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changeable /'tʃeɪndʒəbəl/
[(O)Fr., f. as CHAN

may change or be

to change; mutable;

Showing different

The Turkish Language Reform

A Catastrophic Success

Geoffrey Lewis

THE TURKISH LANGUAGE REFORM

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A Catastrophic Success

GEOFFREY LEWIS

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Abbreviations

[A]	Arabic
ATD	<i>Atatürk ve Türk Dili</i> (Ankara: TDK, 1963)
AKDTYK	Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu
AÜDTC	Ankara Üniversitesi Dil Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi
DLT	<i>Dîwân Luġât al-Turk</i>
[F]	French
[G]	Greek
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of London</i>
[M]	Mongolian
OT	Old Turkic
[P]	Persian
TBMM	Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi
TDK	Türk Dil Kurumu
TDTC	Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti
TL	Türk Lirası (Turkish lira)
TTK	Türk Tarih Kurumu

Note on the Text

Turkish words under discussion are in *italic* unless there is no possibility of confusion with a similar English word. Words from other languages, as well as book titles, are also shown in *italic*, likewise words of Arabic or Persian origin in some of the quotations, words of native origin being in roman.

An [A], [P], [F], [G], or [M] after a word shows its origin as Arabic, Persian, French, Greek, or Mongolian respectively; [PA] after a two-word phrase means that the first word is of Persian origin, the second Arabic. Square brackets are also used (a) to enclose the author's comments within translations of quotations, (b) to cite the original wording where the full text is not included (which happens rarely, only when there is nothing particularly noteworthy about the Turkish), and (c) round surnames later assumed by people who come into the story before the Surnames Law of 1934. Logic would demand that the founder of the Republic should be called Mustafa Kemal (or just Kemal, which he preferred) until the story comes down to the time of that law; nevertheless he is sometimes referred to anachronistically as Atatürk, the name by which he is best remembered.

In transliterations of Arabic and Persian words, *č* stands for the sound of English *ch*; *đ* for English *th* in *this*; *ğ* for English *j*; *ġ* for Arabic *ghayn*, the gargling sound of the Parisian and Northumbrian *r*; *ħ* for *kh* as in *Bukhara*; *ǰ* for French *j*; *š* for English *sh*; *ť* for English *th* in *think*. (In the Chaghatay passage quoted in Chapter 2 I have followed Levend's transliteration; he uses *ç* and *ş*, not *č* and *š*.)

While most references to *Türk Dili*, the Türk Dil Kurumu's monthly journal, are by volume number and page, some give the number or date of the individual monthly part, because volume numbers were not always shown and because the pagination was not always cumulative, so that a volume may contain, say, a dozen pages numbered 27. The aim has been to make the references clear, though not necessarily consistent.

A pair of forward strokes encloses a representation of pronunciation, for which ordinary characters, not the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet, are used: /g'āvur/.

An asterisk preceding a word shows it to be a hypothetical form.

OT stands for Old Turkic, Turkic (the current Turkish for which is Türkî [A]) being the unattractive but generally accepted term for the family of which Turkish, the language of Turkey, is a member. The term Old Turkic is properly applied to languages of the family from the eighth to the tenth century, while the period from the eleventh to the fifteenth century is Middle Turkic. I beg the reader's indulgence if on occasion I have misapplied 'OT' to a Middle Turkic word.

Introduction

This book has two purposes. The first is to acquaint the general reader with the often bizarre, sometimes tragicomic, but never dull story of the Turkish language reform. The second is to provide students of Turkish at every level with some useful and stimulating reading matter. With both purposes in mind, no word, phrase, or sentence of Turkish has been left untranslated, apart from names of books and articles, as it is assumed that the reader who wishes to chase up bibliographical references will understand the meaning of the titles. The second purpose accounts for the references to the author's *Turkish Grammar* and for the abundance of footnotes and digressions.

The language reform is not so well known abroad as other aspects of the Kemalist revolution because, having lasted for more than half a century, it is not the stuff of which headlines are made, but its effects are evident if we compare the Turkish of today with that of even thirty years ago.

Not a few nations have gone in for linguistic engineering. By this I mean tinkering with language with the express purpose of changing people's speech habits and the way they write. I am not referring to the introduction of new words for technical innovations such as vaccination, radar, or the modem, or to the creation of new non-technical words by individuals intending to amuse or to express ideas for which they find no words in the existing language. The names that come to mind in these last two categories are, on the one hand, Lewis Carroll, on the other hand, James Joyce, and, in the middle, the American Gelett Burgess, whom we have to thank for the word *blurb*. In his *Burgess Unabridged: A New Dictionary of Words You Have Always Needed* (1914), he defines it as '1. A flamboyant advertisement; an inspired testimonial. 2. Fulsome praise; a sound like a publisher.' An earlier (1906) success of his had been to popularize *bromide*, previously meaning a sedative, in the sense of a boringly trite remark. He gives as an example: 'It isn't the money, it's the principle of the thing', and points out that what makes it a bromide is not just its triteness but its inevitability. He was by no means the first such benefactor of humanity; there was, for example, the unknown seventeenth-century genius who combined *dumbstruck* and *confounded* to make *dumbfounded*. Nor was he the last; the earliest recorded appearance in print of *guesstimate*, later *gestimate*, was in 1936, in the *New York Times*, and such inventions keep coming. During the Gulf War of 1991 we were reminded by an American general of the existence

of *bodacious*, apparently a combination of *bold* and *audacious*, first recorded in British English in 1845.

These, however, are not what I intend by linguistic engineering. I mean the sort of deliberate campaign that has been carried out at various times by Germans, Swedes, Hungarians, Finns, and Albanians, among others, for nationalistic reasons, to purge their languages of foreign words and substitute native words for them. In lands of German speech the encroachment of French began at the end of the sixteenth century. The first stirrings of protest came a century later, although clearly with no effect on King Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia (1713–40), to judge by his celebrated declaration to his nobles: 'Ich stabiliere die Souveraineté wie einen Rocher de Bronze.' The modern German vocabulary shows the results of another such campaign, with *Fernsprecher* and *Kraftwagen* replacing the international *Telefon* and *Auto*, though the latter two have staged a comeback. A movement to eliminate German and Latin words from Hungarian began in the second half of the eighteenth century and had considerable success. The French Academy has long been fighting a losing battle against the inroads of *Franglais*.

Attempts have been made to purge English too. *Inwit* was used for *conscience* in the *Ancrene Riwe*, written about 1230. In 1340 Dan Michel wrote his *Ayenbite of Inwit*, *ayenbite* being a Middle English translation of the late Latin *remorsus* 'remorse'; James Joyce partially modernized it into *agenbite* in his *Ulysses* (1922). In the nineteenth century came the Saxonisms, native substitutes for words of Greek and Latin origin. *Birdlore* was invented in 1830 to replace *ornithology*, and *folklore* in 1846 to encapsulate 'traditional beliefs, legends and customs of the common people'. *Foreword for preface* is first recorded in 1842. But nowhere has such a campaign been so long sustained and effective as in Turkey.

The aim of the Turkish language reform was to eliminate the Arabic and Persian grammatical features and the many thousands of Arabic and Persian borrowings that had long been part of the language. It comprised two different phases of activity: isolated attempts from the mid-nineteenth century on, undertaken mostly by private individuals and groups, and the government-inspired campaign that began around 1930. The latter could more accurately be termed a revolution than a reform, since 'reform' implies improvement. *Dil devrimi* (the language revolution) is what Turks call it, but Western writers have always called it the language reform, and the practice is followed in this book. Although it is less accurate to call the proponents of *dil devrimi* 'language reformers' rather than 'linguistic revolutionaries', it is also less cumbersome.

Why the subtitle 'A Catastrophic Success'? The author recognizes that not every reader who knows the story will share his view, but some of them may do so by the time they have read to the end. There is no denying the success. An incontrovertible proof is that *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal's thirty-six hour Speech on the end of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the Turkish Republic, which he delivered over six days in 1927, became less and less comprehensible to the young until in

the early 1960s it had to be 'translated into the present-day language'. A single paragraph is enough to show the extent of the changes that thirty odd years had wrought. First, Kemal's own words:

Muhterem Efendiler, İnönü muharebe meydanını, ikinci defa olarak mağlûben terk ve Bursa istikametinde eski mevzilerine ricat eden düşmanın takibinde, piyade ve süvari fırkalarımızın gösterdikleri şayanı tezkâr kahramanlıkları izah etmiyeceğim. Yalnız, umumî vaziyeti askeriye için müsaade buyurursanız Cenup Cephemize ait mıntakada cereyan etmiş olan harekâtı hulâsa edeyim. (Kemal 1934: ii. 106)¹

Honoured gentlemen, I shall not give an account of the notable acts of heroism shown by our infantry and cavalry divisions in pursuit of the enemy, who, vanquished for the second time, was abandoning the İnönü battlefield and retreating in the direction of Bursa, to its old positions. With your permission, however, to complete the general military picture let me summarize the movements which had proceeded in the region of our southern front.

Here is the corresponding text in the 1963 version (Tuğrul *et al.*: ii. 427), with a translation using words of Anglo-Saxon rather than of Latin origin wherever possible, to try to convey the flavour of the neologisms:

Sayın baylar, İnönü Savaş alanını ikinci kez yenilerek bırakan ve Bursa doğrultusunda eski dayangalarına çekilen düşmanın kovalanmasında piyade ve süvari tümenlerimizin gösterdikleri anılmaya değer yiğitlikleri anlatmayacağım. Yalnız, askerlik bakımından genel durumun açıklanmasını tamamlamak için, izin verirsiniz, Güney Cephemiz bölgesinde yapılan savaşları özetleyeyim.

Distinguished sirs, I shall not tell of the noteworthy deeds of bravery done by our infantry and cavalry divisions in chasing the enemy, who, beaten for the second time, was leaving the İnönü battlefield and withdrawing towards Bursa, to its old standings. With your leave, however, to fill out the sketch of the general situation from the military viewpoint, let me outline the struggles carried out in the section of our southern front.

The neologism *dayanga* (here rendered 'standing'), manufactured from *dayanmak* 'to be based, to hold out', was intended to replace *mevzi* in the sense of a position held by troops. It did not gain acceptance, has not replaced *mevzi*, and does not appear in recent dictionaries. Nor has a substitute been found for *harekât*, an Arabic plural still current for 'troop movements'; the *savaşlar* of the text, 'struggles' or 'battles', does not convey Kemal's meaning. For 'permission' in the final sentence, his *müsaade* has been replaced by *izin*, which is equally Arabic but less obviously so.

The language did not remain static after the 1960s. Not twenty years later, the need was felt for an even more up-to-date version. *Nutuk-Söylev* (Arar *et al.* 1986) gives the 1934 and 1963 texts in parallel, with some amendments to the latter, although, in the paragraph quoted above (at ii., 777 in *Nutuk-Söylev*), there happens to be only one change from the 1963 version: *Sayın*, now no more of an honorific than Mr, Mrs, Miss, or Ms, has been replaced by *Saygıdeğer* 'respectworthy'.

¹ The first publication was in the old alphabet (Ankara: Turk Tayyare Cemiyeti, 1927).

And consider this, from the introduction to the 1982 edition of a book first published in 1968 (Yücel 1982), explaining why the author thought a revised version was necessary: 'Bir kez, şimdi olduğu gibi o günlerde de yazılarımı oldukça arı bir Türkçe yazmama karşın, on üç yıl önceki dilim bayağı eskimiş göründü bana' (For one thing, although I wrote then as I do now, in quite a pure Turkish, my language of thirteen years ago seemed to me downright antiquated).

What gives the success its catastrophic aspect is not just the loss of Ottoman Turkish—its time had long passed and only a fast-disappearing company of elderly Turks and the few foreigners who love the language for its own sake are shedding any tears over it—but also the loss of its natural development, the Turkish of the 1920s and 1930s, the language of Halide Edip Adıvar, Sabahattin Ali, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, and Reşat Nuri Güntekin.² The loss affects every Turk who now, in speaking or writing, gropes for the precise word to express the required meaning and does not find it, because it is as dead as Etruscan and has not been replaced. Moreover, many of the neologisms were constructed arbitrarily, with little or no regard for the rules and conventions of Turkish, with the result that any Turk with a feeling for language finds at least some of them excruciating and cannot bear to use or to hear them. Several of my friends cannot stand *iletişim* for 'communications', while many more cannot abide the use of *neden* 'from what?' as a noun meaning 'cause'.

In 1984 I attended a lecture in Ankara by a social anthropologist. It was entitled 'Differing Mentalities and Culture' and it was a good lecture, but I confess to having been more interested in the medium than the message. The speaker began by drawing a distinction between local cultures and universal culture. For 'universal' he first used the Ottoman 'külli', and then, when a stirring in the audience showed that it was not intelligible or not acceptable to everyone, he tried 'tümel', the neologism for 'universal' as a philosophical term. A similar reaction from the audience, and he said 'üniversal'. Later on he used 'genel' 'general'. He did not try 'evrensel', the prescribed neologism for 'universal, cosmic', which was subsequently used by a questioner from the floor. After a while he took to rattling off three words for each concept: for example, when he wanted to express 'causality' he used the Ottoman borrowing from Arabic, the neologism which may be literally rendered 'fromwhatishness', and the French: 'illiyet–nedenlilik–causalité'.

How the language got into that state is the subject of this book.

² Turkish cynics say that the young do not read works written more than ten years ago anyway, but this is belied by the number of 'translations into modern Turkish' and 'simplified versions' of standard authors to be seen in the bookshops. See, however, the quotation from Fuat M. Andic on page 143.

Ottoman Turkish

By the beginning of the eleventh century, most of the ancestors of the present Turks of Turkey had become Muslim. It is evident that their introduction to Islam was due to peoples of Iranian speech, because the basic religious terms in Turkish come not from Arabic but from Persian or other Iranian languages: *namaz* 'prayer', *oruç* 'fasting', *peygamber* 'prophet'. The apparent exceptions, the Arabic *hac* or *ziyaret* for 'pilgrimage', are no exception, because those are the words used in Persian too. Once settled within the civilization of Islam, the Turks took into their language as much of the Persian and Arabic vocabularies as they needed, and more. As the perception that they were Turks was supplanted by an awareness that they were members of the Ümmet-i Muhammed, the Community of Believers, so the tide of Arabic and Persian flowed. It was not just a matter of borrowing foreign words for foreign concepts. They had a perfectly good word for 'city', *balık*, as in Marco Polo's name for Pekin, Cambaluc—i.e. *Hānbalık* 'Emperor's City'. By the fourteenth century they had abandoned it for *şehir* (Persian *šahr*), and *kend* (Sogdian *knd*), which forms the last element of the names Tashkent, Yarkand, and Samarkand. They had two words for 'army', *çerig* and *sü*, both of which were ousted from general use by *asker*, Arabic 'askar (originally the Latin *exercitus*), though *çerig* was preserved in *Yeniçeri* 'New Troops', whence *Janissary*. Even the word for 'fire', *od*, gradually fell out of use; it survived in poetry until the early twentieth century but had hardly been used in prose for four hundred years, its place having been taken by *ateş*, Persian *āteš*. This process had begun in the empire of the Seljuk Turks (1040–1157). Mehmet Fuat Köprülüzade (1928: 10–11) wrote:¹

Anadolu'da . . . klâsik Acem şîrini model ittihaz eden 'Saray şairleri'ni daha Selçukiler sarayında görmeğe başlıyoruz . . . İran tesiratının mütemadi kuvvetle nemasına ve Acem modellerinin taklidinde daimî bir terakki gösterilmesine rağmen, Türkçe yazan şairler ve müellifler, eserlerinde hemen umumiyetle: 'Türkçe'nin Arapça ve Acemce'ye nispetle daha dar, daha kaba, ifadeye daha kabiliyetsiz olduğunu, ve binaenaleyh kendi kusurların bakılmamak lâzım geldiğini' söylüyorlar, hatta bazan zımnî bir mazeret şeklinde 'Arabî ve Farsî bilmeyen halkın anlaması için Türkçe yazmağa mecbur olduklarını' ilâve ediyorlardı.

Already at the Seljuk court in Anatolia we begin to see the 'Palace poets', who took classical Persian poetry as their model . . . But almost all those poets and prose-writers who

¹ This great historian of Turkish literature (1890–1966) changed his name to Mehmet Fuat Köprülü in compliance with the Surnames Law of 1934, which required every family to choose a Turkish surname; the *zâde* ('-son') in his time-honoured patronymic was Persian.

wrote in Turkish despite the continuing vigorous growth of Persian influences and a steady advance in the imitation of Persian models, used to say in their works that Turkish, in comparison with Arabic and Persian, was limited, crude, and inexpressive, and that their own shortcomings must therefore be overlooked. They would sometimes even add as an implicit excuse that they were obliged to write in Turkish in order to be understood by the common people, who were ignorant of Arabic and Persian.

Huge though the influx of Persian words was, a bigger invasion came from Arabic, and not only because as the language of the Koran it naturally became the language of religion and theology and because the Persian vocabulary was itself replete with Arabic borrowings, but also because when an Arabic word was borrowed it brought its whole family with it. This calls for a brief explanation, which Arabists may skip.

Arabic words generally are based on trilateral roots—that is, roots consisting of three consonants, for example, *K-T-B* and *J-B-R* expressing the concepts of writing and compulsion respectively. These consonants are fitted into patterns of short and long vowels, sometimes with a doubling of the second or third consonant, sometimes with prefixes or infixes. Each pattern has a specific grammatical function: *KaTaBa* ‘he wrote’, *KāTiB* ‘writer’, *maKTūB* ‘written’; *JaBaRa* ‘he compelled’, *JāBiR* ‘compelling’, *majBūr* ‘compelled’. Once one knows the patterns, learning a new root can increase one’s vocabulary by as many as a dozen new words.

It was natural that the Turks should borrow so fundamental a word as ‘ilm: ‘knowledge’, more particularly ‘religious knowledge’. So along came ‘*ālim* ‘scholar’ with its plural ‘*ulamā*’, *maʿlūm* ‘known’, *muʿallim* ‘teacher’, *taʿlīm* ‘instruction’, *istīlām* ‘request for information’, and lots more. And every new importation of a foreign word meant that the corresponding Turkish word was forgotten or became restricted to the speech of the common people. A good example is *sin* ‘grave, tomb’, found in popular poetry from the thirteenth to the twentieth century and still widely used in Anatolia, but hardly ever found in elevated writing, having long ago been supplanted by *mezar* [A].

But there was more to the rise of Ottoman than the suppression of native words. With the Arabic and Persian words came Arabic and Persian grammatical conventions. Turkish was born free of that disease of language known as grammatical gender; Arabic was not. Further, whereas Turkish adjectives precede their nouns, Arabic and Persian adjectives follow them.² Nor is that the whole story. When Persian took nouns over from Arabic, it usually took their plurals as well: with ‘ilm ‘knowledge, science’, came its plural ‘*ulūm*, which is grammatically

² While students of Turkish may be cheered to find the occasional similarity with English, they should remember that Turkish adjectives *invariably* precede their nouns. In English, however, besides the locutions exemplified in ‘He is well versed in matters archaeological’ and ‘The boiler is in an out-building, not in the house proper’, we have such anomalies as ‘court martial’, ‘time immemorial’, ‘Princess Royal’, ‘Heir Apparent’, and ‘President Elect’, while ‘law merchant’ and ‘rhyme royal’ still figure in the vocabularies of experts in jurisprudence and literature respectively.

feminine. Moreover, in Persian an *i* (termed ‘Persian izafet’, from *iḏāfa* [A] ‘attachment’) is interposed between a noun and its qualifier. *Āb* is ‘water’, *sard* ‘cold’, *ḥayāt* ‘life’; ‘cold water’ is *āb-i-sard* and ‘the water of life’ is *āb-i-ḥayāt*. The Arabic for ‘natural’ is *ṭabīī*, the feminine of which is *ṭabīīya*. So in Persian ‘the natural sciences’ was ‘*ulūm-i-ṭabīīya*, and this became the Ottoman Turkish too (in modern spelling, *ulūm-i tabiiye*). The New Literature movement at the end of the nineteenth century was known as Edebiyat-ı Cedide; *edebiyat* ‘literature’ was feminine in Arabic, so *cedid* ‘new’, the Arabic *jadīd*, was given the Arabic feminine termination, and noun and adjective were linked by the Persian izafet. One of the names of what we call the Ottoman Empire was ‘The Guarded Dominions.’ ‘Dominion’ in Arabic is *mamlaka*, plural *mamālik*, which again is feminine. So *maḥrūṣ*, the Arabic for ‘guarded’, was put into the feminine form, *maḥrūṣa*. In Arabic, ‘guarded dominions’ was therefore *mamālik maḥrūṣa*, but in Ottoman Turkish it became *memalik-i mahrusa*, for that was how it was done in Persian.

Persianization continued unabated under the Ottomans. Although they did not go as far as their Seljuk predecessors in despising their mother tongue enough to make Persian their official language, the fifteenth century saw a huge increase in the Persian influence on Turkish writers of prose and poetry. They took Persian writers as their models and filled their works with Persian borrowings. Latifî (1491–1582) of Kastamonu relates that the poet and historian Leâli was sufficiently proficient in the Persian language to pass as a Persian. He moved from his native Tokat to the capital, where he became a literary lion and won the favour of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, but immediately lost it when it transpired that he was not a Persian but a Turk (Latifî 1314/1898: 289–90). True, Latifî was writing in 1546, almost a century after Leâli’s time, and there is no guarantee that his account was factual, but it shows how depreciated at least one Turkish literary man, Latifî, felt *vis-à-vis* the Persians.³

The situation is thus summed up by Gibb (1900–9: i. 8):

It is not too much to say that during the whole of the five and a half centuries [fourteenth to mid-nineteenth] covered by the Old School [of poetry], more especially the Third Period [the seventeenth century], every Persian and every Arabic word was a possible Ottoman word. In thus borrowing material from the two classical languages a writer was quite unrestricted save by his own taste and the limit of his knowledge; all that was required was that in case of need he should give the foreign words a Turkish grammatical form.

By this he meant that Turkish suffixes could be added to foreign words. As indeed they were, but not always in profusion; in classical Ottoman poetry one may see whole lines where the only indication that they are in Turkish and not Persian is

³ Of interest in this context is an observation on language in fourteenth-century England in the introduction (signed ‘H.M.’) to Maundeville (1886: 3): ‘In the days of Maundeville Latin, French and English were the three languages written in this country. Latin was then and long afterwards the common language of the educated, and it united them into a European Republic of Letters; French was the courtly language; English was the language of the people.’

a final *-dir* 'is' or *-di* 'was'. Sometimes even that much is wanting. The three following couplets, containing not one syllable of Turkish, form part of an ode in honour of Sultan Süleyman by Bakî (1526/7–1600), the most highly esteemed poet of the classical age:

Bâlânişin-i mesned-i şâhân-i tâcdâr
 Vâlânişân-i ma'roke-i 'arşa-i keyân
 Cemşid-i 'ayş ü 'işret ü Dârâ-yı dâr ü gîr
 Kisrâ-yı 'adl ü re'fet ü İskender-i zamân
 Sulţân-ı şark u ğarb şehinşâh-i baħr u berr
 Dârâ-yı dehr Şâh Süleymân-ı kâmrân.
 Seated above the thrones of crownèd monarchs,
 High o'er the fray of battlefields of kings,
 Jamshid of feasting and carousing, Darius of war,
 Chosroes of justice and clemency, Alexander of the age,
 Sultan of east and west, King of Kings of sea and land,
 Darius of the time, King Süleyman, of fortune blessed.⁴

The mixture of Turkish, Arabic, and Persian, which Turks call *Osmanlıca* and we call *Ottoman*, was an administrative and literary language, and ordinary people must have been at a loss when they came into contact with officials. But while they must often have been baffled by Ottoman phraseology, they were capable of seeing the funny side of it. In the shadow theatre, the running joke is that *Karagöz* speaks Turkish while his sparring partner *Hacivat* speaks Ottoman. In the play *Salıncak*, *Karagöz* keeps hitting *Hacivat*. *Hacivat* asks him why, but receives only nonsensical answers sounding vaguely like his—to *Karagöz*—unintelligible questions. Eventually he asks, 'Vurmanızdan aksâ-yı murâd?' (What is your ultimate object in hitting me?). To which *Karagöz* replies, 'Aksaray'da murtad babandır' (The turncoat at Aksaray is your father) (*Kudret* 1968–70: iii. 54.) A rough English parallel would be, 'Explain your bellicose attitude.'—'How do I know why he chewed my billy-goat's hat?'

Following in the footsteps of *Karagöz* are today's taxi-drivers who refer to their battery-chargers not as *şarjör*, the French *chargeur*, but as *carcur* 'chatter'.⁵ They are displaying not ignorance but a sense of fun, like those who in the days of the Democrat Party pronounced 'Demokrat' as 'Demirkırat' 'Iron-Grey Horse'.⁶ The British sailors who served on the ship taking Napoleon to St Helena knew very well that her name was not *Billy Ruffian*; in calling her that, they were just cutting the fancy foreign *Bellerophon* down to size, like those people in England who used to Anglicize *asparagus* as *sparrow-grass* and *hysterics* as *high strikes*. In fact the

⁴ A translation of the whole ode will be found in Gibb (1900–9: iii. 147–51).

⁵ According to Erkiilet (1952), soldiers were already saying *carcur* instead of *şarjör* in the 1920s, though this was another kind of *şarjör*, an ammunition-belt for machine-guns. (See p. 101 of the 1967 reprint.)

⁶ When the party was outlawed (see Chapter 12), its reincarnation, the Justice Party, chose as its logo the figure of a horse.

Turkish vocabulary still includes not a few originally foreign words that the tongue of the people has converted into more Turkish shapes: from Persian, for example, *çamaşır* 'linen' (*jāmešūy*), *çerçeve* 'frame' (*çarçūba*), *gözde*⁷ 'favourite' (*guzīde*), *köşe* 'corner' (*gūša*), *çarşamba* 'Wednesday' (*çāršanbih*), and *merdiven* 'staircase' (*nardubān*); and, from Arabic, *rahat lokum* 'Turkish Delight' (*rāḥat al-ḥulkūm* 'ease of the gullet'), now abbreviated to *lokum*, *muşamba* 'oilskin' (*muşammā*), and *maydanoz* 'parsley' (*maḫdūnis*). *Maydanoz* was transformed by some into *midenüvaz* [AP] 'stomach-caressing', a Persian compound that cannot be called a popular etymology; one is reminded of the English people who turned 'Welsh rabbit' into the more genteel-seeming 'Welsh rarebit'. The essayist and novelist Peyami Safa (1899–1961) must have taken *midenüvaz* to be the correct form, for he wrote:

Geçenlerde de bir muharrir arkadaşımız, gazetesinde, türkçeleşmiş bir fransızca kelimeyi türkçe imlâ ile yazdığım için bana tariz etmişti. 'Çokolata' kelimesine 'şokola' ve 'şimendifer' kelimesine 'şömendöfer' diyenler arasında bulunmaktan çekinirim. Bu yolun sonunda maydanoza 'midenüvaz' demek vardır. O çıkmaza girmek istemem ben. (Safa 1970: 47)

A writer friend recently took me to task in his newspaper for spelling a Turkicized French word in the Turkish way. I am reluctant to join the ranks of those who pronounce 'çokolata' as 'şokola' and 'şimendifer' as 'şömendöfer' [*chemin de fer*]. What lies at the end of that road is pronouncing *maydanoz* as *midenüvaz*, a dead end which I have no wish to enter.

On the theme of the bewilderment of ordinary people when confronted by speakers of Ottoman, there is the tale of the *sarıklı hoca* (the turbanned cleric), who, wishing to buy some mutton, addresses a butcher's boy with the words 'Ey şâgird-i kaşşâb, laḥm-i ğanemden bir kıyye bilvezin bana 'itâ eyler misin?' (O apprentice of the butcher, wilt thou bestow on me one oke avoidupois of ovine flesh?). The perplexed boy can only reply 'Amîn!' (Amen!). On the other hand, there is the story of one occasion when the uneducated were not baffled by someone who spoke differently from them. It is said to have happened in 1876, at a time of rioting by the *softas* (students at the *medreses* (religious schools)), when the police were chasing a crowd of them. Despairing of outdistancing the pursuit, one *softa* had the bright idea of sitting down on the pavement. When the police asked him, 'Which way did they go?', he replied, giving full weight to the Arabic pronunciation of his words, as was second nature for a *softa*: 'Ba'dısı şu tarafa, ba'dısı o tarafa' (Some went this way, some that)—and was quite surprised to find himself in custody.

Tahsin Banguoğlu, having mentioned (1987: 325) that the poet and sociologist Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924) had wanted the new Turkish to be Istanbul Turkish as spoken by the intellectuals, adds a comment containing an interesting piece of information that the author has not seen recorded elsewhere:

⁷ Turkish for 'in the eye', an obvious popular etymology.

Evet ama, o zaman aydınların konuştuğu Türkçe eski yazı dilinin çok etkisinde kalmış bir Türkçe idi. Onu da halk pek anlamıyordu. Halk buna *istillâhi konuşma* derdi. Meselâ ‘müdür bey, kâtime bir şey soyledi, ama anlayamadım. İstillâhi konuşuyorlar.’

Yes, but the Turkish spoken by intellectuals at that time was a Turkish still very much under the influence of the old written language. And this the people did not understand very well. They called it ‘talking *istillâhi*’. For example: ‘The manager said something to the clerk, but I couldn’t understand it. They’re talking *istillâhi*.’

İstillâhi is another example of the phenomenon discussed above: giving a more familiar shape to high-flown words with which one does not feel at home, the word in this case being *istilahî*, the adjective of *istilah*. *Istilah paralamak* (to tear technical terms to pieces), once meant talking over the heads of one’s hearers. The meaningless but Arabic-looking *istillâhi* is made up of familiar elements: the first two syllables are in imitation of words such as *istiklâl* ‘independence’ and *istikamet* ‘direction’, while *llah* is from the Arabic name of God. As we might say, or might have said a generation or two ago, ‘They’re parleyvooring.’

Even before the rise of the Ottomans there had been expressions of dissatisfaction with the dominance of Arabic and Persian.⁸ In 1277 Şemsüddin Mehmed Karamanoğlu, the chief minister of the ruler of Konya, decreed that thenceforth no language other than Turkish would be spoken at court or in government offices or public places. Unfortunately he was killed in battle a few months later.

Few Turks who write about the history of their language can forbear to quote the two following couplets from the *Garipnâme* (‘Book of the Stranger’) of the Sufi poet Âşık Paşa (1272–1333).⁹ The purpose of the work is to illustrate Sufi doctrine through discourses on passages from the Koran, tradition, and the sayings of Sufi masters.

Türk diline kimesne bakmaz idi
 Türklere hergiz gönül akmaz idi
 Türk dahi bilmez idi bu dilleri
 İnce yolu, ol ulu menzilleri.
 None had regard for the Turkish tongue;
 Turks won no hearts.
 Nor did the Turk know these languages,
 The narrow road, those great staging posts.

It is doubtful, however, whether every reader of these lines has a clear idea of their meaning. Of which languages was the Turk ignorant; what are the narrow road and those great staging posts? One scholar (Sılay 1993) translates the fourth line as ‘these styles of elegant and elevated discourse’, which does no more than raise another question: what styles? The context makes it plain that Âşık Paşa is not talking about literary style. He has been discussing Koran 14. 4: ‘We have sent no messenger save with the language of his people.’ The Koran was revealed to the

⁸ A valuable source on this topic is Yavuz (1983).

⁹ The relevant portion of the text is most readily accessible in İz (1967: i. 584–5).

Arabs, in Arabic; neither Persians nor Turks have had a prophet bearing them the revelation in their own tongues.

Bu *Garipnâme* anın geldi dile
Ki bu dil ehli dahi mânâ bile.

Therefore has this *Garipnâme* been uttered
That those who speak this tongue may also know the hidden wisdom.

The identity of the languages in question is shown in a previous couplet:

Çün bilesin cümle yol menzillerin¹⁰
Yirmegil sen Türk ü Tacik dillerin.

To know all the staging posts of the road,
Do not despise the Turkish and Persian languages.

The languages of which the Turk was ignorant are Turkish and Persian, the implication being that so far the language of religion has been Arabic, but Arabic is not the only language through which spiritual knowledge can be attained. Persian is the language of the *Mesnevî* of the great Sufi poet Jalâl al-Dîn Rûmî; the Turk should learn to read that language and his own, so that he can make use of the *Mesnevî* and of the *Garipnâme*. The road is the progress towards enlightenment, the staging posts are the stages in that progress.

To Mîr 'Ali Şîr Nevâî (1441–1501) of Herat in Afghanistan belongs the distinction of having raised the Chaghatay dialect of Turkish to the status of literary language of Central Asia. In his *Muḥākamat al-Luġateyn* ('The Judgment between the Two Languages') he sets out to demonstrate that Turkish is in no way inferior to Persian as a literary medium. At one point he says:

Ve hünersiz Türknîñ sitem-zarîf yigitleri âsânlıġka bola Fârsî elfâz bile nazm ayturġa meşġul bolupturlar. Ve fî'l-ḥaġıka kişi yaġşı mülâhaza ve te'emmül kılsa, çün bu lafzda munça vüs'at ve meydânıda munça fuşat tapılır, kirek kim munda her sūḥan-güzârlıġ ve faşih-güftârlıġ ve nazm-sâzlıġ ve fesâne-perdâzlıġ âsânraq bolġay, ve vâķî' âsânraqdur. (Levend 1965–8: iv. 203)

Among untalented Turks, would-be artistic young men have occupied themselves with verse composition using Persian vocabulary, as being the easy course. Truly, if one considers and reflects well, since such scope and range are found in our own language, it follows that all eloquence and expression, all versification and story-telling, are bound to be easier in it and are in fact easier.

Like seventeen others of the thirty-six Ottoman sultans, Selim I (1512–20) wrote poetry. Most of his was in Persian. On the other hand, his arch-enemy Shah Ismail of Persia (1501–24) wrote poems in Turkish, some of which, set to music, may still be heard today on Turkish radio. It has been suggested that his purpose was to endear himself to the Turcomans in his territories, but the simpler explanation is that he was a Turk by birth and that writing in his mother tongue came naturally to him.

¹⁰ In modern Turkish, the *-in* at the end of this line and the next would be *-ini*. See Lewis (1988: 41) and, for the *-gil* of *yirmegil*, *ibid.* (137).

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries came the school of *Türkt-i basit* ('plain Turkish' poetry), associated with the names of Aydınlı Visâli, Tatavlı Mahremî, and Edirneli Nazmî, whom it did not outlive. Readers of poetry expected it to be in Ottoman, not *kaba Türkçe* (crude Turkish), whereas those whose everyday language was indeed *kaba Türkçe*, while they might enjoy listening to poetry that they could understand, were not generally readers. Yet even such a dyed-in-the-wool Persianizing poet as Nabî (c.1630–1712), whom Gibb (1900–9: iii. 325) speaks of as 'writing verses which can by courtesy alone be described as Turkish', was moved to write:

Ey şî'r miyanında satan lafz-ı garibi
Divan-ı gazel nüsha-ı kamus değüldür.

(Levend 1972: 78; Korkmaz 1985: 388)

O you who sell outlandish words wrapped in poetry!
A book of odes is not a copy of the dictionary!

It will be seen that only three—*ey, satan, değüldür*—of the eleven words in which Nabî expresses this laudable sentiment are Turkish. Indeed, long after Ottoman chroniclers had taken to writing in Ottoman instead of Persian, they persisted in using pure Persian for their chapter headings.

The political changes introduced by the Tanzimat-ı Hayriye, the 'Propitious Regulations' of 1839, and even more by the reform charter of 1856, gave hope that the manifold grievances of various sections of the Sultan's subjects might be rectified. Some were, but by no means all. For our purposes it is enough to say that the spirit of the Tanzimat (the term applied to the period as well as to the reforms) gave rise to the first serious stirrings of Turkish nationalism and to a flowering of journalism, and from then on the tide of language reform flowed strongly. A newspaper proprietor or editor does not have to be as devoted to the ideal of a well-informed public as the pioneers of Turkish journalism were (most if not all of them were driven into exile at some time in their careers), or indeed devoted to any ideal at all, to see the necessity of making the language of his paper understandable by as many people as possible; if he fails to see it, he will soon be enlightened by his circulation manager.

The father of Turkish journalism was the writer and poet İbrahim Şinasi (?1824–71), co-founder in 1860 with Ağâh Efendi (1832–85), a civil servant and diplomat, of *Terceman-ı Ahvâl*, founded in 1861, the second non-official newspaper to be published in the country (the first was the weekly *Ceride-i Havâdis*, started in 1840 by an Englishman, William Churchill).¹¹ Şinasi declared the paper's policy in his first editorial (Levend 1972: 83):

¹¹ For a concise history of the Turkish press, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (1960), ii. 465–6, 473–6. As for Churchill, see Koloğlu (1986), an entertaining account of how, despite being *miyop* (short-sighted), he went out pigeon-shooting one Sunday afternoon in May 1836 and wounded a shepherd boy and a sheep. There were diplomatic repercussions. An earlier account was Alric (1892).

Ta'rif e hacet olmadığı üzere, kelâm, ifade-i meram etmeğe mahsus bir mevhibe-i kudret olduğu misillü, en güzel icad-ı akl-ı insanî olan kitabet dahi, kalemle tasvir-i kelâm eylemek fenninden ibaretdir. Bu i'tibar-ı hakikate mebnî giderek, umum halkın kolaylıkla anlayabileceği mertebede işbu gazeteyi kaleme almak mültezem olduğu dahi, makam münasebetiyle şimdiden ihtar olunur.

There is no need to explain that, while speech is a divine gift for the expression of thought, writing is the finest invention of the human intelligence, consisting as it does in the science of depicting speech by means of the pen. Proceeding from a regard for this truth, editorial notice is hereby given that it is a bounden duty to write this newspaper in a way that will be easily understood by the public at large.

Among the other pioneers were Namık Kemal (1840–88), a selfless patriot and distinguished writer in many fields, and his friend the great statesman Ziya Pasha (1825–80). This is from Namık Kemal's article 'Observations on Literature in the Ottoman Language':

İstanbul'da okuyup yazma bilenlerden dahi belki onda biri, sebki ma'ruf üzere yazılmış bir kâğıddan ve hattâ kâfil-i hukuku olan kanun-ı devletten bile istifade-i merama kaadir değildir. Çünkü edebiyatımıza şark u garbın bir kaç ecnebi lisanından müstear olan şiveler galebe ederek itirâd-ı ifadeye halel vermiş ve edevât ü ta'birât ü ifâdat-ı takririden bütün bütün ayrılmış olan üslûb-ı tahrir ise bayağı bir başka lisan hükmüne girmiştir . . .

Elfazda garabet o kadar mu'teberdir ki, meselâ Nergisi gibi milletimizin en meşhur bir te'lif-i edibânesinden istihrac-i meal etmek, bize göre ecnebi bir lisanda yazılmış olan Gulistan'ı anlamaktan müşkildir. Türkçenin eczâ-yı terkibi olan üç lisan ki, telâffuzda oldukça itihad bulmuşken tahrirde hâlâ hey'et-i asliyelerini muhafaza ediyor. Akaanîm-i selâse gibi sözde güya müttehid ve hakikatte zıdd-ı kâmilidir.¹²

Even of literates in Istanbul, perhaps one in ten is incapable of getting as much as he would like from a normally phrased note or even from a State law, the guarantor of his rights. The reason is that our literature is swamped with locutions borrowed from several foreign tongues of east and west, which have damaged the flow of expression, while the style of composition has become totally detached from the particles and terms and forms of discourse and has fallen, to put it plainly, under the domination of another language.

So prevalent is foreignness in our vocabulary that it is harder, in my view, to extract the meaning from one of our nation's best-known literary compositions, for example that of Nergisi, than to understand the *Gulistan*, which is written in a foreign language. While the three languages of which Turkish is compounded have attained a certain unity in speech, they still preserve their original forms in writing. Like the three persons of the Trinity, they are said to be united but are in fact the reverse of integrated.

The poems of Nergisi (d. 1635) are more intelligible than his prose works. Gibb (1900–9: iii. 208–9) refers to him when speaking of Veysi's *Life of the Prophet*: '[It] is written in the most recherché Persian style, and shares with the prose Khamsa of Nergisé [*sic*] the distinction of having been gibbeted by Ebu-z-Ziyâ Tevfîq Bey, one of the most stalwart champions of the Modern School, as a composition the continued study of which will land the nation in disaster.' The *Gulistan* of Sa'dî

¹² *Tasvir-i Efkâr*, 416, 16 Rebiyülâhır 1283/29 Aug. 1866; Levend (1972: 113–14).

(?1213–92), in a mixture of verse and rhymed prose, is regarded as one of the masterpieces of Persian literature. One might think that Namık Kemal was exaggerating, but in his day Arabic and Persian were a regular part of secondary education (and remained so until 1 October 1929). Anyone who has learned Persian, which is not a challenging language, can understand the *Gulistân*, but Nergisi's convoluted Ottoman prose presents much greater difficulty.

Ziya Pasha wrote the following in an article in *Hürriyet*, the newspaper he and Namık Kemal founded while exiles in London:

Eylevm resmen ilân olunan fermanlar ve emirnâmeler âhâd-ı nas huzurunda okutuldukta bir şey istifade ediliyor mu? Ya bu muharrerat yalnız kitabette melekesi olanlara mı mahsustur? Yoksa avâm-ı nas devletin emrini anlamak için müdür? Anadolu'da ve Rumeli'de âhâd-ı nastan her şahsa, devletin bir ticaret nizamı vardır ve aşarın suret-i müzayedeye ve ihalesine ve tevzi-i vergiye ve şuna buna dair fermanları ve emirnâmeleri vardır deyü sorulsun, görülür ki biçarelerin birinden haberi yoktur. Bu sebebdendir ki hâlâ bizim memâlikte Tanzimat nedir ve nizâmât-ı cedide ne türlü islâhat hâsıl etmiştir, ahali bilmediüklerinden ekser mahallerde mütehayyızân-ı memleket ve zaleme-i vülât ve me'murin ellerinde ve âdeta kable't-Tanzimat cereyan eden usûl-i zulm ü i'tisaf altında ezilir ve kimseye derdini anlatamazlar. Amma Fransa ve İngiltere memâlikinden birinde me'murun birisi nizâmât-ı mevcude hilâfında cüz'î bir hareket edecek olsa avâm-ı nas derhal da'vâcı olur.¹³

Today, when decrees and orders are read out in the hearing of the common people, can anything be made of them? Are such compositions meant exclusively for those with a mastery of the written word, or is it intended that ordinary people should understand what the State commands? Try talking to any commoner in Anatolia and Rumelia about a commercial regulation, or the decrees and orders relating to the auctioning and awarding of the right to collect tithes, or establishing the amount of tax due from each household, or any matter at all; you will find that none of the poor creatures knows anything about any one of them. This is why dwellers in our territories still do not know what the Tanzimat is and what kind of reforms the new regulations have given rise to, and in most places therefore suffer oppression at the hands of local dignitaries, tyrannical governors and officials, under the same bullying system and with all the injustices that prevailed in pre-Tanzimat times. Nor is the population able to tell anyone its troubles, whereas if an official in any of the French or English realms were to infringe the current regulations in the slightest degree, the commoners would immediately have the law on him.

Two lines from Chesterton's 'The Secret People' come irresistibly to mind:

We hear men speaking for us of new laws strong and sweet,
Yet is there no man speaketh as we speak in the street.

Ali Suavi (1837–78) was one of the first to take a nationalist stand in the matter of language: he urged the avoidance of non-Turkish words for which there were good Turkish equivalents and, like Süleyman Pasha and Şemsettin Sami after him,

¹³ *Hürriyet* (London), 20 Cemâdi'l-ülâ 1285/7 Sept. 1868; Levend (1972: 119).

spoke out against calling the language Ottoman. He went further than Şinasi, who did not explicitly advocate the use of Turkish in preference to non-Turkish words. This is how he ended the introductory editorial he wrote for his newspaper *Muhbir* (1 (1867); Levend 1972: 115): ‘Tasrihi câiz olan herşey’i, Âsitâne’de kullanılan âdi lisan ile ya’ni herkesin anlayabileceği ifade ile yazacaktır’ (Everything which can legitimately be expressed, [this journal] will write up in the ordinary language used in the capital; that is to say, in terms that everybody will be able to understand).

Although the new newspapers and magazines frequently carried articles urging the use of simple Turkish, they tended to urge it in very complicated language. The domestic news sections of the newspapers went on for many years under the heading *Havâdis-i Dâhiliye*, because *havâdis* ‘news’ is an Arabic feminine, so *dâhili* ‘internal’ had to be in the feminine too, not forgetting the Persian *-i*. As late as 1896, a contributor to the newspaper *İzmir* wrote an article appealing for the use of straightforward Turkish, one paragraph of which should suffice to prove this point (Levend 1972: 275). The Persian *izafet* compounds (which is what the writer meant by ‘unfamiliar and ponderous foreign locutions’) are identifiable in the modern transcription by the *-i* or *-ı*. Words in italic are of non-Turkish origin. ‘*Safvet-i ifademizi ihlâl eden elfaz-i gayr-ı me’nuse ve sakile-i ecnebiyyeye mukabil servet-i mevcude-i lisaniyyemizden istifade etmiş olsak, daire-i safvet-i ifadeyi, binaenalyh daire-i terakkiyi tevsî’ etmiş oluruz*’ (Had we made use of our existing linguistic wealth instead of the unfamiliar and ponderous foreign locutions that corrupt our purity of expression, we would have broadened the compass of purity of expression and consequently the compass of progress).

Ahmet Midhat (1844–1912), most prolific of Turkish journalists,¹⁴ wrote this in 1871, with not a single Persian *izafet*:

En evvel kalem sahiblerine şunu sormak isterim ki, bizim kendimize mahsus bir lisanımız yok mudur? Türkistan’da söylenmekte bulunan Türkçeyi gösterecekler, öyle değil mi? Hayır, o lisan bizim lisanımız değildir. Bundan altı yedi asır mukaddem bizim lisanımız idi, fakat şimdi değil. O Türkçe bizim lisanımız olmadığı gibi Arabî ve Farisî dahi lisanımız değildir.

Amma denilecek ki, bizim lisanımız her halde bunlardan haric olamıyor. Haric olamadığı gibi dahilinde de sayılmıyor. Türkistan’dan bir Türk ve Necid’den bir Arab ve Şiraz’dan bir Acem getirsek, edebiyatımızdan en güzel bir parçayı bunlara karşı okusak hangisi anlar? Şübhe yok ki hiç birisi anlayamaz.

Tamam, işte bunlardan hiç birisinin anlayamadığı lisan bizim lisanımızdır diyelim. Hayır, anı da diyemeyiz. Çünkü o parçayı bize okudukları zaman biz de anlayamıyoruz . . .

Pek a’lâ, ne yapalım? Lisansız mı kalamız? Hayır, halkımızın kullandığı bir lisan yok mu? İşte anı millet lisanı yapalım . . .

¹⁴ Ahmet Midhat’s work was more remarkable for its extent than for its originality. His output, of close on 200 books and countless articles, won him the appellation ‘kırk beygir kuvvetinde bir makina’ (a forty-horsepower engine). Nevertheless he was an effective and widely read popularizer of new ideas. Over half of *Türk Dili*, 521 (May 1995) was devoted to him.

Arabça ve Farsçanın ne kadar izafetleri ve ne kadar sıfatları varsa kaldırıversek, yazdığımız şeyleri bugün yediyüz kişi anlayabilmekte ise yarın mutlaka yedi bin kişi anlar. (*Basiret*, 4 Apr. 1871; Levend 1972: 123)

The first thing I should like to ask our writers is, don't we have a language of our own? They will point to the Turkish spoken in Turkestan, won't they? No, that is not our language. It was, six or seven centuries ago, but not now. That Turkish is not our language, nor are Arabic and Persian our language. But some will say, surely our language cannot lie outside these? It cannot lie outside them and it cannot be considered as inside them. If we were to bring a Turk from Turkestan, an Arab from Nejd, and a Persian from Shiraz, and read in their presence some exquisite passage from our literature, which of them would understand it? There is no doubt that none of them would. All right, let us say that this language which none of them can understand is our language. No, we cannot say that either, because when they read that passage to us we cannot understand it . . .

Very well, what are we to do? Are we to be left without a language? No! There is a language that our people speak, isn't there? Let us make that the national language . . . If we were to sweep away all the izafets and all the adjectives there are in Arabic and Persian, if seven hundred people today understand what we write, tomorrow it will surely be seven thousand.

Ahmet Midhat lived to see his wish well on the road to fulfilment. People who had been used to calling the natural sciences *ulûm-i tabiiye* came to see that there was no harm in using the Turkish plural instead of the Arabic, dropping the Persian *i* and the Arabic feminine ending of the adjective, and putting the adjective first: *tabii ilimler*. Even so, M. A. Hagopian found it necessary to devote over 40 per cent of his *Ottoman-Turkish Conversation-Grammar* (1907) to the grammar of Arabic and Persian.

Süleyman Pasha (1838–92) deserves the palm for being the first Turk to publish a grammar of Turkish and to name it accordingly: *İlm-i Sarf-i Türki* (1874). Credit is also due to Abdullah Ramiz Pasha, whose *Lisân-ı Osmâni'nin Kavâ'idini Hâvi Emsile-i Türki* ('Paradigms of Turkish, Containing the Rules of the Ottoman Language') had appeared in 1868. In 1851, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha (1825–95) and Fuad Efendi, later Pasha (1815–68), had published *Kavâ'id-i Osmâniye* ('Ottoman Rules'), a grammar that went through a number of editions. The 1875 edition was named *Kavâ'id-i Türkiye* ('Turkish Rules').

Article 18 of the Constitution of 1876 named the official language as Turkish, not Ottoman: 'Tebâ'a-i Osmâniyenin hidemât-ı devlette istihdam olunmak için devletin lisân-ı resmîsi olan Türkçeyi bilmeleri şarttır' (A prerequisite for Ottoman subjects' employment in State service is that they know Turkish, which is the official language of the State).

Şemsettin Sami (1850–1904), famous for his excellent dictionary *Kamus-i Türki* (1316/1901) (though it is not as comprehensive as Redhouse (1890)), was of Süleyman Pasha's way of thinking. The following extracts are from his article 'Lisân-ı Türki (Osmâni)', published in an Istanbul weekly in 1881.

Osmanlı lisanı ta'birini pek de doğru görmüyoruz . . . Asıl bu lisanla mütekelim olan kavmin ismi 'Türk' ve söyledikleri lisanın ismi dahi 'lisan-ı Türki' dir. Cühelâ-yı avam indinde mezzum addolunan ve yalnız Anadolu köylülerine ıtlak edilmek istenilen bu isim, intisabıyla iftihar olunacak bir büyük ümmetin ismidir. 'Osmanlı' ile 'Türk' isimleri beynindeki nisbet, tıpkı 'Avusturyalı' ile 'Alman' isimleri beynindeki nisbet gibidir. 'Avusturyalı' unvani Avusturya devletinin taht-ı tâbiyyetinde bulunan kâffe-i akvâma ve onların biri ve ümmet-i hâkimesi olan Avusturya Almanlarına ıtlak olduğu halde, 'Alman' ismi bu ümmet-i azîmenin gerek Avusturya'da, gerek Prusya ve Almanya'da ve gerek İsviçre ve Rusya ve sair taraflarda bulunan kâffe-i akvam efradına ıtlak olunur. Devlet-i Osmaniyyenin zir-i tâbiyyetinde bu lunan kâffe-i akvam efradına dahi 'Osmanlı' denilüp, 'Türk' ismi ise Adriyatik denizi sevahilinden Çin hududuna ve Sibiryâ'nın iç taraflarına kadar münteşir olan bir ümmet-i azîmenin unvanıdır. Bunun için, bu unvan, . . . müstevcib-i fâhr ü mesâr olmak ıktıza eder. Memâlik-i Osmaniyye'de söylenen lisanların cümlesine 'elsine-i Osmaniyye' denilmek caiz olabilirse de, bunların birine ve hususiyile ekseriyyet-i etrafı bu memâlikin haricinde olup bu devletin teessüsünden çok daha eski bulunan bir lisanla 'lisan-ı Osmani' denilmek tarihe ve ensâb-ı elsineye asla tevafuk etmez . . .

Bana kalırsa, o aktâr-ı ba'ideki Türklerin lisanıyla bizim lisanımız bir olduğundan, ikisine de 'lisan-ı Türki' ism-i müştereke ve beyinlerdeki farka da riayet olunmak istenildiği halde, onlarınkine 'Türki-şarki' ve bizimkine 'Türki-garbi' unvanı pek münasibdir . . .¹⁵

I do not think the term 'the Ottoman language' is quite correct . . . The name of the people who speak this language is really 'Turks' and their language is Turkish. This name, which is regarded as a reproach by the ignorant masses and which some would like to see applied only to the peasants of Anatolia, is the name of a great community which ought to take pride in being so termed. The relationship between 'Ottoman' and 'Turk' is just like that between 'Austrian' and 'German'. 'Austrian' is applied to the totality of peoples who are subjects of the Austrian State, among them the Germans of Austria, the dominant community. 'German' is applied to all members of this great community, both in Austria and in Prussia and Germany, as well as in Switzerland, Russia and elsewhere. So, too, members of all the peoples subject to the Ottoman dynasty are called Ottomans, while 'Turk' is the title of a great community extending from the shores of the Adriatic to the borders of China and the interior of Siberia. This title, therefore . . . should be a reason for pride and joy. Though it may be permissible to give the name 'the Ottoman languages' to the totality of languages spoken in the Ottoman dominions, it is quite inconsistent with history and the relationships of languages to apply the name 'the Ottoman language' to one of them, particularly one whose boundaries for the most part lie beyond those dominions and which antedates by far the foundation of this State . . .

As I see it, since the language of the Turks in those distant regions is one with ours, it is perfectly proper to give them the common name of Turkish and, in cases where it is desirable for the difference between them to be observed, to call theirs Eastern Turkish and ours Western Turkish . . .

Part of the reaction to the repressive regime of Sultan Abdülhamid (1876–1909) was manifested in the imitation of Western, particularly French, literary works, their content as much as their form, notably by the *Servet-i Fünun* school. Despite its modernist pretensions, this famous journal ('The Riches of Science')

¹⁵ *Hafta*, 12, 10 Zilhicce 1298/4 Nov. 1881. Full text in Levend (1972: 130–4).

represents a blind alley, even a U-turn, on the road to making the written language more accessible to the general public. It began its career in 1891 as the weekly magazine of the Istanbul evening newspaper *Servet*. Between 1895 and 1901, when the government closed it down, it was the hub of a circle of young French-oriented writers who became known as the Edebiyat-ı Cedideciler, the exponents of the new literature. The precious style adopted by many of them repelled the common reader. Persuaded as they were that Turkish was incapable of being a literary medium without the aid of Arabic and Persian, they were wedded to the Persian izafet compounds and, not content with those current in the literary language, created new ones. Among their favourites were: *şebnem-i zevk u tesliyet* 'the dew of pleasure and consolation', *hadika-i sükûn* 'garden of tranquillity', and *melâl-i mesâ* 'evening melancholy' (Levend 1972: 349). At the same time they liked to show how Westernized they were by using calques, literal translations of French expressions, such as *ilâç almak* 'to take medicine' instead of the normal *ilâç yemek*. One of their number, the novelist Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil (1866–1945), wrote this in his memoirs forty years on:

Bu maraz hâdisesi, refiklerimin affedeceklerine, hattâ benimle beraber i'tiraf eyliyeceklerine kanaatle söyliyeceğim, zînet ve san'at ibtilâsıydı . . . öyle ki o tarihten uzaklaştıkça hele bugün ben bizzat bunları tekrar okurken sinirlenmekten hâli kalmıyorum. (Uşaklıgil 1936: iv. 141; Levend 1972: 238)

This disease—and I shall say this in the conviction that my old colleagues will forgive me and may even join in my confession—was an addiction to ornateness and artifice . . . so much so that the further I am removed from that time, and especially at the present day, the more irritated I become on re-reading what I wrote then.

During the 1897 war with Greece, the poet Mehmet Emin [Yurdakul] (1869–1944) published his *Türkçe Şiirleri*. The title is significant: these were Turkish poems, not Ottoman poems. The first, 'Anadoludan bir ses yahut Cenge giderken' ('A Voice from Anatolia, or Going to War'), began:

Ben bir Türküm: dinim, cinsim uludur:
Sinem, özüm ateş ile doludur:
İnsan olan vatanının kuludur:
Türk evlâdı evde durmaz; giderim!
I am a Turk, my faith and my race are great;
My breast and soul are full of fire.
He who serves his native land—he is a man;
The sons of Turks will not stay at home; I go!

It won him the appellation *Türk Şairi*, meaning not just 'the Turkish poet' but 'the "Turk" poet'. The language of the poem, for the most part simple Turkish, the words 'Ben bir Türküm', and above all his use of the syllabic metres of popular verse rather than the Arabo-Persian quantitative metres of classical poetry, were a slap in the face for the intellectuals who saw themselves as Ottomans, in

particular for the élitist Edebiyat-ı Cedideciler. They retorted that he was no poet but a mere versifier and that not all the words he used would be intelligible to the common people. There was some justice in these criticisms: *ceng* [P], for example, was a distinctly high-flown way of saying 'war'. But the common people admired him as a literary man who was not too proud to declare himself a Turk like them.

Türk Derneği, the Turkish Association, was the first nationalist cultural organization to be formed, in January 1908, one of its founders being Ahmet Midhat (Tunaya 1984: i. 414–15; Levend 1972: 301). Its sixty-three members were far from having a shared view about the future of the language. Some of them were Simplifiers (*Sadeleştirmeçiler*), who favoured 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. Their leader Fuat Köseraif was not averse to inventing where necessary; according to Ziya Gökalp, he favoured taking suffixes over from Kirghiz, Uzbek, or Tatar, or even creating them from whole cloth ('büsbütün yeniden yaratılacak'): the adjective suffix *-i* could be replaced by *-kı/ki/gı/gi*, so that *hayatî* 'vital' would become *hayatkı*, and *edebî* 'literary' would become *edebgi*. Unfortunately for anyone trying to sort out the various groups, their contemporaries outside the Dernek tended to call them all Purifiers, which Gökalp (1339/1923: 114–15) found confusing.¹⁶

Others could not stomach the idea of abandoning even the Persian *izafet*, and came out strongly against those who would turn Ottomans into *Buharalı* (people of Bukhara). Two prominent members, Mehmet Emin and Halit Ziya, held diametrically opposite views on the course the language ought to take. While the Association was being established, the latter contributed an article to *Servet-i Fünun* in which he poured scorn on those wishing to expel from the language words of non-Turkish ancestry for which Turkish synonyms existed. The first word or phrase in the first two pairs in the following quotation is Arabic, the second Persian; in the others the order is reversed:

Yök, maksud, zaten bizde Türkçe olarak müradifleri mevcut olan kelimeleri atmaksa, meselâ lisanâ güneş var diye *ufk-ı edebimizden 'şems ü hurşid'* i silmek, yıldız var diye 'nücum u ahter' i söndürmek, göz var diye 'çeşm ü dîde' yi, 'ayn u basar' ı kapamak, yol var diye 'râh u tarik' i seddetmek, su var diye 'âb u mâ' yı kurutmak kabilinden ameliyati tahribe karar vermekse, buna bir israf-ı bihude nazarı ile bakmak tabiidir.

Bu mütalâaya serdedilen yegâne itiraz: lisanı sadeleştirmek, onu seviye-i irfan-ı halka indirmek için bu fedakârlığa lüzum var sözünden ibarettir. Fakat lisan seviye-i irfan-ı halka inmez, seviye-i irfan-ı halk lisana yükseltmeğe çalışılır. (Levend 1972: 305)

¹⁶ He always spelled his second name as two words: Gök Alp (Sky Hero).

No, if the purpose is to discard the words we have with Turkish synonyms, and to decide on such destructive surgery as effacing *şems* and *hurşid* from our literary horizon because we have *güneş* 'sun', extinguishing *nücum* and *ahter* because we have *yıldız* 'star', closing *çeşm u dâde* and *ayn ü basar* because we have *göz* 'eye', blocking *râh* and *tarik* because we have *yol* 'road', drying up *âb* and *mâ* because we have *su* 'water', one cannot but regard it as wanton waste.

The sole objection raised to this observation consists in the assertion that this sacrifice is necessary in order to simplify the language, to lower it to the cultural level of the people. But the language does not descend to the cultural level of the people; one endeavours to elevate the cultural level of the people to the language.

The majority of the membership must have been of Halit Ziya's way of thinking, for this was how the Association's official attitude was set forth in its journal, which shared its name:

Osmanlı lisanının Arabî ve Farsî lisanlarından ettiği istifade gayr-ı münker bulunduğundan ve Osmanlı Türkçesini bu muhterem lisanlardan tecrid etmek hiçbir Osmanlı'nın hayalinden bile geçmiyeceğinden, Türk Derneği, Arabî ve Farsî kelimelerini bütün Osmanlılar tarafından kemal-i sühuletle anlaşılacak vechile şâyi' olmuşlarından intihab edecek ve binaenaleyh mezkûr Derneğin yazacağı eserlerde kullanacağı lisan en sade Osmanlı Türkçesi olacaktır. (Levend 1972: 301)

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 Turkish Association will select Arabic and Persian words from among those that have gained currency enough to be understood with total ease by all Ottomans. Consequently, the language that the Association will use in works it produces will be the simplest Ottoman Turkish.

All very fine for the Ottomans, but not much use to those inhabitants of Turkey who, not presuming to lay claim to that designation, humbly thought of themselves as Turks. Mehmet Emin for one could scarcely have approved. Clearly the disparity of opinions did not augur well for the prospects of the Association, which by 1913 had indeed ceased to exist.

The exponents of simple Turkish still had far to go, not having yet grasped the principle expressed in St Luke's 'Physician, heal thyself.' At this range it is impossible to say whether or not the drafter of the following 'Decision on the Purification of the Language', quoted in the press in November 1909 (Levend 1972: 313), had his tongue in his cheek. Again, the words in *italics* are of non-Turkish origin:

Levazimat-ı umumiyye dairesi ta'yinat kısmı ma'rifetiyle terkim ve tevzi' edilmekte olan matbu' pusulalara envâ'-ı muayyenatı mübeyyin olmak üzere dercolummakta olan 'nân-ı aziz', 'güş', 'erz', 'şa'r' ve 'hatab' kelimelerinin yerlerine, ba'demâ 'ekmek', 'et', 'pirinç', 'arpa' ve 'odun' yazılması karargir olmuştur.

It has been *decided* that the words '*nân-ı aziz*' [PA] 'precious bread',¹⁷ *güş*' [P] 'meat', '*erz*' [A] 'rice', '*şa'r*' [A] 'barley', and *hatab*' [A] 'firewood', which are *included* on the *printed slips*

¹⁷ The adjective 'precious' does not denote a particular type of loaf; it was a stock epithet of bread.

drawn up and distributed by the rationing section of the Department of the Commissariat-General to indicate the various kinds of rations, shall henceforth be replaced by 'ekmek', 'et', 'pirinç' [P], 'arpa', and 'odun'.

But one doubts that members of the Ottoman Parliament had their tongues in their cheeks one month later, when stating their objection to the proposed wording of their response to the Speech from the Throne: '*Arıza-i teşekkürîyyenin üslûb-ı tahriri pek edibane ve Meclis-i Millî'ye yakışmıyacak derecede teşbihat ve elfaz-ı rengin ile mahmul*' (*The style of composition of the Grateful Submission is very literary and laden with similes and ornate locutions to an extent unbecoming the National Assembly*) (Levend 1972: 313).

On the other hand, the poet Mehmet Âkif was not happy with the results of purification as exhibited in the newspaper *İkdam* in 1910:

bir takım makaleler görülüyor ki Türkçe kelimelerin yanibaşlarında Arapçaları olmasa zavallı ümmet-i merhume hiçbir şey anlamıyacak! Meclis yerine 'kurultay',¹⁸ meb'us yerine 'yalvaç', a'yan yerine 'aksakal', hal yerine 'idemük', can yerine bilmem ne! . . . Gazetelerde zabıta vukuatı öyle ağır bir lisanla yazılıyor ki avam onu bir dua gibi dinliyor: 'Mehmet Bey'in hanesine leylan fürce-yâb-ı duhul olan sârık sekiz adet kalıçe-i giran-baha sirkat etmiştir' deyüp de 'Mehmed Bey'in bu gece evine hırsız girmiş sekiz halı çalmış' dememek âdetâ maskaralıktır. Avâmın anlıyabileceği meânî avâmın kullandığı lisan ile edâ edilmeli . . . (*Sırât-ı Müstakim*, 4/92, 9 Apr. 1910; Levend 1972: 311–12)

One sees many articles of which the unfortunate public—God have mercy on them—would understand nothing were it not for the Arabic equivalents given alongside the Turkish words! *Kurultay* for *meclis* 'Parliament', *yalvaç* for *meb'us* 'Deputy', *aksakal* 'grey-beards' for *a'yan* 'notables', *idemük*¹⁹ for *hal* 'situation', and I don't know what for *can* 'soul'! . . . The police reports in the newspapers are couched in language so abstruse that ordinary people listen to them as if they were religious formulas. To say 'Depredators who nocturnally effected an opportunist entry into Mehmed Bey's domicile purloined costly tapis eight in number', and not to say 'Last night burglars broke into Mehmed Bey's house and stole eight rugs' is not far short of buffoonery. Concepts for ordinary people to be able to understand should be expressed in the language used by ordinary people . . .

By the end of the nineteenth century some, and by the First World War most, Turkish writers were making a conscious effort to avoid Persian constructions except in stock phrases. They were also ceasing to think of their language as Ottoman, and after 1918 few went on thinking of themselves as Ottomans. Article 7 of the 1908 political programme of the Society for Union and Progress ('the Young Turks') ran: 'Devletin lisan-ı resmîsi Türkçe kalacaktır. Her nevi muhaberât ve müzakeratı Türkçe icra olunacaktır' (The official language of the State will remain Turkish. Its correspondence and deliberations of every kind will be conducted in Turkish) (Tunaya 1952: 209). In 1920, while the War of Independence was still raging and the Sultan's government still ruled in

¹⁸ In Levend, *kurultay* is misspelt *kurultay*.

¹⁹ The author has so far failed to track down this word, even in that wonderful ragbag *Tarama Dergisi* (1934).

Istanbul, schoolteachers had been instructed by the Ankara government's Ministry of Education to collect pure Turkish words in colloquial use that had so far eluded the lexicographers.

But the non-writing classes took a good deal longer to adjust to the new situation. The author was told by Fahir İz that, during his military service in the neighbourhood of Erzurum just before the Second World War, he had got into conversation with a shepherd, whom he shocked by using the words 'Biz Türkler' (We Turks). 'Estağfurullah!' was the reply, 'Ben Türküm, zat-ı âliniz Osmanlısınız' (Lord have mercy! I'm a Turk; Your Excellency is an Ottoman).

Somewhat more effective than Türk Derneği was the literary group that called itself and its journal *Genç Kalemler* (The Young Pens), formed in Salonica (Selânik) in April 1911 (Levend 1972: 313–30). Its members were also known as *Yeni Lisancılar*, the exponents of the new language. Most influential among them were Ziya Gökalp and the short-story writer Ömer Seyfettin (1884–1920).

The latter was the author of an article entitled 'Yeni Lisan' and signed only with a question mark, attacking the *Edebiyat-ı Cedide*, the 'new literature' of the Servet-i Fünun group, and the even shorter-lived group known as *Fecr-i Âtî* (the Coming Dawn), which formed round *Servet-i Fünun* on its reappearance after the Young Turk revolution of 1908. 'Bugünkülerin dünküleri taklid etmekten vazgeçtikleri dakika hakikî fecir olacak, onların sayesinde yeni bir lisanla terennüm olunan millî bir edebiyat doğacaktır. . . Millî bir edebiyat vücuda getirmek için evvelâ millî lisan ister' (The true dawn will break at the moment when today's people stop imitating yesterday's. Thanks to them a national literature will be born, hymned in a new language. . . To bring a national literature into being requires first a national language). He went on to give his recipe for that future national language. In something of a purple passage, he stated his objections to replacing current words of Arabic and Persian origin with native words or with borrowings from further east:

Derneğin arkasına takılıp akım bir irticaa doğru, 'Buhara-yı şerif'deki henüz mebnâi bir hayat süren, müdhîş bir vukufsuzluğun, korkunç bir taassubun karanlıkları içinde uyuyan bundan bir düzüne asır evvelki günleri yaşayan kavimdaşlarımızın yanına mı gidelim? Bu bir intihardır. Bu seri' ateşli toplarımızı, makineli tüfenklerimizı bırakıp yerine; duşmanlarımız gelince—kavimdaşlarımız gibi—üzerlerine atacağımız suları kaynatmağa mahsus çay semaverleri koymağa benzer. Hayır. Beş asırdan beri konuştuğumuz kelimeleri, me'nus denilen Arabî ve Farsî kelimeleri mümkün değil terkedemeyiz. Hele aruzu atıp Mehmed Emin Bey'in vezinlerini hiçbir şair kabul etmez. Konuştuğumuz lisan, İstanbul Türkçesi en tabii bir lisandır. Klişe olmuş terkiplerden başka lüzumsuz zinetler aslâ mükalememize giremez. Yazı lisanı ile konuşmak lisanını birleştirirsek, edebiyatımızı ihya veya icad etmiş olacağız . . .

Lisanımızda yalnız Türkce kaideler hükmedecek; yalnız Türkce, yalnız Türkce kaideleri. (*Genç Kalemler* (Apr. 1911); Levend 1972: 314–15)

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. Certainly no poet will renounce the classical prosody and accept Mehmet Emin Bey's metres. Istanbul Turkish, the language we speak, is a most natural language. Stereotyped *izafet* compounds aside, the unnecessary trimmings can never enter our speech. If we unify the language of writing and the language of speaking, we shall have revived our literature or produced a new literature . . .

In our language, only Turkish rules will hold sway; only the Turkish language and only the rules of Turkish.

The spectre of Türk Derneği's failure must have been before his eyes as he wrote that equivocal statement, which in no way justified the term 'new language'. Şemsettin Sami had been far more radical thirty years before.

Most of the literary establishment were less receptive than Ömer Seyfettin to suggestions that the language needed to be reformed; this may have been due to their love of Ottoman for its own sake or as a badge of rank distinguishing them from the commoners. Süleyman Nazif (1870–1927), editor of *Yeni Tasvir-i Efkâr*, published an open letter by way of a rejection slip to a writer who had sent him an article on language. Having said that, if he were the proprietor of the newspaper, he would never open its pages to an article that advocated simplifying the language, he went on:

Lisanını seven bir Osmanlı Türk'ü, hiçbir vakit 'hatavât-ı terakki' makamına 'ilerleme adımları'nı is'ad edemez, böyle yaparsak lisanın kabiliyyet ve letafetini elimizle mahvetmiş oluruz . . . Lisanı sadeleştirmek, bizi yedi asır geriye ve dört beş bin kilometre uzağa atmaktır . . . Tekrar ederim ki biz bugün Buhârâlı değiliz ve olamayız. O maziye iadeye çalışmak mühlik bir irtica'dır. (*Yeni Tasvir-i Efkâr*, 12 July 1909; Levend 1972: 305–6)

An Ottoman Turk who loves his language can never elevate *ilerleme adımları* [going-ahead steps] to the status of *hatavât-ı terakki* [progressive paces]. If we do that, we thereby destroy the capacity and subtlety of the language with our own hands . . . To simplify the language is to throw us seven centuries back and four or five thousand kilometres distant . . . I repeat: today we are not and cannot be Bukharans. Trying to bring back that past is a destructive piece of reaction.

Interestingly, the cudgels were taken up on behalf of simplification by an easterner; not a Bukharan but a man from Kazan, Kazanlı Ayaz.

Bizim mesleğimiz avam tarafdarı bulunmak olduğundan, biz bütün efkâr-ı siyasiye ve ictimaiye avâma anlatmak tarafındayız. Bizce bu meslek bir lisan için değil, bütün mesâil-i hayatiye içündür . . . Memleketin islâhı, milletin teceddüdü bütün efrad-ı millet efkârının teceddudu ile hasıl olacağından bizim nokta-ı nazarımızdan milletini seven her Türk

yazdığı her makaleyi Anadolu Türklerinin anlayacağı bir lisanla yazması lâzım gelir. (*Servet-i Fünun*, 9 July 1325/22 July 1909; Levend 1972: 307)

Given that our vocation is to take the side of the common people, we are for acquainting them with all political and social thinking. In my view this vocation does not relate to a language but to all vital problems . . . As the reformation of the country and the renewal of the nation will come about with the renewal of the thinking of every member of the nation, from our point of view every article written by any Turk who loves his nation must be in a language that will be understood by the Turks of Anatolia.

One of the few who joined him was Celâl Sahir [Erozan] (1883–1935), a poet of the Fecr-i Âtî school, who followed Mehmet Emin in making the transition from Arabo-Persian prosody to Turkish syllabic metre, in which he produced some attractive love-poetry:

Şimdi lisanda teceddüd husulü için çalışmak isteyenlerin ilk adımı bu kavaid-i ecnebiyyeyi tard ve imhâ olmalıdır. Bizim kelimeye ihtiyacımız var. Peki, fakat yalnız kelimeye, müfred kelimelerle müfredlerinden ayrı, müstakil bir ma'nâ ifade eden cemî' kelimelere, her kelimenin cem'ine, tesniyesine değil, hele terakibe hiç değil . . . Hele lisanı sadeleştirmenin bizi yedi asır geriye atmak olduğunu hiç kabul edemem. (*Servet-i Fünun*, 27 May 1326/9 June 1910; Levend 1972: 309)

The first step taken by those wishing to work for renewal in the language should be to cast out and eliminate these foreign rules. We need words. Very well; but *only* words: the singular forms of words and those plurals which express independent meanings, distinct from their singulars,²⁰ but not the plural or the feminine of every word and above all not izafet compounds . . . In particular I cannot accept that simplifying the language means throwing us seven centuries back into the past.

To leave for a moment the views of established literary figures of the old days, here is a reminiscence of the economist Fuat Andic about his generation's view in the 1940s of what the language of the future ought to be. It centres on a verse by Kemalpaşazade Sait, alias Lâstik ('Galoshes') Sait, who held several senior posts in government service but was best known as a writer of articles on literature for the newspapers *Tarik* and *Vakit*, and as a minor poet. The reason for his nickname was that he was reputed never to take off his galoshes even in summer.²¹ He engaged in often vitriolic polemics on literature and language with Namık Kemal, Ahmet Midhat, and the poet Abdülhak Hâmid (1851–1937). The language of his writings was pure Ottoman; does the verse express his real opinion or was it meant sarcastically? Probably the former; he habitually wrote in Ottoman, because in those days it was the only way to write formally, but this time he was rebelling. At any rate, the boys of Fuat Andic's generation took it seriously. And here it is:

²⁰ The reference is to words like the Arabic *ajzâ*, plural of *juz* 'part'; its Turkish form *ecza* means not 'parts' but 'chemicals, drugs', whence *eczacı* 'pharmacist'. See Lewis (1988: 27).

²¹ I am indebted to Professor Andic, both for drawing my attention to Lâstik Sait and for explaining the origin of his nickname.

Arapça isteyen urbana gitsin
 Acemce isteyen İrana gitsin
 Frengiler Frengistana gitsin
 Ki biz Türküz bize Türki gerek.

Let the one who wants Arabic go to the Beduin;
 Let the one who wants Persian go to Iran;
 Let the Franks go to their own land.
 For we are Turks; we must have Turkish.

The class used to add a fifth line: 'Bunu bilmeyen ahmak/eşşek demek' (Anyone who doesn't know this, it means he's a silly fool/donkey).²²

To revert to the grown-ups: Ziya Gökalp believed that, if the Turks were to equip themselves with the vocabulary necessary for coping with the advances of science and technology, the natural way was to follow the example of the Western nations. Just as they had recourse to Greek and Latin, the classical languages of their culture, so the Turks should go back to Arabic and Persian. In practice, he based his creations on Arabic, less frequently Persian, while using the Persian *izafet* to make compounds. From *rûh* 'soul, spirit' he made *ruhiyat*²³ for 'psychology'; from *badî* 'floweriness of style', *bedîi* for 'aesthetic' (though in Arabic *badî* means 'rhetorical') and *bediiyat* for 'aesthetics'. From the Arabic *şân*, 'matter, affair', he made *şe'ni* 'pragmatic' and *şe'niyet* 'reality'. These two never won much currency, partly because 'pragmatic' does not figure in everyone's vocabulary, and mostly because Turks in general did not distinguish between Arabic *ayn*, the pharyngeal gulp, and *hamza*, the glottal stop, or attempt to pronounce either of them, so that except to a few pedants Ziya Gökalp's *şe'ni* 'pragmatic' sounded exactly like *şeni*, the Turkish pronunciation of the Arabic *şanî* 'abominable'.

His most successful coinage was a word for 'ideal'. Until his time, the dictionary equivalent had been *gaye-i emel* 'goal of hope' or *gaye-i hayal* 'goal of imagination', though probably most people who talked about ideals used the French *idéal*. He invented *mefkûre* (together with *mefkûreviyat* for 'ideology'), based on the Arabic *fakara* 'to think', which was enthusiastically adopted, surviving long after *Tarama Dergisi* (1934) came up with *ülkü*; indeed, recent dictionaries still use it to define *ülkü*. It survives in another aspect too: in Turkish cities you will see apartment blocks named *Mefkûre*, as well as *Ülkü* and *İdeal*.

* After all that, Gökalp (1339/1923: 28) might be accused of inconsistency for writing: 'Lisanın bir kelimesini değiştiremeyiz. Onun yerine başka bir kelime icad edip koyamayız' (We cannot change a word of the language. We cannot invent and substitute another word for it). His creations, however, were intended to express concepts for which no words yet existed.

²² Andic writes, 'The fifth line may or may not belong to him. When I was in high school it was a pastime among us to add one or two lines to well-known poems. I do not know for sure whether the fifth line belongs to me or to Lâstik Sait' (Letter to the author, 13 Apr. 1997). The student should bear in mind that *eşek* is more offensive than 'donkey', and that *eşşek* is more offensive than *eşek*.

²³ For the *-iyat*, sometimes transcribed as *-iyat* or *-iyyat*, see Lewis (1988: 27).

He tells how deeply impressed he was in 1897 at hearing how private soldiers coped with the Ottoman terms for first and second lieutenant. 'Lieutenant' in Arabic was *mulâzim*, 'first' was *awwal*, and 'second' was *tânî*. Put together in accordance with the rules of Persian and pronounced in accordance with the rules of Turkish, that made 'mülâzim-i evvel', 'mülâzim-i sani'. The soldiers, however, put the adjectives first, saying 'evvel mülâzim', 'sani mülâzim'. This led him to the following conclusion: 'Türkçeyi ıslâh için bu lisanıdan bütün Arabî ve Farsî kelimeleri değil, umum Arabî ve Farsî kaideleri atmak, Arabî ve Farsî kelimelerden de Türkçesi olanları terkederek, Türkçesi bulunmayanları lisanıda ibka etmek' (The way to reform Turkish is not to throw all the Arabic and Persian words out of this language but to throw out all Arabic and Persian rules and abandon all the Arabic and Persian words which have Turkish equivalents, letting those with no Turkish equivalents survive in the language) (Gökalp 1339/1923: 12).

A line from his poem 'Lisan',²⁴ 'Türkçeleşmiş Türkçedir' (What has become Turkish is Turkish), has often been quoted by those unwilling to see the loss of any Ottoman word. Later on in the same book he states his first principle of *Lisanî Türkçülük* (Linguistic Turkism): 'Millî lisanımızı vücade getirmek için, Osmanlı lisanını hiç yokmuş gibi bir tarafa atarak, halk edebiyatına temel vazifesini gören Türk dilini aynıyle kabul edip İstanbul halkının ve bilhassa İstanbul hanımlarının konuştukları gibi yazmak' (For the purpose of creating our national language, to accept as it stands the Turkish tongue, which serves as the basis for popular literature, and to write as Istanbul people speak, especially Istanbul ladies, discarding the Ottoman language as if it had never been) (Gökalp 1339/1923: 121).

The word *halk* is ambiguous nowadays and no doubt was in Gökalp's time too; whereas in political speeches it connotes the citizen body, the sovereign people, in common parlance it means the proletariat. Gökalp was certainly using it in the first sense, but the question is, what then did he mean by 'hanımlar'? Female residents of Istanbul, or Istanbul ladies as distinct from Istanbul women? We must assume the latter; at all events, his first principle was never put into effect. Nor was another of his pronouncements: 'İstanbul Türkçesinin savtiyatı, şekliyatı ve lügaviyatı,²⁵ yeni Türkçenin temeli olduğundan, başka Türk lehçelerinden ne kelime, ne sıya ne edat, ne de terkib kaideleri alınmaz' (As the basis of the new Turkish is the phonology, morphology, and lexicon of Istanbul Turkish, neither words nor moods and tenses nor suffixes nor rules of syntax may be taken from other Turkish dialects) (Gökalp 1339/1923: 122). While later reformers did not adopt moods and tenses or rules of syntax from other dialects, they adopted words and suffixes in full measure, as we shall see.

²⁴ Published in *Yeni Hayat* in 1918, reproduced in Levend (1972: 332–3).

²⁵ The three preceding nouns were coined by Gökalp from Arabic roots.

The New Alphabet

Turkish writers on *dil devrimi* (language reform) do not usually deal with the change of alphabet, which for them is a separate topic, *harf devrimi* (letter reform). A brief account of it is given here for the sake of completeness, since the two reforms are obviously linked, arising as they did from the same frame of mind. The purpose of the change of alphabet was to break Turkey's ties with the Islamic east and to facilitate communication domestically as well as with the Western world. One may imagine the difficulty of applying the Morse Code to telegraphing in Ottoman.

Its intrinsic beauty aside, there is nothing to be said in favour of the Arabo-Persian alphabet as a medium for writing Turkish.¹ All of its letters, including *alif*, the glottal stop, are consonants, some representing sounds not existing in Turkish and one, *k*, which may represent Turkish *g*, *k*, *n*, or *γ*. The sound of *n* indicated by the Arabo-Persian *k* was originally /ng/, pronounced as in English *singer*; in scholarly transcriptions of old texts it is usually shown by *ñ*. It occurs in such Ottoman spellings as *kwkl* for *gönül* 'soul', and *dkz* or *dkyz* for *deniz* 'sea'. It is still heard in some Turks' pronunciation of *sonra* 'after'. With the addition of diacritics above or below the letters, the three vowels *a*, *i*, and *u* can be indicated, whereas Turkish needs to distinguish eight. The Arabic letters *alif*, *wāw*, and *yā* were employed in Arabic and Persian to show *ā*, *ū*, and *ī* respectively. In Turkish they were used to indicate *a/e*, *o/ö/ul/ü*, and *i/ay/ey* respectively. An initial *a* or *e* was indicated by *alif* (henceforth shown as *ʔ*), medial or final *a* also by *alif*, and *e* by *h*, which is similar to the function of English *h* in 'Ah!' and 'Eh?': *kaynana* 'mother-in-law' was written *qynʔnʔ*, *yaparsa* 'if he does' as *yʔpʔrsh*, *ise* 'if it is' as *ʔysh*, *istemediğin* 'which you do not want' as *ʔsthmhdykk*.

* Many equivocal readings were possible. Thus *ʔwlv* in an Ottoman text may be read as Turkish *ulu* 'great' or *ulu* [A] 'possessors', *ölv* 'dead', *evli* 'married', *avlu* 'courtyard', *avlu* 'stocked with game'; *dwl* may represent *döl* 'progeny', *dul* 'widowed', or *düvel* [A] 'States', while *kl* can be *gel* 'come', *gül* 'smile', *kel* 'scabby', *kel* [A] 'lassitude', *kül* 'ashes', *kül* [A] 'all', *gil* [P] 'clay', or *gül* [P] 'rose'. Only the context and a sufficient grasp of the vocabularies of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic can make clear which of the possible readings is intended. Problems often arise in Ottoman texts because scribes and printers were not always careful about word

¹ 'Arabo-Persian' rather than 'Arabic', because it includes three letters, *p*, *ç*, and *j*, that were added to the Arabic alphabet in order to represent the three Persian sounds not occurring in Arabic.

divisions; the letters *bwsnh*, for example, could stand for *bu sene* 'this year' or *Bosna* 'Bosnia'.

In the article 'Turks' in the thirteenth edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1926), Sir Charles Eliot, after mentioning the ambiguities of this alphabet, shrewdly observes: 'The result is that pure Turkish words written in Arabic letters are often hardly intelligible even to Turks and it is usual to employ Arabic synonyms as much as possible because there is no doubt as to how they should be read.' An example of what he had in mind is shown by the words *mḥmd pʔšʔ ʔwldy*, which may be read as 'Mehmed paşa oldu' (Mehmed became a pasha) or 'Mehmed Paşa öldü' (Mehmed Pasha died). If you meant the former, you would resort to a circumlocution such as 'Mehmed was elevated to the rank of Pasha'. If you meant the latter, you would write 'Mehmed Pasha departed this world and journeyed to Paradise', 'Mehmed Pasha attained God's mercy', or at the very least 'Mehmed Pasha expired'.

The case for modifying the Arabo-Persian alphabet had been put forward as early as 1851, by Ahmed Cevdet, and thereafter various others tried their hands at the problem. In May 1862, in an address to the Ottoman Scientific Society (Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i Osmaniye), of which he was the founder, Antepi Münif Pasha blamed the paucity of literates on the deficiencies of the alphabet. He instanced the letters *ʔwn*, which could be read as *on* 'ten', *un* 'flour', or *ün* 'fame'. This last was properly written *ʔwk* (the *k* representing *ñ*); he could, therefore, also have cited *evin* 'of the house', as well as *ön* 'front', similarly written *ʔwk* but, like *ün*, popularly misspelt with *n* instead of *k*. He saw two possible solutions, the first being to write and print with full pointing, using the three diacritics inherited from Arabic and five newly devised as required by the phonology of Turkish. The second solution, which he favoured, was to stop joining the letters of words and to write or print them separately, with the necessary diacritics on the line rather than over or under it (Buluç 1981: 45–8, citing Münif Pasha 1974).

In 1863 the Azerbaijani dramatist and political scientist Feth-Ali Ahundzade came to Istanbul with a proposal for the addition of some new letters to indicate the vowels. He was well received and the Grand Vizier passed his proposal to the Ottoman Scientific Society for consideration. While they conceded its merits, their verdict was unfavourable, because of 'mücerred icrasında derkâr olan müşkilât-ı azîme' (the great difficulties which are evident simply in its implementation) and 'eski âsar-ı İslâmiyenin nisyanını da müeddi olacağından' (because it would conduce to the oblivion of ancient Islamic works) (Ülkütaşır 1973: 18–19).

In the Constitutional period, the time between 1908 and 1918, those intellectuals who saw modification as essential were agreed that the letters must be written, or at least printed, separately, so that students and compositors alike might be spared having to deal with three or four forms for each letter.² In the *Kamus*

² Most Arabo-Persian letters have three forms, depending on whether they are initial, medial, or final. Some have a fourth, used when the letter stands alone.

(1316/1901), Şemseddin Sami used three diacritics over the letter *wāw* to show the sounds of *o*, *ü*, and *ö*, while the bare letter denoted *u*.

The only scheme to be given a prolonged trial was the one sponsored by Enver Pasha from 1913 onwards, with the backing of his Ministry of War and, it is said, with strong-arm tactics to silence any critics. The principle was to use only the final forms of the letters, with no ligatures. The vowels were shown by variegated forms of *alif*, *wāw*, and *yā*, written on the line with the consonants. The result was far from pretty.³ The system was variously known as *huruf-u munfasıla* (disjointed letters), *hatt-ı cedid* (new writing), *Enverpaşa yazısı* (Enver Pasha writing), and *ordu elifbası* (Army alphabet). Originally intended to simplify the work of military telegraphists, its use was extended to official correspondence within the ministry. There is some evidence (TTK 1981: 56–7) that the experiment was abandoned before the end of hostilities, though Enver published *Elifba*, a reading book to teach his system, as late as 1917. Ruşen Eşref [Ünaydın] (1954: 28–9) recalled that Kemal had spoken to him about it in late 1918 as being still in use:

İyi bir niyet; fakat yarım iş; hem de zamansız! . . . Harp zamanı harf zamanı değildir. Harp olurken harfle oynamak sırası mıdır? Ne yapmak için? Muhaverat ve muhaberat teshil için mi? Bu şimdiki şekil hem yazmayı, hem okumayı, hem de anlamayı ve binaenaleyh anlamayı eskisinden fazla geciktirir ve güçleştirir! Hız isteyen bir zamanda, böyle yavaşlatıcı, zihinleri yorup şaşırtıcı bir teşebbüse girişmenin maddî, amelî ve millî ne faydası var? . . . Sonra da mademki başladın, cesaret et; şunu tam yap; medenî bir şekil alsın, değil mi Efendim?

The intention is good, but it's a half-baked job as well as untimely. Wartime isn't letter time. When there's a war on, is it the occasion to play about with letters? What for? To facilitate dialogue and communications? The present system makes writing and reading and comprehension and consequently mutual understanding slower and harder than the old system. At a time when speed is of the essence, what material, practical, or national advantage is there in embarking on an enterprise like this, which slows things down and wearies and befuddles people's minds? Besides, once you've started, have courage; do the job properly so that it takes a civilized shape. Is that no so?

Atatürk's right-hand man İsmet [İnönü] later bore witness to the trouble caused during the war by Enver's experiment. It had fallen to him to talk the Deputy Chief of the General Staff out of insisting that documents presented for his approval must be in two copies, one in normal writing for him to read and one in Enver Pasha writing for him to sign (Arar 1981: 150–1).

Simultaneously with Enver's efforts to propagate his alphabet, a number of journalists and literary figures were urging the adoption of the Latin letters. It was a topic of conversation among Ottoman officers during the Gallipoli campaign.⁴ This idea had a long past. Ahundzade had come round to it when his suggestion

³ A sample will be found in Ülkütaşır (1973: 27).

⁴ Verbal communication to the author in 1972 from Mr Taufiq Wahby.

for improving the Arabic script had been turned down.⁵ The lexicographer Şemseddin Sami and his brother Abdül Bey devised an alphabet of thirty-six Latin and Greek letters for their native Albanian, a language to which the Arabic alphabet could do no more justice than it could to Turkish. It was called the A-be-ya after the names of its first three characters. On 29 January 1910 Hüseyin Cahit [Yalçın], a member of the Servet-i Fünun group and editor of the newspaper *Tanin*, published an article entitled 'Arnavut Hurufâtı' ('The Albanian Letters'), in which he commended their initiative and declared that the Turks would do well to follow it. A request from a group of Albanians for a *fetva*⁶ on the subject elicited the response that it would be contrary to the Sacred Law for the Koran to be written in separated Arabic letters and for the Latin letters to be taught in Muslim schools (Levend 1972: 363–4).

In the spring of 1914 a series of five unsigned articles appeared in a short-lived weekly published by Kılıçzade Hakkı and dedicated to free thought, variously entitled *Hürriyet-i Fikriyye*, *Serbest Fikir*, and *Uluvvat-i Fikriyye*. These articles urged the gradual adoption of the Latin alphabet and prophesied that the change was bound to come. The writer propounded a problem, and invited a reply from the Şeyhülislâm or the Fetva Emni:⁷

Fransızlar İslâmiyetin esaslarını pek makul bularak milletçe ihtida etmek istiyorlar! Acaba onları Müslüman addedebilmek için o pek zarif dillerinin Arap harfleriyle yazılması şart-ı esası mi ittihaz edilecek? 'Evet' cevabını beklemediğim halde alırsam kemal-i cesaretle 'Siz bu zihniyetle dünyayı Müslüman edemezsiniz' mukabelesinde bulunurum, 'Hayır, beis yok' cevabını alırsam: 'Biz Türkerin de Lâtin harflerini kullanmamıza müsaade bahş eder bir fetva veriniz' ricasını serdedeceğim. Hayır, Fransızlar ne kadar az Arap iseler, biz de o kadar az Arabız.

The French, finding the principles of our religion very reasonable, wish to convert *en masse* to Islam! Before they can be accepted as Muslims, will it be obligatory for that very elegant language of theirs to be written in the Arabic letters? I do not expect the answer to be 'Yes', but if it is I shall make so bold as to reply, 'With this mentality you cannot make the world Muslim.' If I am given the answer 'No, there is no harm in it' I shall make this request: 'Give a *fetva* permitting us Turks also to use the Latin letters.' No, we are no more Arab than the French are.

Kılıçzade Hakkı subsequently revealed that it was because of these articles that the Minister of the Interior closed the weekly down (Ülkütaşır 1973: 39–41.)

The subject had long interested Mustafa Kemal. Ruşen Eşref recalled his saying

⁵ Levend (1972: 156) states that Ahundzade produced a Slav-based alphabet, but gives no details. Nor does Algar (1988), though he mentions his proposals for the reform of the alphabet and cites Muhammedzâde and Araslı, *Alefbâ-yı Cedid ve Mektûbât* (Baku, 1963), 3–39, 234–5, not available to the present writer.

⁶ Arabic *fatwâ*. In spite of the case of Salman Rushdie, which has familiarized the world with this word, it does not mean a sentence of death but a mufti's opinion on a point of law, with no executive force.

⁷ These two officials were respectively the chief of the religious hierarchy and the head of the office that issued *fetvas*.

in 1918 that it had been a preoccupation of his between 1905 and 1907, when he was in Syria (Ünaydın 1954: 29.) Halide Edip Adivar (1962: 264) remembered a conversation with him in June 1922 on the same theme, in which he spoke of the possibility of adopting the Latin letters, adding that it would require rigorous measures: 'Hattâ o gün, lâtin harflerini kabul imkânından bahsediyor, bunu yapmak için sıkı tedbirler gerektiğini de ilâve ediyordu.' Agop Dilâçar (1962: 41) tells of showing him, 'sometime between 1916 and 1918,' a copy of Németh's (1917), *Türkische Grammatik*, which printed the Turkish in a Latin transcription with *č* and *š* for what are now written *ç* and *ş*, the Greek *γ* for the sounds now represented by *ğ*, and *χ* for the Arabic and Persian *h*. Kemal did not like it much.

While he was military attaché in Sofia just before the First World War, he corresponded with his friend Madame Corinne in Istanbul in Turkish, written phonetically with French spelling. Here is part of a letter dated 13 May 1914, followed by the same passage in modern orthography and the English of it:

Dunya inssanlar idjin bir dari imtihandır. İmtihan idilêne inssanın hère çualé moutlaka pèke mouvafike djévabe vermessi mumqune olmaya bilire. Fékate duchunmélidir qui heuquume djévabların héiéti oumoumiyéssindène hassil olan mouhassalaya gueuré virilir.⁸

Dünya insanlar için bir dar-ı imtihandır. İmtihan edilen insanın her suale mutlaka pek muvafık cevap vermesi mümkün olmayabilir. Fakat düşünmelidir ki, hüküm, cevapların heyet-i umumiyesinden hasıl olan muhassalaya göre verilir.

For human beings, the world is an examination hall. It may not be absolutely possible for the examinee to give a very appropriate answer to every question. But he must bear in mind that the verdict is given in accordance with the result deriving from the answers taken as a whole.

A comparison of the lengths of the first two paragraphs above reveals one reason for some people's antagonism to the idea of switching to the Latin alphabet: the French spelling takes up more room than the old letters (and the new). In those days, French was the European language most widely known among Turks and it was generally assumed that a new Latin alphabet would involve applying French orthography to Turkish words: the six letters of *gueuré* for the four of *kwrh* (göre), the nine of *tchodjouk* for the four of *çjwq* (çocuk), or the five of the alternative spelling *çwjwq*. The editor of *Resimli Gazete*, İbrahim Alâaddin [Gövsâ], who was against change, generously published, on 22 September 1923, an article by Hüseyin Cahit, who was for it. İbrahim Alâaddin prefaced it with a response,⁹ headed 'Latine houroufati ile Turkdje yazi yazmak mumkinmidir!' (Is it possible to write Turkish with Latin letters!). That took forty-seven characters, whereas the Arabo-Persian alphabet would have needed only thirty-nine: *l?tyñ*

⁸ The version given here is based on a collation of the texts in Özgu (1963: 25–6) and Korkmaz (1992: 6). Note the spellings *idilêne*, *fékate*, *heuquume*, *virilir*, which reflect Kemal's own pronunciations: /idilen/ for *edilen*, /fekat/ for *fakat*, /hökum/ for *hüküm*, /virilir/ for *verilir*.

⁹ For the texts of Hüseyin Cahit's article and İbrahim Alâaddin's response, see Ulkütayır (1973: 45–52).

hırwfıty ʔylh twrkçh yʔzy yʔzmq mmknmydr. (The new alphabet can do it in forty-three: Lâtin hurufatı ile Türkçe yazı yazmak mümkün müdür.)

A year before that, at a meeting with representatives of the Istanbul press in September 1922, Kemal had been asked by Hüseyin Cahit, ‘Why don’t we adopt Latin writing?’ He replied, ‘It’s not yet time.’ His answer is understandable if one remembers that this was the period of the first Grand National Assembly, some fifty members of which were *hocas*, professional men of religion, in addition to eight dervish sheikhs and five men who gave their occupation as ‘tribal chief’.

At the Izmir Economic Congress in February–March 1923, three workers’ delegates put forward a motion in favour of adopting the Latin letters. The chairman, General Kâzım [Karabekir], ruled it out of order as damaging to the unity of Islam, and went on to make a speech in which he said: ‘derhal bütün Avrupa’nın eline güzel bir silâh vermiş olacağız, bunlar âlem-i İslâma karşı diyebileceklerdir ki, Türkler ecnebî yazısını kabul etmişler ve Hıristiyan olmuşlardır. İşte düşmanlarımızın çalıştığı şeytanetkârane fikir budur’ (we shall at once have placed a splendid weapon in the hands of all Europe; they will declare to the Islamic world that the Turks have accepted the foreign writing and turned Christian. The diabolical idea with which our enemies are working is precisely this).¹⁰

In an article in the journal *Hür Fikir* of 17 November 1926, Kılıçzade Hakkı made the point that the sacred nature of the Koran did not extend to the alphabet in which it is written. The title of the article sums up his argument very neatly: ‘Arap Harflerini de Cebrail Getirmemişti ya’ (Gabriel didn’t bring the Arabic letters too, you know) (Levend 1972: 397). This argument was, however, a little disingenuous, in that it ignored one of the main worries of the defenders of the Arabo-Persian alphabet: if it were replaced by a Latin-based alphabet, the number of Turks able to read the Koran—whether or not they understood it—would inevitably diminish, because one alphabet is as much as most people can be expected to learn in a lifetime.

On 20 May 1928 the Grand National Assembly voted to accept the international numerals.¹¹ During the debate, a member asked whether the international letters might be accepted as well. The Minister of Education replied that the government had been giving the matter its attention and that the question would naturally be resolved within the principles accepted by the civilized world, but that time was needed. ‘Onun için bu işde biraz geç kalıyorsak, teşkil ettiğimiz komisyonun, encümenin faaliyetinin neticesine muntazır olduğumuzdandır’ (So if we are a little late in this matter, it is because we are awaiting the result of the activity of the commission, the committee, we are forming). It is clear from the Minister’s imprecision about the designation of the body he was talking about that at the time he spoke it did not yet exist.

¹⁰ For the full text, collated from reports in three daily newspapers of 3 Mar. 1923, see Yorulmaz (1955: 90–3). See also Levend (1972: 392–3).

¹¹ By this was meant what we call the Arabic numerals and the Arabs call the Indian numerals.

Three days later, however, it did, when the Council of Ministers set up the Dil Encümeni, 'to think about the manner and feasibility of applying the Latin letters to our language'. Its nine members included Falih Rıfıkı [Atay], Ruşen Eşref [Ünaydın], Yakup Kadri [Karaosmanoğlu], and Fazıl Ahmet [Aykaç]. The first act of the new body when it met on 26 June 1928 was to divide itself into two, one for the alphabet and one for grammar (Levend 1972: 400–1). Kemal attended the meetings of both whenever he had time.

The Alphabet Commission rejected in principle the idea of a transliteration alphabet, because they did not wish Arabic and Persian pronunciations (as in the story of the *softa* told in Chapter 2) to be perpetuated; they wanted them assimilated to Istanbul speech patterns. The longest discussions took place over the question of how to show the palatalized sounds of *k*, *g*, and *l* before back vowels. Before front vowels, as in *iki* 'two' and *gelmek* 'to come', this happens automatically.¹² Before back vowels there is no palatalization in native words¹³ but there is in Arabic and Persian borrowings, as is seen in the English spelling *Kiazim* of the name appearing as *Kâzım* (/k'âzım/) in modern Turkish spelling, and Byron's *Giaour* for what is now written *gâvur* (/g'âvur/) 'infidel'. The Commission's proposal in its report, published early in August, was to write an *h* after the consonant, as in Portuguese (*velho*/vel'u/, *Senhor*/sen'or/), so *khatip* for what is now written *kâtîp* 'clerk, secretary'. Another proposal was to use *q* to show the sound of palatalized *k*.¹⁴ Many people preferred the latter alternative. Atay's (1969: 441) account of how it came to be quashed is so circumstantial that one feels it must be true:

Ben yeni yazı tasarısını getirdiğim günün akşamı Kâzım Paşa (Özalp) sofrada:
—Ben adımı nasıl yazacağım? 'Kü' harfi lâzım, diye tutturdu.

Atatürk de:

—Bir harften ne çıkar? Kabul edelim, dedi.

Böylece arap kelimesini türkçeleştirmekten alıkoymuş olacaktık. Sofrada ses çıkarmadım. Ertesi günü yanına gittiğimde meseleyi yeniden Ataya açtım. Atatürk el yazısı majüsküllerini bilmezdi. Küçük harfleri büyültmekle yetinirdi. Kâğıdı aldı, Kemal'in baş harfini küçük (kü) nün büyültülmüşü ile, sonra da (k) nın büyültülmüşü ile yazdı. Birincisi hiç hoşuna gitmedi. Bu yüzden (kü) harfinden kurtulduk. Bereket Atatürk (kü) nün majüskülünü bilmiyordu. Çünkü o (K)nın büyültülmüşünden daha gösterişli idi.

Af table on the evening of the day when I brought the draft proposals for the new writing, Kâzım [Özalp] Pasha grumbled, 'How am I going to write my name? We must have a *q*'

¹² See Lewis (1988: 3–4). In western Turkey the palatalization is audible though usually faint, the effect being the introduction of a *y*-sound after the *k*, *g*, or *ğ* not so marked as in English *cure*, *angular*, and British, as distinct from American, *lurid*. The further east you go, the more distinct the palatalization. By the time you get to Erzurum you will hear *iki* sounding just like *içi*.

¹³ For the exceptional *elâ*, see Ch. 4 n. 24.

¹⁴ This may surprise Western orientalists, who regard *q* as the natural transliteration not of the Arabic letter *kâf*, pronounced like our *k*, but of *qâf* (sometimes transliterated as *kâf*), pronounced much like our *c* in *cough*. The explanation is to be sought in the name of the letter *q*, which Turks follow the French in calling *kü*, pronounced /k'ü/. This letter, whose name had the requisite palatalized initial sound, seemed the ideal device for indicating /k'/.

Atatürk said, 'What difference will one letter make? Let's have it.' Had we done so, we would have kept the Arabic word from being Turkicized. I didn't say anything at the table. When I went to see Atatürk next day I explained the problem to him again. He did not know the manuscript capitals; he simply wrote them like the small letters only bigger. He took a sheet of paper and wrote the initial letter of Kemal, first with an enlarged version of *q*, then with an enlarged version of *k*. He didn't like the first at all. So we were spared *q*. Thank goodness he didn't know the script capital *Q*, which was more flamboyant than *K*.

After Kemal's rejection of *q*, it was decided to use the Portuguese alternative, but it did not last long.

When Atay showed him the Commission's draft alphabet, Kemal asked whether they had thought about bringing it into use (Atay 1969: 440).

Bir on beş yıllık uzun, bir de beş yıllık kısa mühletli iki teklif var, dedim. Teklif sahiplerine göre ilk devirleri iki yazı bir arada öğretilecektir. Gazeteler yarım sütundan başlayarak yavaş yavaş yeni yazılı kısmı artıracaklardır. Daireler ve yüksek mektepler için de tedrici bazı usuller düşünülmüştür.

Yüzüme baktı:—Bu ya üç ayda olur, ya hiç olmaz, dedi.

Hayli radikal bir inkılâpçı iken ben bile yüzüne bakakalmıştım.

—Çocuğum, dedi, gazetelerde yarım sütun eski yazı kaldığı zaman dahi herkes bu eski yazılı parçayı okuyacaktır. Arada bir harb bir iç buhran, bir terslik oldu mu, bizim yazı da Enver'in yazısına döner. Hemen terkolunverir.

I told him there were two proposals, one long term, of fifteen years, the other short term, of five years. According to the proponents, in the first period of each the two systems of writing would be taught side by side. The newspapers would begin with half a column in the new letters, which would gradually be extended. He looked me full in the face and said, 'Either this will happen in three months or it won't happen at all.' I was a highly radical revolutionary but I found myself staring at him, open-mouthed. 'My boy,' he said, 'even when the newspapers are down to only half a column in the old writing, everyone will read that bit in the old writing. If anything goes wrong in the meantime, a war, a domestic crisis, our alphabet too will end up like Enver's; it will be dropped immediately.'

As soon as the alphabet seemed satisfactory, Kemal introduced it to the vast crowds attending a Republican People's Party gala in Gülhane Park on the evening of 9 August 1928. Two days later lessons began in Dolmabahçe Palace, first for officials of the presidential staff and Deputies, then for university teachers and literary people. The latter session turned into a heated debate. At the end of five hours the following resolution was put to the meeting and adopted unanimously (Ülkütaşır 1973: 77):

Milleti cehaletten kurtarmak için kendi diline uymayan Arap harflerini terk edip, Latin esasından alınan Türk harflerini kabul etmekten başka çare yoktur. Komisyonun teklif ettiği alfabe, hakikaten Türk alfabesidir, kat'idir . . . Sarf ve imlâ kaideleri lisanın ıslahını, inkişafını, millî zevki takip ederek tekâmül edecektir.

To deliver the nation from ignorance, the only course open is to abandon the Arabic letters, which are not suited to the national language, and to accept the Turkish letters, based on the Latin. The alphabet proposed by the Commission is in truth the Turkish alphabet; that

is definite . . . The laws of grammar and spelling will evolve in step with the improvement and development of the language and with the national taste.

That last sentence was soon proved true, as the ever-cautious İsmet, who framed the resolution, had foreseen. Equipped with a blackboard and easel, Kemal went on tour to teach huge crowds of villagers the new letters, which they called 'Gazi elifbası' (The Gazi alphabet).¹⁵ Some weeks of this practical experience persuaded him that the use of a hyphen before the interrogative particle as laid down by the Alphabet Commission was unnecessary. From Sinop he telegraphed the Ministry of Education to say that the rule was abrogated. On his return to Ankara he addressed a directive to the Prime Minister's office (Ülkütaşır 1973: 122–3):

Encümen esasen yeni harfler ile yazıya başlanırken uzun kelimelerin hecelenmesini, seçilmesini kolaylaştıracak bir çare olmak üzere bağlamayı düşünmüş ve bağlamanın kaldırılmasını ileriye bırakmıştır.

Yeni harflerin kabulü ve taammümündeki sür'at, bu zamanın geldiğini gösteriyor . . . Bu sebeple ve halk içindeki müşahedelerime güvenerek âtidedeki esasları kabul etmek faydalı ve lâzım görülmüştür.

1. İstifham edatı olan mı, mi umumiyetle ayrı yazılır. Meselâ: Geldi mi? gibi. Fakat kendinden sonra gelen her türlü lâhikalarla beraber yazılır. Meselâ: Geliyor musunuz?, Ben miydim? gibi.
2. Râbita edatı olan (ve, ki), dahi manasına olan (de, da) müstakil kelime olarak ayrı yazılır.
3. Türk gramerinde bağlama işareti olan - (tire) kalkmıştır. Binaenaleyh fiillerin tasriflerinden lâhikalar çizgi (-) ile ayrılmayarak beraber yazılır. Meselâ: Geliyorum, gideceksiniz, . . . güzeldir, demirdir. Kezalık (ile, ise, için, iken) kelimelerinin muhaffefleri olan (le, se, çin, ken) şekilleri kendinden evvelki kelimeye bitişik yazılır, çizgi ile ayrılmaz—Meselâ: Ahmetle, buysa, seninçin, giderken gibi . . .
4. Türkçede henüz mevcut olan farsça terkiplerde dahi bağlama çizgisi yoktur, terkip işareti olan sedalı harfler ilk kelimenin sonuna eklenir. Meselâ: hüsnü nazar gibi.

When writing with the new letters began, the Commission originally thought of hyphenation as a means of facilitating the spelling and recognition of long words, proposing to eliminate it at some future date.

The speed with which the new letters have been accepted and become current shows that that time has come . . . For this reason and on the basis of my observations among the people it is deemed advantageous and necessary to adopt the following principles:

1. The interrogative particle *mi* will generally be written separately, as in 'Geldi mi?' ['Has he come?'], but will be written together with any following suffix, as in 'Geliyor musunuz?' 'Ben miydim?' ['Are you coming?' 'Was it me?']
2. The conjunctions *ve* and *ki* ['and', 'that'], and *de/da* in the sense of *dahi* ['also'] will be written separately as independent words.
3. The hyphen marking a junction in Turkish grammar is abolished. In the conjugation of verbs the suffixes will therefore be written without being separated by hyphens:

¹⁵ The Grand National Assembly had conferred the title of Gazi, 'Warrior for the Faith', on Mustafa Kemal in September 1921, after which he was generally referred to as Gazi Paşa. The picture of him with his blackboard is well known to stamp-collectors.

'geliyorum, gideceksiniz . . . güzeldir, demirdir' ['I am coming, 'you will go' . . . 'it is beautiful, 'it is iron']. Similarly the lightened forms of the words *ile, ise, için, iken* will be written contiguously with the preceding word and not separated by a hyphen: 'Ahmetle', 'buysa', 'seninçin', 'giderken' ['with Ahmet', 'if it is this', 'for you',¹⁶ 'while going']. So too in the case of *ce/çe/ca/ça* and *ki*: 'mertçe', 'benimki', 'yarınki' ['manfully', 'mine', 'tomorrow's'].

4. Nor is there a hyphen in such Persian compounds as still exist in Turkish; the vowels which show the *izafet* are suffixed to the first word, as in 'hüsünü nazar' ['favourable consideration', literally 'goodness of view'].

Some years later the Language Society recommended the restoration of the hyphen in Persian *izafet* compounds, which certainly makes them easier to spot. From the fact that Kemal chose not to hyphenate them we may infer that he was not thinking at that time of speeding their demise by highlighting their alien nature; perhaps even that he was not then thinking of hastening the elimination of foreign borrowings except for technical terms. Hyphens tend not to be used in the few *izafet* compounds still surviving. *Türkçe Sözlük* shows *sukutu hayal*, not *sukut-u hayal*, for 'disappointment', and *sürücü lisan*, not *sürç-ü lisan*, for *lapsus linguae* (now usually replaced by *dil sürçmesi* 'slip of the tongue').

A few days after Kemal's directive, an announcement was made ending the use of *h* to show palatalization; instead, a circumflex would be placed on the vowel following the palatalized consonant (Ertop 1963: 66). This device was not totally satisfactory, because the circumflex retained its function of showing a long vowel. The resulting possibility of confusion becomes apparent when one considers, say, *mütalâa* 'observation', in which the first *a* is long and the *â* short: /mütâl'aa/. The 1977 edition of *Yeni Yazım Kılavuzu*, TDK's guide to spelling, restricted the use of the circumflex; *inter alia*, it would no longer be used on adjectives ending in *-î* [A]: *millî* 'national', not *millî*. The decision was reversed in the 1988 edition (the title of which, *İmlâ* [A] *Kılavuzu*, reflects the change in the Society's Council of Management in August 1983; see Chapter 12). By that time, however, the damage was done; fewer and fewer Turks were bothering to write or print the circumflex anyway. If *kâtip* is not totally supplanted by the neologism *yazman* or the French *sekreter*, it seems doomed to be pronounced /katip/ and not /k'âtip/.

Two other elements of the new alphabet, *ğ* and *ı*, are open to criticism. The *raison d'être* of *ğ* ('yumuşak ge') was to replace two characters in the old alphabet. The first was *ghayn*, the second was *kāf* where it had the sound of *y*, as in the words written *dki* and *ckr* in the old letters, and *değil*, *ciğer* ('not', 'liver') in the new. Yumuşak ge now serves to lengthen a preceding back vowel, as in *kâğıt* 'paper' (Persian *kāğid*), pronounced /k'ât/, and *ağa* 'master', pronounced /ā/; while between front vowels, as in *değil* and *ciğer*, it is pronounced like *y*. So *ğ* preserves some features of Ottoman spelling, but that was not the object of the exercise. At least two scholars in the 1930s felt uncomfortable with it. Ahmet Cevat Emre idiosyncratically used *ğ* for 'ayn in his writings on grammar, thus *fiğil* for *fiil* 'verb',

¹⁶ The suffixed—Atatürk would have said 'lightened'—form *-çin* of *için* (for) is no longer in use.

Arabic *fl*, while for *ghayn* he used *ğ*. It was doubtless the fact that *ğ* has two distinct functions that led him not to use it for *ghayn*. On the other hand, Ragıp Özdem (1939: 15) employed *ğ* for *ghayn* to show the pronunciation of French *programme* as *pğogğam*, and *carte postale* as *kağt postâl*.

As for *ı*, when the Alphabet Commission hit on the idea of manufacturing it by removing the dot from *i*, they never stopped to ask themselves what the dot was doing there in the first place. The answer became apparent as soon as people began using the new alphabet: its function was to distinguish its bearer from the up- and downstrokes of *m*, *n*, and *u*.¹⁷ To see this for oneself, one has only to compare *minimum* with *minimium* in joined-up writing. A little brochure on the new alphabet (Necmi 1928), 'consisting in the lessons published in the newspaper *Milliyet*, revised according to the latest amendments', showed the handwritten form of *ı* as *ı* or *î*. Atatürk always used the latter form in writing and also habitually wrote *u* as *û*. Despite these imperfections, the Latin alphabet is undeniably the best that has ever been used for Turkish, and has played a large part in the rise of literacy; according to the official figures, from 9 per cent in 1924 to 65 per cent in 1975 and 82.3 per cent in 1995.

Commendation of it is found in an unexpected source, a book by the Director of the Media Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology:

A speech synthesizer takes a stream of text . . . and follows certain rules to enunciate each word, one by one. Each language is different and varies in its difficulty to synthesize.

English is one of the hardest, because we write (right and rite) it in such an odd and seemingly illogical way (weigh and whey). Other languages, such as Turkish, are much easier. In fact, Turkish is very simple to synthesize because Atatürk moved that language from Arabic to Latin letters in 1929 [*sic*] and, in so doing, made a one-for-one correspondence between the sounds and the letters. You pronounce each letter: no silent letters or confusing diphthongs. Therefore, at the word level, Turkish is a dream come true for a computer speech synthesizer. (Negroponte 1995: 145)

Provided that the synthesizer had been well programmed, the only word one can think of that it might fail to enunciate correctly is *ağabey* (elder brother), pronounced /ābī/, and a thorough programmer could take care of that.

Now briefly to complete the story of how the Latin alphabet was brought into use. Between 8 and 25 October 1928 all officials were examined for their competence in the new letters. It was only when Kemal had done all this that he sought the legal authority to do it. On 1 November the Grand National Assembly passed Law No. 1353, 'On the Adoption and Application of the New Turkish Letters', which came into effect two days later. It provided that documents in the new letters must be accepted and acted upon at once. The use of books printed in the old characters for instruction in schools was forbidden. No books were to be published in

¹⁷ In some hands not only *m*, *n*, and *u* but *r* too can be a source of confusion. The author was gratified when he eventually deciphered, in a handwritten letter from Spain, what looked like *La Couuîa* but turned out to be *La Coruîa*.

the old letters after the end of the year. All correspondence between private citizens and government departments would have to be in the new letters from 1 June 1929. Those Deputies who were ignorant of the Latin alphabet suddenly found that Article 12 of the Constitution had taken on a sinister importance for them: among those it excluded from membership of the Grand National Assembly were 'Türkçe okuyup yazmak bilmeyenler' (those who do not know how to read and write Turkish). They hastened to emerge from the state of illiteracy into which they had thrown themselves. One small concession: the 'old Arabic letters' could be used in official and private records as shorthand—'stenografi makamında'—until 1 June 1930.

Kemal was not given to procrastinating once his mind was made up. So why the delay of three months between the unveiling of the new alphabet in Gülhane Park and its legitimation? The obvious answer is that he did not want the details of the new letters to be the subject of endless wrangling in the Assembly; far better to present the Deputies with a *fait accompli*. There is also evidence that İsmet, mindful of how much of the General Staff's time had been wasted by Enver's new alphabet during the First World War, argued against the change because he was uneasy about the chaos that would surely set in while the old and new alphabets were in use side by side. He was no doubt placated and relieved by the speed with which the new letters were left in undisputed command of the field. And, despite his initial disapproval, once the reform had happened he never used the old letters again.

On 31 August 1928 *The Times* of London devoted a well-informed and sympathetic editorial to the new alphabet:

The advantages of the change can scarcely be appreciated by those who have not struggled with the difficulties presented to the student of Turkish by the Arabic letters . . . No alphabet is less fitted to express the melodious Turkish speech, which has relatively few consonants and an astonishing wealth of vowels and diphthongs . . . Conservatism, the religious associations of Arabic which gave a sanctity to the letters in which the Koran was written, and the oriental delusion that writing should not be made too intelligible in content or in form explain the long domination of the Arabic letters over the Turks . . .

By this step the Turks, who for centuries were regarded as a strange and isolated people by Europe, have drawn closer than ever to the West. It is a great reform, worthy of the remarkable chief to whom the Turkish people has entrusted its destinies.

Memories, however, can be short, even the corporate memory of a newspaper of record. Twenty-one years later, on 10 August 1949, *The Times* devoted a leading article to the proposed admission of Greece, Turkey, and Iceland to the Council of Europe:

To have any chance of success a federal union would have to start with nations either adjoining each other or separated by no barrier more formidable than the English Channel . . . They could not share a common language but at least it would be an advantage if the different languages were written in the same script . . . Muslim in tradition, with an Asiatic

language in an Arabic script, it is not easy to see how Turkey could take her place easily in a United States of Western Europe.

The author of that egregious howler could have mentioned that the Greeks have a different script from other Europeans, but he did not. Nor was there any evidence of remorse in his subsequent reference to it:

On another occasion I wrote a leader on Turkey's claim to be a member of any united European federation. (This was before the days of the Treaty of Rome and the Common Market.) I ridiculed this proposal and pointed out that it would be difficult enough to form a European Federation without adding a country which was neither European nor Christian and which did not even use the Roman alphabet. Alas! I was wrong, Turkey had changed from arabic [*sic*] letters to Roman letters in 1928. Well, one should not make mistakes in *The Times*—or anywhere else for that matter—but the fuss! The Turkish Government sent for the British Ambassador and reprimanded him severely. The Foreign Office sent for the Foreign Editor and reprimanded *him* severely. And Iverach McDonald [the Foreign Editor] did his best to reprimand *me* severely (he was a very kind man). All this because of the absurd myth, which had not been true for many years, that *The Times* spoke for the British Foreign Office and always reflected British foreign policy. It was a disastrous burden for my newspaper to carry. (Pringle 1973: 81)

To quote Yunus Emre, Turkey's greatest folk-poet, 'Bilmeyen ne bilsin bizin?'¹⁸ Bilenlere selâm olsun' (What should the ignorant know of us? To those who know, greetings).

¹⁸ Yunus's *bizin* instead of *bizi* is for the sake of the rhyme (vowel plus *n*).

Atatürk and the Language Reform until 1936

The scattered local movements of resistance to the Allied armies that invaded Anatolia after the 1918 Armistice could never have liberated the country without the boundless energy and organizing genius of Mustafa Kemal. In the same way, it was he who gave effect to the desires of the many intellectuals who wanted to make their language more truly Turkish. I specify intellectuals because in those days four-fifths of the population were peasants, who would no more have thought of tampering with the language than of changing the alternation of the seasons. Above all he wanted to turn his people's face westwards. He resented the dominance of the Arabic and Persian elements in the language and believed that the intelligent use of its native resources could make the use of foreign borrowings unnecessary.

An indication of how such a feeling could arise in a Turk of his generation is seen in a reminiscence of Hasan Reşit Tankut's (1963: 113):

Ben liseyi Şamda okudum. Hürriyetin ilânlandığı¹ günlerde son sınıfta idik. Araçlar birdenbire ulusçuluğa başladılar. Türkçe ile alay ediyorlardı. Bir gün, sınıfta kara tahtada tebeşirle yazılmış beş on satır gördük. Bunun başında Türk dili nedir? yazılı idi. Yazıyı içimizden okuduk. Bunda, tek bir Türkçe kelime yoktu. Osmanlı üslûbuna ve kurallarına uydurularak yazılmıştı. Bu yazının sonu 'dır' ile bitiyordu. Araçlar, bu dil edatını beş on defa tekrarlamışlar ve bu *dırdırların* altını çizmişler ve önüne de Türkçe budur. Yani (dırdır)dır yazmışlardı. O gün, biz 4-5 Türk öğrenci bütün bir sınıfta âdeta boğuştuk ve o günden başlayarak Türkçeci olduk.

I received my secondary education in Damascus and was in my final year at the time of the proclamation of freedom [the restoration in 1908 of the 1876 Constitution]. The Arabs suddenly started on nationalism and took to making fun of Turkish. One day in the classroom we saw half a dozen or so lines written on the blackboard, headed 'What is the Turkish language?' We read the writing to ourselves; it contained not a single word of Turkish. Written in conformity with the style and rules of Ottoman, it ended with *-dır*. The Arabs had repeated this suffix several times, underlining this string of *-dır*s and writing in front of it 'Turkish is this. That is to say, it's *dırdır* [tedious babble]'. That day we four or five Turkish pupils very nearly came to blows with a whole class, and became devotees of Turkish from that day on.

As early as August 1923, a proposal was introduced into the Grand National Assembly by the writer Tunalı Hilmi for a new law, the *Türkçe Kanunu*,

¹ The text has 'alanlandığı', but *alanlanmak* is an obsolete neologism for 'to give ground'. What Tankut intended must have been a Turkicization of 'ilân [A] edildiği'.

providing for the creation in the Ministry of Education of a Commission for the Turkish Language. Technical terms would be Turkicized, school books, official documents, and new laws would be prepared in accordance with the rules of Turkish, and no newspaper or journal breaching these rules would be licensed. Opinion in and out of the Assembly was not yet ready for such a proposal and it was not accepted (İmer 1976: 87). The story of an early, perhaps the earliest, official attempt at simplifying the language was told by H. E. Erkilet (1952), who towards the end of 1924 was appointed to head *Talim ve Terbiye*, the Army's Directorate of Training. Eleven years of almost incessant wars had allowed no time for revising the training manuals. 'Sözün kısası, ordu kitapsızdı' (To put it briefly, the Army had no books). With the backing of the Chief of the General Staff, Fevzi [Çakmak], and his deputy, Kâzım [Orbay], he ordered that the language of the new manuals should be intelligible to conscripts, with no Arabic or Persian constructions that could be avoided or words for which Turkish equivalents were available. *Tarassut* [A] 'observation' became *gözetleme*, *pişdar* [P] 'vanguard' became *öncü*, *esliha-i hafife* [A] 'light weapons' became *hafif silâhlar*. *Şura-yı Âli-i Askerî* [A] 'Supreme Military Council' became *Yüksek Askerî Şura*. Some changes were not as radical as they could have been: *Erkân-i Harbiye-i Umumiye* 'General Staff' became *Büyük Erkâni-i Harbiye*; on the other hand, *Erkân-i Harbiye Mektebi* 'Staff College' was simplified to *Harp Akademisi*. A good effort, ahead of its time.

The first years of the Republic were not easy for the Turks. They were buoyed up by the pride of being the only people on the losing side in the First World War who had successfully resisted the victors' territorial demands and won their independence. But the economic situation was parlous² and the ranks of the commercial and professional classes had been depleted by the departure, one way or another, of many members of the Christian minorities in the course of the First World War and the War of Independence. In addition, the exchange of populations arranged at Lausanne in January 1923 had brought about the displacement of 1.3 million ethnic Greeks from their native Turkey to the 'homeland' that few of them had ever seen, and the arrival from Greece of half a million ethnic Turks in a similar state. There was a pressing need to raise morale, to make the people see themselves as a nation with a great past and a great destiny, who would one day take their place among the civilized nations of the West. Turks must have no feeling of inferiority *vis-à-vis* Europe; they were not outsiders. For the moment they might be poor relations, but relations they were. To this end, history teaching in the country's schools was based on the postulate that all the famous peoples

² Money was very short indeed. As Faliş Rıfkı Atay put it, there was never a limited company worth mentioning that was founded with so little capital as that state in Ankara. He tells a story he heard from Osmanzade Hamdi, co-editor of *Yeni Gün*, a newspaper that though nominally independent could not survive without its government subsidy. At the end of a frantic day spent in trying to placate the paper's creditors, Hamdi rushed round to the tea garden where the Minister of Finance was accustomed to sit for a while after office hours, and caught him just as he was mounting his horse to go home. Hamdi said, 'For heaven's sake give me some money!', to which the Minister of Finance replied, 'I've left the safe open. If you can find anything in it you're welcome' (Atay 1969: 515).

of antiquity were either Turks themselves or had been civilized by Turks.³ In the same spirit, it was thought desirable to show that the Turkish language was not out on a limb but had affiliations with all the great languages of the world.

Atatürk's first concern, as we have seen, was to change from the Arabo-Persian alphabet to the Latin. Already on 3 February 1928 it was ordered that the Friday sermon in the mosques must be delivered in Turkish. Two years later he contributed a short foreword to a book on the history and potentialities of the language (Arsal [1930]), in which he included these two sentences: 'Türk dili, dillerin en zenginlerindedir; yeter ki bu dil, şuurla işlensin. Ülkesini, yüksek istiklâlini korumasını bilen Türk milleti, dilini de yabancı diller boyunduruğundan kurtarmalıdır' (Turkish is one of the richest of languages; it needs only to be used with discrimination. The Turkish nation, which is well able to protect its territory and its sublime independence, must also liberate its language from the yoke of foreign languages). The second sentence unleashed the language reform. If more people had heeded the first, the success of the reform could have been unqualified.

Atatürk practised what he preached. In August 1930 he dictated a list of topics that he wanted historians to address. One of them was 'Beşeriyet menşe ve mebdai' (The source and origin of humankind), all four words being of Arabic origin. When the typescript was brought to him he amended this to 'İnsanların nereden ve nasıl geldikleri' (Where humans came from and how they came), three of the five words being Turkish (*Tarih Vesikalari* (Jan. 1958), opposite p. 192). The key to understanding the course taken by the reform in its early years is that language was his hobby. In the draft bill creating the first faculty of Ankara University, which opened on 9 January 1936, its name was shown as Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi (Faculty of History and Geography), and it took a directive from Atatürk to add language to its name and its responsibilities—Dil Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi—before the bill became law.

The usual setting for his discussions on language, as on everything, was his table, *sofra*, in the special sense of a *rakı sofrası*, a dining-table laden with *rakı* and *meze* (*hors d'œuvre*), theoretically a prelude to dinner but commonly a substitute for it. This institution is well described by Atay:

For anyone who knew him, the name Atatürk conjures up memories of sessions round his table. His custom was to bring his friends together of an evening and talk into the small hours. We never knew in advance whether we would be there just for fun, for a command conference to prepare an attack, or for a meeting that would decide the most involved affairs of State, though we might hazard a guess when we saw who the guests were.

The sessions that were just for fun were very rare, and when they did occur it was like having a free period at school. Generally we would debate, read, or write on the most serious topics. Atatürk seemed never to tire. He would talk and listen. His prime concern

³ In this connection we may mention Vecihe Hatiboğlu's statement (1986: 97): 'Türkçe dünyanın en eski yazılı dilidir' (Turkish is the world's oldest written language). Someone in the language business should have heard of Ancient Egyptian, if not Linear A; perhaps she was subsuming those languages in Turkish.

was not to tell us what he was thinking but to learn what we thought, to hear the country's various voices. He had a genius for synthesizing. After hours of rambling conversation which darted from one topic to another, he would bring together and arrange what had been said, and produce a logical, clear, and well organized work of cogitation.

His guests were always a varied bunch, and he had a perfect tolerance of criticism from those he liked and whom he knew to share his beliefs. I estimate that the problems of Turkish language and history took up as much time round his table as they would have done at a university seminar. Facing him was a blackboard and chalk. All of us, ministers, professors, deputies, were expected to take up the chalk and perform. All of us except him would grow weary and, to be honest with you, a little bored.⁴

Atatürk's personal library, part of which is on display at his mausoleum, the Anıt-Kabir in Ankara, included many works on language, among them Jespersen's *Essentials of English Grammar* and *The Philosophy of Language*, Fowler's *The King's English*, and some less common items such as Chambers and Daunt's *London English 1384–1425*. Ernest Weekley's etymological writings are well represented on the shelves. Nevertheless, in indulging his passion for etymology Atatürk was more enthusiastic than scientific. He saw *asker* [A] 'soldier' (originally the Latin *exercitus*) as a conflation of the Turkish words *asık* 'profit' and *er* 'man', and explained it as meaning 'a man useful to the country, the State, the nation' (Korkmaz 1992; Özgü 1963: 31–2). He equated the first two syllables of *merinos* 'merino' with the Yakut *ibri* 'fine', and merino wool is indeed fine. He wondered whether the word might have travelled to Spain with the Iber Turks,⁵ in which case the names not only of the merino sheep and its wool but of the Iberian peninsula too would be of Turkish origin. He is reputed also to have proposed Turkish etymologies for *Niagara* and *Amazon*: *Ne yaygara* 'What tumult!' and *Ama uzun* 'But it's long!'

Admiral Necdet Uran describes in his memoirs an occasion during a cruise in the Mediterranean in 1937, when Atatürk came into the chart-room and, having studied the chart for a moment, pointed to the *rota*, the line indicating the ship's course. 'What's this?' he asked and, without waiting for an answer, went on, 'You're going to tell me it's English, Italian, French, that sort of thing, but what I was asking was the origin of the word.' The Admiral hesitated. Atatürk took a scrap of paper and wrote on it the word *yürütmek* ('to cause to walk, to set in motion'). Below it he wrote the same word divided into syllables: *yü-rüt-mek*. 'The origin of the word is that *rüt*,' he said, 'and its origin is Turkish. The Italians took it and called it *rota*. The Germans have said it another way. So have the French. But that's its origin' (Özgü 1963: 31).

The trouble was that, although Atatürk liked nothing better than a good argument, none of his intimates had the guts to say 'Very amusing as an after-dinner game, Pasha, but we mustn't take it too seriously, must we?' On the contrary, they

⁴ Collated from various passages in Atay (1969), principally on p. 507.

⁵ According to E. Blochet (1915: 305–8), the Iber were a Tunguz people, whom he equates with the Juan-juan of the Chinese chronicles. The relationship of the Tunguz with the Turks, however, is far from certain.

played the same game. This being long before the age of political correctness, Samih Rifat, the president of TDK, found the origin of the Western word *academy* in the Turkish *ak* 'white' and *adam* [A] 'man'. He also thought that the French *demeure*, *domicile*, and *domestique* were derived from the Turkish *dam* 'roof' and was not ashamed to say so in a public lecture ('Relations between Turkish and Other Languages') at the Turkish Historical Society's first Congress, which took place on 2–11 July 1932. The tone was thereby set for many a subsequent lecture and article. *Tarama Dergisi* marks with an asterisk 'words in use in our language which, although shown in ancient dictionaries as foreign, have emerged in the latest studies as Turkish or are firmly held to be Turkish'. Among the words so marked are *köşe* 'corner' and *tac* 'crown', both of them borrowings from the Persian (*gūše*, *tāj*), and *kıral* 'king', ultimately from Carl, the given name of the Emperor Charlemagne. Another was *kültür*, with the comment 'Keltirmek mastarının kökünden kurulmuş olduğundan ana kaynağı türkçe görünür' (As it is based on the root of the verb *keltirmek*, its original source seems to be Turkish). It is not clear why *kültür* 'culture' should come from an ancient verb meaning 'to bring', but it should be noted that this wild etymology could have been made to look a fraction less wild if *keltür-*, the proper ancient form, had been cited.

Here a general observation must be made, in view of the several allusions in this book to the unscholarliness of some of those who shaped the new Turkish. One should not be shocked at the apparent disingenuousness or self-deception that still allows some Turks to look one in the eye and insist that all the neologisms are entirely home-grown and uninfluenced by the foreign words that have manifestly inspired them; to swear, for example, that the resemblance between *okul* 'school' and the French *école* is fortuitous. One's first thought is, who do you think you're fooling? But when anyone except the most unregenerate of reformers says such a thing, it means no more than 'But it *could* have a Turkish etymology, couldn't it?'

In the several neologisms whose consonants resemble those of the Arabic words they were intended to replace, there is a reflection of their inventors' belief that they were restoring the original Turkish forms of these Arabic words: *ilgi* for *alâka* 'interest', *varsay-* for *farz* 'to suppose', *sömürme* for *istismar* 'exploitation', *kutsal* for *kudsi* 'holy', *sapta-* for *tespit* 'to establish'. All these are current.

Had the reformers happened to know the English *ashlar*, 'dressed stone for building or paving' (ultimately the Latin *axillaris*), they would surely have claimed it as derived from their *taşlar* 'stones'. Similarly they would have claimed the suffix of our *kingdom* and *Christendom* as borrowed from the suffix of Turkish *erdem* 'manly virtue' (compare *er* 'man'). Nor can they have come across Clauson's (1972: p. xliii) mention of *tanığma* as meaning 'riddle', or they would have hailed it as the etymon of *enigma*.⁶ The disappearance of the initial *ts* of *taşlar* and *tanığma*

⁶ Clauson, p. xliii. One assumes that by 'riddle' Clauson meant 'enigma' rather than 'sieve'. He seldom made mistakes, but neither meaning is right for *tanığma*, which in the body of the dictionary he shows as meaning 'denial'. His subconscious must have been brooding on the resemblance between *tanığma* and *enigma*.

would not have bothered them, for they would certainly have agreed with Müller's (1910: 30) dictum 'The change of a consonant is a mere trifle, for in etymology vowels are worth but little, and consonants almost nothing.'⁷ And can it be that nobody noticed the resemblance between *illet* [A] and its English equivalent *illness*? Or the suffix *-ebil-* and English *able*? Had they come across the nineteenth-century attempt to establish a Polynesian etymology for *taboo* as from *ta* 'to mark' and *pu*, an adverb of intensity,⁸ they would have been delighted by this proof that the influence of Turkish had reached the other side of the world. For *tapu* is Turkish for 'title deed', and what is a title deed if not an intensive marking, a legally cogent proof of ownership? The reader may think that what I am trying to say is that etymology is not a game for amateurs, but that is exactly what it is, whereas for others it is a science.⁹

To come back to the Dil Encümeni, which we met in Chapter 3: it had not been idle; in 1929 it had resumed the word-collecting begun by the Ministry of Education in 1920. By mid-1932, however, it was judged to be dormant, for on 25 June the Minister of Education told the Grand National Assembly that an allocation of just one lira had been made to it in the budget (Korkmaz 1992: 252–3). He explained, 'Dil Heyeti, Dil Encümeni, Dil Cemiyeti vesair namlarla her halde böyle bir heyetin . . . lüzumunu Hükümet kabul etmiştir . . . Bunun için bir lira koyduk. (Kâfi sesleri)' (The Government has accepted the necessity for some such body . . . whether under the name of Language Committee, Language Council, Language Society or some other name . . . That is why we have put down one lira. (Cries of 'Enough!')). It is not apparent whether members' lack of enthusiasm at the prospect of perpetuating the existence of the moribund body was just because it was moribund or because they did not favour the language reform; in view of the general fervour for reform at that time, the former reason is the more likely.

Having founded Türk Tarihi Tetkik Cemiyeti (the Turkish Society for the Study of History, later Türk Tarih Kurumu), on 15 April 1931, on 12 July 1932 Mustafa Kemal established the Turkish Society for the Study of Language, Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti, the name of which was changed four years later to Türk Dil Kurumu, after a brief period when *tetkik* [A] was replaced by *araştırma*.¹⁰ The Society's creation is said to have been at the suggestion of four men: Samih Rifat, Ruşen

⁷ Not the great nineteenth-century Oxford philologist Max Müller but his cousin, George A. Müller.

⁸ 'The compound word *tapu*, therefore, means no more than "marked thoroughly" . . . because sacred things and places were commonly marked in a peculiar manner in order that everyone might know that they were sacred' (Shortland 1851: 81, quoted in Steiner 1967: 32).

⁹ The author vividly recalls learning this fact in his youth from listening to one of the regulars at Speakers' Corner in London, a woman who preached the necessity of atheism and tried to prove it by explaining away the pagan deities as personifications of natural forces. The god Thor, for example, was the force that ended the winter, his name being identical with the English *thaw*. See also Lewis (1991).

¹⁰ Already in September 1934 Atatürk was referring to the Society as Türk Dili Araştırma Kurumu. Two numbers of the Society's journal *Türk Dili* appeared in June 1935. In the first, no. 11, as in its predecessors, the subtitle was *Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti Bülteni*; in the second, no. 12, it had become *Türk Dili Araştırma Kurumu Bülteni*.

Eşref, Celâl Sahir, and Yakup Kadri, who became its first board of management, with Samih Rifat as its first president (Doğan 1984: 25). In the forefront of this new organization were the purifiers (*tasfiyeciler*, a term soon replaced by *özleştirmeciler*). One of its first tasks was to draw up a list of philosophical and scientific terms, of which the Ottoman and French ones were sent to the universities and various private scholars, with a request that they produce Turkish replacements for them. The replies, after scrutiny by the Society, were sent to the Ministry of Education, which authorized their use in school textbooks. Not all of them were new; some were long-established Arabic borrowings or coinages from Arabic, some were of Greek or Latin origin.

On 21 November 1932 the Directorate of Religious Affairs instructed all ‘cami ve mesjid hademeleri’ (servants of congregational and other mosques) to prepare themselves to recite the *ezan*, the call to prayer, not in Arabic but in Turkish, though this did not happen all over the country at once, because it took time for all muezzins to master the new version. A gramophone record made by Hafız Sadettin, the chief muezzin of the Sultan Ahmed mosque, was distributed to muezzins as the model to follow. This was the prescribed text:

Tanrı¹¹ uludur!
 Şühbesiz bilirim bildiririm
 Tanrıdan başka yoktur tapacak.
 Şühbesiz bilirim bildiririm
 Tanrının elçisidir Muhammed.
 Haydin namaza!
 Haydin felâha!
 (Namaz uykudan hayırlıdır.)
 Tanrı uludur!
 Tanrıdan başka yoktur tapacak.

(Jäschke 1951: 75)

God is great!
 I know without doubt and I declare:
 There is none to be worshipped but God;
 I know without doubt and I declare:
 Muhammad is the envoy of God.
 Come to prayer!
 Come to felicity!
 (Prayer is better than sleep.)
 God is great!
 There is none to be worshipped but God.

The line in parentheses is recited only for the dawn prayer.

On 9 July 1933, when it had become obvious that it was not going to be easy to

¹¹ *Tanrı*, anciently *teñri*, originally meant ‘sky’ and then ‘God’; Clauson (1972: 523–4) describes it as ‘a very old word, prob. pre-Turkish, which can be traced back to the language of the Hsiung-nu, III B.C., if not earlier’.

find native equivalents for all the doomed Arabic and Persian words, *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* announced that words current among the people, whatever their origin, were to be regarded as Turkish. This sensible provision could have made little impression on the reformers, or they would not have wasted so much time trying to devise Turkish etymologies for Arabic words. Everyone had a go at the etymology game.

Birinci Türk Dili Kurultayı (the First Turkish Language Congress)¹² was held between 26 September and 5 October 1932, in the great ceremonial hall of Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul. Of some thirty papers read to the Kurultay, nine dealt with relationships between Turkish and other languages, one speaker going so far as to entitle his contribution 'Turkish Philology: Turkish is an Indo-European Language' (Dilemre 1933). A Philology and Linguistics Division was created, with responsibility for making comparisons between Turkish 'and the most ancient Turkish languages, such as Sumerian and Hittite, and the languages called Indo-European and Semitic'.

Many people threw themselves enthusiastically into this task. In 1934, if we may get a little ahead of the chronological account, Saim Ali (Dilemre 1935) presented to the Second Kurultay a paper in which he sought to establish a connection between Turkish and the West European languages. He equated the *bi-* of *bicarbonate* and *bilingual* with the *bi* of *bile* 'together' and *binmek* 'to mount', and the prefix *ex-* with the *eks* of *eksik* 'lacking' and *eksitmek* 'to reduce'. Even more bizarre was his identification of Latin *ab* 'as in *abjure* and *abandon*' (although the *ab* in the latter word is not in fact the Latin *ab*) with the first syllable of *abaki* 'scarecrow' and *abacı*, which he explained as 'kaşkarlıların ummacısı' (the Kashghars' bogymen),¹³ the connection being that scarecrows and bogymen are frightening and turn birds and people *ab*, 'away'.

Other products of the same frame of mind were displayed at that Second Kurultay.¹⁴ Naim Hâzım delivered himself of a paper (Onat 1935) on the relationship between Turkish and the Semitic languages, having previously published an article entitled 'Türk kökleri Arap dilini nasıl doğurmuş' ('How Turkish Roots Gave Birth to Arabic' (*Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, 4 Mar. 1933; Levend 1972: 430)). At the

¹² The title of the third and subsequent congresses was Turk Dil Kurultayı—i.e. not Turkish-Language Congress but Turkish Language-Congress, indicating a greater breadth of interest. The title on bound volumes of the proceedings of the second congress is Turk Dil Kurultayı, but the term used throughout the text is Turk Dili Kurultayı.

¹³ The normal spelling of the word translated 'bogymen' is *umacı* with a single *m*. *Abaki* does not seem to be recorded elsewhere. The common Anatolian word for scarecrow is *abak*; see Koşay and İşıtman (1932: 1). As for the *kaşkarlılar* (*sic*): 'The Kashgharians are a people living in Kulja and the western part of Chinese Turkestan' (Czaplicka 1918: 58). 'Kashgartsy, Kashgarlyki: local designation of an Uyghur population of the Kashgar oasis (Western China). The Kashgars in Central Asia are a group of Uyghurs who resettled from the Kashgar oasis to the Ferghana valley in the 1840's; at the present time they are fused with the Uzbeks' (Krueger 1963: 197-a). So far as one can tell in the absence of an index, they are not mentioned in Bainbridge (1993).

¹⁴ And after it: an article by Dilemre, entitled 'Turk-Kelt dil karşılaştırmaları' ('Linguistic Comparisons between Turkish and Celtic'), appeared in *Türk Dili*, 15 (1936), 1–97. The proceedings of the Second Kurultay were published in numbers 9–14 (Sept. 1934 to Dec. 1935) of the journal.

Third Kurultay, in 1936, he returned specifically to the relationship with Arabic, this time in the light of the Sun-Language Theory (Onat 1937). Years later he published a two-volume work on the same theme (Onat 1944–9), though the second volume did not go beyond one fascicle. The kindest comment one can make is that he could scarcely be blamed for failing to prove his thesis.

Yusuf Ziya Özer, a lawyer, not a language man, found the origin of *Aphrodite* in *avrat* ‘woman’ (*‘awrāt* [A]). He spoke at the Second Kurultay on the relationship between Turkish and the Ural-Altai languages, including Finnish:

Fin dili son zamanlarda indo-avrupayı [*sic*] sayılmak için bir meyelan vardır. Bu bir fali hayırdır, çünkü fin dilinin indo-avrupai zümresine girmesi uralo-altay lehçeleri üzerinde yapılacak lisanî tetkikatı genişletecek ve sonunda bu lehçelerin de aynı membadan geldiği anlaşılacak türkçenin ana dil olduğu hakikatini meydana koymaya vesile olacaktır. (*Türk Dili*, 12 (1935), 55)

There has been a tendency recently for Finnish to be counted as Indo-European.¹⁵ This bodes well, since the entry of Finnish among the Indo-European languages will broaden linguistic studies on the Ural-Altai dialects, and eventually the realization that these dialects also come from the same origin will be the occasion to bring to light the truth that Turkish is the mother language.

This same Yusuf Ziya figures in a reminiscence of the constitutional lawyer Ali Fuad Başgil:

Hiç unutmam, 1935 yazında, bir gün, Ada vapurunda, rahmetli Eskişehir Mebusu Yusuf Ziya hoca ile buluştuktu. Ankara’dan geldiğini ve beş yüz sahfelek [*sic*] bir eser hazırlamakta olduğunu söyledi. Neye dair diye sordum. Arapça’nın Türkçe’den çıkma olduğuna dairmiş . . . Bir de misâl verdi, meselâ Firavun kelimesi Arapça sanılır, halbuki Türkçedir ve ‘Burun’ kelimesinden çıkmazdır. Burun, insanın önünde, çıkıntı yapan bir uzuvdur. Hükümdar da cemyetin [*sic*] önünde giden bir şahsiyet olduğu için, Mısır’da buna burun denilmiş, kelime zamanlar içinde kullanılarak nihayet Firavun olmuş . . . Üstad hakikaten uydurmacılık hastalığından kurtulamıyarak Allahın rahmetine kavuştu. (Erer 1973: 186–7)

I shall never forget; on the Islands steamer one day in the summer of 1935, I met the late Professor Yusuf Ziya, the Deputy for Eskişehir. He told me he had come from Ankara and was preparing a work of five hundred pages. I asked what it was about. It emerged that it was on the Turkish origins of Arabic. And he gave an example: for instance the word *Firavun* ‘Pharaoh’ is thought to be Arabic, whereas it is Turkish, being derived from *burun* ‘nose’, an organ protruding in front of a person. As the sovereign is a personage going in front of the society, in Egypt he was called The Nose. In the course of time, this word *burun* became altered to *Firavun* . . . The Professor in fact attained God’s mercy without managing to escape from the disease of fakery.

To revert to 1932: the Society’s by-laws, accepted by the First Kurultay, set out two aims (Kurultay 1932: 437): ‘Türk dilinin öz güzelliğini ve zenginliğini meydana çıkarmak; Türk dilini dünya dilleri arasında değerine yarasır yüksekliğine

¹⁵ This looks like a moonbeam from the larger lunacy, but one cannot confidently assert that there never was such a tendency.

eriştirmek' (To bring to light the particular beauty and richness of the Turkish language and to raise it to the level it merits among the languages of the world). The Central General Committee elected by the Kurultay issued the following directive on the tasks to be given priority:

(1) Halk dilinde ve eski kitaplarda bulunan Türk dili hazinelerini toplayıp ortaya koyma; (2) Türkçede söz yaratma yollarını belli etmek ve bunları işleterek Türk köklerinden türlü sözler çıkarmak; (3) Türkçede, hele yazı dilinde, çok kullanılan yabancı kökten sözler yerine konabilecek öz Türkçe sözleri ortaya koymak ve bunları yaymak. (*Söz Derleme Dergisi* (1939–52): i. 7–8)

(1) Collecting and publishing the treasures of the Turkish language existing in the popular language and old books; (2) clarifying the methods of word-creation in Turkish and employing them to extract various words from Turkish roots; (3) uncovering and publicizing pure Turkish words which may be substituted for words of foreign roots widely used in Turkish, especially in the written language.

On the evening after the close of that First Kurultay there was great euphoria round Atatürk's table. He himself was saying, 'We are going to defeat Ottoman. Turkish is going to be a language as free and as independent as the Turkish nation, and with it we shall enter the world of civilization at one go' (Tankut 1963: 116–17).¹⁶ Then there began *söz derleme seferberliği* (the word-collection mobilization).

'Mobilization' was not an empty metaphor; those called upon included army officers, teachers, tax, agriculture, and forestry officials, and government doctors, whose duties brought them into regular contact with the people. The central committee of the Language Society distributed to every part of the country a booklet explaining how the work was to be carried out, together with slips on which to enter the words collected. In the capital of every province (*vilayet*) a 'collection committee' of mayors, military commanders, and head teachers was set up, chaired by the provincial governor (*Vali*), with a branch committee chaired by the sub-governor (*Kaymakam*) in the chief town of every sub-province (*kaza*); the duty of these committees was to organize the collection of words in use among the people. Within a year, a total of 125,988 slips had been returned, from which, after checking and the elimination of repetitions, 35,357 words were left. To these were added 765 words collected by private individuals and gleaned from folk-poetry and various books, including the first ever Turkish dialect dictionary: Hamit Zübeyr [Koşay] and İshak Refet [İşitman], *Anadilden Derlemeler* (1932),¹⁷ a scholarly work containing the results not only of its authors' own investigations but also of the 1920 inquiry mentioned in Chapter 2. In addition, there was a number of words from *Türkmençe* (Turcoman), and *Azerice*, the dialect of Azerbaijan (Kurultay 1934 (= *Türk Dili*, 8 (1934), 12)).

¹⁶ Tankut does not quote Atatürk's actual words. His version of them runs 'Osmanlıca'yı yeneceğiz. Türk dili Türk ulusu gibi özgür ve başına buyruk bir dil olacak ve biz onunla uygarlık acununa birden ve toptan gireceğiz.' But *özgür*, for example, was not invented until twenty years after the First Kurultay.

¹⁷ Twenty years later a second volume appeared: Koşay and Aydın 1952.

A Commission of Inquiry was created and from March to July 1933 *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* published daily lists of a dozen or so Arabic and Persian words under the heading 'Türk okur yazarları! Büyük dil anketi seferberliği başladı. İş başına!' (Literate Turks! Mobilization for the great language inquiry has begun. To work!). Other newspapers and radio stations were invited to cooperate and readers' suggestions for Turkish replacements were published as they came in. (There is anecdotal evidence that suggestions were paid for at the rate of TL6 a word.) When it became apparent that different contributors had different ideas about what sort of replacements were acceptable, belatedly on 9 July *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* stated two principles: (a) words current among the people, whatever their origin, were to be counted as Turkish, and (b) replacements must be *Öztürkçe* (see note 25, p. 56): while *kalem* [A] 'pen', for example, would not be discarded, *yazak* would also be used and whichever proved the more popular would survive. This exercise was not very productive: the number of words in the daily lists totalled 1,382. Of the replacements suggested, 640 were accepted.

Meanwhile, scholars had been combing through dictionaries of Turkic languages and more than 150 old texts in search of words that had fallen out of use or had never been in use in Turkey; these totalled close on 90,000. After a very brief process of checking, mostly by middle-school teachers, the results of both researches were embodied in *Tarama Dergisi* (1934). Although the compilers had conscientiously put question marks against some words of which they were not sure, and warned that this huge mass of material was undigested, enthusiasts did not feel inhibited from using any word found in it, and for a while Babel set in. If you wanted to express 'pen' without using the normal *kalem*, you looked up *kalem* and made your choice from among *yağuş* or *yazgaç*, shown as recorded at Bandırma and İzmir respectively, or the Karaim *cizgiç* or *sızgiç*, or the Tatar *kavri*, or *kamış* from the *Kamus*¹⁸ or *yuvuş* from Pavet de Courteille (1870). For *hikâye* 'story' there were twenty-two possibilities, including *erteği*, *höçek*, *ötkünç*, and *sürçek*, but not *öykü*, which eventually supplanted it. For *hediye* 'gift' you could pick your favourite from a list of seventy-seven words ranging from *açı* through *ertüt* and *tañşu* to *yarlığaş* and *zını*.

Agop Dilaçar notes (Korkmaz 1992: 363) that for *akıl* 'intelligence' there were twenty-six equivalents, from *an* to *zerey*. He describes a visit he paid some time in 1934 to Necmettin Sadak, editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Akşam*:

Sadak, gazetenin başyazısını yazmıştı, Osmanlıca. Zile bastı, gelen odacıya yazıyı vererek 'bunu ikameciye götür' dedi. Karşı odadaki ikameci *Tarama Dergisi*'ni açtı ve yazının sözdizimine hiç bakmadan, Osmanlıca sözcüklerin yerine bu dergiden beğendiği Türkçe karşılıkları 'ikame' etti. Başka bir gazete bürosunda başka bir 'ikameci' aynı

¹⁸ What the *Kamus* (1316/1901: ii. 1039) actually gives under *kamış* 'reed' is 'kalem kamışı: yontularak yazı yazmağa yarayan kamış cinsi . . .' (pen-reed: a type of reed which on being trimmed serves for writing . . .). 'Reed pen' is *kamış kalem*; the two words are not synonymous.

Osmanlıca sözcüklere başka karşılıkları seçmiş olabilirdi. İşte Atatürk'ün ilk bunalımı bu kargaşadan doğdu.

Sadak had written the editorial, in Ottoman. He rang the bell, gave the text to the messenger who arrived, and said 'Take this to the substitutor.' The substitutor, in the room across the corridor, opened *Tarama Dergisi* and, paying no regard to the structure of the passage, 'substituted' for the Ottoman words the Turkish equivalents he liked from that book. In another newspaper office another 'substitutor' might have chosen other equivalents for the same Ottoman words.

The author had some first-hand experience of the rite of 'substitution' in 1984, when he spent a memorable evening in Istanbul with a group of members of the Faculty of Political Science who were organizing a symposium on the *Tanzimat*, the nineteenth-century reforms. Their chairman, a venerable retired professor, was composing his opening address, which, for the sake of the many young students who were expected, he wanted to couch in the most up-to-date language. So in his own archaic and courtly Turkish he told the company what he wanted to say and we suggested the appropriate neologisms. There was much discussion about how to say 'modern'. He knew *asrî* was too old-fashioned but he did not know the new word. One or two people suggested *çağdaş*, but we agreed that that was the neologism for *muasır* 'contemporary'. The eventual consensus was that he should use *modern*, which he did.

It was around 1934 that a Turkish writer, when asked how many languages he knew, is said to have replied that it was as much as he could do to keep up with Turkish. The situation is well summed up by Heyd (1954: 31):¹⁹

Now any Turkish word found in the vernacular of a remote Anatolian village, in the speech of an even more remote Turkish tribe in Siberia or in the manuscript of an eleventh century Turkish–Arabic dictionary was regarded as a possible addition to the modern Turkish vocabulary. On the other hand, practically every word of Arabic or Persian origin was considered outlawed and condemned to suppression as soon as a Turkish equivalent was found.

An undated leaflet, published by TDK and distributed to the participants at one of the early Kurultays, deserves to be rescued from oblivion. It is entitled *Kurultay Marşı* ('Congress March'), words by Dr Hilmi Oytaç, Deputy for Malatya, music by Maestro Karlo d'Alpino Kapoçelli. The presence of the surnames Atatürk and Oytaç shows it could not have been before 1934, as does Dr Oytaç's manifest indebtedness to *Tarama Dergisi* of 1934: *buşgut, tolunay, cankı* [M], and so on. The translation offered here is in parts tentative; the rendering 'respect' for *okkay*, for example, which is not found in *Tarama Dergisi*, is based on the possibly far-fetched assumption that it is a back-formation from *okkalı* (from *okka* 'oke', a measure of weight), first meaning 'weighty' and then 'worthy of respect', with the *y* added for the sake of the rhyme.

¹⁹ This book is immensely useful for details of the Society's history, as is Brendemoen (1990: 454–93).

Gözün aydın Türk oğlu açıldı benlik yolu
 Ey bu yolun yolcusu artık sana ne mutlu
 Atatürk çocukları diline el bastırmaz
 Kurultay buşgulları diline dil kattırmaz
 Selâm sana Kurultay yeni doğan tolunay
 Selâm sana Atatürk, bizden sana bin okkay
 Bil ki tarih ile dil benliğin damgasıdır
 İçi dışı gösteren bir kılık aynasıdır
 Bu cankıdan doğacak öz Türklüğe yom olcay
 Özge dilden öz dili kurtaracak Kurultay
 Selâm sana Kurultay yeni doğan tolunay
 Selâm sana Atatürk, bizden sana bin okkay

Joy to you, son of Turks, the road to identity has been opened
 O traveller on this road, how happy you are at last.
 The children of Atatürk let no stranger encroach on their language
 The disciples of the Kurultay let no language adulterate their language
 Salutations to you, Kurultay, full moon newly rising
 Salutations to you, Atatürk, a thousand respects from us to you
 Know that history and language are the mark of identity
 A full-length mirror showing the inside and the outside
 From this council blessings and felicity will be born for pure Turkdöm
 The Kurultay will save the pure language from other languages.

İbrahim Necmi displayed some cheerful ignorance in his speech on the occasion of the second *Dil Bayramı* (Language Festival), in which he spoke of *Tarama Dergisi*:

Dergideki sözler, öz dilimizin hem zenginliğini, hem de başka dillere kaynaklığını gösterecek değerdedir. Bir örnek verelim. Bugün herkesin söylediği ‘psikoloji’ sözünün kökü aranacak olursa bunun ‘psikoz’ dan çıktığı görülür. Etimoloji kitapları bunu da ‘nefes’ diye anlatırlar. Yaşamının nefes almakla bir olduğunu düşünen eskilerin ‘nefes’ le ‘ruh’ u bir tutmaları kolay anlaşılır bir iştir. Şimdi Dergide ‘nefes’ sözüne bakarsanız ‘Pıs’ diye bir söz görürsünüz ki ‘psikoz’ sözünün de, ‘nefes’ lakırdısının da hep bu ana kaynaktan kaynamış olduğunu anlamak pek kolay olur. . . . (*Türk Dili*, 10 (1934), 23-4)

The words in the *Dergi* are capable of showing both the richness of our language and the fact that it is the source for other languages. Let me give an example. If one looks for the root of the word *psikoloji*, which today is on everyone’s lips, it will be seen that it comes from *psikoz*. The etymology books explain this as *nefes* [A] ‘breath’. It is easily understandable that the ancients, reflecting that living was one with breathing, took ‘breath’ and ‘soul’ as one and the same. Now if you look up the word *nefes* in the *Dergi* you will see a word *pıs*, and it will be very easy to understand that *psikoz* and *nefes* have both welled up from this ultimate source.

He then gave another example, *tünel* (familiar to Istanbul people as the name of the underground railway going down from the lower end of İstiklâl Caddesi to the Golden Horn), ‘which everyone knows we borrowed from the French’. Having said that a recent French etymological dictionary explained the word as a French borrowing from the English *tonnel* (*sic*), of obscure origin, he continues: ‘Şimdi

Dergiyi açınız: “Tün” sözünün “gece, karanlık” demeye geldiğini görürsünüz. Buna “Kural, kaval, çakal, sakal, güzel . . .” sözlerinin sonunda görülen “al-el” ekini katarsanız “Tünel” in “karanlık yer” demeye gelen öz Türkçe bir söz olduğu ortaya çıkar’ (Now open the *Dergi* and you will see that *tün* means ‘night, darkness.’ If you add to this word the suffix appearing at the end of words such as *kural* [‘rule’],²⁰ *kaval* [‘shepherd’s pipe’], *çakal* [‘jackal’], *sakal* [‘beard’], *güzel* [‘beautiful’], and so on, it becomes apparent that *tünel* is a pure Turkish word meaning ‘dark place’). That last paragraph, together with his confusion of *psikoz* ‘psychosis’ and *psyché*, and his equating the second syllable of the Arabic *nefes* with *pis* (according to *Tarama Dergisi* (1934), a Kirghiz word for ‘weak breath’),²¹ may be thought to show a deficiency of philological competence. Although he taught literature and from 1935 was a member of the Grand National Assembly, by training he was a lawyer, but that did not harm his career in the Language Society, of which he was Secretary-General from 1934 to 1945.

It was during the period of linguistic chaos following the publication of *Tarama Dergisi* (1934) that Atatürk said to Atay something on these lines:²² ‘Çocuğum beni dinle, dedi. Türkçenin hiçbir yabancı kelimeye ihtiyacı olmadığını söyleyenlerin iddiasını tecrübe ettik. Bir çıkmaza girmişizdir. Dili bu çıkmazda bırakırlar mı? Bırakmazlar. Biz de çıkmazdan kurtarma şerefini başkalarına bırakamayız’ (‘Listen to me, my boy,’ he said. ‘We have put to the test the claim of those who say that Turkish has no need of any foreign word. We really have got into a dead end. Will they leave the language in this dead end? They won’t. But we can’t leave to others the honour of saving it from the dead end’). Atay’s next words are of greater significance: ‘Fakat bir noktada ısrar etti. Türkçede kalacak kelimelerin aslında Türkçe olduğu izah edilmeli idi’ (But on one point he was insistent: it had to be explained that the words which were to remain in Turkish were Turkish in origin).

Atay gives us an insight into the method used to avoid branding as foreign any essential word for which no native equivalent could be found. He tells of a discussion on the Dictionary Commission about possible replacements for *hüküm* [A] ‘judgement’:

Naim Hâzım Hoca was sitting on my right, Yusuf Ziya on my left. I said, ‘There’s no equivalent for it. Let’s keep it.’ They both said, ‘Impossible!’ I turned to my right and said, ‘Professor, you say that the origin of Arabic is Turkish. You claim as originally Turkish any word we cite from the Koran.’ I turned to my left. ‘And you, Professor, maintain that all languages derive from Turkish. You resort to all kinds of dodges to show that the French *chambre* is

²⁰ *Kural* ‘rule’ is a neologism of dubious ancestry. In the real world it occurs in the sense of ‘instrument, tool’ in most Central Asian dialects.

²¹ *Pis*, which looks onomatopoeic, is not to be found in Taymas (1945–8), the Turkish translation of Yudakhin, *Kirgizsko-Russkiy Slovar* (1940).

²² The reason for the *Russkiy Slovar* uncertainty is that this version, from Atay (1951), is one of his three versions of the same reminiscence. It has been selected as being the oldest and, one therefore hopes, the nearest to what Atatürk actually said. There is yet another version in Akbal (1984), obviously quoted from memory: ‘Atatürk “öz Türkçe işi çıkmaza girdi, vazgeçelim bundan” diyeyi imiş!’ (Lewis 1988: 115) (A. is supposed to have said, ‘The pure Turkish business has got into a dead end; let’s drop it.’)

derived from *oda*. And now, when it comes to a word like *hüküm* which has become part of village speech, the two of you dig your toes in.' We had quite an argument. After the meeting, my friend Abdülkadir came up to me in the upper corridor of Dolmabahçe Palace. He it was who had once said to me, 'I know most of the dialects of the Asian Turks. I also understand the dialect spoken by you and people like Yakup Kadri. If there's one dialect I can't make head or tail of, it's the dialect of the Turkish Language Society.' On this occasion he said, 'You look worried. Tell me what words are bothering you and I'll find Turkish origins for them.' 'Well,' I replied, 'there's this word *hüküm*.' 'Don't worry,' he said, 'tomorrow we'll make *hüküm* Turkish.' Next day he quietly put into my hand a slip of paper on which he had noted that some dialects had a word *ök* meaning 'intellect', which in several of them took the form *ük*. I had myself discovered that in Yakut there was a word-building suffix *-üm*. The rest was easy: *ük* plus *üm* had in the course of time become *hüküm*. When the meeting began, I said, 'The word *hüküm* is Turkish,' and gave a full account of what I had learned, which reduced the two professors to silence. We had laid the foundations of the science of—I shan't say fakery, but flim-flam. ['Uydurma' demiyeyim de 'yakıştırmacılık' ilminin temelini atmıştık.] That evening I reported to Atatürk on the Commission's proceedings and he was very pleased that we had won so important a word by this fabrication. What he wanted us to do was to leave as many words in the language as possible, so long as we could demonstrate that they were Turkish.²³

Atay of course knew that *hüküm* was borrowed from the Arabic *ḥukm* but he offers no justification for his conduct; if taxed with dishonesty he would no doubt have pleaded that what he had told the Commission and Atatürk was a white lie intended to save the life of a word that had served the Turks well for centuries. Atatürk, who was no doubt equally aware of the origin of *hüküm*, was satisfied that it could be reprieved now that it had been provided with a Turkish pedigree.

A remarkable revelation of the Language Society's way with words is to be seen in an unsigned article entitled 'Cep Kılavuzları ne kadar Sözü Karşılımıştır?':

Şimdiye kadar lügatlerde arapça farsça . . . gibi Türkçeden başka sanılan dillere mensup diye gösterilmiş olan, fakat Kılavuz araştırmaları arasında gerek kökünün Türkçe olduğu anlaşılması ve gerek yaygınlığı ve dilin ihtiyacı olması bakımından Türk kökünden geldiği tesbit edilen sözlerin sayısı (583)tür. (*Türk Dili*, 16 (1936), 22–3)

Up to now, 583 words have been shown in the dictionaries as belonging to languages thought to be different from Turkish, such as Arabic, Persian etc., but their derivation from Turkish roots has been established, in view of the facts that it has become clear in the course of researching the *Guide* that their roots are Turkish, that they are widely used, and that the language needs them.

One may wonder why, once it had become clear that the roots of the words in question were Turkish, further evidence was required that their derivation from Turkish roots had been established. In so far as it betokens an uneasy conscience on the anonymous writer's part, let us not condemn him.

Atatürk was far too intelligent to be deluded by those who maintained that all languages derived from Turkish. The logical consequence of such a belief would

²³ Atay's story is here pieced together from his two divergent accounts, one in Atay (1969: 478), the other in Atay (1965).

have been to retain all the Arabic and Persian elements in the language, which at that time was the exact opposite of his intention. So, for a limited period, he seized on the *Öztürkçe* words produced by the reformers and used them in his speeches and letters.

In February 1935 he dropped his given names, Mustafa and Kemal, both being irremediably Arabic, and for a little while took to signing himself as Kamâl. The origin of this novel name was explained in a communiqué from Anadolu Ajansı, the official news agency:

İstihbaratımıza nazaran Atatürk'ün taşıdığı 'Kamâl' adı Arapça bir kelime olmadığı gibi Arapça 'Kemal' (olgunluk) kelimesinin delâlet ettiği mânâda değildir.

Atatürk'ün muhafaza edilen öz adı, Türkçe 'ordu ve kale' mânâsına olan 'Kamâl' dir. Son 'a' üstündeki tahfif işareti 'l' harfini yumuşattığı için telaffuz hemen hemen Arapça 'Kemal' telaffuzuna yaklaşıır. Benzeyiş bundan ibarettir. (*Cumhuriyet*, 5 Feb. 1935, quoted in Bozgeyik 1995: 15)

In the light of our information, the name 'Kamâl' that Atatürk bears is not an Arabic word, nor does it have the meaning indicated by the Arabic word *kemal* ['maturity', 'perfection'].

Atatürk's personal name, which is being retained, is 'Kamâl', the Turkish meaning of which is army and fortification. As the circumflex accent on the final *a* softens the *l*, the pronunciation closely approximates that of the Arabic 'Kemal'. That is the full extent of the resemblance.

Tarama Dergisi (1934) gives *kamal* as meaning fortification, castle, army, shield. That, however, is of no relevance, because *kamâl* (/kamal/) is not *kamal* (Lewis 1988: 6–7).²⁴ Apart from the improbable final syllable, the substitution of *a* for the *e* of *Kemal* would alter the sound of the initial consonant, from /kʰ/ to /k/. But clearly the purpose of the change was not to affect the pronunciation of the name but only to make its written form look less Arabic. In fact he did not persist with 'Kamâl' but habitually signed himself K. Atatürk.

In the spring of 1935 the newspapers began to publish lists of proposed replacements for Arabic and Persian words, on which readers were invited to comment. Later that year the results were presented to the public in a little 'Pocket Guide from Ottoman to Turkish' (*Cep Kılavuzu* (1935)), as planned at the Second Kurultay in August 1934. The speed with which the plan had been implemented was due to the active interest of Atatürk himself, but it is a pity the editors did not have more time to spend on it. Two examples: the new word they offered for 'education' was *eğitim*, which was supposed to be a noun derived from an ancient verb *eğitmek* 'to educate'. But there never was a verb *eğitmek*; it was a misreading of *igidmek* 'to feed (people or animals)'. For *millet* 'nation' *Tarama Dergisi* had come up with eight possibilities, among them *uluş* and *ulus*. The compilers of *Cep Kılavuzu* backed the wrong horse and chose the latter, which represented the Mongolian pronunciation of Turkish *uluş* 'country', an early borrowing by the

²⁴ There is a Turkish word containing a back vowel and a clear *l*, the somewhat mysterious *elâ* (/el'â/) 'hazel' (of eyes). Agop Dilâçar's new surname 'language-opener' (he was born Martayan) was given to him by Atatürk; the circumflex shows that the *l* is clear.

Mongols, used by them for 'a confederation of peoples' (Clouston 1972: 152). By the fourteenth century the Turks had borrowed it back, and it was in its Mongolian form *ulus* that they used it until the seventeenth century and use it again now.

The end product was to be *Öz Türkçe*²⁵ (Pure Turkish), a term said to derive from a favourite expression of Atatürk's, 'öz Türk dilimiz' (our own Turkish language), *öz* meaning 'pure' as well as 'own'. The new words were circulated to schools by the Ministry of Education, and publicized and used in the newspapers.

Atatürk had already gone a long way in the use of *Öztürkçe*; he took it to the limit in the speech he made on 3 October 1934, at a banquet in honour of the Swedish Crown Prince and Princess. Turks refer to it as 'baysal utkulu nutuk' (the speech characterized by 'baysal utkusu'), this expression standing out as the oddest of all. It contains three French words, *Altes*, *Ruvayâl*, and *Prences*, and only two words of Arabic origin, *tarih* 'history' and *tüm* 'all'.²⁶ It also contains some startling neologisms. Here is a sample (full text and glossary in Levend 1972: 424–6): 'Avrupanın iki bitim ucunda yerlerini berkiten uluslarımız, ataç özlüklerinin tüm ıssıları olarak baysak, önürme, uygunluk kıldacıları olmuş bulunuyorlar; onlar, bugün, en güzel utkuyu kazanmıya anıklanıyorlar: baysal utkusu' (Our nations, which hold firm their places at the two extremities of Europe, in full possession of their ancestral qualities have become the agents of tranquillity, progress and harmony; today they are preparing to win the most beautiful victory of all: the victory of peace). Tankut (1963: 125) says that the speech was composed in Ottoman and the Arabic words were then replaced by neologisms. He says too that Mustafa Kemal delivered it 'okumaya yeni başlamış öğrencilerin acemiliğiyle' (with the awkwardness of schoolchildren who have just begun to read).

This self-inflicted injury must have caused him great irritation, for he was a proud man and a master of his own language. He had the rare gift of being able to extemporize, in Ottoman, lengthy periods of the kind that others might struggle for hours to compose, while he was equally at home with the straightforward and often racy colloquial he used in conversation and when addressing informal meetings. His address opening the new session of the Grand National Assembly on 1 November 1934 contained a fair number of *Öztürkçe* words,²⁷ though they were nothing like so numerous or so outlandish as those that must have tried the skill of the Swedish Crown Prince's interpreter a month earlier unless he had been given a sight of the original Ottoman text.

Towards the end of 1935, Atatürk seems to have decided that he would no longer deny himself the full use of the instrument he wielded so well; this is evident from the language of his subsequent public utterances, as we shall see. One can only imagine his mortification after all the effort he had invested in the language reform. And then, in what must have been a time of great chagrin and heart-searching for him, there appeared a *deus ex machina*: along came Kvergiç.

²⁵ Now generally written as one word, a practice which henceforth is followed in this book.

²⁶ It is not totally certain that *tüm* is originally Arabic, but there is no evidence that it is not.

²⁷ Text in *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri* (1945: i. 362–4).

The Sun-Language Theory and After

Sometime in 1935 Atatürk received a forty-seven-page typescript in French, entitled 'La Psychologie de quelques éléments des langues turques', by a Dr Hermann F. Kvergić of Vienna. The theme was that man first realized his own identity when he conceived the idea of establishing what the external objects surrounding him were. Language first consisted of gestures, to which some significant sounds were then added. Kvergić saw evidence for his view in the Turkish pronouns. *M* indicates oneself, as in *men*, the ancient form of *ben* 'I', and *elim* 'my hand'. *N* indicates what is near oneself, as in *sen* 'you' and *elin* 'your hand'. *Z* indicates a broader area, as in *biz* 'we' and *siz* 'you'. Further, Kvergić considered that Turkish was the first human language to take shape. Nothing could have been more timely.

Two months before, a copy of the paper had been sent to Ahmet Cevat Emre, the chairman of the grammar section of the Language Society, who after a cursory examination dismissed it as unsubstantiated and worthless. Atatürk was more impressed, partly because, having discussed it with Emre, he suspected that the latter's rejection of it was due to his seeing in Kvergić a potential rival. 'To me,' he said, 'the psychological analyses look important.' He thought that primitive man might well have given vent to exclamations such as 'Aa!' and 'Oo!' and that language could have emerged from utterances of this kind. He passed the paper on to İbrahim Necmi Dilmen, the secretary-general of the Language Society, and said, 'It looks important; let it be examined carefully.' Dilmen talked it over with Hasan Reşit Tankut, Naim Hâzım Onat, and Abdülkadir İnan, who saw merit in the psychological analyses (Emre 1960: 342–6).

The result of Atatürk's subsequent lucubrations, aided by these and others of the staff of the Society, was *Güneş-Dil Teorisi* (the Sun-Language Theory), which saw the beginning of language as the moment when primitive man looked up at the sun and said 'Aa!'. As it was concerned only with the beginning and not the development of language, it cannot be reproached for omitting to explain how mankind progressed from that primeval 'Aa!' to the sublimity of 'Faith, hope and charity, these three things', or Virgil's 'sunt lacrimae rerum' or even to so commonplace an utterance as 'Let's go for a walk in the park.'

Here is a brief summary of the theory, which came equipped with a battery of rules for its application. That 'Aa', *ağ* in Turkish spelling, was the first-degree radical of the Turkish language. Its original meaning was sun, then sunlight, warmth, fire, height, bigness, power, God, master, motion, time, distance, life,

colour, water, earth, voice. As man's vocal mechanisms developed, other vowels and consonants became available, each with its own shade of meaning. Because the primeval exclamation was shouted, and it is obviously easier to begin a shout with a vowel than with a consonant, any word now beginning with a consonant originally began with a vowel, since abraded. The words *yağmur* 'rain', *çamur* 'mud', and *hamur* 'dough', for example, are compounded of *ağmur* 'flowing water' preceded by *ay* 'high', *aç* 'earth', and *ah* 'food' respectively. The reader is urged not to waste time looking for the last four 'Turkish' words in the dictionary.

There is a cryptic foreshadowing of the theory in Dilmen's preface to *Türkçeden Osmanlıcaya Cep Kılavuzu*. After asserting that it was becoming daily more certain that 'the languages termed non-Turkish are equally of Turkish origin', he says, 'There can be no doubt that the great truth we are referring to will soon reveal itself with the brightness of the sun.' The authorship of the theory is archly hinted at by the anonymous writer of 'Güneş-Dil Teorisinin Esaslarına Kısa bir Bakış',¹ which speaks of it as a product of 'Türk jenişi' (the Turkish genius).

The Third Kurultay, in 1936, was dominated by what Heyd (1954: 34), with admirable restraint, refers to as 'this amazing theory'. So does Brendemoen (1990: 456), who with less restraint also calls it 'infamous'. Atatürk's responsibility for the theory is not disputed, though clearly he did not do all the donkey work. Dilâçar (1963: 50) says in so many words that the paper on the application of the analytical method of the theory, described in the agenda as the work of İsmail Müştak Mayakon, who read it to the Congress on 27 August 1936, was wholly due to Atatürk. So was the anonymous and undated little brochure *Etimoloji Morfoloji ve Fonetik Bakımından Türk Dili* ('The Turkish Language Etymologically, Morphologically and Phonetically Considered'), a condensed version of which was given away with the issue of *Ulus*, 14 November 1935. Between 2 and 21 November of that year, half of the front page of the newspaper was devoted to a series of unsigned 'Dil Yazıları', articles purporting to demonstrate the Turkish origin of some sixty words, mostly Arabic borrowings, on the basis of the Sun-Language Theory. The fact that *Ulus* gave up half its front page day after day to these articles is a pointer to the identity of their writer, but Atatürk's authorship of them was not known for sure until the publication in 1994 of an article that established with documentary evidence (Ercilasun 1994: 89) what had long been generally assumed.

This is how the first section of the brochure began:

Etimoloji, morfoloji ve fonetik bakımından Türk dili' hakkındaki şu notların ifade ettiği fikirler . . . Birinci Dil Kurultayından beri geçen üç sene içinde, Türk Dil üzerinde ve bu münasebetle diğer dillerde yapılan tetkik ve araştırmalardan ve dille alâkadar olan filozofi,

¹ Originally serialized in *Ulus* from the beginning of November 1935 onwards, reprinted in *Türk Dili*, 16 (1936), 33–123.

psikoloji, sosyoloji bahislerinin gözden geçirilmesinden doğmuştur. Bu doğuş, filolojide yeni bir teori olarak görülebilir. Bu teorinin temeli, insana benliğini güneşin tanıtması fikridir.

The ideas set out in these notes on 'The Turkish Language Etymologically, Morphologically and Phonetically Considered' have emerged in the three years since the First Language Congress . . . They grew from studies and research conducted during that time on Turkish and other languages and from a review of topics in philosophy, psychology, and sociology that have a bearing on language. This outcome may be seen as a new philological theory, based on the concept that what made man aware of his identity was the sun.

Having cited several works in which he had found confirmation for his theory—by Carra de Vaux on Etruscan, and Hilaire de Barenton on the derivation of languages from Sumerian—Atatürk continues:

Dil bu buluşla, tamamen câmit olmaktan kurtulamamıştır. Ona can ve hareket vermek lâzımdır. İşte bu nokta üzerinde düşünmeğe ve tetkike başladık . . . Türk diline ait lûgat kitaplarını önümüze aldık. Bu kitaplardaki tam ve belli anlamlar ifade eden sözleri ve bu sözlerde ek olarak köke yapışmış konsonları birer birer gözönünde tutarak, bunların kökte yaptıkları mana nüanslarını etüt ettik . . . Bu sırada Dr. Phil. Orient. H. F. Kvergitch'in 'Psychologie de quelques éléments des langues turques' adlı basılmamış kıymetli bir eserini okuduk. Türk dilindeki süfiklerin gösterici manalarını bulmak için Dr. Kvergitch'in bu nazariyesini Türk Dil Kurumunun ekler hakkındaki geniş ve çok misalli çalışmaları sayesinde anlıyabildik ve istifade ettik.

This discovery could do nothing to save the language from being totally lifeless. It had to be given soul and activity. It was on this point that I began to concentrate my thinking and investigation . . . I sat down with the Turkish dictionaries in front of me. Scrutinizing one by one the words in them that expressed complete and clear meanings, and the consonants suffixed to the root of each word, I studied the shades of meaning these made in the root . . . About this time I read a valuable unpublished work, Dr. Phil. Orient. H. F. Kvergic's 'Psychologie de quelques éléments des langues turques'. To find out the demonstrative senses of the Turkish suffixes, thanks to TDK's extensive labours on the suffixes, with abundant examples, I was able to understand this theory of Dr Kvergic's and I made use of it.

The first hint of what was coming was in a paper entitled 'The Sun, from the Point of View of Religion and Civilization', presented on the first day of the Congress by Yusuf Ziya Özer. The theory was mentioned only at the very end:

Beşeri kültür üzerinde bu kadar mühim rol yapan Güneşin . . . dil üzerinde de aynı tesiri ve aynı rolü yapmış olması gayet tabii görülmek lâzım gelir. Binaenaleyh Güneş-Dil Teorisi'nin de Güneşe bu kadar ezeli surette merbut olan Türk ilmi telâkkiyatının bir eseri olarak meydana konmuş olması iftihara lâyıktır. (Kurultay 1936: 48)

It must be seen as quite natural that the Sun, which plays so important a part in human culture, has . . . exercised the same influence on, and played the same part in, language too. We should therefore take pride in the fact that the Sun-Language Theory has been propounded as a product of the outlook of Turkish science, which has been linked to the Sun since time immemorial.

Dilmen began the next day with a lengthy outline of the theory, in which he proved, among other things, the identity of English *god*, German *Gott*, and Turkish *kut* 'luck'. The proof was simple enough: *Gott* is oğ + ot, *god* is oğ + od, *kut* is uk + ut. By spelling *Gott* with only one *t*, he spared himself the necessity of explaining its second *t*. Similar moonshine was delivered on that second day and the three following days, the sixth day being given over to the foreign scholars. Dilmen used the theory to show the identity of the Uyghur *yaltrık* 'gleam, shining', and *electric* (*Türk Dili*, 19 (1936), 47–9). An article in the *Wall Street Journal* of 16 March 1985 on the language reform states that a headline in *Cumhuriyet* of 31 January 1936 ran: 'Electric is a Turkish word!'

Space does not permit a full examination of the material presented to the Congress, much as one would like to go into the content of papers with such intriguing titles as Tankut's 'Palaeosociological Language Studies with Panchronic Methods according to the Sun-Language Theory' and Dilâçar's 'Sun-Language Anthropology'. Emre's contribution, however, deserves a word, because Zürcher (1985: 85) describes him as 'l'un des rares linguistes un peu sérieux de la Société'. Emre, who had expressed his contempt for Kvergić's paper, which was not devoid of sense, went overboard on the Sun-Language Theory.

Here is a summary of his lengthy presentation (Kurultay 1936: 190–201) on the origin of the French borrowings *filozofi* 'philosophy', *filozof* 'philosopher', and *filozofik* 'philosophic(al)', commonly supposed to be from the Greek *phil-* 'to love' and *sophía* 'wisdom'. Having learned that the etymology of Greek *phil-* was doubtful, he decided that the word was his to do with as he would, to the following effect. As the Sun-Language Theory shows, no word originally began with a consonant, so the first syllable of *filozof* was *if* or *ef*, and in its original form *ip* or *ep*. Now *ip* or *ep* in Turkish meant 'reasoning power' (this was no better founded than his preceding assertions). Further, the Greek *phil-* is generally supposed to mean 'to love' or 'to kiss', but he rejected the first sense on the grounds that Aristotle used *sophía* alone for 'philosophy', so the *philo-* could only be an intensifying prefix, having nothing to do with love. On the other hand, he accepted the second sense, because *ip*, besides meaning 'reasoning power', was clearly the same as the Turkish *öp-* 'to kiss'. Next, the original form of *philo-* was *ipil-*, the function of the *il* being 'to broaden the basic meaning of the *ip*', and this was obviously the same word as the Turkish *bil-* 'to know'. As for *sophía*, that did indeed mean wisdom; compare *sağ* 'sound, intelligent' and *sav* 'word, saying'. In short, *filozofi*, *filozof*, and *filozofik* were Turkish, so there was no need to create replacements for them.² Emre concluded his contribution with a verse 'from one of our poets', the second line of which indicates that Atatürk's proprietorial interest in the theory, if not common knowledge, was at least an open secret:

² Clement of Alexandria would have put this differently. He is quoted by Peter Berresford Ellis (1994: 67) as saying, 'It was from the Greeks that philosophy took its rise: its very name refuses to be translated into foreign speech.'

Atatürk, Atatürk antlıyız sana
 Güneşinden içtik hep kana kana.
 Atatürk, Atatürk, we are pledged to you,
 We have all drunk deep of your sun.

The impact of the theory on books and articles published during its brief reign is easily recognized. Turning the pages of Abdülkadir İnan's (1936) *Türkoloji Ders Hülasaları* for example, you see it to be a compendium of notes on the history of the language and on its dialects, particularly that of the Kirghiz (Kırgız). Then, after a discussion of various views on the etymology of the name, you come across Fig. 5.1 and know you have left the realm of scholarship for the land of the Sun-Language Theory.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>kırgıy</i>		(ık + ır + ıg + ıy)		
<i>Kırgız</i>		(ık + ır + ıg + ız)		

FIG. 5.1. A typical 'etymological analysis' according to the Sun-Language Theory
 Source: İnan (1936: 52).

This figure purports to show the components of the words *kırgıy* and *Kırgız*, the former being the Kazakh-Kirghiz word for falcon, a bird which may have been the Kirghiz tribal totem. Then comes the analysis. *ık* is the first-degree principal root, representing abrupt motion, *ır* expresses the confirmation of the root meaning, *ıg* is the object or subject over which the abrupt motion recurs, while *ıy* is the expression and nominalization of this. The first three elements of *kırgıy* and *Kırgız* are identical in form and meaning, but one of the final elements ends in *y*, the other in *z*. The explanation is that the function of *ıy* was to turn the word into a noun. In the totemistic period all surrounding subjects and objects were the same, but once the concepts of distance and the individual had emerged, all such subjects and objects, starting from the centre, the ego, were expressed by the element *z*. Here İnan, to his credit, loses interest in the Sun-Language Theory and goes on to talk about his experiences among the Kirghiz.

Another sample of the application of the theory will be found in the first volume (1937) of *Belleten*, the journal of Türk Tarih Kurumu (the Turkish Historical Society). Its name looks like the present participle of *belletmek* and its apparent meaning is 'causing to learn by heart', which is perhaps just possible as the title of a learned journal.³ The earlier and later word for 'bulletin' is *bülten*, correctly shown in *Türkçe Sözlük* (1988) and other dictionaries as from the French *bulletin*. On pages

³ *Belleten* is indeed a learned journal, with a high international reputation; the accident that it was given its name during the heyday of the Sun-Language Theory must not be held against it.

311–16 of the first volume of the journal, however, will be found an analysis in French of *belleten* and *bulletin*, from which we learn that the two are phonetically identical and that, Turkish being the oldest of languages, the French word is derived from the Turkish, and not, as some may have supposed, *vice versa*.

In defence of *belleten*, Doğan Aksan (1976: 25) writes:

Bu sözcük, dilimize Fransızcadan gelen *bülten*'in (Fr. *Bulletin*) etkisiyle, daha doğrusu, onu Türkçeleştirme amacıyla türetilmiştir. Ancak türetme, Türkçenin kurallarına uygundur (*belle-, bellet-, bellet-en*). Ayrıca, dile, yeni bir kavramı karşılayan yeni bir sözcük kazandırılmış olmaktadır. *Belleten*'i, *bülten*'in bozulmuş biçimi değil, yeni bir sözcük saymak gerekir.

This word has been derived under the influence of *bülten* (French *bulletin*), which comes into our language from French; to be more precise, with the purpose of Turkicizing it. But the derivation is in accordance with the rules of Turkish . . . Moreover, a new word covering a new concept has thereby been won for the language. *Belleten* must be regarded not as a corrupted form of *bülten* but as a new word.

Atatürk's faith in his theory must have been shaken by the reactions of the foreign guests at the 1936 Congress, a group of distinguished scholars including Alessio Bombaci, Jean Deny, Friedrich Giese, Julius Németh, Sir Denison Ross, and Ananiasz Zayączkowski. One, variously referred to as Bartalini, Baltarini, and Balter, and variously described as Lector and Professor in Latin and Italian at Istanbul University, mentioned it tactfully in the course of a graceful tribute to Atatürk and the new Turkey: 'La théorie de la langue-Soleil, par son caractère universel, est une preuve nouvelle de la volonté de la Turquie de s'identifier toujours davantage avec la grande famille humaine.' Four of them did not mention it at all in their addresses to the Congress or subsequent discussion. Two thought it 'interesting'. Hilaire de Barenton agreed that all human speech had a common origin, but saw that origin in Sumerian rather than Turkish. Two wanted more time to think about it. The only foreign guest to swallow it whole was Kvergić, who volunteered the following etymology of *unutmak* 'to forget':

Its earliest form was *uğ + un + ut + um + ak*. *Uğ*, 'discriminating spirit, intelligence', is the mother-root. The *n* of *un* shows that the significance of the mother-root emerges into exterior space. The *t/d* of *ut* is always a dynamic factor; its role here is to shift the discriminating spirit into exterior space. The *m* of *um* is the element which manifests and embodies in itself the concept of the preceding *uğ-un-ut*, while *ak* completes the meaning of the word it follows and gives it its full formulation. After phonetic coalescence, the word takes its final morphological shape, *unutmak*, which expresses the transference of the discriminating spirit out of the head into the exterior field surrounding the head; this is indeed the meaning the word conveys. (Kurultay 1936: 333)

Yet Atatürk did not immediately drop the theory; for this we have, *inter alia*, the testimony of Âkil Muhtar Özden, a highly respected medical man who served in 1937 on the Language Commission (Dil Komisyonu), over which Atatürk

presided, and who attended sessions on the technical terms of geometry, physics, chemistry, mechanics, and geology. He kept notes, mostly on individual words and tantalizingly brief. After listing the names of those present at a session on 8 March 1937, he recorded:

Kara tahta geldi. Atatürk hemen terim meselesi ile meşgul olmaya başladı. Benden ne yaptığımızı sordu. Gösterdikleri istikamette giderek çalıştığımızı söyledim. Güneş-Dil tabikatında abstrait (soyut) kelimeler için zahmet çektiğimizi söyledim. Bir misal istedi. Aklıma *muvazi* kelimesi geldi. Hemen analiz başladı. *Parallel* kelimesinin Türkçe olduğu ispat edildi. (Tevfikoğlu 1994: 99)

The blackboard arrived. Atatürk at once began to deal with the question of technical terms. He asked me what I had been doing, and I told him I was working on the lines he had indicated. I told him I was having difficulty in applying Sun-Language to abstract words. He asked for an example. The word *muvazi* ['parallel'] came to mind. The analysis started immediately. It was proved that *parallel* was Turkish.

Others of his notes read: 'atom (Türkçe)', with no explanation, and 'Geometri (Türkçe)', followed by a terse 'ge = gen = geniş'; i.e. the *ge* of *geometri* is not the Greek *gē* 'earth' but the Turkish *gen* 'wide'. On *polygon* he made two notes: 'Poligon Türkçe/Pol = bol/gen = en', and 'gen = geniş/poligon (genişliği çok)'. These can be expanded as follows: *Poligon* is Turkish. *Pol* is *bol* 'abundant', *gen* is *en* 'width', and *geniş* 'wide'; *poligon* means 'of much width'. Later on comes an analysis of *likid* 'liquid' according to the Sun-Language Theory: 'Likid (Türkçe) Yg-il-ik-id-ey Yg = Katı İl = Bunu namütenahiye kadar uzaklaştıran, yani yok eden ek. (İlik Türkçe katı olmayan bir şey demektir.)' In other words, *liquid* is Turkish, its original form being *ygilikidēy*. *Yg* means 'hard'. *İl* is the suffix removing it to infinity, i.e. annihilating it. (*İlik* ('marrow') is Turkish, meaning a thing which is not hard.)

These instances of the application of the theory are not cited just for their inherent fun. They also demonstrate the unscholarliness of the officers of the Language Society (as well as of Dr Kvergić), who unblushingly delivered themselves of such drivel in public. And these people and others like them were largely responsible for the creation of *Öztürkçe*, a fact which helps to explain why so much of it violates the rules of the language.

About Atatürk's motive in launching the theory, opinions differ. Did he deliberately take up Kvergić's idea of the antiquity of Turkish and enlarge on it in order to justify ending the purge of words of Arabic and Persian origin? A footnote to the article on *Cep Kılavuzları* (1935) cited in Chapter 4, while not suggesting that this was Atatürk's purpose, indicates that it was the result of the theory:

Kılavuzun neşrinden sonra Türk dehasından fıskıran 'Güneş-Dil Teorisi' yalnız bu Kılavuz alınan sözlerin değil, daha pek çoklarının Türkçeden üremiş sözler olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Kılavuz araştırmaları arasında yalnız benzerliklere ve klâsik etimoloji bilgilerine göre elde edilebilen neticeler, 'Güneş-Dil Teorisi' nin yüksek ışığı altında çok daha esaslı ve muayyen bir şekilde genişlemiştir. Bu genişleme bir derecededir ki dilimizin ihtiyacı olan

ve halk arasında manası bilinen kelimelerden hiç birini atmağa ve yerini yeniden bilinmeyen bir kelime koymağa ihtiyaç kalmamıştır. (*Türk Dili*, 16 (1936), 22-3)

The Sun-Language Theory, which welled up from the Turkish genius after the publication of *Cep Kılavuzu*, has revealed that not only the words included in *Cep Kılavuzu* but a great many more are of Turkish derivation. The results that could be obtained in the course of the research for *Cep Kılavuzu*, going by resemblances and the findings of classical etymology alone, have broadened far more fundamentally and definitely under the sublime light of the Sun-Language Theory. Such is the extent of this broadening that there is no longer any necessity to discard a single one of the words that our language needs and whose meanings are known among the people, and to start from scratch to replace them with words that are not known.

Karaosmanoğlu (1963: 110) saw in the theory 'dil konusundaki tutumuna yeni bir biçim, bir orta yol arama endişesi' (a concern with seeking a new shape, a middle way, for his attitude to language). Hatiboğlu (1963: 20) is more explicit: Atatürk put the theory forward to end the impossible situation in which satisfactory replacements could not be found for words that were being expelled from the language. Nihad Sâmî Banarlı (1972: 317), an inveterate opponent of the reform, is of the same opinion:

öztürkçeyi denemiş ve bu yoldaki çalışmalara bizzat iştirâk etmiştir. Fakat, aynı Atatürk, tecrübeler ilerledikçe, işi yar şa döküp soysuzlaştıranların elinde Türk dilinin ve Türk kültürünün nasıl bir çıkmaza sürüklendiğini de derhal ve çok iyi görmüştür. Neticede, Atatürk, bu durumu düzeltme vazifesini de üzerine almış ve yine dâhiyâne bir taktikle Güneş-Dil teorisinden faydalanarak öztürkçe tecrübesinden vazgeçmiştir.

[Atatürk] tried *Öztürkçe* and took a personal part in the efforts in this direction. As the experiment advanced, however, this same Atatürk saw instantly and clearly what sort of impasse the Turkish language and Turkish culture had been dragged into by people vying with each other to bastardize the whole thing. Eventually he took upon himself the duty of rectifying this situation too and, again by a stroke of tactical genius, availed himself of the Sun-Language Theory to drop the *Öztürkçe* experiment.

So is Ercilasun (1994: 89):

Atatürk'ün kaleme aldığı bütün bu broşür ve dil yazılarından çıkan sonuç şudur: Güneş-Dil Teorisini ortaya atarken Atatürk'ün amaçlarından biri de aşırı özleştirmecilikten vazgeçmek, 'millet, devir, hâdise, mühim, hâtırâ, ümit, kuvvet' vb. [ve başkaları 'and others'] kelimelerin dilde kalmasını sağlamaktı.

The conclusion emerging from all these brochures and articles on language penned by Atatürk is this: one of his aims when launching the Sun-Language Theory was to give up excessive purification and to ensure the survival in the language of the words *millet* ['nation'], *devir* ['period'], *hâdise* ['event'], *mühim* ['important'], *hâtırâ* ['memory'], *ümit* ['hope'], *kuvvet* ['strength'], and others.

Ertop's (1963: 89) view is quite different:

Atatürk tarafından dildeki özleştirmeciliği sınırlamak amacıyla kullanıldığını ileri sürenler, Atatürk'ün kişiliğini de gözden uzak tutmaktadırlar. Atatürk ulusun iyiliğine

dokunacağına inandığı hiçbir konuda kesin, köklü davranıştan kaçınmamıştır . . . Atatürk Güneş-Dil Kuramını bir geriye dönüş aracı olarak kullanmamıştır. Böyle bir davranışın gerektiğine inansaydı düşüncesini açık, kesin yoldan doğrudan doğruya belli ederdi.

Those who assert that the Sun-Language Theory was used by Atatürk in order to limit the purification are overlooking Atatürk's personality. He never refrained from acting decisively and radically in any matter which he believed would affect the good of the nation . . . He did not use the theory as a means of turning the clock back; had he believed in the necessity for such a move, he would have made his thinking plain, candidly, positively, and directly.

The argument has some force, but it is harder to accept Ertop's subsequent remarks, which reflect the views of the many adherents of the pre-1983 Language Society who refuse to believe that Atatürk abandoned the campaign to 'purify' everyday speech. He goes on to offer what he calls clear proof that the theory was not advanced with the aim of slowing the pace of language reform: work on the reform went on after the theory was propounded, technical terminology continued to be put into pure Turkish, and Atatürk busied himself with linguistic concerns almost until his death. While all three statements are accurate, they are irrelevant to the question of whether or not Atatürk, having tired of the campaign to purge the general vocabulary, concocted the Sun-Language Theory to justify abandoning it. The basis of all three items of 'proof' is the fact that, while at one time he had tried his hand at finding *Öztürkçe* equivalents for items of general vocabulary, his enduring concern was with technical terms.

However much lovers of the old language may regret some of the consequences of the language reform, they cannot deny that something had to be done about scientific terminology. This was almost entirely Arabic; what was not Arabic was Persian. English technical terms, though mostly of Greek or Latin origin, have long been Anglicized; we say ecology not oikologia, hygiene not hygieiné. In Turkish, however, there had been no naturalization of Arabic and Persian terms; they remained in their original forms. Atatürk decided to tackle the problem in person.

In the winter of 1936-7 he wrote *Geometri*, a little book on the elements of geometry, which was published anonymously. The title-page bears the legend 'Geometri öğrenenlerle, bu konuda kitap yazacaklara kılavuz olarak Kültür Bakanlığınca neşredilmiştir' (Published by the Ministry of Education as a guide to those teaching geometry and those who will write books on this subject).

In it he employed many words now in regular use, though not all were of his own invention; some are discussed in later chapters. They included *açı* 'angle', *alan* 'area', *boyut* 'dimension', *dikey* 'perpendicular', *düşey* 'vertical', *düzey* 'level', *gerekçe* 'corollary', *kesit* 'section', *köşegen* 'diagonal', *orantı* 'proportion', *teğet* 'tangent', *türev* 'derivative', *uzay* 'space', *yanal* 'lateral', *yatay* 'horizontal', *yöndeş* 'corresponding', *yüzey* 'surface'. He created the terms *artı*, *eksi*, *çarpı*, *bölü*, for 'plus', 'minus', 'multiplied by', and 'divided by', and *izdüşümü* ('trace-fall') 'projection'.

Of these, *eksi* is an example of *uydurma*; the others are made from the appropriate verb-stems, whereas *eksi* is formed analogously with them but solecistically, from the adjective *eksik* 'deficient'. He also devised new names for the plane figures, which until then had been called by their Arabic names, his method being to add an invariable *-gen* to the appropriate numeral. *Müselles* 'triangle' became *üçgen*, while *müseddes* 'hexagon' became *altıgen*, and *kesirüladlá* 'polygon' became *çokgen*.⁴

In *Sinekli Bakkal* (1936), Halide Edib describes Sabit Beyağabey, the local bully, as standing with his arms at his sides like jug-handles, each making a right angle. And for 'right angle' she says 'zaviye-i kaime', two Arabic words joined by the Persian *izafet*. That is because until 1937 Turkish children were still being taught geometry with the Ottoman technical terms. When Halide Edib learned geometry, this is how she was taught that the area of a triangle is equal to the base times half the height: 'Bir müsellesin mesaha-i sathiyesi, kaidesinin irtifainı hasıl-ı zarbinin nısfına müsavidir.' Largely through the personal effort of Atatürk, this has now become: 'Bir üçgenin yüzölçümü, tabanının yüksekliğine çarpımının yarısına eşittir', which contains no Arabic or Persian. This achievement may be said to justify much of what has been done in the name of language reform. It is true that the pedigree of *-gen* is attained, owing more to the *-gon* [G] of *pentagon* than to the ancient and provincial Turkish *gen* 'wide'. But the new terms of geometry must be numbered among Atatürk's greatest gifts to his people. A Turk would have to be a pretty rabid enemy of change to persist in calling interior opposite angles 'zâviyetân-ı mütekâbiletân-ı dâhiletân' rather than 'içters açılar'.

A related topic that may conveniently be discussed here is the much debated question of whether Atatürk, while adhering to the new technical terms, many of which he himself devised, gave up the use of neologisms for everyday concepts.

There is no shortage of misrepresentations of his attitude; here is one specimen, by Gültekin (1983: 72):

1936'dan sonra, özleşme çalışmalarındaki aşırı yönleri görmüş ve bunları düzeltmiştir. Ama bundan, Atatürk'ün 1932'de başlattığı dil hareketinden döndüğü çıkarılabilir mi? Böyle bir iddia, gerçekleri tersyüz edip, olmsını istediğimizi gerçekmiş gibi göstermektir. Atatürk, 1932 yılı öncesi dile dönmemiştir. Bilindiği üzere, 1937 yılında özellikle bilim dilinin özleşmesi doğrultusunda kendi çalışmaları vardır. Gene mirasından Türk Dil Kurumu'na pay bırakması, 1932'de başlattığı dil çalışmalarının devam etmesini istediğini gösterir.

After 1936, [Atatürk] saw the extremist aspects of the purification campaign and he corrected them. But can one deduce from this that he turned away from the language movement which he initiated in 1932? To make such a claim is to stand the facts on their head, to show as fact that which we want to be fact. Atatürk did not return to pre-1932 Turkish.

⁴ Not to be confused with the variable *-gen* seen in *unutkan* 'forgetful' and *döğüşken* 'quarrelsome' (see Lewis 1988: 223). *-gen/gan* was once the suffix of the present participle, as it still is in many Central Asian dialects: Kazakh *kelgen* = *gelen* 'coming', Tatar *bilmägän* = *bilmeyen* 'not knowing', Uyghur *alğan* = *alan* 'taking'.

It is well known that in 1937 he himself worked especially on the purification of scientific language. Again, his bequest of a share in his estate to TDK shows that he wanted the work on language, which he initiated in 1932, to continue.

And another, by Yücel (1982: 36):

Burada raslantıdan söz edilebilirse, ilginç bir raslantıyla, 'Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti' adının 'Türk Dil Kurumu'na dönüştürüldüğü yıl, kimilerinin sık sık sürdükleri bir görüşe göre, Atatürk'ün böyle bir girişimin çıkar yol olmadığını, yani *yanıldığını* anlayarak özleştirme etkinliklerini durdurduğu yıldır. Atatürk'ün Türk Dil Kurumu çalışmalarıyla yaşamının sonuna değin çok yakından ilgilendiği, daha da önemlisi, bu çalışmaları kendi görüşleri doğrultusunda yönlendirdiği göz önüne alınacak olursa, kesinlikle özleştirme doğrultusunda olan bu ad değiştirmenin onun bilgisi dışında yapılmış olmasına olanak bulunmadığını, onun bilgisi dışında yapılmış olmasına olanak bulunmadığı için de, böyle bir değişikliğe izin vermekle Atatürk'ün çelişkiye düştüğünü kesinlemek gerekir.

If one may speak here of coincidence, it is by an interesting coincidence that the year [1936] in which the name Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti was changed to Türk Dil Kurumu was, according to a view frequently advanced by some, the year in which Atatürk realized that this kind of undertaking was a dead end, i.e. *that he had made a mistake*, and put a stop to the purification exercise. If one keeps before one's eyes that until the end of his life Atatürk was very closely involved in TDK's endeavours and, more important, that he directed these endeavours along the lines of his own views, one is bound to state categorically that this change of name, which was definitely on the lines of purification, could not possibly have been made without his knowledge and that, because this change of name could not possibly have been made without his knowledge, in allowing such a change Atatürk fell into an inconsistency.

The italics, which are Yücel's, must be intended to point to the enormity of the implication. Atatürk was in fact never afraid to admit that he was fallible, but idolatry, by definition, denies the humanity of its object. In italicizing these words, Yücel seems to be rejecting the possibility not only of Atatürk's making a mistake but of his realizing that he had done so.

A dispassionate examination of the evidence leads to the following conclusion. When Atatürk launched the theory, it was not with the express intention of justifying a change of course. He had decided that a change of course was due, because he had appreciated the futility of trying to make the mass of the people give up their ancestral vocabulary. On the other hand, he could not abandon his declared purpose of freeing Turkish from the yoke of foreign languages. He loved playing at etymology and had persuaded himself that Turkish origins could be found for the ostensibly non-Turkish elements in the language. He had already been toying with the notion that what made man aware of his identity was the sun before he read Kvergić's paper, which asserted the antiquity of Turkish (but did not mention the sun). The elements of the Sun-Language Theory all came together in his mind and he published it. It was not an excuse to justify a change of policy but a systematization of his ideas. He launched the theory because he genuinely believed in it; he started to abandon it when he saw that

foreign scholars thought it nonsensical. Intelligent as he was, he must have sensed that the best native opinion too, though scarcely outspoken, was on their side.

To disprove the common assertion that he never returned to pre-1932 Turkish, we need do no more than examine the proof-texts, his own speeches and writings. While in general exhibiting a desire to avoid using words of Arabic origin if Turkish synonyms—or synonyms he believed to be Turkish—existed, they show that he was no longer going out of his way to give up the words he had used all his life in favour of unnecessary neologisms. From 1933 on, 26 September had been celebrated as *Dil Bayramı* (the Language Festival). The vocabulary of his telegrams to the Language Society on this occasion is worthy of study. Those he had sent in 1934 and 1935 were couched in *Öztürkçe* throughout,⁵ including the words *kutun-bitikler* ‘messages of congratulation’, *orunlar* ‘official bodies’, and *genelözek* ‘general headquarters’, none of which proved viable. The 1936 telegram contained four words of Arabic origin: *mesai* ‘endeavours’, *teşekkür* ‘thanks’, *tebrik* ‘congratulations’, and *muvaffakiyet* ‘success’: ‘Dil Bayramını mesai arkadaşlarınızla birlikte kutuladığınızı bildiren telgrafi teşekkürle aldım. Ben de size tebrik eder ve Türk Dil Kurumuna bundan sonraki çalışmalarına da muvaffakiyetler dilerim’ (I have received with thanks the telegram telling me that you and your colleagues who share in your endeavours offer congratulations on the occasion of the Language Festival. For my part I congratulate you and wish the TDK success in its subsequent endeavours too).

The 1937 telegram contained six: *münasebet* ‘occasion’, the *hakk of hakkımdaki* ‘about me’, *mütehassis* ‘moved’, *teşekkür* and *muvaffakiyet* again, and *temâdi* ‘continuation’: ‘Dil bayramı münasebetiyle, Türk Dil Kurumu’nun hakkımdaki duygularını bildiren telgraflarınızdan çok mütehassis oldum. Teşekkür eder, değerli çalışmanızda muvaffakiyetinizin temâdisini dilerim’ (I have been greatly moved by your telegrams conveying your feelings about me on the occasion of the Language Festival. I thank you and wish that your success in your valuable labours may continue).

But of no less significance than the old words he used are the new words that he also used; the inference is not that he had abandoned the language reform—*birlikte* ‘together’, *duygu* ‘sentiment’, *bildiren* ‘conveying’, *değerli* ‘valuable’; had he been simply rejecting the reform he would have said *beraber*, *his*, *tebliğ eden*, and *kiymetli* or even *zikıymet*. What he was doing was adhering to the wholly praiseworthy aspect of the reform: making full use of the existing resources of the language. His use of *kutululamak* ‘to congratulate’ as well as *tebrik etmek* ‘to felicitate’ in the 1936 telegram is a perfect example, reflecting the stylist’s desire to avoid repeating a word if a synonym could be found.

On 1 November 1936 he delivered his annual speech opening the new session of the Grand National Assembly. It too was peppered with words of Arabic origin, including *sene* not *yıl* for ‘year’, *maarif* not *eğitim* for ‘education’, *tetkik*

⁵ The text of the 1933 telegram does not seem to be available. The texts of the later telegrams were published in the September issues of *Türk Dili* (1934–7).

not *araştırma* for 'research', and *millet* and *memleket* rather than *ulus* and *yurt* for 'nation' and 'country'. He did use *Kamutay* for 'Assembly', however, and not *Meclis*.

The language and content of his last message to the Language Society is highly significant. It consists of two sentences of the speech read for him by the Prime Minister, Celâl Bayar, at the opening of the new session of the Assembly on 1 November 1938, nine days before he died. It is worth quoting, because it has often been used as evidence that the Society never ceased to enjoy Atatürk's total support for its campaign to eliminate everyday pre-reform words from the language. The contents of the message (Özgül 1963: 37), however, no less than its language, give the lie to that claim (words of Arabic origin are italicized):

Dil Kurumu en güzel ve feyizli bir iş olarak türlü ilimlere ait Türkçe terimleri *tespit* etmiş ve bu suretle dilimiz yabancı dillerin *tesirinden* kurtulma yolunda *esaslı* adımını atmıştır. Bu yıl okullarımızda *tedrisatın* Türkçe terimlerle yazılmış *kitaplarla* başlamış olmasının kültür *hayatımız için mühim* bir *hâdise* olarak *kaydetmek* isterim.

The Language Society, in a most excellent and fruitful endeavour, has established Turkish technical terms pertaining to the various sciences, and our language has thus taken its essential step on the road to liberation from the influence of foreign languages. I should like to place it on record, as an important event for our cultural life, that teaching has begun this year in our schools from books written with Turkish technical terms.

The partisans of 'purification' will not give Atatürk credit for saying what he meant. Those words are regularly cited as praise for the Society's 'sürdürülen özleştirme çabaları' (continued exertions towards purification) (e.g. Yücel 1982: 38). Aksoy, too honest a man not to concede that there was precious little Öztürkçe in that speech, could still write (1982: 146-7): 'Büyük Millet Meclisi açılırken okunan söylevinde öz Türkçe sözcükler kullanmamış olmakla birlikte, özleştirmeden duyduğu mutluluğu belirtmiyor mu?' (Although he did not use pure Turkish words in his speech at the opening of the Grand National Assembly, does he not make clear the happiness he felt in the purification?). No, he does not. All he does is to praise the Society for its work on technical terms, and for nothing else. In fact those words reflect his disillusionment with the people who sat round his table night after night, drinking his rakı and enthusiastically applauding his views without ever having the honesty—even if they had the knowledge—to tell him that some of the ideas he came out with could not be taken seriously.

Anyone who pictures him as a typical 1930s dictator may suppose that nobody could be blamed for pretending to agree with him. In fact one of the things he liked best in the world was a good argument. An observation by Falih Rıfkı Atay (1969: 474), who knew him better than most, is worth quoting in this context. Having described a heated discussion at Atatürk's table, he says, 'Sakın bu tartışmalarda bulunmağı cesarete vermeyiniz . . . Atatürk'ün sofrasında fikirlerini söylemek bir cesaret değildi. Söylememek, aksini söylemek lüzumsuz bir

“müdahane”, yahut çıkar bekleyen bir dalkavukluktu’ (You must not think that it called for courage to take part in this kind of argument . . . To speak one’s mind at Atatürk’s table was not an act of courage. Not to say what one thought, or to say the opposite of what one thought, was an act of unnecessary sycophancy, or toadying in the expectation of personal gain).

Melâhat Özgü (1963: 37) notes, ‘Atatürk bu söylevinde henüz pek aykırı gelmiyen: *feyizli*, *tesir*, *tedrisat*, *mühim*, ve *hâdise* gibi yabancı sözleri kullanmıştır’ (In this speech [his last message to TDK], Atatürk used such foreign words as *feyizli*, *tesir*, *tedrisat*, *mühim*, and *hâdise*, which did not yet sound incongruous). She sanctimoniously continues: ‘Yeni kuşak, bugün, Atatürk’ten aldığı esin ve buyrukla daha ileridedir’ (The new generation today is further advanced, thanks to the inspiration and the command it has received from Atatürk). Instead of singling out five of the fourteen ‘foreign words’ he used in those two sentences, she could have been better employed in noticing that he used only two of the new words, *terim* rather than *ıstılah* for ‘technical term’ and *okul* rather than *mektep* for ‘school’. His use of them is understandable: *terim* was the new technical term *par excellence*, which he himself had originated, while *okul* did not have the pre-Republican connotations of *mektep* and was partly his work.

In the face of Atatürk’s clear indication of his opinion, why did the Language Society continue to introduce not just technical terms, as he wanted it to do, but also replacements for normal items of standard Turkish? Many otherwise reasonable Turks will tell you it was all a communist plot to destabilize the country by impoverishing the language, widening the generation gap, and demoralizing the people by cutting them off from the records of their great past. Comparisons were drawn between the Society’s ceaseless undermining of the language and the Trotskyite doctrine of permanent revolution. Tekin Erer (1973: 61) said: ‘Türkiyemizde solcuları tefrik etmek için basit bir usûl vardır: Bir insanın ne derece solcu olduğunu anlamak için yazdığı ve konuştuğu kelimelere dikkat edeceksiniz. Eğer hiç anlıyamayacağımız kadar uydurma kelimelerle konuşuyorsa, ona tereddütsüz Komünist diyebilirsiniz’ (There is a simple method of distinguishing the leftists in our country. To ascertain how far to the left a person is, look at the words he uses in writing and speech. If the fake words he employs when speaking are too numerous for you to be able to understand, you may unhesitatingly call him a communist).

Turkish communists, on the other hand, saw the language reform as a bourgeois movement aimed at widening the gulf between the official and literary language and the language of the people. It is worth remembering that the poet and playwright Nazım Hikmet (1902–63), the most distinguished of all Turkish communists, did not use *Öztürkçe* but followed Atay in making full use of the language as it stood.

The extremists of the right regarded the Language Society as a subversive organization whose mission was to decrease mutual understanding between the Turks of Turkey and the Turks of the then Soviet Union, whom they hoped some

day to liberate. In this they were overlooking the high degree of mutual unintelligibility that existed even before the reform began, due only in part to the influx of Russian words into the Central Asian dialects, most of which use, for example, the Russian names of the months.⁶

This point is worth a digression. A vivid illustration of how the meanings of words may vary from one dialect to another was given by Nermin Neftçi, a former Minister of Culture, at the 1992 meeting of the Standing Congress on the Turkish Language:

Af buyurun, 'kıç' bizde başka manaya gelir, ama Kerkük Türkçesinde 'kıç' bacadır. Ben Kerkük'e gittiğim zaman eşimin süt ninesi 'ay ay' diye ağlıyordu 'kıcım kırıldı, sümüğüm yazıya çıktı' diyordu. Allah aşkınıza bu ne diyor diye sordum. Meğer 'bacağım kırıldı, kemiğim dışarı çıktı' demek istiyormuş. (*Sürekli Türk Dili Kurultayı* 1992: 169)

The word *kıç*, if you will pardon the expression, means something else to us [backside'], but in the Turkish of Kerkuk it's 'leg.' When I visited Kerkuk, my husband's foster-mother was sobbing bitterly and saying, 'My backside is broken and my mucus has gone up to the writing.' 'For goodness' sake, what is she talking about?' I asked. It emerged that she meant, 'My leg is broken and my bone is sticking out.'

The national motto of Uzbekistan is 'Müstakıllık, Tinçlik, Hämkarlık' (Independence, Peace, Cooperation). The first and third words would be intelligible to anyone old enough to remember when *müstakil* was the Turkish for 'independent' (now *bağımsız*), and *kâr* was 'work'. The second would convey only 'vigour'.

To resume: it was neither left-wing nor right-wing ideology that motivated those who were not content to follow Atatürk's lead and confine their creative urge to technical terms. They began with a genuine desire to close the gap between the official and the popular language, or at least to comply with his desire to do so. When he decided that things had gone too far, and reverted to his natural mode of expression, they allowed a decent interval for him to depart from the scene and then resumed their work, having developed a taste for inventing words, which for many of them had become a profession. So they continued to invent, for which one should not blame them too harshly; after all, Atatürk's withdrawal from the wilder shores of *Öztürkçe* was based on a personal decision which he did not seek to impose on anyone else. But while continuing to invent, they persisted—and this was their unpardonable offence—in claiming to be following in the footsteps of Atatürk.

Their frequent line of argument is to adduce the fact that Atatürk wrote his little book on geometry with his own hand in the winter of 1936–7; would he

⁶ Kirghiz and Uyghur are partial exceptions. In Kirghiz both the Russian and the following names are used: *Üçtün ayı, Birdin ayı, Calğan Kuran, Çım Kuran, Bugu, Kulca, Teke, Baş öna, Ayak öna, Toguzdun ayı, Cetinin ayı, Beştin ayı*. In Uyghur, as well as the Russian names, the months are called 'First Month' etc., from *Birinçi Ay* to *Onikkinçi Ay*. The Kazakh months are: *Kańtar, Aqpan, Navruz, Kökek, Mamır, Mavsim, Şilde, Tamız, Kırküyek, Kazan, Karaşa, Celtoksan*. None of the Kirghiz or Kazakh names would be understood in Turkey, where indeed *Tamız* 'August' would be mistaken for *Temmuz* 'July'.

have done so if he had turned against the language reform? The answer, as we have seen, is that it was only the creation of technical terms that continued to interest him.

For a defence of their position, Ömer Asım Aksoy's (1982: 144–5) would be hard to beat, depending as it does on his coolly equating the Language Society with the nation:

Totalım ki, Güneş-Dil Teorisini biz yanlış yorumluyoruz ve Atatürk iki uç yıl özleştiricilik yaptıktan sonra Güneş-Dil Teorisini ile eski dile dönmüştü. Bunu kabul etmek neyi değiştirir? 1932'de başlayan özleşme akımı durmuş mudur, gittikçe genişleyip güçlenmemiş midir? Denilmek isteniyor mu ki 'Atatürk özleştiricilikten vazgeçtiğine göre bizim de vazgeçmemiz gerekir'? Gerekseydi, buna 'vazgeçme' (!) tarihinde uyulamaz mıydı? Böyle bir dönüşün olmaması, özleşmenin sürüp gelmesi neyi kanıtlar? Atatürk'e karşın ulusun özleştirme eyleminde direndiğini mi, yoksa Atatürk'ün özleştirmeden vazgeçtiği savının yanlışlığını mı? Elbette ikincisini. Çünkü ulus, hiç bir zaman Atatürk'e ters düşmediği gibi Atatürk de hiç bir zaman ulusçuluk, halkçılık ve bağımsızlık ilkelerine ters düşen bir yol tutmamıştır.

Let us suppose that we have been misinterpreting the Sun-Language Theory and that Atatürk, after practising purism for two or three years, used the theory as a way of reverting to the old language. If we accept this, what does it change? Has the current of purification which began in 1932 stopped? Has it not gradually broadened and gained strength? Is what is meant that since Atatürk abandoned purism, we must do so too? If that were the case, would people not have complied at the time of the 'abandonment'? The fact that there was no such reversion and that the purification kept on going; what does that prove? Is it that the nation persisted in the purification activity in spite of Atatürk, or that the allegation that he abandoned purification is wrong? Certainly the latter, for never has the nation been at variance with Atatürk, nor did Atatürk ever take a course at variance with the principles of nationalism, popularism, and independence.

All that is proved by the fact that the purification went on is that the Language Society—not the nation, which was not consulted—persisted in the purification although Atatürk had abandoned it.

Whether that persistence was justified is another matter. Had the Society not persisted, Atatürk's goal of liberating the language from the Arabic and Persian yoke would not have been achieved. But one may recognize this without insisting that he himself never gave up purification, because he indubitably did, and to deny it is to falsify history.

Heyd's (1954: 36) statement that the Sun-Language Theory gradually faded out after Atatürk's death needs to be modified; the theory had already begun to fade out during his lifetime, and interest in it evaporated the moment he died. Tankut (1963: 125) says the theory was carried to excess by people out to make a name for themselves, 'and Atatürk eventually abandoned it'. There are several pieces of evidence that he was still interested in it in 1937 and perhaps even in the following year. One is Âkil Muhtar's testimony that the topic was still alive in March 1937, another is that Atatürk was still corresponding with Kvergić in September of that year. A third is that in the first week of that month the seventeenth session of the

Congrès International d'Anthropologie was to be held in Bucharest, and Atatürk decided that a Turkish delegation should be there to present the theory to the participants. A few days before the congress opened, he gave Tankut a pile of his own handwritten notes on the theory and said, 'Produce a thesis out of these and go to Bucharest.' Tankut produced his paper in two days and in another two days it was translated into French 'again at Atatürk's table and in his presence'. On their arrival in Bucharest they found that no one had been aware that they were coming, but an opening was made for Tankut on the last morning of the congress. According to the report subsequently presented to Atatürk by Dilmen, his paper was well received, but as the proceedings of the congress were never published this cannot be confirmed.

There is one scrap of evidence that Atatürk may have maintained his interest in the theory into 1938. On 1 June of that year, when he was very ill indeed, he was moved from the heat of Istanbul to his yacht, the *Savarona*, in the port of Istanbul. 'Bununla ilgili haberi verirken, *Cumhuriyet* gazetesi, yata Güneş-dil adı verilmesi olasılığı bulunduğunu ekliyordu' (In presenting the news of this, the newspaper *Cumhuriyet* added that there was a possibility that the yacht might be given the name *Güneş-Dil*) (Derin 1995: 130). Although the possibility never materialized, this at least suggests that somebody thought it would please him.

Dilmen, who had been giving a series of lectures on the Sun-Language Theory at Ankara University, cancelled the course when Atatürk died. When his students asked him why, he replied, 'Güneş öldükten sonra, onun teorisi mi kalır?' (After the sun has died, does its/his theory survive?) (Banarlı 1972: 317). It was not mentioned, for good or ill, at the 1942 Kurultay. Atatürk never publicly repudiated it; why did he not 'make his ideas plain, openly and directly', on this matter? A sophistic answer could be that as he had never put his name to it he could fairly have claimed that it was not his business to disown it. But the simple truth is that, although his belief in it had been shaken by the reception given to it by the foreign guests at the 1936 Kurultay, he still clung to it because he saw it as his contribution to scholarship.

One can well understand his reluctance to engage in a public debate that might have entailed a public retreat, and not just because it would have hurt his pride to do so. In those years there were more pressing calls than the Sun-Language Theory on the time and energy of a Head of State, particularly one in poor health. Five months before the theory was first aired, Hitler occupied the Rhineland. Three months before, Mussolini annexed Ethiopia. Two months before, the Spanish Civil War began. Three days before, Germany introduced compulsory military service. In addition, during 1937 and until a matter of months before his death on 10 November 1938, Atatürk was spending much of his waning strength—successfully—on coercing France into ceding Hatay, the former Sanjak of Alexandretta, to Turkey. The Sun-Language Theory must have recurred to haunt him while he was trying to concentrate on matters of high policy. What began as a harmless after-dinner game had ended up as an incubus.

On 27 September 1941, İsmet İnönü, who had succeeded Atatürk as President of the Republic, gave an address to mark the ninth Language Festival. It included these words: 'Büyük Atatürk'ün, Türk dili uğrunda harcadığı emekler boşa gitmemiştir ve aslâ boşa gitmiyecektir' (The efforts which the great Atatürk expended for the sake of the Turkish language have not gone to waste and never shall). (*Türk Dili*, 2nd ser., 11–12 (1941), 2). But who suggested that they had? Could there have been any reason for İnönü to say this other than his awareness of a general feeling that the Sun-Language Theory had been a fiasco?

It is recorded (Şehsuvaroğlu 1981: 260, cited in Tevfikoğlu 1994) that during the evening of 16 October 1938, when Atatürk lay on his deathbed, he said again and again in delirium 'Aman dil . . . Aman dil . . . Dil efendim.' Some interpret this as 'For pity's sake, the language', and explain it, according to their point of view, either as 'Don't let them stop the language reform' or as 'Don't let them go on ruining the language'. Others cite the well-known fact that he habitually pronounced *değil* in the Rumelian fashion, as /dîl/, and prefer 'For pity's sake . . . It isn't . . .' What he really meant is unknown, save only to God.

Atay, Ataç, Sayılı

Two people besides Atatürk made significant contributions to the vocabulary of modern Turkish: Falih Rıfki Atay and Nurullah Ataç. The third subject of this chapter, Aydın Sayılı, did not, but his efforts to do so deserve to be commemorated.

Atay and Ataç both believed that the language had to be modernized and both saw the futility of merely producing lists of neologisms; the new words had to be used in the sort of newspaper and magazine that ordinary people read. As Atay was fond of saying, the neologisms were dead butterflies pinned into collections; what they needed was the life and colour they could be given by stylists. On how the new words were to be arrived at, however, the two men's views could not have been more different.

Atay (1894–1971), having graduated from Istanbul University, spent most of his working life before and after the First World War as journalist, editor, and newspaper proprietor. From 1922 he was the friend and confidant of Atatürk, until the latter's death in 1938. He had a fine feeling for language and shared Atatürk's conviction that the intelligent use of the native resources of Turkish, with its enormous capacity for word building, could reduce dependence on foreign borrowings. The underground railway in Istanbul, on which work began in the 1980s, is called the Metro, as it was when planned at the beginning of the century. Atay would never have used this name for it; in 1946, when speaking of an underground train he had taken in the course of his travels abroad, he called it just that: 'yeraltı treni' (Atay 1946, cited in Özön 1961b: 42).

Here, in his own words (Atay 1969: 477) is how he set about 'purifying' the Turkish vocabulary:

Anadolu kulübünde 'Cep kılavuzu' denen Osmanlıcadan–Türkçeye lûgatı hazırlamağa başladık. Usulümüz pek sade idi: Bir Türkçesi olan yabancı kelimeleri tasfiye ediyorduk. Kullanılır Türkçesi olmayanları Türkçe olarak alkoyuyorduk. Artık Türkçe kelimeler yapıma devrine girmiş olduğumuzdan, şivemizdeki ek ve köklerden yeni kelimeler üretiyorduk.

At the Anatolia Club we began preparing *Cep Kılavuzu*, the dictionary from Ottoman into Turkish. Our method was very simple: we were purging the language of foreign words which had a Turkish equivalent. Words with no current Turkish equivalent we retained as being Turkish. Because by now we had entered the era of making Turkish words, we were producing new words from the suffixes and roots existing in our dialect.

His contribution is the subject of a lengthy article by M. Nihat Özön (1961b). On running an eye over the six hundred or so items in it and noticing, say, *cinsdaş* (1956)¹ ‘member of the same race’ (the Ottoman *hemcins*), one wonders why credit should be given to Atay for this regularly constructed word. Surely somebody before Atay must have added that suffix to that noun? The answer is that somebody may well have done so in conversation; somebody indeed may have used it in writing and not been lucky enough for it to be noted by an Özön.

Özön includes among Atay’s words *vurgunculuk* ‘profiteering’ (1945), derived from the expression *vurgun vurmak* ‘to pull off a shrewd stroke of business’. It does not occur in the *Kamus* or Redhouse (1890). Redhouse (1968), on the other hand, by showing it in the old letters as well as the new, indicates that it was used in Ottoman, so what we have here may be that rarity, an error in a work bearing the name of Redhouse, in which case the word is post-Ottoman and may well be due to Atay.

One of his successes was to popularize *içtenlik*, literally ‘from-within-ness’, for ‘sincerity’, now well on the way to supplanting *samimiyet*.² From the expression *mirin kırın etmek* ‘to shilly-shally, to find excuses not to do something’, he made *mirin kırınacı* to describe the sort of person who does that sort of thing (1950). He refers to the chart at the bed-end of a patient suffering from fever as ‘indili çıktılı grafik’ (1951), using *-li* to make adjectives from *indi* ‘it went down’ and *çıktı* ‘it went up’: ‘the graph with its ups and downs’. He contrasts *yapılamazcılık* with *olurculuk* (1956), the first being the quality (*-lik*) of the defeatist who says *yapılamaz* ‘it can’t be done’, the second that of the sanguine person who says *olur* ‘it will happen’.

In 1946 he suggested a new use for an old word, *ufantı* ‘fragment’, as a replacement for *teferruat* [A] ‘details’: ‘Ufanti kelimesi dilimizde vardır ve pek güzel “teferruat” yerine kullanılabilir’ (We have the word *ufantı* in our language and it may very well be used in place of *teferruat*). But *ayrıntı*, from *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935), has carried the day, except with those who prefer the French *detaş*.

In 1951 he wrote, ‘Bursa benim için bile bir dinlenti yeri’ (Bursa, even for me, is a place of repose). This *dinlenti* ‘rest, repose’ has an *Öztürkçe* look about it, but is a respectable formation, from *dinlenmek* ‘to rest’ with the same deverbal noun-suffix *-ti* as in *ufantı*, only no one seems to have used it before or since; *dinlenme* is the usual word.

Others of his are: *operetleştirmek* ‘to make into a light opera’ (1932), i.e. to turn something serious into something frivolous; *yazı kalfaları* ‘hacks’ (lit. ‘writing-journeymen’, 1945); *yapım* ‘manufacture’ (1946); *yıkıcılık* ‘destructiveness’ (1951); *kesik* for ‘newspaper cutting/clipping’ (1951), previously *kupür* [F] or *gazete maktuası* [A]; *oycu* ‘vote-catcher’ (1951); *politikasızlaştırılmalıdır* ‘must be

¹ In what follows, dates in parentheses after individual words indicate the first recorded use of these words.

² It is not known whether Atay was the first to use *içtenlik*. *Tarama Dergisi* (1934), in the production of which he was closely involved, gives *içten* for *samimi* ‘sincere’, attributing it to the *Kamus*, in which work the present writer has failed to find it.

depoliticized' (1952); *yaranıcı* 'sarmy, ingratiating', from *yaranmak* 'to curry favour' (1954); *yasaksızlık* 'policy of *laissez-faire*' (1954); *nutukçu* 'speechifier' (1956); *oydaş* 'holding the same opinion' (1956).

His *danişçılık* (1961) for 'consultancy' is at first sight surprising, as one would have expected him to know better than to use a verb-stem (*daniş*- 'to consult') as a noun.³ But in the Ottoman Turkish that was his mother tongue *daniş* was a noun, the Persian borrowing *dāniş* 'knowledge, learning'. Its connection with the verb *danişmak*, in use since the fourteenth century, is unclear; there may have been a confusion with *tanişmak* 'to become acquainted'. Atay's *danişçi* was not taken up; the neologism for 'consultant, counsellor' is *danişman*, ostensibly derived from *daniş*- and the spurious suffix *-men/man* making nouns of agent, but in fact a corruption of the Persian *dānişmand* 'learned'.

His *uçum* for 'flight' (1946), as in 'Bir uçum ötede kıta' (the continent which is a flight away), fell by the wayside; *uçuş* is the current word. Using *uçum* in this sense was an uncharacteristic oversight on his part, as it existed already for what in English is termed the fly—i.e. the end of a flag furthest from the flagstaff.⁴

In 1951 he created *eyim* from *eyi*, a by-form of *iyi* 'good', and *kötüm* from *kötü* 'bad', for 'approval' and 'disapproval' respectively, which one might think a heavy load to impose on the unassuming suffix *-m*. From these two words, someone manufactured the verbs *iyimsemek* and *kötümsemek*, 'to be optimistic' and 'to be pessimistic', neither much used except for their aorist participles *iyimser* and *kötümser*, 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic', which have totally replaced the Persian *nikbin* and *bedbin*.

To judge by a passage from his study of Atatürk (Atay 1969: 476), Atay deserves credit for assuring the survival of *şey* 'thing'. The resurrected *nesne* has won limited currency but will never replace *şey*, a word without which many Turks would find difficulty in conversing, for it is what comes automatically to their lips when groping for a word or a name, or thinking what to say next. It is used much like the English 'what-d'you-call-it' or the French *chose* and, as a sentence opening, like 'Well now' or 'I'll tell you what', or 'Il-y-a une autre chose qui est celle-ci'. Atatürk wanted it abandoned, as it was a borrowing from Arabic. (Had that happened, an English analogy would be the inhibiting effect of a ban on 'y'know' or 'basically'.)

beni her toplantıda bulundurup tenkidlerimi dinlemeğe tahammül göstermekte idi:

—Yapmayınız Paşam, diyordum, bir mucize olsa da Anadolu'da ne kadar ölmüş Türk varsa hepsinin aynı anda dirilmesi mümkün olsa, hepsinin beraber ilk ağzlarından çıkacak kelime *şey*'dir. 'Şey' o kadar Türkçedir.

Hiç unutmam. Atatürk, dil meselesine sarıldığından beri kendi dairesinin işleri ile uğraşmamasına pek sevinen vekil ile aynı arabaya binmiştim. Bana dönerek:

³ Only a handful of pre-reform nouns are also verb-stems, such as *göç* 'migration', *göç*- 'to migrate', *boya* 'paint', *boya*- 'to paint'. See Lewis (1988: 227).

⁴ *Uçum* is so defined in Kurtoglu (1938), the definitive work on Turkish flags, which is not mentioned in Eren (1990). *Okyanus* (Tuğlacı 1971-4), a comprehensive dictionary marred by many misprints, gives the correct definition of *uçum* but under the headword *uçun*. So did *Türkçe Sözlük* before the 1988 edition, but has since got it right.

—Falih'ciğim, sen de 'şey' gibi koyu Arapçaların Türkçe olduğunu iddia edecek kadar ileri varma! demesin mi?

Bu vekilin dili de zevki de eskinin eskisi idi.

he had me present at every meeting and was indulgent enough to listen to my criticisms. 'Don't do it, Pasha!' I was saying, 'If a miracle were to occur and all the dead Turks in Anatolia could suddenly be resurrected, the first word to come out of their mouths in unison would be *şey*. That's how Turkish *şey* is.'

I shall never forget; I had got into the same car as the Minister, who was delighted that Atatürk had not been concerning himself with the business of his Ministry since he had become engrossed in the language problem. He turned to me and, would you believe it, he said, 'My dear Falih, don't go so far as to claim that genuine Arabic words like *şey* are Turkish.'

This Minister's language and his taste were the oldest of the old.

Özön does not distinguish between words Atay originated and words he merely used. He credits him with several neologisms proposed in *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935), such as *kurtarıcı* 'saviour' and *uyanık* 'wide-awake', as well as several words in use in the nineteenth century and earlier—for example, *bulantı* 'feeling of nausea', *ölüm-kalım (savaşı)* 'life-and-death (struggle)', and *yapıcı* 'builder, constructive'. But the credit is deserved, if not for creating these and other words, then for giving them new leases of life and inspiring others to explore the existing resources of the language before resorting to invention.

Nurullah Ataç (1898–1957) was a late convert to the cause of *Öztürkçe*, which he had long opposed. The autobiographical note on the jacket of his *Karalama Defteri* (1952) reads:

1898de İstanbul'da doğmuş. 1909da üç sınıflık iptidai mektebinden çıkmıştır. Sonra bir iki okula gitmişse de hiçbirini bitirememiştir. İmtihana girerek fransızca öğretmeni olmuş edebiyat dersleri de vermiştir. Bazı dairelerde mütercimlik etmiştir. Şairliğe, hikâyeciliğe özenmişse de becerememiş işi eleştirmeciliğe dökmüştür. Son yıllarda türkçeyi—kendince—özleştirmeye çalışmaktadır. Birkaç kitabı dilimize çevirmiştir . . .

Born 1898 in İstanbul.⁵ Left three-year primary school 1909. Subsequently attended a school or two but failed to finish any of them. Went in for an exam and became a teacher of French and also taught literature. Worked as a translator in some government departments. Longed to be a story-teller and poet but could not make it. Turned to criticism. In recent years has been trying to purify—as he sees it—Turkish. Has translated several books into our language . . .⁶

He was a prolific essayist, whose work appeared regularly in a number of newspapers and journals. For some twenty years his interests were literary, but in the early 1940s his attention was increasingly directed towards language reform. He explained this change of heart as due to a realization that, in a country

⁵ His father was Mehmet Ata, who translated von Hammer's *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches* into Turkish.

⁶ They number over sixty, the authors ranging from Balzac to Simenon.

where Latin and Greek were not taught (earlier he had advocated their inclusion in the school syllabus and he continued to stress, rather wistfully, the desirability of knowing them), the only rational course was ‘to go to the pure language’ (Ataç 1954: 11). In other words, he rejected Ziya Gökalp’s view that Turks should go back to Arabic and Persian when creating new words for new concepts, in the way that West Europeans resorted to Greek and Latin. As he saw it, the Turks had to exploit the resources of their own language. Incidentally, by Ataç’s time Ziya Gökalp’s view could never have prevailed anyway, the Ministry of Education having removed Arabic and Persian from the school syllabus on 1 September 1929.

Ataç’s place in the language reform is that he was the great inventor of words. He was no language expert, nor did he profess to be; indeed he is said to have remarked, ‘My ignorance is boundless and at my age it cannot be eradicated.’ He had, however, a passionate love of language. He detested the habit some intellectuals had of using Western words as clichés without understanding their origins. He came out strongly against those who maintained that language can only develop naturally and that no individual or group of individuals can bring about linguistic change. He took to task a writer, whom he does not name, for saying in a newspaper article: ‘bir milletin dilini heyetler düzenleyemez. O kendi kendine gelişir. Ve en doğru tabirler halkın sağduyusundan doğar’ (A nation’s language cannot be regulated by committees. It develops by itself, and the most authentic forms of expression are born of the common sense of the people). He points out that the words used by the writer for ‘regulate’, ‘develop’, and ‘common sense’—*düzenlemek*, *gelişmek*, *sağduyu*—were not words he had grown up with but were products of the language reform: ‘Sorun kendisine: Bunlar halkın sağduyusundan mı doğmuş? Bir kurul, bir kurum yapmamış mı onları? Ne yaptığını bilmeden söylüyor: Kendisi bir kurulun çıkardığı sözleri kullanıyor, sonra da kurulların dil yapamayacağını söylüyor’ (Ask him: were they born of the common sense of the people? Weren’t they the work of a committee, a society? He speaks without knowing what he is doing: he uses words produced by a committee, then he says that committees could never create language!).⁷

As has been said, he shared Atay’s belief that it was futile to produce new words unless they were brought to public attention by being used, preferably in newspaper articles that would be widely read. He declared his philosophy in an article in *Ulus* of 8 March 1948 in which he spoke of his last conversation with Kemalettin Kamu, a recently deceased member of TDK’s central committee: ‘“Sizin Dil Kurumu’nda yaptığınız doğru değildir, birtakım yabancı sözlere karşılık arıyorsunuz; ancak onları birer yazıda kullanacağınıza sözlük yapmağa kalkıyorsunuz. Tiltikler sözlüklerde ölüdür, yazılarda dirilir” gibi sözler söyledim’ (I said something on these lines: ‘What you’re doing in the Dil Kurumu isn’t right. You’re looking for equivalents for a lot of foreign words but instead of using each

⁷ *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935) gives *gelişmek* as the replacement for *inkişaf etmek* ‘to develop’. The word existed long before, but in pre-reform days it meant ‘to grow, improve’.

of them in a piece of writing you set about making dictionaries. Words are dead in dictionaries; they come to life in writing').

The popularity he enjoyed with his readers enabled him to familiarize them with existing *Öztürkçe* and to make known his own neologisms, adding in parentheses the words they were intended to replace, usually with no explanation of how he had derived them. Here is a typical example: 'Dörüt yapıtlarında (*sanat eserlerinde*) ancak biçime bakılır, konunun bir önemi yoktur derler. Bu söz, ezgiciler (*bestekârlar*), bedizciler (*ressamlar*) için kesin olarak doğrudur belki; öykücüler (*hikâyeciler*), oyun-yazanlar için de bilmem öyle midir?' (They say that in works of art one looks only at the form; the subject has no importance. This may be absolutely true for composers and painters; I wonder if it is so for storytellers and playwrights) (Ataç 1964: 187).

His many opponents called him an extremist. One of his friends said in his defence that you cannot adopt a balanced position until you have been to the far end, a not unreasonable remark but hardly applicable to Ataç who, when it came to *Öztürkçe*, never aspired to being anything but extreme.

I met him in Ankara in 1953 and found him to be not the irascible Antichrist my linguistically conservative friends had told me to expect but an amiable and enthusiastic man of high intelligence. As we strolled up and down the Atatürk Boulevard, stopping every now and then for coffee, his good humour and his doggedness were amply displayed. He spoke of the problem that was currently exercising him: finding a Turkish replacement for *rağmen* [A] 'in spite of'. He had invented and had for some years been using *tapa*, but was not satisfied with it.⁸ He said, 'I don't feel at all proprietorial about my ideas for new words. If people like them and use them, of course I'm pleased; if they don't, I tell them to have a go themselves and I think of some more.' At one point he shyly mentioned that he had tried his hand at writing poetry in English, but had got no further than a single couplet. He wrote it down on a scrap of paper, treasured by the author to this day:

O Lord! give me the power of a song-creator,
For the joyful love I would sing!

He devised a game, described by Aksoy at a memorial meeting held on the tenth anniversary of Ataç's death. The idea was to find meanings for Ottoman words of Arabic origin on the assumption that their consonants were not those of Arabic trilateral roots but those of a more familiar Turkish or Western word.

Birgün odama gelmiş, 'meşruta' ne demek, diye sormuştu. Ben 'hükümet-i meşruta', 'evkaf-ı meşruta' gibi örneklerle göre açıklama yaparken o kıs kıs gülmüdü;

—Yorulmayın, bilemezsiniz, diyordu.

Bu sözlerini ciddiye aldığımı görünce hemen açıklamıştı:

⁸ Where he got *tapa* from is not evident; *tap-* means 'to worship'. The modern replacement for *rağmen* is *karşın*, another of his inventions, based on *karşı* 'against', though he used it not for *rağmen* 'in spite of' but for *muhalif* [A] 'opposed to'.

—Meşruta 'şort giymiş kadın' demek.

Bu kez gülme sırası bana gelmişti.

O zaman karşı karşıya oturup birçok sözcüklerin bu biçim anlamlarını bulmuştuk: 'Tereddi' radyo dinlemek, 'tebenni' banyo yapmak, 'terakki' rakı içmek demekti, 'mezun' Özen pastahanesinde oturan kimseye denirdi. 'Tekellüm'ün birkaç anlamı vardı: Kilim satın almak, kelem yani lahana yemek ve KLM uçağı ile uçmak. (Aksoy 1968: 18)

He came to my room one day and asked me the meaning of *meşruta*. While I was trying to explain it on the basis of examples such as *hükümet-i meşruta* ['constitutional government'] and *evkaf-ı meşruta* ['pious foundations subject to conditions'], he was chuckling and saying, 'Don't wear yourself out, you'll never guess.' Seeing that I was taking what he said seriously, he explained. '*Meşruta* means a woman wearing shorts.' This time it was my turn to laugh. Thereafter we sat down together and invented this kind of meaning for a number of words. *Tereddi* meant 'listening to the radio', *tebenni* 'to take a bath', *terakki* 'to drink rakı'. *Mezun* was an habitué of Özen's patisserie.⁹ *Tekellüm* had several meanings: 'to buy kilims', 'to eat the sort of cabbage known as "kelem"', 'to fly KLM'.

Readers who have seen the point need not bother with the rest of this paragraph. *Meşruta* is the feminine of *meşrut* 'bound by conditions', Arabic *maşrūt*, the triliteral root of which is *Ş-R-Ṭ* (whence *şart* 'condition'). Ataç was pretending that the root was *Ş-R-T*, the consonants of Turkish *şort*, English *shorts*. The Arabic root of *tereddi* 'degeneration' is *R-D-Y* 'fall', not *R-D-Y* as in Turkish *radyo*, English *radio*. *Tebenni* 'adoption' is from Arabic *B-N-Y*, not from the three consonants of Turkish *banyo* (Italian *bagnio*) 'bath'. *Terakki* 'progress' is from Arabic *R-K-Y* 'ascent', not from *rakı* 'arrack'. *Mezun* 'authorized, graduate' is from Arabic *?-D-N* 'permission', not from the name of a Turkish pastry-cook. The root of *tekellüm* 'speaking' is Arabic *K-L-M*, not Turkish *kilim* 'woven rug' (Persian *gelim*) or the Turkish dialect word *kelem* 'cabbage' or the Dutch abbreviation KLM.

In 1947 he was using *keleci* [M] (Mongolian *kele-* 'to speak') for *kelime* [A] 'word'. *Keleci* is found in written Turkish of the fourteenth to eighteenth centuries in the sense not of 'word' but of 'words, discourse',¹⁰ just like Turkish *söz*. Even if it had been of impeccably Turkish parentage, it would have stood little chance of general acceptance, because the final *-ci* makes it look like a noun of agent, specifically *kelleci*, 'dealer in sheeps' heads'. Yet that fact did not seem to bother him, as is evident from the explanation he gave in *Ulus* (9 February 1948) for dropping *keleci*: 'Şimdiye dek *kelime* yerine *keleci* diyordum, pek de beğenmiyordum; çünkü *keleci*, *kelime* değil, *söz* demektir; bundan böyle *tilcik*, belki *tilce* diyeceğim. *Til*, *dil* lûgat demektir, *tilcik*, *tilce* de "küçük til" demek olur' (Until now I've been saying *keleci* instead of *kelime* but I didn't like it much, because *keleci* doesn't mean *kelime* but *söz*. From now on I shall say *tilcik*, perhaps *tilce*. *Til*, *dil* means speech, so *tilcik* or *tilce* would mean 'speechlet'). What he was doing was adding a diminutive suffix to a word he alleged to mean 'speech', as if *speechlet* meant 'unit of

⁹ Özen Pastahanesi on the Atatürk Boulevard, a favourite haunt of Ankara intellectuals.

¹⁰ It is recorded for 'agreement' in the spoken language of the vilayet of Tokat (*Derleme Sözlüğü* 1963–82: viii. 2726).

speech' and so 'word'; a good example of the cavalier attitude that shocked the language specialists. And why *til*? Because *dil* 'tongue' already had a diminutive, *dilcik*, a botanical term for 'ligule' and a physiological term for 'clitoris'. It was not, however, as his wording suggests, an alternative to *dil*, but an older form of it that had been obsolete for centuries, its initial *t* having followed the normal course and become *d*. *Tilcik* was used by hardly anyone but its inventor. The neologism that carried the day was *sözcük*, invented by Melih Cevdet Anday in 1958 on the same lines as Ataç's *tilcik* but based on *söz*, which really did mean 'speech'. Here is Anday's note on it: 'Dağlarca, "kelime" karşılığı olarak "sözcük"ü değil, "tilcik"i benimsemiş. Ben, "tilcik"e karşı "sözcük"ü önerirken, bunun, yeni sözcük yapma kurallarına daha uygun olduğunu düşünmüştüm: elden geldiğince canlı köklerden, canlı eklerden yararlanarak . . .' (As the replacement for *kelime*, [the poet Fazıl Hüsnü] Dağlarca has adopted not *sözcük* but *tilcik*. When I proposed *sözcük* instead of *tilcik*, I had reflected that it was more consistent with the rules for building new words: making use as far as possible of living roots and living suffixes . . .) (Anday 1960, cited in Kudret 1966: 61).

There is a critical study of Ataç's contribution to the new Turkish in Talât Tekin's (1958) paper 'Ataç'ın Dilciliği ve Tilcikleri' ('Ataç as Language Expert, and his Speechlets', the use of Ataç's own *tilcik* being ironic.

Tekin lists the *tilciks* in three groups, though the first and second sometimes overlap: (1) Anatolian dialect words found in *Tarama Dergisi* (1934) and *Söz Derleme Dergisi* (1939–52); (2) OT words, most of them from *Dîwân Luğât al-Türk (DLT)*,¹¹ the rest from *Tarama Sözlüğü* (1963–77) or *Tarama Dergisi*; (3) words of Ataç's own coining. Some examples of each group are now discussed; all the words Ataç hoped his proposals might replace are Arabic unless otherwise indicated.

Group 1: *ayak* for *kafiye* 'rhyme'; *gerçek* for *hakikî* 'true, real' and *hakikat* 'truth'; *kez* for *defa* 'time, occasion'; *kural* for *kaide* 'rule'; *küşüm* for *şüphe* 'doubt'; *öğseyin* for *elbette* 'certainly'; *sin* for *mezar* 'tomb'; *töre* for *ahlâk* 'customs, ethics'; *tüm* for *kül* 'whole, totality'; *umut* for *ümit* [P] 'hope', *ürün* for *mahsul* 'crop, product'; *yazak* for *kalem* 'pen'; *yımızık* for *çirkin* [P] 'ugly', *yitirmek* for *kaybetmek* 'to lose'.

Tekin remarks that, in spite of all Ataç's efforts, a large number of the words in Group 1 had not become part of the written language and never would, because the words they were meant to replace were so widely known. Time has proved him wrong; the majority of them—all but *küşüm*, *öğseyin*, *yazak*, and *yımızık*—are in everyday use. While *ayak* has not superseded *kafiye* for 'rhyme', it has always been a technical term of folk-poetry, applied to the rhyming refrain between verses. For rhyme in general, from 1949 onwards Ataç himself used *uyak*,

¹¹ Mahmud Kaşgari's dictionary of Turkish, written in Arabic and completed probably in 1079. See References under *DLT*. A Turkish translation of the unique manuscript and a facsimile of it were available to Ataç (Atalay 1939–41).

obviously based on *ayak* but having as its first syllable the stem *uy-* ‘to fit, to conform’, and *uyak* is well on its way to ousting *kafiye* among the younger generation of poets. For *sin*, see pages 6 and 82.

As for *şüphe*, which Tekin thought assured of survival, though still common in speech it is rarely seen in writing, being rapidly edged out not by Ataç’s *küşüm* but by *kuşku*, proposed in *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935) as a replacement for *vehim* ‘groundless fear’ and *vesvese* ‘Satanic prompting, morbid suspicion.’ Ataç rightly objected to it, as he said in an article in *Ulus* of 21 February 1957: ‘Çünkü *kuşku*, *doute* demek değil, olsa olsa *soupçon* demektir. *Kuşku* bir türlü güvensizlik gösterir. Ben bu sözden kuşkulandım demek, bunun altında bir kötülük, başka bir dilek sezdim demektir’ (For *kuşku* does not mean *doute* but, if anything, *soupçon*. *Kuşku* indicates a kind of lack of confidence. To say ‘I felt *kuşku* about this remark’ means that behind it I sensed some evil, some *arrière pensée*). He was not wedded to his own suggestion, *küşüm*:

Konya’da öyle derlermiş de onun için. Sonra *küşüm* tilciğinin başka yerlerde başka anlamlarda kullanıldığını öğrendim. Kökünü bilmiyorum. Konya’da *şüküm* dedikleri de olurmuş. Arapça *şek*’in bozması olacak. Bunun için şimdi *sizin* diyorum. Onu da pek beğenmediğim için daha iyisini arıyorum.

That’s how they’re reported to say it in Konya, that’s why [I proposed it]. Later I learned it was used elsewhere in other senses. I don’t know its root. It seems that sometimes in Konya they also say *şüküm*. That will be a corruption of the Arabic *şek*. So now I use *sizin*. As I don’t like that much either, I’m looking for a better word for it.

Tarama Dergisi records *küşüm* as being in colloquial use for ‘doubt’ or ‘worry’ in nine vilayets besides Konya, but it has not achieved literary status. *Şüküm*, not in *Derleme Sözlüğü* (1963–82) or *Tarama Dergisi*, may well have been a metathesis of *küşüm* under the influence of *şek* (the Arabic *şakk*), to which Ataç refers. As for *sizin*, which he first used for ‘doubt’ in 1956, it sank without trace; given that *sizin* is the Turkish for ‘of you’, it was clearly a non-starter.¹²

Ürün, an Anatolian word for ‘produce’ that has now almost totally supplanted *mahsul*, is probably a Turkicization of *üren* [M] ‘seed, fruit, progeny’ (Clouston 1972: 233). If so, while Ataç may not have been aware of its non-Turkish origin, he would not have cared anyway, considering as he did that anything was preferable to an Arabic word.

Group 2: *betik* for *kitap* ‘book’; *köğ* for *vezin* ‘metre’ (of verse); *tin* for *ruh* ‘soul, spirit’; *netek* for *nasıl* ‘how’; *ozan* for *şair* ‘poet’; *tamu* for *cehennem* ‘hell’; *tükeli* for *tamamiyle* ‘wholly’; *tüp* for *asıl* ‘origin, original’; *uçmak* for *cennet* ‘paradise’; *yanıt* for *cevap* ‘answer’; *yavuz* for *kötü* ‘bad’.

Tekin includes *çevre* ‘surroundings’, now ‘environment’, in this group, which is

¹² Ataç may have come across and misread *sezik*, which in the old alphabet was written identically with *sizin*. *Tarama Sözlüğü* (1963–77) gives two citations, from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, with the meanings *sezgi*, *zan*, *tahmin*: ‘perception, supposition, estimation’.

an error, as the word has never totally lost currency since the thirteenth century. He may have confused it with *çevren*, manufactured by Ataç from *çevre* to replace *ufuk* [A] ‘horizon’ but scarcely known nowadays even to intellectuals. *Tamu* and *uçmak* for ‘hell’ and ‘paradise’ did not catch on; they would scarcely have helped the ethnic cleansing, as they were not Turkish but Sogdian. Some items in this group were taken in a form consistent with the phonetic development of modern Turkish—for example, *yanıt*, anciently *yanut*. The changes Ataç made in others were contrary to the laws of phonology. Tekin tells how in 1949, while still an undergraduate, he wrote to Ataç to point out that *netek* (properly *neteg*) was the ancient form of a word that, had it survived into modern Turkish, would have become *nite*. Ataç accepted the correction and used *nite* thereafter. *Betik* has won some currency but it was a mistake for *bitig*, the natural development of which, *biti*, was in use as late as the eighteenth century for ‘letter, document’. *Tin* too is flawed; its ancient form was *tın* ‘breath, spirit’. Tekin, comparing its derived verb *dinlenmek* ‘to rest’, originally ‘to draw breath’, notes that its modern form would have been *din*. Even if Ataç had known that, however, he would have been unwise to chose the latter form, since a homograph and so near a homophone of *din* [A] ‘religion’ (in which the *i* is long) would have been unlikely to gain favour,¹³ whereas *tin* and its adjective *tinsel* ‘spiritual’ are nowadays not without their devotees. *Tükeli* (in the older language not ‘wholly’ but ‘perfect’) would have become *dükeli* if it had survived into the modern language. *Tüp* did in fact survive, as *dip* ‘bottom, base’.

He took *yavuz* for ‘bad’, the opposite of its most usual modern sense. Tekin notes that, although ‘bad’ was its ancient meaning, it is used in dialect for ‘good, beautiful’. He could have added that it is also used in dialect for ‘generous, manly, capable’. And for ‘bad’. In view of its ambiguity, in a country where *Yavuz* is a common male name it could never have won acceptance as a replacement for *fena* [A] ‘bad’, much less for *kötü*, which being pure Turkish stood in no need of a replacement.¹⁴ As the appellation of Sultan Selim II, *Yavuz* is rendered ‘Grim’ by English-speaking historians.¹⁵ but ‘Steadfast’ is closer to what it meant to those who applied it to the ruler who added Egypt and Syria to the Ottoman dominions.¹⁶

It is a pity that many modern writers have followed Ataç in using *ozan* in place of *şair* for ‘poet’, because its old meaning was ‘bard, minstrel’. Those who know—a large category, including as it does every Turk with an interest in folk-poetry—preserve the distinction.

¹³ In the light of his toying with *sizin* for ‘doubt’, that consideration might not have deterred him.

¹⁴ Not that that is much to go on, as the impeccably Turkish *bütün* for ‘all, whole’ has for years been fighting for life against *tüm*, of whose Arabic origin there is little doubt. The two words, however, are not synonymous. While the sophisticated may use *tüm elmalar* for ‘all the apples’, to the people who grow them it means whole apples, as distinct from sliced apples. Even *istemek* ‘to want’ is looked on with disfavour, the in-word being *dilemek* ‘to wish for’.

¹⁵ Some old Turkey hands refer to him affectionately as Grim Slim.

¹⁶ The use of *wicked* as a term of approbation by English and American schoolchildren is worth mentioning in this context but, as with *yavuz*, should not be cited as evidence of moral decline.

Group 3: (a) words made from OT roots with various suffixes: *assiğlanmak* for *faydalanmak* ‘to utilize’; *kopuzsulluk* for *lyrisme* [F] ‘lyricism’; *kөгük* for *mısra* ‘line of poetry’; *tansıklamak* for *-e hayran olmak* ‘to admire’; *yanıtlamak* for *cevaplamak* ‘to answer’.

Assiğlanmak was Ataç’s first attempt at a replacement for *faydalanmak*, in which the *fayda* represents the Arabic *fā’ida* ‘use’, ‘profit’, the OT for which was *asığ*. Why he decided to double the *s* is unknown. He then came up with *asılanmak*, no doubt having learned that *ası* was the form *asığ* would have taken had it survived into the modern language. Neither form has endured. He coined *kopuzsulluk* by first adding *-sul* to *kopuz* ‘lyre’, to make *kopuzsul* ‘lyric’, and then the abstract-noun suffix *-lik*. *-sul* was not a living suffix, occurring only in *yoksul* ‘destitute’, described by Clauson (1972: 907) as ‘clearly a corruption of *yoksuz*’. *Kopuzsulluk* did not survive its creator.

No more did *kөгük*, which he manufactured from *kөг* with the long-obsolete diminutive suffix *-ik*. In so doing he was using the method he later used to create *tilcik*: loading on to a diminutive form of his word for ‘metre’ the meaning of ‘line of poetry’. (The accepted new term for this is *dize*, a deliberate variation of *dizi* ‘line’.) *Kөг* for ‘metre’ is the form he would have found in Atalay’s translation of *DLT*. Clauson transcribes it as *kü:g*—i.e. with long *ü*—which is how Dankoff and Kelly (1982–5) also read it. *Küğ* survives, though not in Ataç’s sense of ‘metre’ but rather for ‘music’—its first sense was indeed ‘tune’. Neither *kөг* nor *küğ* appears in *Tarama Sözlüğü*, but *küğ* is used for ‘music’ by some musicologists, particularly those at the University of the Aegean (see Chapter 9). *Tansıklamak* was made from *tansık*, which is how the old *tansuk* ‘marvellous, marvel’ would have appeared had it survived. *Tarama Sözlüğü* does not include the verb but gives *tansık* for *mucize* [A] ‘miracle’. Both *yanıtlamak* and the noun *yanıt* ‘answer’ from which Ataç formed it are commonly used in modern writing.

Group 3: (b) words coined by Ataç from Anatolian dialect words: *devinme* for *hareket* ‘movement’; *öykünülmek* for *taklit edilmek* ‘to be imitated’; *perkitlemek* for *tekit etmek* ‘to corroborate’; *yeğinlemek* for *tercih etmek* ‘to prefer’; *yöresellik* for *mahallilik* ‘regionalism’. Tekin points out that, as *yeğinlemek* is based on *yeğ* ‘good’, the *-in-* is superfluous, as is the *-le-* of *perkitlemek*, *perkit-* being a verb-stem anyway. As *perkitmek* is given in *Derleme Sözlüğü* (1963–82) with the required meaning, it is problematic why Ataç did not leave well alone. The *yöre* of *yöresellik* (the only word in this group, apart from *devinmek*, to have won any currency) is shown in *Derleme Sözlüğü* as meaning *çevre* ‘surroundings’. The same work shows *devinmek* for ‘to move’; on the other hand, it gives *öykünmek* only in the senses of ‘to relate, tell’ and ‘to compete’, though the meaning ‘to imitate’ is given in *Tarama Dergisi*, as is the meaning ‘to be sorry’. It was presumably *öykünmek* that inspired Ataç’s invention of *öykü* for ‘story’, which has largely replaced *hikâye*, though some say that *öykü* is no more than a vulgar mispronunciation of *hikâye*. If so, it is as if we were to discard *nuclear* in favour of the Pentagon’s *nucular*.

In view of the rash of *-sels* and *-sals* by which the face of written Turkish is blemished, Tekin's comment on *yöresellik* is of historical interest: 'Bunlardan *yöresellik* işlek olmıyan *-sel* ekiyle kurulmuştur. *Kumsal*, *uysal* gibi pek az birkaç kelimedede görülen bu ek bir vakitler *nisbet -î* si yerine teklif edilmiş fakat tutmamıştı' (Of these, *yöresellik* is formed with the unproductive suffix *-sel*. This suffix, which appears in a very few words such as *kumsal* and *uysal*, had at one time been proposed as a replacement for the [Arabic and Persian] adjectival suffix *-î*, but had never caught on). It is fair to add that in 1958, when he wrote this, he was not alone in his judgement.

Group 3: (c) coinages produced by dismembering ('ayırma yolu ile') ancient and dialect words—i.e. by taking them apart and putting the pieces together as he fancied: *betke* for *makale* '(newspaper) article'; *dörüt* for *sanat* 'art'; *ep* for *sebep* 'cause'; *söydeşi* for *yani* 'that is to say'; *tükelmek* for *tamamlamak* 'to complete'; *usul* for *akli* 'intellectual'. None of these won favour. As Tekin says, this method of word-making calls for profound grammatical knowledge. He explains *betke* as derived by Ataç from *biti*, earlier *bitiğ*, in the mistaken belief that *bit-* was the stem of a verb *bitmek* 'to write' (the old word, of Chinese origin, for 'to write' was *bitimek* not *bitmek*); he then added the *-ke* to make a noun of it. It is more likely that he manufactured it from *betik*, his invention for 'book', or from *bete*, his misreading of *biti*, which he went on using for 'letter' until his death. The second syllable, *-ke*, is not an all-purpose noun-suffix but an extremely rare diminutive suffix (Clouston 1972: p. xi); what he thought he was creating was a word meaning 'little writing'. *Dörüt* is the stem of *dörütmek* or *törütmek*, an old word for 'to create', from which he also made *dörütmen* for 'artist'.

With all due respect to Tekin, *ep* 'cause' does not belong in this group but in the first. Ataç would have found it among the equivalents for *sebep* in *Tarama Dergisi*, where it was due to a misreading of *ip* 'rope' in one of the Ottoman sources used by the compilers of that dictionary. There, however, it was given as the Turkish for *sabab* [A] in the sense not of 'cause' but of 'tent rope', the original meaning of the Arabic word.

Söydeşi for 'it means, that is to say', is another oddity that did not take. Tekin supposes that Ataç extracted the first syllable from *söylemek* 'to say' on the correct assumption that the latter was compounded with the denominative verb-suffix *-lemek*, but there was no such noun as *söy*; the *söy* of *söylemek* started life as *söz*. The *-deş* is for the invariable *-daş* 'fellow', which Ataç helped deprive of its invariability.¹⁷ The literal meaning he must have been aiming at was 'its saying-fellow'—i.e. 'which amounts to saying'.

Over *tanmalı* 'wonderful, surprising' one must again take issue with Tekin. His

¹⁷ In pre-reform days, the only word in which it appeared as *-deş* seems to have been *kardeş* 'sibling', an Istanbul pronunciation of *kardaş* (earlier *karındaş* 'womb-fellow'), a form used until well into the seventeenth century. *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935) gives *gönüldeş* not *-daş* for *yekdil* 'sympathizer', possibly through a misreading of the phonetic spelling used by Redhouse (1890).

view is that Ataç made it by adding the deverbal suffix *-malı* to *tan*, the noun seen in *tansık* and *tana kalmak* ('to be left to wonderment'), which he took to be a verb-stem meaning 'to wonder'.¹⁸ But there is also a verb *tanmak* 'to be astonished', found in the form *dañmak* in texts of the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries and still used in parts of Anatolia. Ataç presumably made *tanmalı* from the *-me* verbal noun of that word, in which case it belongs in Tekin's list 3(b).

As for *usul* for 'intelligent': although *us* originally meant 'intelligence, discrimination', *uslu*, once 'intelligent', nowadays means only 'well behaved'. This attempt by Ataç to base a new adjective for 'intelligent' on *us* is rightly criticized by Tekin on the grounds that 'research to date into the Turkish language has failed to come up with a denominal adjective-suffix *-il/il*'. Moreover, there was another *usul* [A] 'method, system' in everyday use in Ataç's day and still not extinct. True, it differs from Ataç's *usul* in that, because of its Arabic origin, its final *l* is clear, so that its plural is *usuller*, while 'methodical' is *usullü* and 'unmethodical' *usulsüz* (Lewis 1988: 19),¹⁹ but that would not—indeed did not—make its proposed homograph acceptable.

Group 3: (d) words taken from other Turkic dialects or based on such words: *komuğ* for *musiki* 'music'; *üçük* for *harf* 'letter of the alphabet'; *şüyüncü* for *müjdecî* 'bearer of good news'; *tilcik* for *kelime* 'word'; *üyük* for *beyit* 'line of poetry'.

These need not detain us long, since *tilcik*, the only one of them to win any currency at all, has been adequately discussed. The correct form of Ataç's *üçük* is *üjek*, probably of Chinese origin. *Üy* is the form taken by *ev* 'house' in Kirghiz, Uzbek, and those other Eastern dialects in which it does not appear as *öy*. Ataç's reason for making a diminutive of it to replace *beyit* [A] is that 'line of poetry' is a secondary sense of Arabic *bayt*, the primary sense being 'tent' or 'house'.

Group 3: (e) compounds made with words from OT and Anatolian or other dialects: *aktöre* or *sağtöre* for *ahlâk* 'ethics'; *bile-duyuş* for *sympathie* [F] 'sympathy'; *budunbuyrumcu* for *demokrat* 'democrat'; *düzeyit* for *nesir* 'prose'; *gökçe-yazın* for *edebiyat* 'literature, belles-lettres'; *uza-bilik* for *tarih* 'history'.

To prefix *ak* 'white' or *sağ* 'right' to *töre*, the OT for 'customary law', does not seem a particularly felicitous way of expressing the concept of ethics, but some writers do use *aktöre*. *Bile-duyuş*, compounded of *bile*, OT for 'with', and *duyuş*, 'feeling', did not prevail; the new word for 'sympathy' is *duygudaşlık* 'feeling-fellowship', which has not supplanted *sempati*, as may be judged from the fact that the equivalent given in *Türkçe Sözlük* (1988) for *duygudaş* is *sempatizan*.

Tekin passes over the second element of *budunbuyrumcu* in silence, saying only

¹⁸ From this noun *tan* comes the verb *tanlamak* 'to be astonished', in literary use between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries and still alive in one or two local dialects, including that of the vilayet of Ankara.

¹⁹ Some use the neologism *yöntem*, others still prefer *metot* [F]. In the 1950s Istanbul University had a pair of professors known to their colleagues as Metotlu Cahil ('The Methodical Ignoramus') and Metotsuz Cahil respectively.

that *budun*, an ancient word for 'people', would have become *buyun* had it survived. The ancient word for 'people' was in fact *bođun*, which by the eleventh century had become *boyun* though, given the existence of *boyun* 'neck', *boyun* 'people' would have stood little chance of acceptance in modern Turkish. As early as 1912, Yakup Kadri [Karaosmanođlu] made fun of an attempt to replace *millet* 'nation' by *budun* (Levend 1972: 321). But now it has happened, in that *budun* is used to some extent, notably in *budunbilim* for 'ethnography'. The *buyrum* of *buyrumcu* is pure invention, a noun made from the stem of *buyurmak* 'to command'. The *buyruk* of *budunbuyrukçu*, Ataç's offering for 'dictator', was an old Ottoman word for 'command'.

Tekin explains *düzeyit* for 'prose' as illegitimately formed by adding to *düz* 'level' the stem of the old verb *eyitmek* 'to say': 'level-speak'. The somewhat more logical *düzyazı* 'level writing' is used instead. *Gökçe-yazın* was intended to mean 'belles-lettres', *gökçe* being a provincialism for 'beautiful', while *yazın* was Ataç's arbitrary modification of *yazı* 'writing'. The whole expression did not catch on, but *yazın* is current in the sense of 'literature', without having supplanted the time-honoured *edebiyat*.

Categories (d) and (e) both contain words not in the spirit of the guideline adopted by the Sixth Kurultay, but then no one could have expected it to restrain Ataç's creative urge: 'Türk dili, Türk Milletinin kullandığı dildir. Terimler yapılırken eski tarihlerden beri yaşayıp gelen unsurlar zaman ve mekân itibariyle yakınlık ve uzaklık bakımından dikkate alınmalı ve bugünkü Türkiye Türkçesinin fonetik ve estetiğine uygun olmalıdır' (Turkish is the language used by the Turkish nation. When terms are being made, elements which have survived from ancient times should be considered from the point of view of their proximity and remoteness in time and place and be in conformity with the phonetics and aesthetics of the present-day Turkish of Turkey) (Kurultay 1949: 146).

No one has yet succeeded in finding an acceptable Öztürkçe word for 'history'; *tarih* [A] still holds its ground and will continue to do so. Ataç's *uza-bilik* won no following, any more than his *uza* alone or *uzağı* or *uza-bilim*, or his *uzabilikçi* for 'historian'. *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935) gives *uza* as replacement for *mesafe* [A] 'distance', while *bilik* is OT for 'knowledge', appearing in Ottoman from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century as *bilü* or *bili*. As for *bilim*, which has acquired general currency for 'science' because of its fortuitous resemblance to *ilim* ('ilm [A] 'knowledge'), Ataç's first recorded use of it was in 1956, but it had already appeared in 1935, in *Cep Kılavuzu*.

Group 3: (f) words made by Ataç from living roots and more-or-less active suffixes: *bağlanç* for *din* 'religion'; *dokunca* for *zarar* 'harm'; *örneğin* for *meselâ* 'for example'; *sorun* for *mesele* 'problem'; *yapıt* for *eser* 'work' (artistic or literary); *yazım* for *metin* 'text'; *yazın* for *edebiyat* 'literature'.

Tekin's conclusion:

Ataç, yaman bir tenkitçi, titiz bir çevirici, kısaca, usta bir edebiyatçı idi; ancak bir dilci değildi. Gerekliliğine inandığı dâvayı yürütebilmek için dilimizdeki yabancı kaynaklı kelimelere türkçe karşılıklar aramış, bulamadığı zaman kendi kurmuştur. Fakat, kelime yaparken bir noktaya dikkat etmemiştir: Yaşayan köklerden işlek eklerle söz türetmek. Böyle yapseydi *tilcik*'leri yadırganmaz, kolayca tutunurdu.

Ataç was a remarkable critic and a sensitive translator; in short, a consummate literary man, but he was no language man. To advance the cause in whose necessity he believed, he looked for Turkish equivalents of words of foreign origin in our language and when he could not find them he made them up himself. But in his word-making there was one point he disregarded: the need to derive words from living roots and active suffixes. Had he done so, his *tilciks* would not have struck people as odd and would have easily gained acceptance.

The criticism sounds reasonable but in its implication that the *tilciks* did not gain acceptance it is dead wrong. All the words in the last list, with the exception of *bağlanç*, are in everyday use, and all but one with the meanings he assigned to them: *yazım* nowadays means not 'text' but 'spelling'. It is a pity that *bağlanç*, from *bağlan-* 'to be attached', has not had more success, seeing that it was one of Ataç's few correct formations.

Yılmaz Çolpan (1963) does not claim that the thousand-odd neologisms in his glossary of Ataç's words were all originated or resurrected by Ataç, nor were they. He shows *içtenlik* 'sincerity', for example, as having been used by Ataç in 1950, whereas Atay's first recorded use of it is dated 1946. It appears in *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935), for which Atay was largely responsible. Çolpan shows *yır* 'poetry', a respectable old word listed in *Tarama Dergisi*, as first used by Ataç in 1949, but Sadri Maksudî (Arsal 1930: 116) had used it nineteen years before. Nevertheless, even if we halve Çolpan's figure, Ataç's contribution to the vocabulary of present-day Turkish unquestionably exceeds that of any other individual.

Aydın Sayılı (1913–93) was born in Istanbul and completed his secondary education at the Atatürk Lycée in Ankara. Atatürk attended the *viva voce* examination for the baccalaureate and was so greatly impressed by Sayılı's performance that he recommended him to the Minister of Education, who sent him to Harvard, where he studied under George Sarton, obtaining his doctorate in 1942. In 1952 he was appointed Professor of the History of Science at Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi and in 1974 became Chairman of the Philosophy Department of the same faculty. His reputation was worldwide. His best-known work in English (Sayılı 1988) is *The Observatory in Islam and its Place in the General History of the Observatory*.

Unlike many scholars of his age group, he took to *Öztürkçe* enthusiastically, but he did not believe in letting the old words die. He wanted to keep them alive because they might be useful, now or in the future, to express subtle distinctions. Thus he advocates (Sayılı 1978: 400) the retention of *tabii* alongside the increasingly popular *doğal* for 'natural', because *tabii* is used 'yadırganmayan bir şey için'

(of something not regarded as strange)—i.e. in the sense of ‘naturally, of course’. *Tabii* does in fact survive in this sense, but I fear the credit goes not to Sayılı but to the linguistic conservatism of the people.

His language is eclectic; he uses whatever word best expresses his meaning, whether it belongs to the older or the newer vocabulary. He did not condemn *-sel/sal* but his remarks on it (see Chapter 7) include such Ottoman survivals as *tereddü*, *hissedenler*, *mevcut*, *çare*, *vâkıa*, *taraf*, *iltifat*, and even the antiquated *selika*. Although he used *Öztürkçe*, he was ready to speak out against its worst features, as we see in the following passage (Sayılı 1978: 399). The word *yanırsız*, which he uses in it for ‘unbiased’, is the final theme in the present chapter.

Birhayli fena bir başka misal de *kuşku* sözcüğünün *şüphe* yerine kullanılmasıdır. Çünkü *kuşku* sözcüğünde bir itimatsızlık, bir kötü niyet, yahut da hoşlanılmayacak bir sezinleme anlamı vardır. *Şüphe* ise bu bakımdan tarafsız veya yanırsız bir kelimedir. *Kuşku* gibi güzel bir kelimeyi *şüphe* yerine kullanmak onu özel anlamından ayırmak ve aynı zamanda dilimizi *şüphe* ve *kuşku* gibi yakın anlamlı iki kelimeye sahip olmaktan zorla yoksun kılmak demektir.

Another extremely bad example is the use of *kuşku* instead of *şüphe*. For in *şüphe* there is a sense of a lack of confidence, or an evil intent, or a perception of a situation that is going to be unpleasant, whereas *şüphe* in this respect is neutral or unbiased. To use a beautiful word like *kuşku* in place of *şüphe* is to divest it of its proper sense and at the same time to dispossess our language forcibly of a pair of words of related meaning.

His intelligence and erudition marked him off from those responsible for much of the vocabulary of current Turkish. Every page of his book-length article reveals that he thought more deeply about the language than did most of those who shaped its future. The reason he had so little effect on the course of the reform is that, unlike Atay and Ataç, he was not a popular writer but a scholar who wrote for scholars. Discussing *neden*, for example, he mentions that Ottoman had the words *sebep* ‘cause’ and *illet* ‘reason’. *Neden*, which could have replaced *illet*, is now used for both *illet* and *sebep*. But these two words represented two distinct concepts, and two such words exist in all developed languages. ‘Cause’ is used in relation to nature, and for situations outside one’s volition, whereas ‘reason’ is used for matters coming within one’s volition: ‘yağmur yağmasının nedeni’ (the cause of the rainfall), but ‘konuşmak istemesinin sebebi’ (the reason for his wishing to speak).

No one seems to have paid any attention to that or his other criticisms and suggestions. He thought it was wrong (Sayılı 1978: 442), for example, that, although *çeviri* was in common use for ‘translation’, for the verb ‘to translate’ there was only the old *tercüme etmek* or the non-specific *çevirmek* ‘to turn’. He made a verb from *çeviri*—*çevirilemek*—and used it throughout the article, but it is doubtful if anyone else ever adopted it. Probably not, as it would have been too easily confused with the existing neologism *çevrilemek* ‘to explain away, to interpret allegorically’.

He pointed out a flaw in *yüzyıl*, the prevalent replacement for *asır* [A] ‘century’—namely, that when you hear ‘yedi yüzyıl/yüz yıl’ you cannot tell

whether what is meant is 'seven centuries' or 'seven hundred years'. And this distinction may sometimes be important. If someone says 'yedi asır kadar önce' (some seven centuries ago), you understand that there may be a margin of error of, say, sixty or seventy years, whereas 'yedi yüzyıl/yüz yıl kadar önce' may imply an error to be measured not in years but in centuries. A valid criticism, but he did not offer an unambiguous alternative to *yüzyıl*; obviously he was hoping that *asır* could be rescued from oblivion.

The trouble was that he was working on too high a plane. One need only open his article at any page to see why his proposals passed over the heads of the wordsmiths. This passage, for example:

Bugün *örtük* ve *açık* sözcüklerini birbirinin karşısı iki terim olarak kullan larımız vardır. Bunların da terim olarak pek doyundurucu olmadığı söylenebilir. Çünkü *açık* sözcüğü çokanlamlı olduğu gibi, *örtük* de yakın akraba terim türetilmesine pek elverişli değildir. Ayrıca, *örtük* sözcüğü anlamın örtülü olduğunu ifade ediyor. Oysa, burada önemli olan husus anlamın *örtülmesi* değil, *örtük* biçimde *ifade edilmesi, dile getirilmesidir* . . . Bu terimlerin İngilizcedeki karşılıkları *implicit* ve *explicit*'tir . . . Fakat *örtük* ve *açık* yerine, yukarıda değinilen yetersizlikleri dolayısıyla, *altgın* ve *üstgün* gibi iki terimin getirilmesi daha isabetli olur. Çünkü bunlardan her ikisi de özel terim vasfını tatmin edici bir şekilde karşıyabileceği gibi, *altgın* sözcüğü anlam bakımından, *örtük* sözcüğüne kıyasla, maksada daha uygun düşer. (Sayılı 1978: 443-4)

There are some amongst us today who use the words *örtük* and *açık* as two antonymous technical terms. One may say that as technical terms they are not very satisfactory. For aside from the fact that *açık* has many meanings, *örtük* is not particularly suited to deriving closely related terms. Moreover, the word *örtük* implies that the meaning is veiled, whereas the important fact here is not that the meaning is veiled but that it is expressed, conveyed, in a veiled way . . . The English equivalents of these terms are *implicit* and *explicit* . . . But because of the inadequacies of *örtük* and *açık* touched on above, it would be more appropriate to introduce two terms to replace them, such as *altgın* and *üstgün*. Not only would they both meet the definition of a special technical term more satisfactorily; if we consider the word *altgın* from the point of view of meaning, in comparison with *örtük* it is more to the purpose.

Or this, from a discussion of possible equivalents for 'determinism' and 'indeterminism':

Osmanlıcada bu konuda oturmuş ve yerleşmiş terimler pek yoktu. *Muayyeniyet* ve *gayr-i muayyeniyet* sözcüklerinin bu terimlerin fizik alanındaki anlamını karşılamak maksadıyla kullanılabileceği aşıkardır. Fakat bu anlamlar çok genel ve geniş olduğundan, bu sözcüklerin, gerçek anlamıyla terim sayılmaması gerekir. Ayrıca, bu sözcükler söz konusu felsefi anlamlarını karşılamamaktadırlar. Bu terimlerin felsefi anlamını karşılamak üzere de *icâbiyye* ve *lâicâbiyye* sözcüklerimiz vardı. Fakat bunlar da çok dar bir çevre dışında tanınmamaktaydı. (Sayılı 1978: 502)

Ottoman really had no settled and established terms in this subject. It is manifest that *muayyeniyet* [definiteness] and *gayr-i muayyeniyet* [non-definiteness] could be used for the purpose of representing the meaning of these terms in the field of physics. But since these

meanings were very general and broad, these words are not to be regarded as technical terms in the true sense. Moreover, these words cannot meet the philosophical meanings we are talking about. To meet the philosophical meaning of these terms, we also had the words *icâbiyye* [determinism] and *lâicâbiyye* [indeterminism].²⁰ These, however, were not known outside a very narrow circle.

Sayılı goes on to say that no agreement has been reached on new equivalents for 'determinism' and 'indeterminism', though various terms are in use: *gerektirim*, *gerekircilik*, and *belirlenimcilik* for the first and *belirlenmezcilik* for the second. But obviously these are no more widely used or known than were *icâbiyye* and *lâicâbiyye* in the Ottoman period.

Nevertheless, though his theme is the language of science and teaching, he has time for some less technical terms: 'to translate' and 'century', as we have seen. He considers (Sayılı 1978: 441–2) that insufficient thought was given to the consequences of replacing *kütüphane* by *kitaplık*: what happens to 'librarianship'? In fact the *kitaplıkçılık* he feared has not won the day over *kütüphanecilik*, though *kitaplık bilimi* is used for 'library science'. Another problem he could have added was how to say 'a library of twenty thousand books'; clearly 'yirmibin kitaplık bir kitaplık' won't do, and to say 'volumes' instead of 'books'—'yirmibin ciltlik bir kitaplık'—does not mean the same.

One curious coinage of his which had no success was *yanır*. Speaking of *taraf* [A] 'side' and its derivatives *tarafılı* 'partisan' and *tarafsız* 'impartial', he remarks (Sayılı 1978: 402) that some people use the pure Turkish *yan*, *yanlı*, and *yanısız* instead. He continues:

Dilimizdeki *kocunmak* ve *yağır* sözcüklerinden bu bakımdan yararlanma yoluna gidilebilir. Bunlardan her ikisi de aslında at için kullanılan sözcükler olmalarına rağmen, *kocunmak* sözcüğü daha genel ve mecazi anlamda da sık sık kullanılmaktadır. Ayrıca bu sözcükler *yanır* ve *gocunmak* biçiminde de telaffuz edilmektedir. *Yağır* veya *yanır* atın omuzları arasındaki yer ve bu yerde eğer vurmasından açılan yara anlamındadır. Yağırı olan at bu yarasından kocunduğu için bu iki sözcük arasında her zaman için hatırlanan bir çağrışım mevcuttur. Bu belirgin anlamıyla, *yağır* veya *yanır* Avrupa dillerindeki *bias* ve *biais* gibi sözcükleri akla getirmektedir.

Kanımcı, *yanlı* ve *yanısız* yerine *yanırlı* ve *yanırsız* sözcüklerini kullanmak daha yerinde olur. Böylece *yanır* telaffuz şekline aslına yakın özel bir anlam verilmiş olur ve dili bir yerde fakirleştirmek yerine tam tersi yapılmış olur . . . *Tarafsız* veya *yanırsız* karşılığı olarak İngilizcede *neutral* ve bir de gramer terimi olarak *neuter* sözcükleriyle karşılaşır.

From this point of view, one may resort to utilizing the words *kocunmak* and *yağır*, which we have in our language. Although both are originally used of horses, *kocunmak* is frequently used in a more general and metaphorical sense. Moreover, they are also pronounced *yanır* and *gocunmak*.²¹ *Yağır* or *yanır* means the horse's withers and the sore made there by saddling. Since the horse with a saddle-sore is scared of this wound he has, there is an

²⁰ The first of these is an Arabic abstract noun of Turkish manufacture, derived from *iğâb* 'making obligatory, making unavoidable'; the *lâ* of the second is the Arabic for 'not'.

²¹ *Gocunmak* is an Anatolian pronunciation of *kocunmak*. See Lewis (1988: 4, end of §9).

unforgettable association of ideas between these two words.²² With this specific meaning, *yağır* or *yanır* calls to mind such words in the European languages as *bias* or *biais* [F].

In my opinion, it will be more appropriate to use *yanırlı* and *yanırsız* instead of *yanlı* and *yansız*. In this way, the pronunciation *yanır* will have been given a special meaning close to its origin and instead of impoverishing the language at one point the exact opposite will have been achieved . . . The sense of *tarafsız* or *yanırsız* is conveyed in English by *neutral* or, as a grammatical term, *neuter*.

It is not surprising that this suggestion did not catch on. The progression from a saddle-sore that makes a horse shy away from a curry-comb, to a bias that makes a person shy away from a course of action, is more than a little far-fetched. But Sayılı did explain the thinking behind his suggestion, which is more than Ataç was in the habit of doing.

²² The reference is to the proverb 'Al kaşığı, gir ahıra, yağırı olan gocunur' (Take the curry-comb, go into the stable, and the one with saddle-sores will be scared), much like our 'If the cap fits, wear it.'

Ingredients

As we have seen, the reformers' overriding desire was to get rid of Arabic and Persian borrowings, even if the proposed replacements were equally non-Turkish: *hudut* [A] 'frontier' was dislodged by *sınır* [G] (*sýnuron*), *millet* [A] 'nation' by *ulus* [M], *şehir* [P] 'city' by the Sogdian *kent* 'small town, village', *istilâh* [A] 'technical term' by *terim* [F]. But at least these were natural-born words. This chapter discusses the more noteworthy suffixes used, even invented, in the creation of *Öztürkçe*. The squeamish reader may find some of what follows disturbing.

Before we come on to suffixes, a word about prefixes. At the time when TDK was doing its best to prove that Turkish and the Indo-European languages were akin, efforts were made to create words by using prefixes, against the genius of Turkish. For 'sub-', *ast* was imported from one or other of the Central Asian dialects in which it means 'underside', like Turkish *alt*. It was soon shortened to *as-*, which survives in *asteğmen* 'second lieutenant' and *assubay* 'non-commissioned officer'. In the late 1930s *astüzük* was used for 'supplementary by-laws', *asbaşkan* for 'vice-president', and *askurul* for 'subcommittee'. The first syllable of *yardım* 'help' was prefixed to *direktör* to make *yardirektör* 'assistant director', to *başkan* to make *yarbaşkan* 'vice-president', and to *kurul* to make *yarkurul* 'subcommittee'; this and *asbaşkan* may still be met with occasionally. One other *yar-* survives, in *yarbay* 'lieutenant-colonel', *bay* being the *Öztürkçe* replacement for *bey* 'commander'. The first syllable of *albay* 'colonel' is also an abbreviation, of *alay* 'regiment', The *gen of genel* 'general' was similarly pressed into service as a prefix, a use that survives in *gensoru* 'parliamentary question'. The *tüm* of *tümgeneral* 'major-general' is the first syllable of *tümen* 'division', while the *or* of *orgeneral* 'general' is from *ordu* 'army'. What inspired these truncations was Russian abbreviations like *Sovnarkom* for 'Sovyet Narodnykh Komissarov' 'Council of People's Commissars'. It should be remembered that in those days Turco-Soviet relations were, at least outwardly, cordial.

Another attempt at creating a prefix was *arsı-* 'inter-', an arbitrary corruption of the postposition *arası*, but its use did not go beyond *arsıulusal*, which gave rise to one of the successive designations of the Izmir International Fair: İzmir Beynelmîlel Fuarı, İzmir Arsiulusal Fuarı, İzmir Enternasyonal Fuarı, İzmir Uluslararası Fuarı. There is some dispute about the legitimacy of the widely used *öngörmek* 'to foresee', there being no precedent for incorporating an adverb into a verb. There is no such dispute about prefixing *ön* to nouns, as in *önsezi*

'premonition', the *ön* here being an adjective, as in many respectable old words like *önkapı* 'front door' and *önoda* 'antechamber'. So too with *alt*, as in *altgeçit* or *alt geçit* 'underpass'. Now for some suffixes.

-çe/ça. Three old borrowings from Serbo-Croat—*kıraliçe* 'queen', *çariçe* 'tsarina', *imparatoriçe* 'empress'—supplied a feminine suffix, which Turkish lacked. Added to *tanrı* 'god', it made *tanrıça*, the *Öztürkçe* for *ilâhe* [A] 'goddess'. That was its sole contribution to the language reform.

There is another *-çe/ça* that, unlike the *-ce* of *düşünce* 'thought' and *eğlence* 'amusement', is added to nouns. It is a Persian diminutive suffix, seen in *paça* (*pāça* [P]) 'trotter' from *pā* [P] 'foot', and *lûgatçe* 'glossary' from *lûgat* [A] 'dictionary'. It provided the reform with one or two hybrids like *tarihçe* 'short history', and *dilekçe* 'petition' from *dilek* 'wish'.

-enek. Once occurring in very few words—for example, *görenek* 'usage' and the archaic *değenek* 'stick, wand' (now *değnek*, from *değ-* 'to touch, reach')—it was given new life by İsmet İnönü. On the pattern of *görenek*, he created *gelenek* for 'tradition', which has totally replaced *an'ane* [A], while its adjective *geleneysel* has done the same for *an'anevi* [A] 'traditional'. Other neologisms made with this suffix are *olanak* 'possibility', *seçenek* 'alternative', *yazanak* 'report', and *tutanak* 'minutes of a meeting'.

Apropos minutes, those of the first three Language Congresses (1932, 1934, 1936) were called *Müzakere Zabıtları*; the fourth (1942) *Toplantı Tutulgaları* (*tutulga* is the equivalent given for *zabıtname* in *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935)); the fifth and subsequent ones (1945–); *Tutanaklar*. Those of the Congresses of the Republican People's Party: 1934 *Tutulga*, 1938 *Zabıt*, 1939 *Zabıtlar*, 1947 *Tutanak*.

-ev/-v. The origins of this suffix lie far from Turkey. In Bashkurt and Kazakh the infinitive ends not in *-mek/mak* but in *-v* (preceded by the appropriate vowel after consonant-stems), and in Kirghiz and Tatar *-u* or *-ü*. The respective equivalents in these languages of *almak* 'to take' are *alıv*, *aluv*, *alı*, *alı*, and of *görmek* 'to see' *küriv*, *körüv*, *körü*, *kürü*. Hence several neologisms: *görev* 'duty', *söylev* 'speech', *işlev* 'function', *ödev* 'obligation', *sınav* 'examination', *türev* 'derivative, by-product'. Another was *saylav*, Kazakh and Kazan for 'to choose', used in the early years of the reform instead of *milletvekili* or *meb'us* 'deputy'. *Ödev* is from *ödemek* 'to pay', and for a glimpse of how it struck sensitive Turks we only have to imagine how we would feel if told we should abandon the foreign *obligation* and adopt a new word constructed from an English root and a German suffix, say *paykeit*. Nor can one overlook the possibility that *ödev* owes something to the French *devoir*. As for *görev*, this is how it is explained in Eyuboğlu's (1988) etymological dictionary, a work remarkable for its shiftness: 'Sözcüğün sonuna getirilen v sesiyle ad türetme, seyrek de olsa, Türk dilinde vardır. Edilce-v/edilcev (yapılması, edilmesi gereken), Anadolu halk ağzında ar. sünnet karşılığı söylenir . . . Gece-v/geceve (gerçekke gece evi, tarlalarda yapılan, geceleyin ekinleri kollamak için kurulan kulübe)'

(Noun-derivation by adding a *v*, though rare, does exist in the Turkish language. *Edilce-v/edilcev* ('what must be done') is said in popular Anatolian dialect for the Arabic *sünnet*¹. . . *gece-v/gecev* (in fact *gece evi*, a hut made in the fields and erected for watching the crops by night.) *Edilcev* appears in *Derleme Sözlüğü* (1963–88) (misplaced at *v*. 1665) as being recorded for *sünnet* at Ünye in the vilayet of Ordu, which makes 'Anadolu halk ağzında' seem a bit of an exaggeration. No explanation is offered for the peculiar-looking *edilce*. Nor does Eyuboğlu strengthen his case by citing another *-v*, in *gecev*, which he himself recognizes as an abraded form of *ev* 'house'. To revert to *görev*: one can see a connection between the notions of obligation and payment, but why should a noun derived from *görmek* 'to see' mean 'duty'? The answer requires a digression.

One of Ataç's neologisms, invented in 1947, is *koşul*, now widely used in writing instead of *şart* [A] for 'condition'. Ataç extracted it from the expression *şart koşmak* 'to impose a condition'. (*Koşmak*, besides meaning 'to run', is also used transitively in the sense of 'to attach', as in 'atı arabaya koştuk' (we hitched the horse to the cart).) The once unproductive noun-suffix *-ul* occurs in a few words such as *çökül* 'sediment' and *kumul* 'sandhill'. Tack it on to *koş-* and you have *koşul*, which should mean, if anything, 'attachment'. But it does not; it means 'condition', though it has not replaced *şart* in the sense of 'prerequisite'. This gives us the clue to *görev*. It will be remembered that *görmek*, besides 'to see', means 'to perform' (compare the English 'to see to'). In the old days when 'duty' was *vazife* [A], 'he has done his duty' was 'vazifesini görmüştür'. Just as *koşul* owes its existence to *koşmak*, which in *şart koşmak* is no more than an auxiliary verb, so *görev* owes its existence to the auxiliary verb *görmek*. I don't think that a Turk of any sensibility could bear to say 'görevini görmüştür'; it has to be 'görevini yapmıştır' or 'görevini yerine getirmiştir'. The lexicographer D. Mehmet Doğan, however, in his volume of essays (1984: 135), perversely combines the Ottoman for 'to perform' with this ill-conceived item of *Öztürkçe*, writing *görevini ifa etmiştir*.

-ey/y is a zombie, like *-it* and *-meç*, raised from its long sleep and put back to work by the reformers. Before they got hold of it, it occurred in a handful of words, notably *kolay* 'easy'; *güney*, common in Anatolian dialects for 'sunny place'; and *kuzay*, *kozay* or *kuzey*, anciently and in dialect 'sunless place'. These forms were explained as follows in an illuminating paper by Jean Deny (1937).² *Kol*, besides 'arm', anciently meant 'hand', as it still does in much of Central Asia. *Gün* means 'sun' as well as 'day': 'Gün doğdu/battı' (The sun rose/set). *Kuz* is the side of a mountain out of reach of the sun. The *-ey/y* adds the notion of being in the domain of what is denoted by the noun to which it is suffixed. As Deny puts it, 'Les détails que nous venons de donner permettent donc, à notre avis, de rattacher en toute sécurité le mot *kol-ay* à la formation de *dérivés en ey et d'en restituer le sens*

¹ The Arabic *sunna* means 'practice of the Prophet'. Its Turkish form *sünnet* has the special sense of 'circumcision'.

² I am indebted to Professor Şukrû Elçin for a copy of this article.

primitif dans ces termes: "qui est exposé à l'emprise de la main, qui est sous la main, bien en main, maniable".' *Tarama Dergisi* (1934) gives *kuzey* as one of ten possible replacements for *şimal* 'north', with a note: 'Gölgede kalan yer man. [= manasına]. "Güney" zıddı' (In the sense of place staying in shadow. Opposite of *güney*). *Kuzey* (the non-harmonic form being due to analogy with *güney*) and *güney* are now usual, even in speech, for 'north' and 'south' respectively.

The reformers, who were unlikely to have seen Deny's paper (and if they had?), added *-ey/ay/y* indiscriminately to verb-stems, nouns, and adjectives. From *ol-* 'to be, happen', *uza-* 'to extend', and *dene-* 'to try', they made nouns: *olay* 'incident', *uzay* 'space', and *deney* 'experiment'; from *yap-* 'to make', the adjective *yapay* 'artificial'; from *yön* 'direction' and *yüz* 'face', the nouns *yöney* 'vector' and *yüzey* 'surface'; from the adjective *düz* 'flat', the noun *düzey* 'level'. In 1938, when the Turkish Navy required names for its new 'Ay' class of submarine, the same hard-working suffix was added to the verbs *atıl-* 'to assail', *batır-* 'to sink', *saldır-* 'to attack', and *yıldır-* 'to daunt': *Atılay*, *Batıray*, *Saldıray*, *Yıldıray*.³ It is hard to deduce from these examples what the function of *-ay* was supposed to be.

Yüzey, *düzey*, and *birey* 'individual' all appear in *Cep Kılavuzu* (1935). *Birey*, which had already appeared in *Tarama Dergisi* (1934), is of more respectable ancestry than the rest of what we might, taking a leaf from the Turkish Navy's book, call the Ay class of neologism. *Birey* is the form that *biregü* 'individual', used in Ottoman between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, would have taken if it had survived.

-ge. Turkish has an abundance of word-building suffixes but not all of them seem to have a specific meaning.⁴ Take *-ge/ga*, for instance. In OT it was used mostly as an ending of names of birds, animals, and insects, many still extant: *karga* 'crow', *çekirge* 'locust', 'grasshopper'. It also appears in a few other nouns, such as *süpürge* 'broom', *dalga* 'wave', *yonga* 'wood chippings'. The reformers used it to make a number of neologisms, including *dizge* 'system' (*diz-* 'to arrange in order'), *genelge* 'circular, notice' (*genel* 'general'), *gösterge* 'indicator' (*göster-* 'to show'), and the question-begging *sömürge* 'colony' (*sömür-* 'to exploit').

-gi/ki is a respectable old suffix, forming numerous nouns from verb-stems: from *duy-* 'to feel', *duygu* 'feeling'; from *as-* 'to hang', *askı* 'hanger'; from *sar-* 'to wrap', *sargı* 'bandage'. A number of successful neologisms have been made with it, such as *bitki* 'plant' from *bit-* 'to grow', and *tepki* 'reaction' from *tep-* 'to kick'. One neologism formed with it, however, has a bad name among conservatives: from *et-* 'to do', *etki* 'influence', 'effect', which has largely supplanted *tesir* [A]. The word exists in the speech of several regions of Western Anatolia, but not in that sense; its meanings are 'ill treatment, distress, excessive difficulty', less commonly

³ *Saldıray* was commissioned in July 1938, the other three in 1939, *Batıray* in March, *Atılay* in May, *Yıldıray* in August.

⁴ One is reminded of the Esperanto suffix *-um*: 'suffixe peu employé, et qui reçoit différents sens aisément suggérés par le contexte et la signification de la racine à laquelle il est joint' (Zamenhof 1931: 177).

'witchcraft'. But the conservative scholar Faruk Timurtaş (1979: 47–8) sees more in it to object to than that:

Yardımcı fiillerden prensip itibarıyla yeni kelimeler türetilmez . . . 'etmek' kelimesi, bâzan halk ağızlarında, zikredilmesi uygun olmayan veya ayıp sayılan kelimelerin yerini tutmak üzere kullanılır. Meselâ, büyük ve küçük abdestini yapmak 'etmek' kelimesiyle anlatılır. Böyle bir kullanılış İstanbul ağızında ve yazı dilinde de görülür . . . Hiçbir ağızda etki'ye 'tesir' mânâsı verilmemiştir. Bu mânâ sonradan Kurumca uydurulmuştur.

In principle, new words cannot be derived from auxiliary verbs . . . The word *etmek* is sometimes used in popular dialects to replace words that it is unseemly or considered shameful to mention. For example, answering either call of nature is conveyed by the word *etmek*. Such a use is seen both in the spoken language of Istanbul and in the written language . . . In no dialect has *etki* been given the sense of *tesir*. This sense has been concocted *ex post facto* by the Language Society.

-im/m. The flood of new words incorporating this suffix seems to have started with *anlam*, which has now virtually displaced *mânâ* 'meaning'. *Anlam* was one of fourteen alternatives offered in *Tarama Dergisi* (1934), which noted it as used instead of *mânâ* in the vilayet of Konya. *Derleme Sözlüğü* (1963–82), however, shows *añlam* as used in just two villages, not for *mânâ* but for *anlayış* 'sagacity' or *duygu* 'feeling'. Those who recorded it must have either misread their notes or doctored them. *-m* originally indicated a single action, as in *ölüm* 'death', *doğum* 'birth'. Long before the language reform got into its stride, this limitation had begun to weaken, *Yarım* 'a single act of splitting', a verbal noun of *yar-* 'to split', became a concrete noun, 'half'. The meaning of *alım*, from *al-* 'to buy', was extended from a single act of purchase to purchasing in general, and the same happened with *satım* from *sat-* 'to sell', so that 'alım satım' came to mean not a single transaction but buying and selling, business. Similarly *dikim* from *dik-* 'to sew' means not just one stitch but sewing. The suffix has been enormously productive: *basım* 'printing', *dağıtım* 'distribution', *anlatım* 'narration', *oturum* 'session', *seçim* 'election', *üretim* 'production', and countless more. *Kalıtım* 'heredity' was not made from a verb but from Ataç's *kalıt* 'inheritance'. *Ortam* 'environment, ambiance' and *toplum* 'community, society', which one sees and hears all the time, are equally illegitimate, *ortam* being from the noun *orta* 'middle', and *toplum* from the adjective *toplu* 'collective'.

-it/t. An ancient addition to verb-stems: *geçit* 'mountain-pass' or 'parade' from *geç-* 'to pass', *içit* (archaic) 'drink' from *iç-* 'to drink', *binit* (provincial) 'animal for riding' from *bin-* 'to mount'. It has produced many serviceable neologisms: *konut* 'abode' from *kon-* 'to settle', *taşıt* 'vehicle' from *taşı-* 'to carry', *dikit* 'stalagmite' from *dik-* 'to plant', *sarkıt* 'stalactite' from *sark-* 'to hang down', *yakıt* 'fuel' from *yak-* 'to burn'. The ingenious *soyut* 'abstract' from *soy-* 'to strip', which has replaced *mücerret*, was due to Ataç, but to replace its antonym *müşahhas* 'concrete' he added the suffix to the adjective *som* 'solid', not to a verb-stem. Nobody seems to mind; *soyut* and *somut* make a neat pair. *Örgüt* for 'organization', however, has its critics.

It is the result of cross-breeding between *örgü* 'plait' and *organ*, a late nineteenth-century borrowing from the French *organe*. *Örgen*, a face-saving Turkicization of *organ*, will be found in dictionaries but is unlikely to be encountered in real life. A postage stamp issued around 1988 featured *Organ Bağıışı* 'Organ Donation', and *Organ Nakli* 'Organ Transplant'. This followed in the tradition of an earlier stamp dedicated to *Sıtma Eradikasyonu* 'the eradication of malaria'. *Örgüt* has acquired a sinister connotation, being used mostly of terrorist organizations, except by some newspapers, notably *Cumhuriyet*, that are committed to *Öztürkçe*. The remainder of the press and most individuals prefer the Ottoman *teşkilât* or the French *organizasyon*.

Other current malformations using *-it/t* are *karşıt* 'contrary', one of Ataç's, from the postposition *karşı* 'opposite', and *eşit* 'equal' from the noun *eş* 'mate'. *Tarama Dergisi* (1934) gave *eşit* as used in Istanbul for 'equal', but the absence of the word from the twelve-volume *Derleme Sözlüğü* (1963–82) makes one wonder.

-meç/maç. A vice to which the reformers were prone was the use of suffixes that had ceased to be productive—that is, that had anciently been used in word formation but were no longer. How would English-speakers receive some Big Brother's decree outlawing the Latin 'corporation' and replacing it with 'bodydom'? Kâmile İmer (1976: 57) has a pertinent observation:

Türetme yoluyla yeni sözcükler yapılırken dilin işlek eklerinin kullanılması dil devrimin bir an önce, uzun süre istemeden başarılı olmasını sağlayabilir. İşleklik yitirmiş eklerle bu özelliklerini yeniden kazandırmak güç olmakta, belki uzun süre gerekmektedir. Bu nedenle işlek olmayan eklerle türetilen sözcükler, kökü bilinse bile, dili kullandanda kavramla ilgili çağrışıma yol açamamaktadır. Örneğin, *-maç/-meç* ekine (*sarmaç* 'bigudi', *dilmaç* 'tercüman', v.b. [ve başkaları]) Türk Dil Devriminden sonra işlerlik kazandırılmaya çalışılmaktaysa da, şimdilik bu ekle yapılan sözcüklerin dilin işlek ekleriyle yapılan sözcükler oranında tutunmadığı göze çarpmaktadır.

When new words are being made by derivation, the use of the productive suffixes of the language can ensure that the language reform is successful very soon and will not take a long time. It becomes difficult, and may take long, to restore this quality to suffixes that have lost their productivity. That is why words derived with the help of unproductive suffixes, even if their roots be known, are incapable of arousing in the user of the language any relevant association of ideas with the concept. For example, since the start of the language reform there have been attempts to put the suffix *-maç/meç* (as in *sarmaç* 'hair-curler', *dilmaç* 'interpreter', etc.) back to work. At the moment, however, it is obvious that words constructed with this suffix have not caught on to the same extent as words constructed with the productive suffixes of the language.

She does not make it clear that *sarmaç* and *dilmaç* are not on the same level. While *dilmaç* is an old word (though its Turkish origin is far from certain), *sarmaç*, from *sar-* 'to wrap', was a failed attempt to replace *bigudi*, a French word still current among Turkish coiffeurs and their clients. If *dilmaç* really is Turkish, it is the only example of *-maç* attached to a noun and one of the very few examples until

modern times of its forming anything other than names of foodstuffs (Clouston 1972: pp. xliii, 500; Doerfer 1963–75: ii, §1010.) Among these names are *tutmaç*, *bulamaç*, and *uğmaç*. Redhouse (1890) defines *tutmaç* as a dish made of stewed mutton in gobbets, with chickpeas. In Redhouse (1968) it is fresh-made pastry cut in strips and cooked with meat and yoghurt. Redhouse (1890) ingeniously but unconvincingly explains it as *tutma aş*, ‘holding-food’, and either recipe would clearly hold one till the next meal. Doerfer (1963–75: ii, §876) records another popular etymology, no less ingenious but even less plausible: Alexander the Great and his comrades had lost their way and were wandering about with nothing to eat. They said to him, ‘Bizni tutma aç’ (Don’t keep us hungry).⁵ Whereupon Alexander, having been supplied with the name, invented the dish. The other two names of dishes are formed from the verbs *bulamak* ‘to bedaub’ and *uğmak* ‘to rub and crumble in the palm of the hand’, both being thick soups. Other pre-modern appearances of *-maç* are in *dönemeç* ‘bend in a road’ (*dön-* ‘to turn’), *kanırtmaç* ‘lever’ (*kanırt-* ‘to bend’) and *yırtmaç* ‘vent in a garment’ (*yırt-* ‘to tear’).

Except in *demeç* ‘official statement’ (*de-* ‘to say’), which may owe something to *démarche*, it has been little used by the reformers. *Günlemeç*, which was *Tarama Dergisi*’s (1934) offering for *tarih* ‘date’, was spasmodically used during 1934 in draft legislation, notably in the clause ‘Bu kanun neşri günlemecinden muteberdir’ (This law is in force from its date of publication), but every *günlemecinden* was replaced by *tarihinden* before reaching the statute book.

-men/man. One word that had to go was *mütehassis* ‘expert’, not just because its initial *m* and its lack of vowel harmony branded it as Arabic but also because it was too easily confused with another Arabic borrowing, *mütehassis* ‘sensitive’. Its replacement was *uzman*, said to have been invented by Köprülü, although he never used it himself. The first syllable was an old word for ‘skilled craftsman’ and the second might have been the intensive suffix seen in *şişman* ‘fat’ and *kocaman* ‘huge’. But it was not; it was another *-man*, long familiar to Turks in the word *vatman* ‘tram-driver’ (sometimes used in place of *asansörcü* for the operator of a lift or elevator). For the benefit of readers born since the heyday of the tram or streetcar, it should be explained that *vatman* is the Turkish spelling of the French *wattman*, compounded of the two English words *watt*, the unit of electric power, and *man*.

Fired by the success of *uzman*, the reformers went around adding the suffix to verb-stems, producing such misbegotten words as *öğretmen* ‘teacher’, *yazman* ‘secretary’, *okutman* ‘lector’, and *seçmen* ‘voter’. *Koruman* ‘trustee’ is found in legal language. Less successful was the attempt to replace *cerrah* [A] ‘surgeon’ by *yarman*, from *yarmak* ‘to split’. Its failure was due to the good sense of Turks at large and of Turkish surgeons in particular, who prefer to call themselves *operatör* anyway.

⁵ For *bizni*, see von Gabain (1950: 92). Alexander the Great’s men of course spoke Old Turkic, not modern Turkish.

This suffix also helped to inspire the creation of *teğmen* ‘first lieutenant.’⁶ After the promulgation of the Surnames Law in 1934, İbrahim Necmi, for many years Secretary-General (‘Genel Yazman’) of the Language Society, chose ‘Dilmen’ for his surname, compounded of Turkish *dil* ‘language’ and non-Turkish *man*.

The suffix appears also in *barmen* ‘barman’ (which by the mid-1990s had acquired a feminine form, *barmeyd*, replacing the earlier *kadın barmen*), *formen* ‘foreman’, *sportmen* ‘sportsman’, and *rekortmen* ‘record holder’. It is not clear why the last syllable of all these words except *uzman* (the inspiration for the *man* of which is plausibly reputed to be the second syllable of German *Fachmann* ‘expert’) is *-men* rather than *-man* as the laws of vowel harmony and the analogy of *vatman* would have led one to expect. It may be significant that Russian uses *rekordmen*, whereas *recordman* is a French invention (1889). In the early 1950s the façade of the İnönü Stadium in Istanbul bore the slogan ‘Sportmen, Centilmen İnsandır’ (The sportsman is a gentlemanly person), but *sporcu* is more usual nowadays.

Other proposed *-men* words, which fell by the wayside, were *savaşman* ‘warrior’, *öçmen* ‘vengeful’, *bakman* ‘inspector’, *uçman* ‘aviator’, and *ökmen* ‘judge’.

-sel/sal is the most controversial of all the products of the language reform. In brief, its origin is the suffix of the French *culturel* and *principal*. The purifiers wanted a native substitute for the Arabic and Persian adjectival suffix *-î* as in *tarihî* ‘historical’ and *siyasî* ‘political’. They failed to find one, because Turkish, thanks to its use of nouns as qualifiers, has no need of an all-purpose adjectival ending. *-li* does not fit the bill; *tarihli* means ‘having a history’, as in ‘şanlı tarihli bir şehir’ (a city with a glorious history), or ‘bearing a date’ as in ‘4 Haziran tarihli mektubunuz’ (your letter dated 4 June), but it does not translate ‘historical’ as in ‘historical research’, the Turkish for which is ‘tarih araştırmaları’. As Ziya Gökalp (1923: 112–13) pointed out, the use of *-î* ought to be and easily can be avoided;⁷ there is no need to say ‘Edebi Hafta’ for ‘Literary Week’, the Turkish for which is *Edebiyat Haftası* ‘Literature Week’. For ‘vital problem’ we don’t have to say ‘hayati mesele’ when we can say ‘hayat meselesi’. Gökalp was not calling for the total abandonment of *-î*; he would never have given up *aklı*, for example, the meaning of which—‘pertaining to the mind, intellectual’—was quite different from that of *akıllı* ‘possessed of mind, intelligent’.

⁶ *Mülâzim*, the Ottoman term for ‘lieutenant’, also meant ‘adherent’, so the *teğ-* must be from *teğmek* (a variation on *değmek* ‘to touch’), given in *Tarama Dergisi* (1934) for *temas etmek* ‘to make contact’ and presumably the source of Atatürk’s *teğet* ‘tangent’. *Teğmen* may well be an echo of *seğmen* (from the Persian *sagbân* ‘dog-keeper’), originally the keepers of the Sultan’s hounds, later incorporated in the Janissaries. *Seğmen* or *seymen* survives as the name for the armed and mounted young men in regional costume who feature in processions at weddings and on festal days.

⁷ Gökalp made two exceptions: when it was added to Turkish names to make musical terms, such as *varsâğı* (now written and pronounced *varsâğı*), a ballad-metre of the Varsaks, a Tatar tribe of southern Anatolia, and when it was added to Turkish nouns to make adjectives of colour, such as *kurşuni* ‘leaden’ and *gümüşi* ‘silvery’, for it then became a Turkish suffix, words thus formed being exclusive to Turkish.

Unaware or heedless of Gökalp's advice, the reformers took the ending of the French *culturel* and used that.⁸ It was not until 1983 that *Türkçe Sözlük* came clean and showed both *kültür* and *kültürel* as borrowed from French; previous editions had shown the noun but not the adjective as a French borrowing, the implication being that the latter was derived from the former by adding a Turkish suffix. In 1934 Ahmet Cevat Emre put a French *-el* on to *ses* 'voice' to make *sesel* for 'vowel', to which for good measure he added *-ik* for the French *-ique*, making *seselik* for 'vocalic'. He also manufactured a word for 'euphonic', *yeğçavlik*, from OT *yeğ* 'good' and *çav* 'voice', plus *-lik* for the French *-lique* as in *vocalique*. Let no kind-hearted reader mistake the *lik* of *yeğçavlik* for the Turkish abstract-noun suffix; the lack of vowel harmony—*lik* not *lık*—shows that it is not.⁹ From the obsolete *sü* 'army', İbrahim Necmi Dilmen manufactured *süel* for 'military' in 1935 (*Ulus*, 1 July 1935; Levend 1972: 423).

Until then, Turkish had had no denominal suffix in *l*,¹⁰ but that did not deter the reformers. The Arabic *siyāsa* 'politics, policy' being, as they claimed, obviously derived from the Turkish (actually Mongolian) *yasa* 'law', they saw no need to discard its Turkish form *siyaset*. But *siyasî* 'political' was another matter, because for some inscrutable reason they never claimed that the Arabic suffix *-î*, whence Turkish *-î*, was originally Turkish. They therefore replaced *siyasî* with *siyasal*.¹¹ Next for the high jump was *millî* 'national'. The Arabic *millet* having been dislodged by the Mongolian *ulus*, *millî* became *ulusal*—that is to say, the 'pure Turkish' replacement for the Arabic *millî* is half Mongolian and half French, a curiously outlandish way for a Turk to express 'national'.¹² Then there was *kudsi* 'holy', the Arabic *kuḍsî*. *Kudḥ* plus *-al* should have added up to *kudsal*, but, as the first syllable happened to resemble the Turkish *kut* 'good luck', the *d* of *kudsi* was replaced by the *t* of *kut*, while its *s* was retained, and 'holy' became *kutsal*. As the excuse for this word's existence was that it derived from *kut*, if one subtracted *kut* the remaining *sal* had to be a suffix. Coupled with the fact that the *-al* of *siyasal* and *ulusal* as well chanced to be preceded by an *s*, that seems to have been what

⁸ The more obdurate *Öztürkçeciler* such as Haydar Ediskun deny this, vigorously but unpersuasively. See the controversy between him and Zeynep Korkmaz in the pages of *Türk Dili*, 15–16 (1965–7). See also Tahsin Banguoğlu, 'Nispet Sifatları ve -sel, -sal', four articles in *Dünya*, 15–17 Sept. 1965 and 19 Sept. 1965, repr. in Banguoğlu (1987: 264–77).

⁹ These two words, *seselik* and *yeğçavlik*, occur in Emre's paper presented to the Second Kurultay: 'Türkenin Hint-Avrupa Diliyle Mukayesesi', Kurultay 1934 (= *Türk Dili*, 11 (1935), 2–12).

¹⁰ OT had a deverbal adjective-suffix: *-l* after vowels and *-il/il* after consonants, as in *kızıl* 'red' from *kız-* 'to be hot'.

¹¹ Gallagher (1971: 169) says that *siyasal* was 'actually an innovation of the nineteenth century Tanzimat period for the Arabic-Turkish *siyasî*', a dubious assertion for which he gives no evidence.

¹² The National Library has retained its name of Milli Kutuphane. Some years ago the author asked the Librarian how it had escaped becoming Ulusal Kitaplık. With evident glee she replied that its name was enshrined in its charter, which no one had got round to amending and, since the state takeover of TDK in 1983, with luck no one ever would. It is fair to add that a reputable youngish Turkish scholar with whom I discussed the alternative words for 'library' did not find Milli Kutuphane more impressive than Ulusal Kitaplık, but generously told me that *kütüphane* not *kitaplık* is still regularly used of one's personal library.

launched *-sel/sal* on its merry way: *elektriksel* and *fiziksel*, *kimyasal* 'chemical', *tarihsel* 'historical', and so on *ad infinitum*.

The lusty infant was not slow to extend its sway; having started life as a denominational suffix, it soon became deverbal too: *görsel* 'visual' from *gör-* 'to see', with a matching *işitsel* 'auditory' from *işit-* 'to hear'. For 'educational', *eğitimsel* has an even less legitimate rival: *eğitsel*. And now, to change the metaphor, in the written language *-sel* sweeps all before it.¹³ It has even produced a noun, *sorunsal* from *sorun* 'problem', to translate the French *la problématique*, English 'problematic(s)'.¹³

Those who claim *-sel/sal* as an authentic Turkish suffix adduce two words in justification: *uysal* 'compliant' and *kumsal* 'sandy tract'. *Uysal* must be connected with *uy-* 'to conform' (OT *üd-* 'to follow'), but no one knows quite how. One suggestion is that the ancient deverbal suffix *-l* was added to *uy-sa-* 'to want to conform'; compare *susa-* 'to thirst' and *mühimse-* 'to regard as important' and its Öztürkçe replacement *önemse-* (Lewis 1988: 230). The trouble is that *-se-* was never added to verb-stems but only to nouns and adjectives. As for *kumsal*, while Redhouse (1890) and the *Kamus* give it only as a noun, all recent dictionaries, including Redhouse (1968), give it also as an adjective, 'sandy'. One does not have to be a conspiracy theorist to believe that it was not an adjective until the reformers set out to justify their new adjective-suffix *-sel/sal*.

Time was, to express 'psychological illness' you would say 'ruh hastalığı' (illness of the psyche). Now you say 'ruhsal hastalık' (psychish illness), unless you prefer 'psikolojik hastalık'. The use of *-sel/sal* may speed the task of translation from works in West European languages, but it goes against the grain of Turkish and has markedly affected the style of much modern writing, particularly on technical matters. 'Literary criticism', once 'edebiyat tenkidi', became 'edebiyat eleştirisi', then 'yazın eleştirisi'. Some writers talk about 'yazınsal eleştiri', which is a direct translation of 'literary criticism' but to a literate Turk does not convey criticism of literature but criticism which is literary.

Kâmile İmer (1976: 57) strikes a warning note:

Dil devrimi sırasında herhangi bir kavramın anlatımında, onu karşılayacak sözcük dile bulunamıyor ve türetilmiyorsa yabancı dildeki anlamının etkisi altında yerli dil öğeleriyle çevirme işi yapılabilir. Bu yöntem her ne kadar yerli dil öğelerinin kullanımını sağlamaktaysa da çok başvurulduğunda dilin kendi anlatım özelliklerinden uzaklaşmasına yol açabileceği düşünümeli ve zorda kalmadıkça başvurulmamalıdır. Çünkü her ulusun kavramları adlandırışındaki tutum—kimi benzerlikler olmasına karşın—genel olarak değişiktir.

In the course of language reform, if, in expressing any concept, no word corresponding to it can be found in the language or can be derived, it is possible to do a job of translation with elements of the native language under the influence of its meaning in the foreign language. One must bear in mind that, while this method ensures the use of elements of the native language, if it is resorted to overmuch it can open the way to the language's becom-

¹³ The author's excuse for changing the metaphor is that, although Turks do not go in much for puns, he imagines that some lovers of the older language must have reflected that *sel* [A] means 'torrent'.

ing distanced from its own characteristic modes of expression, and it should not be resorted to unless one is forced to it. For every nation's attitude in its way of finding names for concepts—despite the existence of some resemblances—is generally different.

Many Turks dislike *-sel* intensely. Nurullah Ataç, the great neologizer, used it and defended it, but he did not like it. Perhaps significantly, it was not mentioned in a TDK brochure on word construction published in 1962 (Dizdaroğlu 1962).¹⁴ Yet its defenders include many writers and scholars whose opinions cannot be brushed aside. This is what Fahir İz,¹⁵ lexicographer and historian of literature, has to say about it:

Bir de *-sel* eki var ki, o başlı başına bir yazı konusu olabilir. Burada kısaca şunu belirteyim ki, bizim bu eke gerekmemiz sınırlıdır. Avrupa dillerindeki sıfat tamlamaları bizde ad tamlaması olur. Biz, Avrupa dillerinde olduğu gibi mısırsal çarşı, denizsel ticaret, demeyiz Mısırcarşısı, deniz ticareti, deriz.

Fransızca ya da İngilizce değil de Türkçe düşünürsek tarımsal ilaç yerine tarım ilacı, ştiirsel sanat yerine şiiir sanatı, parasal sorun yerine para sorunu der de yazarız. Bununla birlikte, kimi durumlarda dilde bu eke gerekseme vardır: sinirsel nefes darlığı, tanrısal komedi v.b. gibi. (İz 1984: 13)

There is also the suffix *-sel*, which could of itself be the subject of an article. Here let me briefly say this: our need for this suffix is limited. The adjective-groups of European languages appear with us as noun-groups. We do not say 'Egyptian Market' and 'maritime commerce', as in the European languages, but 'Egypt Market' and 'sea commerce'.

If we think not in French or English but in Turkish, in place of 'agricultural chemical', 'the poetic art', 'monetary problem', we say and write 'agriculture chemical', 'the poetry art', 'money problem'. Nevertheless, in some situations the language does have a need for this suffix, as in 'nervous shortage of breath', 'The Divine Comedy', and so on.

So erudite a man as Aydın Sayılı (1978: 468) found *-sel* useful and necessary:

Özel terimler kullanma ihtiyacının baskısını kendilerinde hissedenler ve mevcut terimlerin yetersizliğinin yarattığı sıkıntıyı duymak durumunda bulunanlar için *sel* ve *sal* eklerinin bir cankurtaran gibi birçok güçlükere çare getirdiği de bir vâkıa olarak ortadadır. Bu ekleri büyük bir çoğunluk yadırgamamaktadır. İlk *sel* ile *sal*'ı tereddütle karşılaşmışken sonradan bunlara alışmış, yararlı olduklarını görmüş ve bunlarda Türkçenin selikasına ve estetiğine uymayan bir taraf bulunduğu düşüncesine iltifat etmemeye karar vermiş kimselerin sayısı da az değildir.

It is a manifest fact that for those who feel a pressing need to use special terminology and who find themselves constrained by the inadequacy of existing terms, the suffixes *sel* and *sal* are a lifeline remedying a good many difficulties. A large majority do not find these suffixes strange. There are also not a few people who were at first hesitant about *sel* and *sal* but have subsequently grown accustomed to them, seen that they were useful, and decided to disregard the notion that there was something about them that did not conform to correct Turkish usage and the aesthetics of the language.

¹⁴ Nor is it mentioned in Korkmaz (1969). In view of Korkmaz's exposure of its illegitimacy during the controversy referred to in note 8 of this chapter, that is hardly surprising.

¹⁵ İz (1984) is a privately printed brochure summarizing the author's previous writings and lectures on *Öztürkçe*.

Peyami Safa, no great admirer of *Öztürkçe*, regarded *-sel* as incorrectly formed and never used it unless he had to, but his taste was offended by having to add the Arabic *-î* to French words. Reproached by a conservative critic for using *fiziksel* instead of *fiziki* for ‘physical’, he replied that he found words such as *fiziki*, *lojiki*, *matematikî*, and *muziki* irritating, and preferred the forms in *-sel/sal* (Safa 1970: 189–90). He went on, “Dudaksal” demeyelim de “Dudaki” mi diyelim? Yahut yine buyurun Arapçaya: “Şefevî”! Bu gidişle öyle olacak gibi’ (Are we not to say *dudaksal* [‘labial’, from *dudak* ‘lip’] but *dudakî*? Or by all means revert to the Arabic: *şefevî*! At this rate, it looks as though that’s how it’s going to be).

So, like it or not, Turkish is stuck with it, and the language of the intellectuals moves further and further away from that of the people. Social anthropologists and writers in glossy magazines may talk of country life as *kırsal yaşantı*; villagers prefer *kır hayatı*.

-tay. This new suffix was extracted from *kurultay*, originally *kuriltay*, the form taken in Turkish by the Mongolian *kurilta* ‘assembly of the nobles’,¹⁶ borrowed in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Like the modern reformers who resuscitated it, their forebears must have felt it to be derived from Turkish *kurulmak* ‘to be set up’ because, in three of the first four citations of the word in *Tarama Sözlüğü* (1963–77), it is used in conjunction with that verb, one example being ‘Kuriltay kuralım, meşverete oturalım’ (Let us convene an assembly and sit down to take counsel together). *Tarama Sözlüğü* misspells it *kurultay*, although the correct vocalization is shown in the *Kamus*.¹⁷ The last citation in *Tarama Sözlüğü*, from a Turkish translation of an eleventh-century Persian–Persian dictionary, deserves quoting in full, not least because it shows that *kuriltay* was not in use in Turkey in 1789, when the translation was completed:

Gavga [Fa.]: Çığıltı ve ses ve şamata ve arbede ve karkaşa mânasındır ve encümen ve meclis ve cemaat mânasındır, Çağatayca kuriltay derler.

Gavga [P]: Confused animal noises, sounds, hubbub, tumult, dispute; also meeting, assembly, gathering; in Chaghatay they say *kuriltay*.

One supposes that the last three words of the Turkish apply only to the second set of meanings.

Once *kurultay* was established, its last syllable was added to the originally Middle Persian *kamu* ‘all’, the *Öztürkçe* for ‘public’, making *Kamutay*, intended to replace *Büyük Millet Meclisi* ‘Grand National Assembly’. The new suffix was also added to the noun *yargı* ‘decision’ and to two verb-stems, *danış-* ‘to consult’ and *sayış-* ‘to settle accounts’, making *Yargıtay* ‘Supreme Court of Appeal’, *Danıştay*

¹⁶ From *huri-* ‘to gather’ and the suffix *-ita*. See Poppe (1954: §163) and Doerfer (1963–75): i, §305). The latter discusses the suggested origins of the final *y*, one being that the Turks equated the last syllable of *kurilta* with *toy* ‘festal occasion, banquet’.

¹⁷ I have corrected the spelling in quoting from *Tarama Sözlüğü*.

'Council of State', and *Sayıştay* 'Exchequer and Audit'.¹⁸ These three survived (though by 1983 *Danıştay* had become *Danışma Meclisi*), but *Kamutay* did not; it never stood much of a chance, because everyone knew *Meclis*, whereas few had ever heard of the other three institutions or cared what those who did know about them might choose to call them. One oddity should be recorded: *kamutay*, with a small *k*, appears in Article 24 of the 1945 Constitution, the *Anayasa*, where the 1924 Constitution had 'heyet-i umumiye' (plenary body):

1924: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi heyet-i umumiyesi her teşrin-i sani iptidasında bir sene için kendisine bir reis ve üç reis vekili intihab eder.

1945: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi kamutayı her kasım ayı başında kendine bir yıl için bir Başkan, üç Başkanvekili seçer.

The Grand National Assembly of Turkey in plenary session shall, at the beginning of every November, elect for itself a chairman and three deputy chairmen.

Ataç made an *Öztürkçe* word for 'academy' by adding *-tay* to the neologism for 'science': *bilimtay*. This won no currency, doubtless because there is no internationally recognized Turkish Academy: when scholars wistfully talk about one, as they periodically do, the word they use is *Akademi*.

¹⁸ The former names were respectively *Temyiz Mahkemesi*, *Şura-yı Devlet* or *Devlet Şurası*, and *Divan-ı Muhasebat* or *Muhasebat Divanı*.