme Dairesi*). The personal initiative of Şükrü Bey was decisive for the implementation of this idea.⁶⁰

This project had ambitious aims. The mission of the Commission was to “to find [words] corresponding to numerous scientific phrases and terminology currently used in advanced languages [*elsine-i müterakkiye*], and to compose a correct, compact and compiled

⁵⁹ “Binaenaleyh tercüme-i âsârdan evvel ıstılahât-ı ilmî takrîre ihtiyâç vardır. Bu ıstılahât takarrur etmedikçe dilimizdeki çetrefillik gitmez.” Cited in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 112.

⁶⁰ Şükrü Bey’s personal interest in the formation and functioning of the Commission was acknowledged by Rıza Tevfik (see “Preface,” *Mufasssal Kâmus-ı Felsefe* 1, in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 56-7. A considerable part of the preface of Rıza Tevfik’s *Dictionary* (3-25) can be found in transliteration in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 56-63. Due to limitations of accessibility, all the references to the preface will be from this book.) Rıza Tevfik relates in his autobiography that he was personally invited by Şükrü Bey to join the commission. When Rıza Tevfik expressed doubts about its credentials, Şükrü Bey enthusiastically assured him of “the exclusively scientific character and competence (*ilmî mahiyet ve salâhiyet*)” of the commission. See Rıza Tevfik, *Biraz da Ben Konuşayım*, 145.

[*mazbut ve müdevven*] terminological dictionary.”⁶¹ The scope of disciplines to be covered by the Commission was intended to be comprehensive. The third article of the Regulations stated that,

The Commission on Scientific Terminology is to be divided into the following branches: philosophy, mathematics and physics, history and geography, medical sciences, law and political science, linguistics, military strategy, nautical science, literature, fine arts, music, agriculture, engineering [*sic*], technology, mechanical engineering, metallurgical engineering, industry etc. The present members [of the commission] are to be assigned to the mentioned branches in accordance with their expertise.⁶²

As it will be discussed more extensively below, immediate outcomes of the Commission's activities were limited. Only two lexicographic journals containing the recommended terminology for philosophy and fine arts were published. The preparation of the French-Ottoman comprehensive dictionary of scientific terminology that Rıza Tevfik mentions commenced, yet merely the first volume came out and the project was abandoned as the Commission practically ceased to function after a year because of the First World War.

The Commission used Arabic as the main reference language for the new terminology. This preference had a factual reason, since words of Arabic origin predominantly constituted the intellectual vocabulary of Ottoman Turkish. The idea that Arabic is the classical language for Turkish, similar to that Latin and Greek are for

⁶¹ “Meleketimizin ekser-i mütehasşısîn-i ulûm u sanâyi’inden mürekkep bulunan bu heyet-i ilmiyenin haysiyet-i hizmeti ve vazifesi, elsin-i müterakkiyede câri ve müstamel birçok tabirât-ı ilmiye ve kelimât-ı ıstilahiyenin, kendi lisanımızda mukabillerini bulup tayin etmek ve binaenaleyh mazbut ve müdevven bir *Kâmus-ı Istilahât* vücuda getirmektir.” Rıza Tevfik, “Preface,” *Kâmus*. See Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 56.

⁶² “Madde 3. Istilahât-ı İlmiye Encümeni; felsefe, riyaziyyât ve fizik, tarih ve coğrafya, ulûm-i tıbbiye, hukuk ve siyasiyyât, lisanîyyât, ulûm-ı harbiye, ulûm-ı bahriye, edebiyât, sanâyi’-i nefîse, musıkî, ziraat, mühendislik, teknoloji, makine mühendisliği, maden mühendisliği, sanâyi’ ve saire olmak üzere bir takım şu’abâta taksim olunmuş ve aza-yı mevcûde ihtisaslarına göre şu’abât-ı mezkûreye ayrılmışlardır.” *Maarif-i Umumiye Nezareti Istilahât-ı İlmiye Encümeni Talimatnâmesi* [Regulations of the Commission on Scientific Terminology of the Ministry of Public Education] See Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 52-5.

European languages also supported coining new terms from Arabic roots. As the members of the Commission argued, the choice of Arabic as the source language was crucial to maintain the link to the indigenous intellectual tradition: modern concepts should be articulated through establishing contacts with the classical scientific and philosophical works in Arabic, classical works, in return, would be taken up for reinterpretation through the lens of modern philosophy or science.

Motivations

Translations of philosophy books from western languages were one of the concrete reasons that prompted the need to have a conventional terminology for modern concepts in Ottoman Turkish. Individual translators and authors inventively utilized the intellectual vocabulary of the Ottoman language to confront this problem on an ad hoc basis. The need for a systematic treatment of this issue was called as publications in philosophy proliferated in the period following the promulgation of Second Constitution (1908). The introduction of philosophy-related courses on secondary and higher education curricula made it essential to produce relevant textbooks and supplementary material. This also brought about an institutionally sustained audience for philosophy texts. Students were expected to acquire certain familiarity with philosophical topics and encouraged to develop an interest in philosophy. The lack of conventional terminology in Turkish created a major problem in translating and authoring books dealing with philosophical subjects.⁶³

Mehmet Ali Aynî's retrospective observations saliently attest to the shortcoming of philosophy textbooks that resulted from the lack of adequate and conventional terminology. Though some philosophy books were written as the relative liberty of the press following the promulgation of the Second Constitution allowed, these books were scant in number and quality. As most of these works were translated from French,

the leading cause for this: except for logic [*mantık*] and philosophy [*hikmet*] books taught in our madrasas, philosophy has just began to be consolidated in high school and college [education]. It is doubtful if we will be able to do translations so accomplished as we desire, before many years pass with consolidating [philosophy] while the terms are being established and issues are being made clear.⁶⁴

As Aynî observes, courses exclusively dedicated to the instruction of philosophical subjects became a permanent part of the curricula of middle and higher level schools only in the Second Constitutional period. A system of modern education on both levels, however, had long been established. The rapid expansion of state-sponsored secondary and higher education during the reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909) set the basis of modern education in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁵ With temporary interruptions since its first inauguration in 1863, the first modern university was reopened for the fourth time in 1900 under the name Imperial University (*Darülfünun-ı Şahane*). After the promulgation of the Second Constitution, it was renamed Istanbul University (*İstanbul Darülfünunu*)⁶⁶ and divided into five faculties.

Subjects of modern philosophy had been taught intermittently on various level of education since the inauguration of *Mekteb-i Sultanî* in 1868. Yet the introduction of courses under the rubric of “philosophy group (*felsefe takımı*)” and “social sciences group

⁶³ Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 23-4.

⁶⁴ “... Bunun başlıca sebebi: Medreselerimizde okutulmakta olan Mantık ve Hikmet kitapları müstesna olmak şartıyla, felsefenin mekâtib-i sultaniye ve âliyyede henüz tedvine başlanmış olmasıdır. Bunun için seneler geçmedikçe ve bu ilmi tedvin ede ede ıstılahlar takarrür ve mesâil tenevvür etmedikçe arzu ettiğimiz kadar müttekin bir tercümeyle muvaffakiyet pek müşkildir.” Mehmet Ali Aynî, *İntikad ve Mülâhazalar: Dinî, Felsefî, Tasavvufî, Ahlakî ve Edebî* (İstanbul: Kütüphane-i Sûdî, 1339 [1923]). Cited in Kardaş, “II. Meşrutiyet devrinde felsefe ıstılahları,” 769-779, especially 770-1.

⁶⁵ For a thorough discussion and critical overview of the Hamidian educational policies with a focus on secondary education, see Fortna, *Imperial Classroom*, 1-42.

⁶⁶ The official name was changed to “Ottoman University [*Darülfünun-ı Osmani*]” in 1909, and finally to *İstanbul Darülfünunu* in 1912.

(*ulûm-ı içtimaiye takımı*)”⁶⁷ in the University marked a discernible point in that humanities became a continuous part of the higher education.

Courses in humanities offered on a regular basis required the establishment of permanent chairs for social sciences and philosophy. This requirement provided the institutional framework for professionals to teach philosophy, and also created a specialized audience knowledgeable and interested in philosophy. The introduction of mandatory philosophy courses in high schools was more decisive in augmenting the demand for philosophical texts, since the number of students enrolled in high schools was far more than the university students. In addition to reorganizing the University and increasing the weight of humanities in the program, the Minister of Education Emrullah Efendi assigned mandatory philosophy courses in the high school (*sultani*) curriculum. This caused urgent practical problems. There were not enough teachers to be employed for teaching philosophy courses. These teachers needed to be trained and relevant textbooks to be commissioned.⁶⁸ The lack of a comprehensive terminology denoting modern philosophical concepts made it difficult to author or translate philosophy books. The problem of textbooks and supplementary texts was even more demanding on the university level, for higher education required more specialized and complex material.

The Commission was formed partially to address these pedagogical concerns. Alluding to the widely held conviction of the age that education (*maarif*) serves progress (*terakki*) and becoming civilized (*temeddün*) in manifold ways, Rıza Tevfik anticipates everyone’s appreciation for their endeavor in the terminology commission. First and

⁶⁷ According to the new regulation of the University (4 Cemaziyülevvel 1330 – 12 April 1912), in addition to the mandatory “philosophy and history of philosophy (*felsefe ve tarih-i felsefe*)” courses for the Humanities program (*Ulûm-ı Edebiye*), the following electives were planned to be offered: “psychology (*ilm’ün-nefs*), logic and ethics (*ilm-i mantık ve ahlâk*), primary philosophy (*felsefe-i ûla*), and pedagogy (*terbiye*).” Mandatory “economics and social sciences (*iktisat ve ilm-i içtimâ*)” were also introduced together with the electives “economics (*ilm-i iktisat*), and sociology (*ilm-i içtimâî*).” Kardaş, “II. Meşrutiyet devrinde felsefe ıstılahları,” 769.

foremost, he emphasizes, students [*talebe efendiler*] will benefit from his *Dictionary*, which is “composed to contribute to [students’] intellectual cultivation.”⁶⁹

Settling the philosophical terminology in Ottoman Turkish was considered to have broader implications than to serve facilitating translations or production of textbooks. Pondering on the reasons for limited scientific and intellectual production in Turkish, Rıza Tevfik points at the lack of determinate terminology and the attendant conceptual confusion as the main factors. He argues that

in our country, philosophical thoughts and scientific truths could not spread to a desired degree up to now; [this] is not due to our incompetence, the probable reason is that our scientific language has been ignored for a long time, unfortunately. Even those rare people who gained familiarity with theoretical knowledge and abstract truths cannot compose a book on philosophical doctrines. Apart from other reasons, this is due to the fact that they construe numerous important terms in different ways.⁷⁰

Rıza Tevfik argues that having a common vocabulary in Ottoman is essential for intellectual production because it presumes a communal dialogue. The analytical usefulness of clear and distinct terms complements the dialogical value of a conventional terminology. Philosophical thinking and scientific research require conceptual clarity and comprehensiveness. That each term has a distinct and determinate sense prevents ambiguity in articulation. Semantic nuances are sustained and made explicit by means of clearly

⁶⁸ Ibid, 770.

⁶⁹ “Memleketin temeddün ve terakkisinde maarifin ne kadar mütenevvi avâmil-i müessire ihzar edebileceğini bihakkin takdir eden herkes -eminim ki- bu teşebbüsü kemâl-i şükran ile karşılayacaktır. Hele bundan en ziyade müstefid olacak kimseler, bilhassa müntesibîn-i ulûmdur, talebe efendilerdir. Nitekim bu kitap, onların terbiye-i fikriyesine hizmet için vücuda getirilmiştir.” Rıza Tevfik, “Preface,” *Dictionary in Kara, Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 57.

⁷⁰ “Şimdiye kadar memleketimizde efkâr-ı felsefiye ve hakâyık-ı ilmiyenin -lüzumu kadar!- intişar ve te'ammüm edememiş olması, kendi istidatsızlığımızdan değil belki lisan-ı ilmîmizin -maatteessüf- uzun müddet ihmal edilmiş bulunmasındandır. Malumat-ı nazariye ve hakâyık-ı mücerrede ile az çok ülfet ve istînâs etmiş olan zevât-ı nâdirenin bile akîde-i felsefiye üzerinde telif-i efkâr edememeleri -esbâb-ı saireden kat'-ı nazar- birçok ıstılahât-ı mühimmeye başka başka mâna vermekte olduklarındandır.” Ibid.

defined terms. The purpose of the Commission that he claims to carry forward in his *Dictionary*, is to enhance the language to cultivate philosophical articulation in Turkish.⁷¹

Members

The location and the members of the Commission illuminate the close connection between the above-mentioned endeavor and the institutional context of the Ottoman higher education. The Commission convened at the library of Istanbul University.⁷² This location symbolically emphasized the scientific and modern character of the Commission, since the *Darülfünun* was the climax and center of the state-sponsored modern education. The library was also a convenient place to meet, since a considerable amount of the members were among the professors or instructors of the University.⁷³

Among the members who had impact on determining philosophical terminology,⁷⁴ four out of the nine were full professors at the University: Ağaoğlu Ahmed, Ziya [Gökalp], Mehmet Ali Aynî, Emrullah Efendi.⁷⁵ Salih Zeki as the rector (*Müdür-i Umumi*), and Ahmet Naim [Babanzâde] as member of the Ministry of Public Education's Department of Authored Books and Translations were also members. Ahmet Naim was not a full professor, but was also an affiliated instructor.⁷⁶ Rıza Tevfik was to become philosophy professor a few years later. Among these members, only Mahmud Esad, who was a member of the

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 58.

⁷² Abdullah Uçman, "II. Meşrutiyet'ten sonra ilmî terimlerin tespitinde önemli bir teşebbüs: İstilahât-ı İlmiyye Encümeni." *Türk Dili* 536 (August 1996): 199-205, especially 202.

⁷³ For the complete list of the names and occupations of the members of the Commission see: Ibid, 201-2.

⁷⁴ Despite the fact that there is no document indicating which particular members were in the sub-committee dealing with philosophical terminology, Kara surmises from the extant evidence that the above-mentioned nine members are most likely to have been involved in determining philosophical terminology. Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 47.

⁷⁵ Emrullah Efendi is not listed among the members of the commission, yet Kara persuasively argues that he must have been involved, because Babanzâde and Gökalp refers to Emrullah Efendi's terminology suggestions and opinions concerning certain words. Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 46.

⁷⁶ While the Commission was active, Babanzâde was the psychology instructor at the University. Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 67.

Council of State (*Şûra-yı Devlet*), and [Elmalılı] Muhammed Hamdi [Yazır] were not affiliated with the University.

As the University was the spearhead of modern higher education and research the Commission was a thoroughly modern project. The Commission did not only have the purpose of constituting a set of uniform terms in Ottoman Turkish corresponding to French terms. The desire to appropriate modern scientific and philosophical vocabulary underlies this apparent function of fixing one-to-one correspondence between the words of the two languages. “If we do not produce the language for philosophy and sciences,” Rıza Tevfik contends, we will remain “foreign to the spiritual virtues of modern civilization [*medeniyet-i hazıranın kemalât-ı mâneviyesi*] forever; we will not be able to communicate any new idea.”⁷⁷

Muhammed Hamdi had only a traditional madrasa education. Emrullah Efendi, and Babanzâde were both educated in the madrasa and western-style schools, whereas the rest of the Commission members only studied in western-style state schools. That these members who had madrasa background were active in the Commission did not contradict its modernization mission. On the contrary, their involvement reflected the indigenizing character of Ottoman cultural modernization which had a substantial emphasis on education. The Hamidian educational policies shifted the aim from imitating to adapting western institutions, practices and ideas by incorporating Islamic and Ottoman elements into them. Madrasa-graduates have been involved in this process from high educational bureaucracy to teachers in western-style high schools.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ “Çünkü ilk vazifemiz istediğimiz gibi terkip yapmak değil adam akıllı ıstılah bulmaktır. Lisan-ı ilim ve felsefeyi imal etmezsek medeniyet-i hazıranın kemalât-ı mâneviyesine ile’l-ebed Türk zihn-i ictimâisine bîgâne bırakmış olacağız, yeni bir fikir nakledemeyeceğiz.” Rıza Tevfik, “Preface,” *Dictionary* in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 62.

⁷⁸ Fortna, *Imperial classroom*, 9, 13-4.

The educational efforts and intellectual products of these members reinforce the view that scholars with madrasa background were central to the modernization projects usually associated with Westernization. Babanzâde was a professor of philosophy at the University until the University Reform of 1933. He translated works on philosophy and psychology to be used as textbooks at the University. As mentioned above, Emrullah Efendi reformed the higher and secondary education when he was the Minister of Education in 1912. He introduced humanities courses into high school curriculum and expanded the chairs for humanities in the University. Muhammed Hamdi's most renowned and long lasting work was the translation and exegesis of the Qur'an (1938) commissioned by the Republican Directorate of Religious Affairs.

The Commission members' recurrent reference to intellectual and linguistic continuity did not express a marginal reaction, but rather reflected a widely shared norm. Rıza Tevfik complains that the terminological confusion and arbitrariness arises from the ignorance of "valid words that our predecessors [*eslâfımız*] used on the same subject, with the same meaning."⁷⁹ Taking Arabic as the primary reference language for terms will sustain the connection between the classical works of Ottoman intellectual tradition and modern philosophy.

Along the same lines, Babanzâde argues that the complexity of settling the modern philosophical terminology arises not because philosophy is a "novel" thing for the Ottomans. On the contrary, this complication emerges from the challenge of taking into consideration the highly elaborate philosophical literature still taught in Ottoman madrasas as *ulûm-u arabiye*. Yet those occupied with modern philosophy are unacquainted with this philosophical tradition, from which Ottoman Turkish inherited its intellectual vocabulary.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ "... eslâfımızın aynı mevzuda, aynı mâna için kullanmış oldukları kelimât-ı mutebereden gafil bulunmak..." Rıza Tevfik, "Preface," *Dictionary* in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 57.

⁸⁰ Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 112.

The Criteria

Linguistic guidelines for determining terminology were laid down in the Article 16 of the Commission's regulations. The regulations prescribed that to translate a French term, first of all, words already current in Turkish be taken into consideration. If a Turkish word in use sufficiently conveys the meaning of the French term, that word should be kept. “If there is no extant word corresponding to the term [to be translated] or else a [Turkish word being used to translate the term] exists, but is proven to be unsuitable, [the members of the Commission] will create a term *on their own initiative* in conformity with the intended meaning and resonance of the language. However, if expedient, they can also *modify long-established terms* [ıstılahât-ı kadime].”⁸¹

The regulations evidently did not dictate precise rules to be executed. The broadly defined criteria, rather, left much of the decisions to the members’ discretion. The members had almost uncircumscribed authority to decide if an extant term is adequate. If they deemed it expedient to change or modify an extant term, it was up to their “own initiative” to replace that term with some other, or, create a neologism. Yet, the regulations did not define the manner of forming new terms, nor anything explicit about the source language, the only condition put by the regulations was concerned with adequately conveying the meaning of the original term, and the resonance of the language.

The fact that words of Arabic origin constituted the substantial part of the current Ottoman intellectual vocabulary lent weight to preferring Arabic as the main source language for coining new terms. The members either resorted to classical Arabic scientific

⁸¹ Italics are mine. “Madde 16. Asılları Fransızcadan alınmakta olan ıstılahâtın mukabillerini tayinde evvelâ o ıstılah için lisanımızda bir karşılık bulunmuş ve kullanılmış olup olmadığı araştırılacak ve mevcut ise o ıstılahın ihtiyacât-ı hazırâyı tatmin edebilip edemediği tedkik olunarak muvafakati takdirinde aynen kabul edilecektir. Bir ıstılahın Türkçede muhtelif mukabilleri var ise bunlardan en münasibi alınacaktır. O ıstılah için Türkçede mevzû' bir mukabil yok ise veya mevcut olup da gayrı muvafık olduğu tahakkuk eder ise aile-i ıstılahât, mâna-yı maksûda ve âheng-i lisana tevfiikan ve re'sen mukabil bir ıstılah vaz edilecektir. Maamafih îcabı halinde ıstılahât-ı kadîmede tadilat da yapılabilir.” *Regulations*, in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 54.

and philosophical works to revive and recast an old term, or to make new words from Arabic roots.

A possible challenge to the preference of Arabic came from growing Turkish nationalism. The Turkish Association (*Türk Derneği*), found in January 1908, was the first Turkish nationalist cultural organization. The association was accused of regresiveness, purportedly trying to move back Turkish for seven centuries, yet even the members were at great variance as to what constituted Turkish and which direction its reform was to take.⁸²

Except for the fringe of radical purists who defended purging out words of Arabic or Persian origins, though, the consensus in the Association was not to object Arabic and Persian words because of their origin. As stated in its official journal, “since the benefit that the Ottoman language has derived from the Arabic and Persian languages is undeniable, and since no Ottoman would even dream of dissociating Ottoman Turkish from these revered languages,” the Association did not aim at eliminating these words, but give preference to simplicity so that its works could be “understood with total ease by all Ottomans.”⁸³

The call for a simple language was rooted in the aspiration to reach the widest possible members of the nation in the making. Concerning the scientific terminology, though, this populist ideal was criticized. Babanzâde argued that the terminology of a discipline is the building block of its knowledge. As each discipline addresses specialized subject, its language should be resourceful enough to express the conceptual complexity its level of specialization demands. Since credibility of knowledge does not depend on its

⁸² “[The Association’s] sixty-three members were far from having a shared view about the future of the language. Some of them were Simplifier (*Sadeleştirmeçiler*), who favored eliminating non-Turkish elements and replacing them with native words current in speech. Some were Turkicizers (*Türkçeciler*), who believed that new words should be created by means of the regular Turkish suffixes and that Arabic and Persian words current in popular speech should be counted as Turkish. Then there were the Purifiers (*Tasfiyeciler*), who did not object to the Turkicizers’ view on the latter point but advocated borrowing words and suffixes from other dialects.” Geoffrey Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform*, 19. As Lewis points out in the following page, none of these views were prevalent among the members of the Association.

⁸³ Translation is by Lewis. Ibid, 20.

concordance with the popular opinions, he argued, “the language of the common people cannot be [taken as] an evidence for scientific terminology.”⁸⁴

Rıza Tevfik held Babanzâde’s distinction between common and intellectual language for similar reasons. In the preface of the *Dictionary*, he enthusiastically declares that he is an ardent advocate of common Turkish in national poetry, because “this is necessary and possible.” When it comes to terminology, though, this is not desirable: a term “would not be understood just because it is Turkish. Those who understand [the term] do so not because it is Turkish, [but] they belong to the relevant profession, science or art.”⁸⁵ The criticism that preferring Arabic words for terminology obscures the meaning of these terms for common Turkish speakers, he argued, is untenable. Regarding the language employed to articulate scientific theories or philosophical ideas, he defended a distinction between the high and low language (*havas dili/avam dili*), for terms “need to be completely distinguished (*mümtaz*) from the common language.”⁸⁶

In a review article on the terms recommended by the Commission,⁸⁷ Avram Galanti⁸⁸ tacitly aligns with Babanzâde and Rıza Tevfik. Rephrasing the *Regulations*, he

⁸⁴ “Lisan-ı avam ilmî ıstılahlar için delil olamaz.” Babanzâde’s footnote 4 on page 278 of his translation from George L. Fonsegrive’s *Cours de Philosophie (Mebadî-i Felsefe’den Birinci Kitab: İlmü’n-Nefs* [First Book of the Principles of Philosophy: Psychology] (İstanbul: Matbaa-yı Âmire, 1331 [1915]), cited in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 82. As in the case of this citation, Babanzâde articulated his ideas on issues related to translating philosophical works and particular terms in extensive footnotes to his translations.

⁸⁵ “Şiir-i millîde Türklüğün en samimi ruhunu, en asil hissiyatını söyletmek taraftarıyım; çünkü mümkündür ve lazımdır. Fakat ıstılah bahsinde bu mümkün değildir ve o kadar da elzem değildir. Bir kelime-i ıstılahiye Türkçe olmakla heman anlaşılmaz. Anlayanlar, onu Türkçe olduğu için anlamazlar; o ıstılahın alakadar bulunduğu mesleğe, ilme veya sanata mensub oldukları için anlarlar.” Rıza Tevfik, “Preface,” *Dictionary* in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 61.

⁸⁶ “... lisan-ı avamdan bütün bütün mütaaz olmaları lâzım geldiğini...” Rıza Tevfik, “Bazı ıstılahât-ı Hikemiye Hakkında Mütalâa ve Tafsilat (Considerations and Explanations on Some Medical Terminology),” *Malûmat* 33: 299 (26 Temmuz 1317 – 8 August 1901): 1111-8. Cited in Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik’in Sanat*, 302.

⁸⁷ Avram Galanti, “İhdas olunan kelimât ve ıstılahât etrafında bazı mülâhazât [Some considerations on the introduced words and terms],” *Darülfünun Edebiyat Fakültesi Mecmuası* [Journal of Istanbul University Faculty of Letters], 2, no. 7 (March 1333-1917): 44-51.

⁸⁸ Avram Galanti [Bodrumlu] was the assistant instructor of Semitic languages in the *Darülfünun* (1914-18). He was assisting Gotthelf Bergsträßer who became the professor (*müderris*) of Semitic languages after the university reform which brought a host of German Academics in 1914. When the German professors were discharged at the end of the war, he was appointed to the chair of History of Ancient Oriental Peoples

suggests that a foreign term should be rendered in Turkish and the entry of foreign words should be prevented. He does not make any distinction among Turkish words depending on their origin. In case no extant word sufficiently translates the original term, “[the term] can be borrowed first of all from Arabic which has extensive ability for deriving new words, then from Persian.”⁸⁹ He cautions against confusion that might arise from borrowing Arabic words. He provides examples of Arabic words which have different meanings in Arabic and Turkish, and different Arabic words in Turkish and Arabic which denote the same thing. He moves on to record extant Arabic words with French translations whose counterparts do not exist in Turkish yet. The latter group of words, he suggests, should be taken into consideration as agreeable candidates to borrow.⁹⁰

Galanti does not specify his preference for the source language to be used to form neologisms. Yet, he does not comment on the rules to be followed in forming neologisms from Persian or Turkish roots, but only Arabic: “If it is expedient to form new terms from extant Arabic words, [they should] comply with the conventional norms [of Turkish].”⁹¹ This implicitly suggests that Arabic is to be taken as the primary language to derive new

(*Tarih-i akvam-ı kadîme-i şarkıyye*) as instructor (*muallim*), later full-time professor. See “Avram Galanti” and “Darülfünun” in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, respectively v.13, 296-297 and v.8, 521-525.

⁸⁹ “Bu mümkün olmadığı takdirde, evvel emirde kabiliyet-i tasrifıyesı vasi’ olan Arapça ve sonra Farsîden istiare olunabilir.” Galanti, “İhdas olunan kelimât,” 49.

⁹⁰ “Reminding that [there are] words that are current in Egypt but does not exist in Turkish yet, I record the following words which it could be good to [borrow]: *sharikat musâhama, société anonyme, sharikat tawşıyya, société commanditaire, tazhîr, endosser, fann ikhtizâl, sténographie, mukhtazil, sténo graphe; mulhaq ‘askarî, attaché militaire; mulhaq bahrî, attaché naval; ‘ilm istiḥdârât arwâh, spiritisme; mustahḍir arwâh, spirite; i’tisâb, gréve; mu’tasib, gréviste; mashrû’, projet; muḥādatha, conférence.*” Ibid, 50. The Turkish press was also interested in contemporary reform efforts in Arabic. Around the time that the Commission convened, the İstanbul based journal *Sebilürreşad* reports about a formation of a similar commission in Egypt. “Purification of language in Egypt: According to Egyptian newspapers, Haşmet Paşa, the Minister of Education of Egypt, formed a committee of experts called ‘Commission on Arabic Terminology’ in Cairo.” This commission is dedicated to replace foreign scientific terminology used in textbooks untill now with Arabic terms and to assure correct pronunciation of foreign proper nouns. “Şuun,” *Sebilürreşad* 10, no. 236 (7 Mart 1329 - March 20, 1913): 35. Cited in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 40.

⁹¹ “Mevcut Arapça kelimeler ile yeni tabirat teşkil etmek lazım gelirse, mümkün mertebede, kavaid-i mevzuaya riayet etmeli.” Ibid. The conventional norms he describes are the manner of forming compounds and the spelling of Arabic words in Ottoman which differs from Arabic syntax and orthography. Instead of Arabic genitive compounds, Galanti indicates Persian *izafet* should be used. He enumerates different Ottoman orthography of the some Arabic words ending with the suffix “-î”. Galanti, “İhdas olunan kelimât,” 48-9.

terms. His suggestions for terminology of linguistics accord with the already established practice of utilizing Arabic roots. Together with “the professor of Semitic languages,”⁹² he suggests to translate “*infixe*” as “*dâhile*,” “*synonyme*” as “*hem-mâna kelime*,” “*homonyme*” as “*hem-savt kelime*,” and “*participe*” as “*sıfat-ı fîliye*.”⁹³

Ziya Gökalp, the chief ideologue of Turkish nationalism, was not an exception to the view that Arabic is the primary reference language for Ottoman terminology. His views carried a particular importance because of his position as the prominent intellectual behind the Unionist cultural policies.⁹⁴ Gökalp distanced himself explicitly from the linguistic purifiers. His motto “what has become Turkish is Turkish,”⁹⁵ referring to Turkish words of Arabic and Persian origin, reflects the view held by the majority of intellectuals of the period.⁹⁶

In addition to defending preservation of Arabic terms current in Ottoman Turkish, Gökalp resorted to Arabic, less frequently to Persian, for deriving neologisms.⁹⁷ Conforming to his trine vision for Turkish nationalism elaborated in his book *Türkleşmek*,

⁹² The unnamed “*elsine-i Sâmîye müderrisi bey*” should be Gotthelf Bergsträßer, see above, footnote 79.

⁹³ Galanti, “İhdas olunan kelimât,” 48.

⁹⁴ Ziya Gökalp’s encouragements and recommendations had a notable impact in the formation of the Commission. Ali Utku, “İlk Felsefe sözlüklerimiz,” *Virgöl* 20 (June 1999): 30-33, especially 31.

⁹⁵ “Türkçeleşmiş Türkçedir.” A line from Gökalp’s poem “*Lisan*” (Language), cited in Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform*, 26.

⁹⁶ The only challenge to this came from a fringe of Turkish nationalist. The main stream of the precursors of Turkish nationalism did not align with the Purists. The pioneer of nationalist literature Ömer Seyfeddin’s views should suffice. Interestingly enough, Seyfeddin defends Arabic and Persian with almost the same rhetoric that his ideological heirs were to use only two decades later to purge these words out of Turkish: “Are we to tag along behind the Türk Derneği and head for a sterile reaction, joining our fellow members of the Turkish community who still lead a basic existence in ‘Bukhara the Noble’, slumbering in the darkness of a dreadful ignorance and horrendous fanaticism, living the life of a dozen centuries ago? That would be an act of suicide. It would be like abandoning our quick-firing artillery and machine-guns and instead, when our enemies arrive, doing as the fellow-members of our people do and putting on the samovars expressly intended to boil the water we’re going to throw over them. No, it is impossible; we cannot forsake the Arabic and Persian words, the words we call familiar, that we have spoken for five centuries.” Cited in Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform*, 22-23.

⁹⁷ Gökalp’s practice of forming neologisms sheds light on the inventive use of Arabic roots to come up with new terms in Ottoman. For the examples of neologisms Gökalp derived from Arabic roots, see: Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform*, 25. To these examples, few neologisms he derived from Persian roots might be added. From “*padar*” (cognate of English ‘father’) and *shāh*, he made *pederşahî* for ‘patriarchal’, and from “*māder*” (cognate of mother), *māderşahî* for ‘matriarchal.’

İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak (Becoming Turkish, Becoming Islamic, Becoming Modern), Gökalp contended that “‘new ideas [*yeni mefhumlar*]’ are the faculty of speech of the age [*asrın*], ‘terms’ are of the religious community [*ümmetin*], language is of the nation [*millet*].”⁹⁸ The reason for the preference for Arabic, he explains, is that Arabic is the classical language of Turkish as Latin and Greek are classical languages of European languages.

Already in the second half of the nineteenth century, Arabic came to be perceived as the classical language for Ottoman Turkish analogous to Latin and Greek. Arabic had always enjoyed a high status as the language of education in the traditional Ottoman madrasa system. Arabic grammar, syntax and rhetoric were integral to madrasa curriculum. Arabic was not only the liturgical language; in addition to *traditional sciences (naklî ilimler)* (Qur’anic exegesis, theology, hadith, jurisprudence), primary reference books of *rational sciences (aklî ilimler)* (geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, geography, medical sciences), and philosophy were all in Arabic.⁹⁹ Turkish translations and commentaries of classical Arabic works proliferated from the fifteenth century on, yet, Arabic, and Persian, remained as the languages of cultivation for the Ottoman literati. The reevaluation of Arabic in a deliberate analogy to the European idea of classical languages, though, was a novel phenomenon.

When the Ottoman Medical Association (*Cemiyet-i Tıbbiye-i Osmaniye*) published its *French-Turkish Medical Dictionary (Lügat-ı Tıbbiye)* in 1873, French terms were translated by the words found in classical Arabic medical and philosophical works, or derived from Arabic and, to a smaller degree, Persian roots. The translators of *Medicinal Organic Chemistry (Kimya-yı Uzvî-i Tıbbî)*, published in 1883, followed this practice. In the

⁹⁸ “‘Yeni mefhumlar’ asrın, ‘ıstılahlar’ ümmetin, ‘lügatler’ milletin nâtıkasıdır.” Ziya Gökalp, *Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak*, ed., İ. Kultuk (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1976), 19. Cited in Kardaş, “II. Meşrutiyet devrinde felsefe ıstılahları,” 778.

preface, the translators Dika and Limonidis drew an explicit parallel between Latin and Greek, and Arabic in terms of being the source languages from which new terms were to be derived.¹⁰⁰ In an article on medical terminology, Rıza Tevfik reiterates this conviction. As in “western languages like French and English” new terms to be used in modern scientific parlance are formed from Latin and Greek, Arabic would sufficiently serve the same function for Turkish.¹⁰¹

The analogy between Latin and Greek, and Arabic was not confined to formation of neologisms. In the preface of the *Dictionary*, Rıza Tevfik argues that Arabic is the classical language for Ottomans because of the historical significance of classical Arabic philosophy and sciences as the origin of the Ottoman intellectual tradition. Arabic survived as the language of sciences and philosophy, for it was the language of “spiritual and intellectual civilization” that Ottomans deem themselves heir to. Following the conversion to Islam, Turks

...came under the spiritual [*manevî*] influence of Arabic, the language of religion and civilization... Since Arabic was a perfect and rich scientific and philosophical language in the first place, and since it had a great treasury of wisdom, all the Turks who had vocation for philosophy and sciences had written their works in [Arabic]; this is natural and indispensable... As intellectual and spiritual civilization [*medeniyet-i fıkriye ve mâneviye*], religious and social cultivation, and scientific cultivation were invariably in Arabic, moreover, books in libraries were in Arabic... [Anyone] -even a genius and wise philosopher like Farabî- could not invent a new philosophical language [in defiance of the impact of these factors] ; even if he tried, he could not manage to succeed; for not an individual but a hundred people

⁹⁹ For the sixteenth century Ottoman encyclopedist and scholar Taşköprülüzâde Ahmed’s classification of sciences, see Halil Inalcik, “Learning, the Medrese, and the Ulema,” *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London: Phoenix, 1994), 165-6.

¹⁰⁰ Charles-Adolphe Wurtz, *Kimya-yı Uzvî-i Tıbbî*, tr., Dika and Limonidis, (İstanbul, 1299). Cited in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 33.

¹⁰¹ Rıza Tevfik, *Considerations and Explanations on Some Medical Terminology*, cited in Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik’in Sanat*, 303.

together cannot bring about the enlightening effect of a bright civilization lasting for centuries.¹⁰²

Publications

Although the Commission's initial plan was to publish an exhaustive dictionary of terminology comprising of all the above mentioned subjects,¹⁰³ the product was meager. It published two lexica (one for philosophical terminology, the second for the fine arts) and the first volume of the dictionary of Scientific Terminology, containing the terms starting with "A". Despite that the last one was called Dictionary, all the three publications were merely lexicographic indexes, comprising of terms in French followed by the corresponding recommended terms. The publications of the Commission are as follows:

1- *Istilahât-ı İlmiye Encümeni Tarafından Kâmus-ı Felsefede Münderic Kelimât ve Tabirât İçin Vaz ve Tedvini Tensib Olunan Istilahât Mecmuasıdır* (Journal of Terminology to be used in Dictionary of Philosophy, Recommended by and Collected with the Approval of the Commission on Scientific Terminology). Istanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1330 (1914).

2- *Istilahât-ı İlmiye Encümeni Tarafından Sanâyî-i Nefisede Mevcud Kelimât ve Ta'birât için Vaz' ve Tedvini Tensib Olunan Istilahat Mecmuasıdır* (The Journal of Terminology Recommended by and Collected with the Approval of the Commission on Scientific Terminology for Words and Phrases Present in Fine Arts) Istanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1330 (1914).

¹⁰² "Bilahare yani saha-ı fütuhâtı tevsi' edip de medenî milletlerin hududuna varınca, Türkler İslâm ile müşerref olmuş ve lisan-ı din ve medeniyet olan Arapçanın –bi'z-zarure- nüfuz-ı mânevîsine tutulmuş, artık ondan kurtulamamış. Arapça zaten mükemmel ve zengin bir lisan-ı ilmî ve felsefî olduğu ve büyük bir define-i irfana malik bulunduğu için felsefe ve ulûma müstaid olan Türkler, eserlerini hep o lisan ile yazmışlardır ki bu da tabii ve zaruridir. Medeniyet-i fikriye ve mâneviye, terbiye-yi diniye ve ictimaiye, terbiye-yi ilmiye hep Arapça olunca, kütüphanelerdeki âsâr dahi Arapça olunca – velev ki Farabî gibi dahi bir filozof-ı nihrîr olsun! – bütün bu avamilerin tesirâtından kendini kurtarıp da sırf Türkçe olmak üzere yeni bir lisan-ı felsefî icad etmeye kalkışmazdı, kalkışsa da bir şey yapamazdı; çünkü asırlarca devam eden parlak bir medeniyetin eser-i feyzini, bir adam değil, bin adam vücuda getiremez." Rıza Tevfik, "Preface," *Dictionary in Kara, Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 61.

¹⁰³ The articles 9, 10 and 11 of the Regulations of the Commission that addresses the administrative details about the staff to be employed in charge of collecting and organizing the Commission's decisions on particular terms and preparing them for publication.

3- *Kâmus-ı Istilahat-ı İlmiye* (Dictionary of Scientific Terminology) Istanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1333 (1917).

The Journal of philosophical terminology contained 1132 terms in French with recommended Ottoman counterpart.¹⁰⁴ As the title clearly indicates, this booklet was only a preliminary work listing the words to be expounded in a philosophical dictionary, which never came out.

The immediate impact of the Commission was far below the ambitious aims it was envisioned to fulfil. When the First World War broke out in 1914, the Commission practically ceased to function. The fact that it was functional only for a year impeded the accomplishment of the intended publications. The impetus it engendered, though, was more productive. İsmail Fennî [Ertuğrul] published his *Lügatçe-i Felsefe* (Glossary of Philosophy) in 1925. Despite its modest name, spanning over 900 pages, this book was a compilation of some dictionaries and notes that Fennî gathered in years.¹⁰⁵ Babanzâde's extensive and meticulous observations on particular terms or translating philosophy in general scattered through numerous footnotes in his translations. These notes and appendices all together has enough material for a glossary.¹⁰⁶

The Commission itself could never publish the intended Dictionary of Philosophy, but Rıza Tevfik's encyclopedic work *Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy* semi-officially accomplished this project. Despite the fact that only one and a half volumes were published,

¹⁰⁴ Utku, "İlk Felsefe sözlüklerimiz," 31. Kardaş suggests that the terminology published in *Bulletin de la société Française de Philosophie* was an important reference source for the Commission's journal. The French Society of Philosophy started to publish a dictionary of philosophy in instalments in July 1902 to standardize philosophical terminology, at least in text books. The dictionary was serialized until the July 1923 edition of the *Bulletin*. Since this dictionary was far from being complete in the period that the Commission was active, the Commission's terminological suggestions must have benefited from this dictionary only partially. See Kardaş, "II. Meşrutiyet devrinde felsefe istilahları," 773.

¹⁰⁵ Utku, "İlk Felsefe sözlüklerimiz," 33.

¹⁰⁶ Kara compiled and edited these notes and appendices. See Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 135-376.

Dictionary excelled the above-mentioned dictionaries and glossaries in terms of scope and content.

CHAPTER IV. DETAILED DICTIONARY OF PHILOSOPHY: FROM DEFINITION TO INTERPRETATION

As Rıza Tevfik relates in his memoirs, his notes on philosophical terminology amassed over years constituted the preliminary preparations for the *Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy* (*Mufasssal Kâmus-ı Felsefe*). At a meeting with the Minister of Education Şükrü Bey, Rıza Tevfik expresses his dissatisfaction with the fact that the Commission's lexicographic journal on philosophical terminology¹⁰⁷ does not contain even basic definitions of the recommended terms. Sharing with the minister his intent to write a dictionary of philosophy to meet this need, Rıza Tevfik recounts

For many years, I have recorded the expressions that I came across while studying philosophy books written in Turkish, Arabic or foreign languages whose equivalents [I found] in Islamic books [*İslam kitaplarında*]. [That day] I brought along the notebook in which I recorded around 800 words. [I told Şükrü Bey], let me hand over these words to you together with their detailed explanations. They could be kept in the ministry so as to be consulted later [for a dictionary of philosophy]. But if I will not be allowed to write freely now, please excuse me from this obligation.¹⁰⁸

In response to Rıza Tevfik's threat to resign, the Minister Şükrü Bey anxiously assures him that "[he] would be honored if this dictionary will be published during [his] ministry."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ İstilahât-ı İlmiye Encümeni Tarafından Kâmus-ı Felsefede Münderic Kelimât ve Tabirât İçin Vaz ve Tedvini Tensib Olunan İstilahât Mecmuasıdır, see above "Publications" on page 36.

¹⁰⁸ "Ben zaten öteden beri gerek Türkçe, gerek Arapça ve ecnebi dillerde yazılmış bulunsun yahut filozofi kitaplarını tetebbû ederken İslam kitaplarında mukabillerine rast geldiğim tâbirâtı zaptetmiştim. Bugün yanıma 800 kadar kelime kaydettiğim defteri aldım, geldim. Eğer bu kelimelerin mefhumlarını ve tazammun ettikleri meselelerin mahiyetlerini, bildiğim gibi anlamayacak olursam, ben o kelimeleri size tevdi edeyim, lâzım gelen tafsilât ve izahatı da takdim edeyim, Maarif Nezareti'nde mahfuz bulunsun, zamanı gelince ehline bu işi havale ederler. Fakat şimdi bugün serbest yazamayacaksam beni lütfen bu hizmetten af buyurunuz." Rıza Tevfik, *Biraz da Ben Konuşayım*, 146-7.

¹⁰⁹ "...; ben böyle bir kâmusun nezâretim zamanında basılmış olmasıyla iftihar ederim, demişti." Ibid., 147.

With Şükrü Bey's personal support, Rıza Tevfik set out to compile and develop these notes into what eventually became the *Mufasssal Kâmus-ı Felsefe (Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy)*. The *Dictionary* was published as a part of the series called *Ministry of Public Education: Library of Authored and Translated Books (Maarif-i Umumiye Nezareti Telif ve Terceme Kütüphanesi)* in the official publishing house *Matbaa-yı Âmire*. As stated on the cover of the *Dictionary*'s second volume, the *Dictionary* was composed to contain only the philosophical terminology of a general encyclopedia that the Ministry intended to publish.¹¹⁰

Rıza Tevfik's assignment to the Commission did not only provide the occasion for the Ministry's sponsoring of his encyclopedic work. Although Rıza Tevfik had expressed reservations that "had [he] had the absolute authority, [he] would have recommended some of the terms [differently] according to [his] knowledge and taste," he followed the terminological recommendations of the Commission.¹¹¹ In this regard, the *Dictionary* filled the place for the planned dictionary of philosophy that the Commission itself could not publish.¹¹²

The publication of the *Dictionary* began in a series of booklets in 1330 (1914). When first volume was completed and bound in 1332 (1916), with a preface, it contained the articles from the prefix "A" to "*Bon Sense (Kaziyye-i Hissiye)*". The publication of the booklets which were to constitute the second volume began in February 1917. The first part

¹¹⁰ Rıza Tevfik, *Kâmus* 2. In the preface of the first volume, Rıza Tevfik mentions Emrullah Efendi's individual project to write a general encyclopedia (more on Emrullah Efendi's *Muhit'ul-Maarif*, see below.) This project was left unfinished since such an extensive undertaking requires the contribution of many experts. Rıza Tevfik praises Şükrü Bey for acknowledging this necessity and assigning a commission of experts to write a general encyclopedia. "Maarif nazır-ı hâzır [Şükrü] Beyfendi'nin muvaffakiyeti, bu hakikata kanaat edip taksim-i a'mâle lüzum görmüş olmasındadır. Erbab-ı salahiyyetin ancak himemât-ı müstereklesiyle vücuda gelebilecek olan böyle bir eser, bu şarta tamâmî-i riayetle meydana çıkabilir." Rıza Tevfik, "Preface," *Kâmus*, in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 57.

¹¹¹ "Şunu ihtara mecburum ki bu ıstılahât, İstılahât-ı İlmiye Encümen[i'n]de ittifak veya ekseriyet-i ârâ ile tayin olunmuştur. Eğer bende salahiyyet-i mutlaka olsaydı ve bu salahiyyeti -garip olarak- herkes teslim etseydi ben bu kelimâtın bir kısmını bildiğim ve beğendiğim gibi vaz' u tayin ederdim." Ibid, in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 63.

of the second volume came out in 1336 (1920), containing the articles from “*Canon (Kanun)*” to “*Classification des Sciences (Tasnif-i Ulûm)*”. In total, one and a half volumes of the envisioned ten or eleven volumes of the dictionary spanned over around 1200 pages, containing 211 articles.¹¹³

The articles in the *Dictionary* are alphabetically ordered according to French headings, followed by the Ottoman translation(s). In most cases, English, German and Italian equivalents are also added. In each article, Greek and Latin roots of the French term are mentioned and related to the Arabic term which was employed to translate the original Greek term. By pointing out the historical links between Greek, Latin and Arabic terms, Rıza Tevfik provides an account of how the notion these terms designated were articulated in the history of philosophy. Despite the false impression its title might give, the *Dictionary* is an encyclopedic work, as its content and scope evince.¹¹⁴

The present chapter addresses first the genre itself and places the *Dictionary* in the context of modern Ottoman encyclopedism. Secondly, Rıza Tevfik’s hermeneutic principles which figure in the *Dictionary* are analyzed. As will be discussed in detail, Rıza Tevfik tries to trace the evolution of a concept from Ancient Greek to Latin and to Arabic philosophy, while the links between the Arabic or Latin words and the Greek one that they translated provide a path in his genealogical survey. The historical reference point of Rıza Tevfik’s readings is the Abbasid translation movement of the ninth century. Drawing on the common origin of modern philosophy and classical Arabic philosophy, Rıza Tevfik evaluates the both of them in relation to each other with respect to a particular philosophical notion. This reveals Rıza Tevfik’s interpretive concern to show the relevance of the Arabic, and subsequent Ottoman intellectual traditions for contemporary philosophical questions.

¹¹² More on the publication projects of the Commission, see above “Publications” on page 36.

¹¹³ Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik’in Sanat*, 303-4.

Encyclopedic Sources and Models of the *Dictionary*

The official sponsoring of the *Dictionary* by the Ministry of Public Education reflected the tendency of the period that encyclopedias carry symbolic value for national prestige. In Europe from the late eighteenth century on, general encyclopedias acquired a national association. The first edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1768) was followed by the German Brockhaus (1796), by the *Encyclopedia Americana* (1829), and the French *Grand dictionnaire universel* (1864). The Dutch, Spanish, Yugoslav and the Greek projects followed the suit.¹¹⁵

The national competition over procuring prestige was a factor that encouraged the state funding for projects like Rıza Tevfik's *Dictionary*; nonetheless, both for the Ottoman encyclopedists as well as the policy makers, though for varying reasons, education was the prime concern. As Rıza Tevfik dedicates the *Dictionary* to the "intellectual cultivation [terbiye-yi fıkriye]"¹¹⁶ of the young generation, with the intent of serving the same cause, Emrullah Efendi undertook writing a general encyclopedia in Ottoman, called *Muhit'ul-Maarif*¹¹⁷ (İstanbul, 1901). Emrullah Efendi managed to publish only the first volume. The revised second edition of the encyclopedia, *Yeni Muhit'ul-Maarif*, was published posthumously in 1914, though the content was only negligibly extended as the new edition ended with the article "*Asûriye* (Assyria)."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 305-6.

¹¹⁵ The Dutch Winkler-Prins goes back to 1870, the Spanish *Enciclopedia universal ilustrada* to 1905, the Yugoslav *Narodna Enciklopedija* to 1924, the Greek *Megale Ellenike Enkykopaideia* to 1926. Burke adds that "... the famous eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was described in a London periodical as 'a great glory to our nation'... Encyclopaedias became one of the many arenas in which nations competed. It was recently remarked that 'Each "civilized nation" was expected to produce one in order to be taken seriously by its neighbours and the European powers.'" Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge II: from the Encyclopédie to Wikipedia* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), 196.

¹¹⁶ Rıza Tevfik, "Preface," *Kâmus*, in Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 57.

¹¹⁷ Literally, 'The Milieu of Education'. Emrullah Efendi proposed *Muhit'ul-Maarif* to translate the word 'encyclopedia.' As *muhit* means a circle in which one moves, and *maarif* education, this phrase literally reproduces the etymology of encyclopedia: *enkyklios* (in circle), *paideia* (education).

¹¹⁸ Kara, *Bir Felsefe Dili Kurmak*, 17. Utku mentions that regarding the Ottoman general encyclopedias, *Muhit'ul-Maarif* is the second, after Ali Suavi's *Kâmus'ul-Ulûm ve'l-Maarif* (Paris, 1870) See Utku, "İlk

A number of subject specific Ottoman encyclopedias of various scope preceded Emrullah Efendi's initiative. Ömer Subhi and Mehmed Nuri embarked on coauthoring a biographical encyclopedia of scientists and philosophers, *Müessisîn-i Fünûn* (Founders of the Sciences) (İstanbul, 1885); like the aforementioned project, only the first volume was published. Salih Zeki prepared an encyclopedia of mathematical Sciences, *Kâmus-ı Riyaziyat* (İstanbul, 1897), which explained major mathematical problems and gave biographical account of prominent eastern and western scientists. Salih Zeki's second encyclopedic work, *Âsâr-ı Bâkiye* (*Everlasting Opuses*, two volumes, İstanbul, 1913) concentrated on the history of the mathematics and geometry in Islamicate civilization.¹¹⁹

Although late Ottoman encyclopedias were modeled after the modern pattern that emerged in the eighteenth century, they were informed by the pre-modern Arabic encyclopedic handbooks. For instance, the sixteenth century Ottoman scholar Taşköprizade's *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, one of the sources that Rıza Tevfik consulted for the *Dictionary*,¹²⁰ was a product of a long and evolving Arabic encyclopedic tradition.¹²¹

With the ninth century Abbasid translation movement, the late-antique Hellenistic "cycle of education" entered into the Arabic erudition. As the books of Aristotle and Plato, Neoplatonic commentaries as well as the scientific treatises in medicine, geography, geometry, astronomy, optics and arithmetic were rapidly translated into Arabic, the expansion of knowledge and the proliferation of disciplines brought about a need for

Felsefe sözlüklerimiz," 30. Although Ali Suavi's intent was evidently to write an encyclopedia, it is hard to call an encyclopedia the collection of five installments of appendices to his newspaper *Ulûm*, consisting of haphazardly selected subjects and totaling 80 pages. See, Abdullah Uçman, "Ali Suavi" *İslam Ansiklopedisi* v.2, 447-8.)

¹¹⁹ Remzi Demir, *Philosophia Ottomanica*, 145-6.

¹²⁰ Uçman, *Rıza Tevfik'in Sanat*, 307.

¹²¹ Gerhard Endress, "The Cycle of Knowledge: Intellectual Traditions and Encyclopedias of the Rational Sciences in Arabic Islamic Hellenism," *Organizing Knowledge: Encyclopædic Activities in the Pre-Eighteenth Century Islamic World*, ed., Gerhard Endress (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 133.

classification. The initial attempt at systematic classification was the philosopher-scientist al-Kindi's, which came in the early and vibrant period of the translations.¹²²

“A true encyclopedia, in the sense of a handbook comprising of the matters of all the cycles of knowledge”¹²³ came into being only after the philosophical projects of Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Rushd offered a comprehensive program for the concordance of philosophical, theological and scientific rational inquiry. The twelfth century theologian and philosopher Fakhr-al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *Jāmi' al-'ulūm* (Collection of Sciences) introduced all the branches of erudition present at his time. This book contained an enumeration of different disciplines and explanation of their subject matters. The incorporation of *logic*, *astronomy*, *geometry*, *medicine*, and philosophy [*ḥikma*] into madrasa curriculum in the twelfth century paved the way for the emergence of propaedeutic handbooks that integrated rational knowledge (*ma'qūl*), sciences, philosophy and theology, and the received knowledge (*manqūl*), jurisprudence, exegesis of Qur'an and *hadith*.¹²⁴

When Taşköprizade wrote his handbook for classification of all the disciplines taught at madrasas at his time *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda* (The Key of Happiness), he had at his disposal a matured encyclopedic tradition.¹²⁵ For propaedeutic purposes, *The Key* provides a systematic summary of the disciplines taught at the Ottoman madrasa in the sixteenth century. Taşköprizade begins with discussing the value of the sciences, the virtue of learning and the mutual duties of the students and teachers. The main body of the book addresses the proper methods, subjects, principles, pedagogical purposes and benefits of each discipline, together with a review of their history and major literature.¹²⁶

¹²² Ibid, 110-11.

¹²³ Ibid, 115.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 128.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 133.

¹²⁶ İlhan Kutluer, “Miftāḥ us-Sa'ādet,” *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, v. 30, 18-9.

Pre-modern counterparts of Arabic encyclopedia in the Latin West shared the same presumption that it is theoretically possible to acquire all the pertinent knowledge. These encyclopedias summarized, categorized, and ordered knowledge in a systematic treatment.

Modern encyclopedias emerged as the belief in the possibility of presenting universal knowledge in a systematic fashion gradually faded away. By the seventeenth century, the canonical subjects and their traditional delineation that pre-modern encyclopedias rested on was contested by the recently emerging branches of learning, such as mechanics or history, which were formerly barred out from university education. In addition to the ramification of disciplines, it became apparent that the amount of knowledge worth studying could not be covered by an individual in his lifetime. The new role assigned to encyclopedias, thus, consisted in not preserving the received knowledge but recording the progressive accumulation of knowledge and rendering it accessible to a wider audience.¹²⁷

As opposed to the thematically, if not systematically, organized Renaissance encyclopedias, the enlightenment encyclopedias followed the pattern of alphabetical order employed in the dictionaries of arts and sciences of the seventeenth century. Alphabetical order dissolved the preconceived order among the subjects and topics in the Renaissance encyclopedias.¹²⁸ Although as the image of tree of knowledge published in the *Encyclopédie* edited by Denis Diderot and Jean d’Alambert suggested, the enlightenment encyclopedias did not completely dispense with the idea of mapping knowledge, there was a crucial difference between the tree of knowledge of the *Encyclopédists* and the premodern idea of systematic itinerary of advancing in learning. “While [the *Encyclopédie*] still show[ed] intellectual relations between subjects, these links were not completely divorced from any sense of a proper order of study... This secular tree of knowledge was no longer an *arbor*

¹²⁷ Richard Yeo, *Encyclopaedic Visions: Scientific Dictionaries and Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), 9-12.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 16.

sapiente.”¹²⁹ Instead, as D’Alambert suggested, the modern encyclopedia is a decentralized mapping of knowledge without asserting a predetermined way to navigate.

A Glossary, a Dictionary, and an Encyclopedia

A comparison between Rıza Tevfik’s *Dictionary*, and two other contemporary publications on philosophical terminology reveals the different semantic functions each had and different purposes each served.

The journal of philosophical terminology¹³⁰ published by the Commission consists of merely French terms and their recommended equivalents in Ottoman. As a reference tool, it had the practical function of fixing the one-to-one correspondence between the French and Ottoman words. This bi-lingual list of terms practically defers all the relevant explanation on the meanings of the terms to French.

The French-Ottoman dictionary of philosophical terminology¹³¹ serialized in the Ottoman philosophy journal *Felsefe Mecmuası* (*Journal of Philosophy*) (1913)¹³² was the compilation of the terms previously used in the journal, supplied with, if at all, brief descriptions. In the Editor Baha Tevfik’s words, some of the terms are just listed merely with the French equivalent without any explanation, because these terms were “mentioned in the previous editions of [the] journal.”¹³³ Apart from these, some terms are followed by their analytic definitions. For instance *haseniyât* is derived from the Arabic root *ḥusn* ‘beauty’ to translate esthetics. The definition “the discipline of beauty [*ilm-i hüsn*], the philosophy of beautiful sayings [*hikmet-i bedayi*]” does not convey much about what

¹²⁹ Ibid, 28.

¹³⁰ *İstilahât-ı İlmiye Encümeni Tarafından Kâmus-ı Felsefede Münderic Kelimât ve Tabirât İçin Vaz ve Tedvini Tensib Olunan İstilahât Mecmuasıdır* see above “Publications” on page 36.

¹³¹ Tevfik Baha, ed., *Felsefe Mecmuası* [Journal of Philosophy] (İstanbul: Nefaset Matbaası, 1913), 161-8.

¹³² In terms of its purpose and its being exclusively dedicated to philosophy, *Felsefe Mecmuası* was the first philosophy journal in Ottoman. (Alkan, “Türkiye’nin İlk Felsefe Dergisi,” 49).

¹³³ *Felsefe Mecmuası*, 161.

esthetics is or pertains to in philosophy. Some terms only indicate antinomies, such as “*hilkatiye - créatism*: the opposite of *tekâmüliye* (evolutionism),”¹³⁴ some others give a brief depiction of the subject of certain disciplines (for instance the entries ‘ethnography’, ‘linguistics’ etc.).¹³⁵ In all cases, this dictionary serves as a “pragmatic device,”¹³⁶ which circumscribes the meaning of a term without due conceptual or linguistic analysis.

Rıza Tevfik’s *Dictionary* also serves this pragmatic purpose of showing inter-lingual verbal correspondences. The French heading of a term contains the equivalents in English, German and Italian, next to the Ottoman translation. A typical entry reads as follows:

(İngilizce, Fransızca)	Cause	illet, (sebeb)
(Almanca)	Ursache	
(İtalyanca)	Causa	
[Main Text of the article] ¹³⁷		

For ease of navigating, every Ottoman term that appears in an article is highlighted and followed by the French equivalent. Moreover, the Ottoman pronunciation of Latin and Greek¹³⁸ words as well as of foreign proper names is supplemented.

The outstanding merit of the *Dictionary* that neither the glossary journal of the Commission, nor the lexicographic appendix of the *Felsefe Mecmuası* attains consists in the selective readings of philosophical texts clustered around a concept that the *Dictionary* provides. In the *Dictionary*, Rıza Tevfik follows the historical evolution of the concept a term denotes through its articulation by various philosophers in both the Western and

¹³⁴ Ibid., p.165.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p.168.

¹³⁶ Umberto Eco points out that “if the encyclopedia is an unordered set of markers (and of frames, scripts, text-oriented instructions), the dictionary-like arrangements we continuously provide are transitory and pragmatically useful hierarchical reassessments of it. In this sense, one should turn upside down a current distinction between dictionary (strictly ‘semantic’) and encyclopedia (polluted with ‘pragmatic’ elements); on the contrary, the encyclopedia is a semantic concept and the dictionary is a pragmatic device.” Umberto Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 85.

¹³⁷ Rıza Tevfik, *Kâmus* 2, 149.

¹³⁸ That Rıza Tevfik knew Modern Greek figures in the pronunciations of the Ancient Greeks words supplied in the *Dictionary*. Instead of variants of reconstructed pronunciation of Ancient Greek common in Western Classics scholarship, Rıza Tevfik uses the Modern Greek/Byzantine pronunciation. For instance, the pronunciation of the Greek word ‘*eusebeia*’ is not written as *eusebeya* but as *evseviya*. Ibid, 60.

Eastern philosophical traditions. Starting from exploring the meaning of a concept, he presents the way in which it was used by Medieval Latin and Arabic, and finally Modern thinkers.

On the level of semantic description, the *Dictionary* does not merely state as in the above-mentioned glossary and the dictionary, but evaluates the meaning of the terms. The article “Cause”¹³⁹ exemplifies the critical linguistic analysis employed in the *Dictionary*. Indicating that Ottoman *illet* and *sebeb* translate cause, Rıza Tevfik evaluates the meaning of these words to show that their meaning in the common language cannot be a tenable reference for philosophical terms. *İllet* is employed to mean sickness [*maraz*] in common parlance. “It seems,” he surmises, “the cause [*sebeb*] of sickness is identified with the sickness itself and the cause and the effect [*sebeb ile müsebbib*] are not distinguished from each other.” The precise translation of the philosophical term ‘cause’ cannot be ‘*sebeb*’, for ‘*sebeb*’ primarily denotes ‘mean [*vasıta*]’ and ‘occasion [*vesile*]’. Yet again, the meaning *sebeb* in the common usage multiplies the confusion, as ‘*sebeb*’ also connotes ‘condition’ in the phrases such as ‘conditions of wealth [*esbâb-ı refah*]’.¹⁴⁰

Regardless of this confusion, Rıza Tevfik argues, *illet* should translate the term ‘cause.’ *Sebeb* should not be completely discarded, for it is needed to denote a particular notion of cause in philosophy. The seventeenth century French philosopher Nicolas Malebranche attributes the power of action to nothing but God, arguing that the real causation [*illet-i hakikiye*] belongs only to him. What seems as causation in nature and as the consequence of the exertion of human will are merely the result of the fact that mundane

¹³⁹ Ibid, 149-196.

¹⁴⁰ “Türkçe’de avam lisanında ‘illet’ maraz manasına hala müstameldir. Anlaşıyor ki hastalığın sebebi bizzat hastalıkla bir tutulmuş ve ‘sebeb ile müsebbib cause et effet’ yekdiğerinden tefrik edilememiştir. Bugün ‘sebeb’ kelimesini tercihen kullanıyoruz, fakat yanlışır; zira sebeb ‘vesile’ ve ‘vasıta’ demektir. Hala bu manada varid olarak yine lisanımızda istimal edilmektedir.” Ibid, 149.

things occasion the manifestation of the divine will [*iradat-ı ilahiye*]. ‘*Sebeb*’ should be retained to denote this sort of causes, namely, ““*causes occasionnelles*’.”¹⁴¹

In addition to lexicographic discussion on the adequacy of the Ottoman term, Rıza Tevfik indicates, the etymology of the both French and Ottoman term should be taken into consideration. The root of the French word ‘cause’ is the Latin ‘*causa*’ which was employed to translate the Ancient Greek ‘*aition*.’ Since “Arabic philosophers [*Arap feylesoflari*]” called [*aition*] ‘*illa*’, its Ottoman version *illet* should be used to denote cause.¹⁴²

The importance of the etymological links consists in that these connections provide a path for cross-readings, and sustain the clarity of the meanings of the terms. As Ancient philosophy is the origin of western Medieval and modern philosophy, as well as classical Arabic philosophy and subsequent Islamicate intellectual traditions, words which reflect the historical transfer of ideas are the designators orienting the genealogical exposition of the designated concepts in the history of philosophy.

The article “Cardinal Virtues”¹⁴³ suggests the outlines of Rıza Tevfik’s genealogical analyses. To articulate the origin of the idea of cardinal virtues, Rıza Tevfik claims that virtues became a philosophical question only after Socrates turned philosophical interest from inquiring the principles of cosmos to search what it means to live a good life. Plato elaborated his teacher’s [*üstad*] ideas on virtue, and explained them in terms of his tripartite theory of the psyche [*ruh*]. Platonic psychology asserts that the psyche is composed of three parts. *Epithymia* (*nefs-i behimî*) is the appetitive part. If it obeys the commands of the reason, this part acts in accordance with its virtue, that is, temperance (“*sōphrosynē* = *iffet*”). The second part, *thymos* (*nefs-i gazabiye*) is the source of passions. If this part obeys commands the reason, it fulfills the virtue pertinent to it. This virtue is called courage

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 150.

¹⁴² Ibid, 149-151.

(“*andreia* = secaa”). The last and highest constitutive part of the soul is reason (“*nous* = *akıl*”). Reason rules over the other parts of the soul in order for the other two parts to attain their virtue. If the reason does not rule the other parts tyrannously but with moderation, it attains its own virtue, that is, wisdom (*hikmet*). The equilibrium and concordance among the faculties of the soul is essential for Plato as he calls this “spiritual harmony ‘the greatest harmony [*en büyük ahenk*] = *megistē mousikē*’.” This symphony of the three parts is the overall virtue of the soul, which is justice (“*dikaiosynē* = *adalet*”).¹⁴⁴

The four cardinal virtues –temperance, courage, wisdom and justice- were adapted into Medieval Latin philosophy through Cicero. The adaptation of this idea amounted to the harmonization of the original four virtues with the additional three, peculiar to Christianity, namely, faith (*iman*), hope (*ümit*) and charity (*kerem*).¹⁴⁵ Rıza Tevfik ends tracing the genealogy of cardinal virtues in Western philosophy by noting that the idea of cardinal virtues lost their validity in modern philosophy, as each school of philosophy (*mezheb-i felsefi*) has a view on virtues according to its moral theory.¹⁴⁶

While establishing the genealogical links, Rıza Tevfik does not presume a simplistic view that the meaning of the terms did not change over the centuries. The other line of genealogy, Rıza Tevik elaborates on, is the appropriation of Plato’s ethics by the “philosophers of Islam [*hükema-yı İslam*]” as modified in Late Antiquity. Late Antique syncretism of Plato’s and Aristotle’s philosophy brought about the modification of Plato’s theory of virtues by Aristotelian ethics.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Ibid, 59-66.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 60-61.

¹⁴⁵ Rıza Tevfik refers to the theological virtues of Christianity -*pistis* (faith), *elpis* (hope), *agapē* (charity-love) - derived from the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 13:13.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 62.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 63.

Rıza Tevfik puts an emphasis on the connection between the Ottoman intellectual tradition and Ancient philosophy. Devoting almost half of the article to long quotes from the sixteenth century Ottoman scholar Kınalızâde's book *Ahlak-ı Alâî* (The Exalted Ethics),¹⁴⁸ Rıza Tevfik repeatedly underlines that Kınalızâde's consideration of the essentials of virtues [*usûl-i fezail*] is "exactly Plato's famous theory [of virtues]." ¹⁴⁹

Despite the repetition of Kınalızâde's reliance of Plato's views, Rıza Tevfik evidently acknowledges that it was not exactly Plato's theory. In addition to the late Antique modification of Platonic ideas by Aristotelian ethics, based on that virtues should be cultivated as character traits and are attained by avoiding excesses, the long quotes from Kınalızâde reveal that Plato's ideas had undeniable impact on Kınalızâde, but were not merely reproduced. Plato's *sōphrosynē* (temperance), for instance, becomes Kınalızâde's *iffet* (chastity), which is heavily laden with the norms of Islamic morality.¹⁵⁰

Rıza Tevfik's stressing the connection between Kınalızâde's and Plato's ideas has the evident purpose of legitimizing the reading of *The Exalted Ethics* not as a madrasa textbook on Islamic morality, but an example of philosophical ethics. "All these considerations," Rıza Tevfik concludes the article, "clearly proves that the Greek genius had a deep and continuous impact on both the Orient and the Occident."¹⁵¹ The common origin of Western and Arabic philosophy suggests placing texts of different pedigree in one frame circumscribed by the interpretive discussion of a philosophical problem or the evaluation of a concept with respect to its articulation in the history of philosophy.

¹⁴⁸ Kınalızâde Ali Efendi was one of the prominent Ottoman scholars of the 16th century. His magnum opus *Ahlâk-ı 'Alâî* [The Exalted Ethics] was studied in Ottoman medreses till the very end of the Empire. For further biographical information and the synopsis of his works see: Ayşe Sıdıka Oktay, "Kınalızâde Ali Efendinin hayatı ve Ahlâk-ı Alâî isimli eseri," *Dîvân*, no. 1 (2002): 185-233.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 66.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

CONCLUSION

In four chapters, the present thesis suggested to reevaluate the history of the formation of modern terminology in Turkish. The first chapter reviewed the philosophical translations into Ottoman in the second half of nineteenth century. The translations, which unprecedentedly proliferated in the period under consideration, were from French as well as from Arabic. Translations from French paved the way for the formation of modern terminology in Ottoman. The late Ottoman interest in Classical Arabic works, I argued, reflects the refashioning of Arabic as the classical language of Ottomans over the second half of the nineteenth century.

A short biography of Rıza Tevfik and his works are presented in the second chapter. That Rıza Tevfik was versed in French, English, Arabic, knew some Italian and Greek proved to be fruitful in his multilingual *Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy*. His varied intellectual interests were also reflected in his publications. Philosophy text books and articles published by Rıza Tevfik show his sustained engagement with philosophy. Together with these, his scholarly knowledge of Turkish literature made him a perfect candidate for the Commission on Scientific Terminology.

The third chapter took up and expanded on the issue raised at the end of the first chapter. The Commission on Scientific Terminology was established by the Ministry of Education in order to conventionalize modern scientific and philosophical terminology in Ottoman. The Commission's choice of Arabic as the source language was based on the view that Arabic is the classical language for Ottoman Turkish, analogous to Latin and Greek for European languages. The members of the commission argued that as French terms are derived from Latin and Greek, Arabic should be the main source language for the modern terminology in Ottoman. The insistence on Arabic as the source language was also essential to maintain a link between modern ideas and the indigenous intellectual tradition.

The last chapter explored Rıza Tevfik's contribution to the formation of modern philosophical terminology in Ottoman. His encyclopedic work *Detailed Dictionary of Philosophy* was an instance of the modern Ottoman encyclopedism that emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ottoman encyclopedias of the period were fashioned after the model set in eighteenth century Europe. Yet they also draw on the long and evolving pre-modern Arabic encyclopedic tradition. A comparison with two other contemporary Ottoman lexicographic publications on philosophical terminology showed the singularity of the *Dictionary* in terms of its scope and methodological scrutiny.

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