

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTENTS OF DİWÂN LUGHÂT AL-TURK

### DİVANÜ LÛGAT-İT-TÛRK'TE FELSEFÎ İÇERİKLER

#### VEFA TAŞDELEN

Prof. Dr., Kırgızistan Türkiye Manas Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Felsefe Bölümü, Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü.

Prof. Ph.D., Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University Faculty of Humanities Department of Philosophy, Yıldız Technical University Faculty of Education Department of Curriculum Development and Education.

vefa@yildiz.edu.tr

Orcid: 0000-0003-3937-3413

MAKALE BİLGİSİ	ARTICLE INFORMATION
Makale Türü	Article Type
Araştırma Makalesi	Research Article
Geliş Tarihi	Date Received
10 Ocak 2020	10 January 2020
Kabul Tarihi	Date Accepted
17 Nisan 2020	17 April 2020
Yayın Tarihi	Published
30 Haziran 2020	30 June 2020
Yayın Sezonu	Pub Date Season
Haziran	June
Doi	
<a href="https://doi.org/10.14395/hititilahiyat.673391">https://doi.org/10.14395/hititilahiyat.673391</a>	

#### ATIF/CITE AS:

Vefa Taşdelen, "The Philosophical Contents of Diwân Lughât al-Turk" [Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk'te Felsefî İçerikler], *Hitit Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi- Journal of Divinity Faculty of Hitit University* 19/1 (Haziran – June 2020): 151-172.

#### İNTİHAL/PLAGIARISM:

Bu makale, en az iki hakem tarafından incelendi ve intihal içermediği teyit edildi.

This article has been reviewed by at least two referees and scanned via plagiarism software. No plagiarism detected.  
Copyright © Published by Hitit Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi – Divinity Faculty of Hitit University, Çorum, Turkey.  
All rights reserved.



Makale dosyası



Makale ses dosyası

## The Philosophical Contents of *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*<sup>1</sup>

*“Language is the ornament of reason,  
a word is the ornament of language...”<sup>2</sup>*

### Abstract

Philosophy is a work of mind which is produced in language. The power of expression regarding being, mankind, society, morality, and value manifests the philosophical potential of a language as well. The potential of the language is the potential of philosophy and the potential of philosophy is the potential of the language.

*Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* is one of the oldest and the most important texts of Turkish culture. This work that is written to teach Turkish to foreigners, is not a work of dictionary in a simplistic sense, it has a quality of an “anthology” which presents the samples from the structure of the language of its own period such as poetry, proverb, and story according to the requirement of the language teaching that is embodying and exemplary. It is one of the works that has a quality of exhibiting the philosophical potential of Turkish, the possibility to conceive and articulate the being in scope of the riddle of human being, God and universe; for the first time as in the most advanced level. This article aims to deal with the philosophical content in the text. In this article words, idioms, proverbs, poems, stories, and sample sentences will be examined in terms of their philosophical contents and connotations. This accumulation, will take place in order to reflect the holistic perspective of philosophy within the frame of: (1) conception of being, (2) conception of knowledge, (3) conception of human, (4) ethical and aesthetic values.

**Keywords:** Philosophy, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī, Being, Knowledge, Ethics, Aesthetics.

### Summary

Great texts are texts which are alive; they need to be re-read, re-comprehended and reproduced. *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* is such a living text; it embodies the accumulated education, science, thought, and culture of life in its own period. Language is simultaneously experience, worldview,

<sup>1</sup> A comprehensive summary of this article was presented in Turkish at Symposium on Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī (*Mahmūd al-Kāšzarī*) in *The Turkish and Islamic World*, hold in on April 21-23, 2016 in Bishkek and Issyk-Kyl.

<sup>2</sup> Yusuf Has Hacib, *Kutadgu Bilig* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 1959), 2: 31.

conception of the universe, culture of living, and the apprehension of civilization; language is a common reason with the words, conceptions and traditional verbal components (epics, proverbs, ballads, tales, myths, elegies, jokes) it embodies. *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* is precisely such a book of common reason. It is the common accumulation and common treasure of Turkish civilization; its intention is to present a common language of culture and communication without respect to the differentiations of accent and dialect that arise from distance over space (geography) and time. Likewise, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* opens up the conception of Turkish into Arabic, in terms of its worldview, apprehension of life, and cultural riches; it furthermore opens up Arabic, the language of education, science, philosophy and literature, into Turkish. It does so by the means of reproducing Turkish in Arabic; it, so to speak, attunes the two languages to one another via their mutual encounter.

Philosophy is a language study and emerging in the language. The power of expressing existence, people, society, morality and value constitutes the philosophical potential of a language. Languages in which great philosophies are produced are languages that allow for a detailed and inclusive consideration of existence. The “alternating” and “reciprocal” relationship between philosophy and language is reflected not only from language to thought but also from thought to language; the meaning given to the being in its broadest sense, the ability and skill in expressing the being is a contribution to the development and enrichment of the language. The potential of language determines philosophical effort; the potential of language is the potential of philosophy; the potential of philosophy is the potential of language. *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* is one of the works in which the philosophical potential of Turkish is exhibited for the first time in the context of the concept of human beings, God and the universe.

As a language has its own capacity, so too do human beings have a capacity of their own. As a language possesses its own wisdom, so too does each individual human being have a wisdom one of his or her own. At some point, language transcends being a mere “instrument” and transforms into a state of mind or consciousness that reflects in its own body the accumulation of millennia. Therein, people feel as if they were swept along in a vigorous river that comes flowing through the depths of the history, becoming ever greater and stronger as it flows. Philosophy, as the activity of deep thinking, emerges at the point where the capacity of humankind converges with the capacity of language, where the accumulation of language intersects with the accumulation of human beings. When the capacity of language is met

by the faculties and strivings of mankind, it moves beyond mere potential and becomes an active force. Every language possesses its own mental structure and worldview. A language, which reflects a worldview, culture and the philosophy of a nation, also possesses a philosophical quality with a unique conception of being, knowledge, and values it encapsulates. This is certainly true of *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*. While the *Lughāt* is not a dictionary in a simplistic sense, it occupies the position of a work of art which reflects with the vocabulary it transmits; in this case, the apprehension of thought, belief and morality of the Turkish mind, as the latter exists in the frames of being, knowledge and value, and in its purest and most concise form. This rich context enables us to read it not only as a dictionary but also as a book of knowledge, culture and wisdom.

Every text ought to be read and comprehended from a philosophical perspective. Such a reading enriches the text and enables it to endure. Looking at a text from a philosophical point of view does not mean to claim that the text is philosophical. Rather, such a “philosophical” reading can be defined as: (1) a reading which conceptualizes; (2) a reading which problematizes; (3) a reading which deals with an issue not in the framework of singular examples but in a holistic perspective; (4) a critical reading; (5) a reading which regards language and thought coherently; (6) a reading which intends to deal with the subject matter comprehensively and strives for integrity and consistency within that frame; (7) an interdisciplinary reading; (8) a reading which eventually seeks to ground the subject matter pursuant to ontological, epistemological, ethical and aesthetic values, to make it comprehensible; and (9) a reading which considers the historical and traditional context in its own right.

In the current article, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* will be read with the express purpose of laying forth the philosophical contents encapsulated therein; its subject will be treated within the framework of (1) being (*ontology*), (2) knowledge (*epistemology*), and (3) ethical and aesthetic values (*axiology*). This effort will also mean exploring the philosophical potential of this first source, in which the Turkish language accumulates in its purest form.

## Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk'te Felsefî İçerikler

### Öz

Felsefe dille yapılan ve dilde ortaya çıkan bir çalışmadır. Varlığı, insanı, toplumu, ahlâk ve değeri ifade edebilme gücü, bir dilin felsefe potansiyelini

de ortaya koyar. Büyük felsefelerin üretildiği diller, varlığı ayrıntılı ve kapsayıcı bir şekilde düşünmeye izin veren dillerdir. Felsefe ve dil arasındaki “dönüşümlü” ve “karşılıklı” ilişki, sadece dilden düşünceye değil, düşünce-den dile doğru da yansır; en geniş anlamıyla varlığa verilen anlam, varlığı ifade etmedeki yetenek ve beceri, dilin gelişmesi ve zenginleşmesi yönünde bir katkıdır. Dilin potansiyeli felsefenin, felsefenin potansiyeli de dilin imkânıdır. Dil ile zihin arasındaki yakın ilişki dikkate alındığında, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*'ün doğrudan kendi dönemindeki ortak akıl ve zihniyete tanıklık ettiği düşünülebilir.

*Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, Türk kültürünün en eski ve en önemli metinlerinden biridir. Yabancılara Türkçe öğretmek amacıyla yazılan bu eser, basit anlamıyla bir sözlük çalışması değil, dil öğretiminin somutlaştırıcı ve örnekleyici yapısı gereği şiir, atasözü, hikâye, folklor gibi dönemin dil ve kültür birikiminden örnekler sunan bir “seçki” niteliğindedir. Bu anlamda insan, Tanrı ve evren tasavvuru çerçevesinde Türkçenin felsefe potansiyelinin ilk defa en ileri derecede sergilendiği eserlerden biridir. Bu makale, söz konusu metindeki felsefî içeriği ele almayı ve bu içerikten örnekler sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada kelimeler, deyimler, atasözleri, şiirler, hikâyeler, örnek cümleler, felsefî içerik ve çağrışımları açısından ele alınacaktır. Bu birikim, felsefenin bütüncül bakışını yansıtacak şekilde: (1) varlık anlayışı, (2) bilgi anlayışı, (3) insan anlayışı, (4) etik ve estetik değerler çerçevesinde olacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Felsefe, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, Kaşgarlı Mahmud, varlık, bilgi, etik, estetik.

## INTRODUCTION

Great texts are texts which are alive; they need to be re-read, re-comprehended and reproduced. *Divān Lughāt al-Turk* is such a living text; it embodies the accumulated education, science, thought and culture of life in its own period. Language is simultaneously experience, worldview, conception of the universe, culture of living, and the apprehension of civilization; language is a common reason with the words, conceptions and traditional verbal components (epics, proverbs, ballads, tales, myths, elegies, jokes) it embodies. *Divān Lughāt al-Turk* is precisely such a book of common reason. It is the common accumulation and common treasure of Turkish civilization; its intention is to present a common language of culture and communication without respect to the differentiations of accent and dialect that arise from distance over space (geography) and time. In this respect, it is not a work aiming solely to teach Turkish to Arabs, but rather one which also endeavors to

form an identic language of speech and communication among Turkic tribes. On the other hand, every activity of translation, every instance of engaging the dictionary, enriches both languages (the source language and the target language) at once; it adds the richness of one into the other. Likewise, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* opens up the conception of Turkish into Arabic, in terms of its worldview, apprehension of life, and cultural riches; it furthermore opens up Arabic, the language of education, science, philosophy and literature, into Turkish. It does so by the means of reproducing Turkish in Arabic; it, so to speak, attunes the two languages to one another via their mutual encounter.

Every text ought to be read and comprehended from a philosophical perspective. Such a reading enriches the text and enables it to endure. Looking at a text from a philosophical point of view does not mean to claim that the text is philosophical. Rather, such a “philosophical” reading can be defined as: (1) a reading which conceptualizes; (2) a reading which problematizes; (3) a reading which deals with an issue not in the framework of singular examples but in a holistic perspective; (4) a critical reading; (5) a reading which regards language and thought coherently; (6) a reading which intends to deal with the subject matter comprehensively and strives for integrity and consistency within that frame; (7) an interdisciplinary reading; (8) a reading which eventually seeks to ground the subject matter pursuant to ontological, epistemological, ethical and aesthetic values, to make it comprehensible; and (9) a reading which considers the historical and traditional context in its own right. In the current article, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* will be read with the express purpose of laying forth the philosophical contents encapsulated therein; its subject will be treated within the framework of (1) being (*ontology*), (2) knowledge (*epistemology*), and (3) ethical and aesthetic values (*axiology*).

## 1. DĪWĀN LUGHĀT AL-TURK: AN AUTHENTIC WORK OF ART

We can summarize the circumstances of knowledge, culture, and philosophy of the period in which *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* was written as follows: At the beginning of the ninth century, with the support of Abbasid caliph Harun Rashid and his son al-Ma'mun, significant translation movements took place in Baghdad at the “House of Wisdom” (Ar. *Bayt al-Hikmah*); via these efforts, the accumulation of Greek, Indian, Persian and other cultural riches were transferred into Arabic. Within a short period, the foundation that produced these translations turned into an institution boasting a huge library and engaged in advanced works with scientific and philosophical attributes.

At the end of this period of cultural mobility, an immense accumulation emanated from the fields of mathematics, astronomy, geography, philosophy, and medicine. Arabic, a prominent language of poetic literature, became a tongue associated with philosophical and scientific mastery.<sup>3</sup> A whole culture was gradually produced through this language as remarkable achievements were made in the fields of philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, chemistry, physics, and geography. In this manner, many sages and philosophers, including al-Khwarizmi, Jabir Ibn Hayyan, al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ikhwanal-Safa, Avicenna (Ibn Sina), Ibn Miskawayh, and al-Biruni came to prominence. In the years 1064–1092, Nizamiye Madrasas, which corresponded to today’s universities, were founded by the vizier of the Great Seljuk Empire, Nizam al-Mulk, in cities such as Baghdad, Mosul, Basra, Nishapur, Balkh, Herat, and Isfahan. It is apparent that in the years of 1072–1074 when Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī lived and wrote the *Lûghat*, “encyclopedic lexicon”<sup>4</sup> considerable engagement of knowledge, wisdom, culture, art, and philosophy took place. The aforementioned cities of culture are in the position of being the places where multiculturalism is manifested in terms of language, religion, and traditional structure. As a result of the desire of different human groups to learn each other’s languages, it seems that many languages were spoken together in these cities. This was in fact so much the case that, as Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī says, people who spoke only one language could be found only in villages and hamlets, whereas people who mingled with the city-dwellers, who were at least bilingual, spoke a broken language.<sup>5</sup> In this period, Turks began to exercise military dominance in such regions as Iran, Iraq, and Syria, becoming a prominent constituent of the territory, which in turn aroused the regional public’s interest in Turkish. This political, military, social and cultural conjuncture is among the reasons why the *Lughāt* was written.

*Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* possesses rich content that demands multifaceted examination. It includes lexicologies that reflect the Turkish language of the period: words, idioms, exemplary expressions, proverbs, poems, stories, historical and geographical information, aphorisms concerning daily life, and folkloric information. It also quotes from the Qur’an and hadith. Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī claims that this rich content was intended to ornament and beautify his lexical work. He says, “I have set it out according to the order of the

<sup>3</sup> Mahmut Kaya, “Beytülhikme”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1992), 6: 88-90.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Dankoff, “Editor’s Introduction, Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī”, *Compendium of the Turkic Dialects* (Harvard: Harvard University Printing Office, 1982), 1: 4.

<sup>5</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 1982), 1: 21.

alphabet; and adorned it with words of wisdom and elegant speech, proverbs, verses of poetry, and sentences of prose. I have spent long years of labor over it, causing each word to lie down in its proper place, and lifting each one out of obscurity”<sup>6</sup> This rich content made it “the book of firsts” in many respects: it is the first Turkish dictionary, the first book which gives information about the grammatical structure of Turkish, the work containing the first map along with geographical, historical and cultural information regarding the regions where the Turkic tribes lived, and the first folklore compilation that includes recipes<sup>7</sup> and even children’s games<sup>8</sup>. It is also attributed to be the first anthology in which one can find the various examples of poetry of the period. It seems that this book wishes to emphasize the truth that in order to learn a language with all its rich content and vocabulary, one is not merely required know word and sentence structures; that in fact language cannot be learned without also understanding the worldview and manner of life, thought, and perception style. For this reason, it includes expressions that are clearly intended to teach culture: The author explains: “For each of their dialectal groups I have established the root principles from which the acts of speech branch out; since pruning down what is spread out allows wisdom to grow. I have strewn therein examples of their verses, which they utter in their pronouncements and declarations; as well as proverbs which they coin according to the ways of wisdom, both in adversity and in felicity, and which are handed down from speaker to transmitter. And I have gathered therein much-repeated matters and famous expressions. Thus has the book attained the utmost of excellence and the extreme of refinement.”<sup>9</sup>

Another authentic aspect of *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, to use if expression from modern literature, is the fact that it employed a “research method.” To compose *Lûgat*, Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī created a compilation, an area study, a type of field research, so to speak, by wandering among different Turkic tribes of the period. To quote: “I have traveled throughout their cities and steppes, and have learned their dialects and their rhymes; those of the Turks, the Turkmān-Oğuz, the Čigil, the Yağma, and the Qırqiz. Also, I am one of the most elegant among them in language, and most eloquent in speech; one of the best-educated, the most deep-rooted in lineage, and the most

---

<sup>6</sup> Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī, *Compendium of The Turkic Dialects* (Harvard: Harvard University Printing Office, 1984), 2: 71.

<sup>7</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 136

<sup>8</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 60.

<sup>9</sup> Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī, *Compendium of The Turkic Dialects*, 2: 72.



penetrating in throwing the lance. Thus, have I acquired perfectly the dialect of each one of their groups; and I have set it down in an encompassing book, in a well-ordered system".<sup>10</sup> In such statements, Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī provides information about his research methods and also expresses the idea that *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* reflects the accumulated riches of Turkish, as spoken among the Turkic tribes of the period, in their highest level of expression.

## 2. THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTENTS OF DĪWĀN LUGHĀT AL-TURK

Language bears witness to the mentality, worldview, and life perception of a nation. The mind of a nation reveals itself most expressively through its linguistic elements as manifested in written and verbal accumulation. The language of a nation is its character, its soul; understanding a nation requires understanding its language, its human, cosmos and God conceptions. In an article entitled "Possibilities of Turkish as a Language of Philosophy," we stated that Turkish already revealed its philosophical potential in an early period, in *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*; the aesthetic and intellectual depth found in the poems of Yunus Emre emerged as the harvest of this potential. In another essay, "The Issue of Verb of the Poetry in Turkish", we strived to unpack the Turkish approach to art and literature more broadly, as well as the Turkish approach to poetry more specifically. Similarly, in this article, we will attempt to evaluate the content of *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* through a philosophical lens.

### 2.1. The Conception of Being

The conception of being is among the most fundamental constituents of philosophical thought. The specific conception of being that emerges in *Lughāt* bears the influence of Islamic belief in the context of the relationship among God, human being and the universe. A central aspect of this conception is the idea of "creation," which plays a crucial role in the understanding of being. It establishes a relationship of existence between "Being" and the true and an absolute being is God; "It" is the one which is the very essence of being. All things that come into existence after "It" and owe their being to "It." Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī says: "God created Adam and everything besides Adam (*Tenğri yalñguk yarattı*)."<sup>11</sup> Again: "Man is created" (*Yalñguk törüdi*).<sup>12</sup> In another part of the *Lûghat* we encounter the following expression: "God made it rain" (*Tenğri*

<sup>10</sup> Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī, *Compendium of The Turkic Dialects*, 2: 70.

<sup>11</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 315.

<sup>12</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 362.

*yağmur yağitti*).<sup>13</sup> In yet another place the author states, “God made it thunder” (*Tenğri yaşın yaşnattı*).<sup>14</sup> According to the Mahmūd al-Kāşrārī’s statements, the conception of a “Creator” God lays the groundwork for comprehending being and existence. God would not merely create and leave; being bears witness to a new occurrence by an act of will, unfolding anew in every instance. In the *Lughāt*, no notion of a passive God or of an inert being is implied, as some philosophers have suggested. God’s will reveal itself as a new occurrence, a new creation, a new act of will in every instant; in this sense, being can be defined as a situation in which creation is on the scene in every moment. Accordingly, creation is not something that simply occurs and comes to an end; rather, it is an existing being which renews its bloom in perpetuity, discloses itself in every wink, and brings being into existence, alongside itself, in every instant. As such; being is elucidated both as a creating force and as a creation, manifesting itself as a metaphysical ground.

## 2.2. The Conception of Knowledge

One of the most prevalent words in the *Lughāt* is *bilig*. *Bilig* means knowledge, wisdom, intellect, and the ability to conceive;<sup>15</sup> in this quality, it resembles the notion of *logos*. Mahmūd al-Kāşrārī mentions the word “sage” (*bilge*), which means “wise” or “sovereign” and relates to the verb “to know” (*bilmek*).<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, a sage is a person who possesses knowledge and wisdom; just as *philo-sophos* is *philo-logos*.

To know is to attain sainthood. As we approach the point of attaining sagacity, our boundedness to the world is loosened proportionally. The inverse proportion between wisdom and worldliness was first articulated by Plato, who asserted that the age of wisdom is over fifty.<sup>17</sup> At this age, the eyes in the head weaken and internal eyes begin to open and to look and recognize more deeply.<sup>18</sup> As human beings grow older, their passion for the world diminishes; they gain an awareness of ephemerality and begin to pursue permanent values and seek to grasp the essence of truth, justice, temperance, and courage. In the *Lughāt*, too, certain verbal formulations point to wisdom which grows as physical powers and passions fade away. One of these says:

<sup>13</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2 316.

<sup>14</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 356.

<sup>15</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 12 – 2: 143.

<sup>16</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 11.

<sup>17</sup> Plato, *The Republic of Plato* (New York: A.L. Burt Company Publishers, 1924), 184, 295.

<sup>18</sup> Platon, *Şölen* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1995), 78.

“Now that my wish has come closer, the springs of knowledge in my chest have burst forth; as time takes me there [to the dead], my life ebbs away”.<sup>19</sup>

Plato carves out a prominent place for knowledge and wisdom within his conception of virtue. Without knowledge, the state of virtue cannot be attained. Knowledge must come first. This does not apply only to matters of individual virtue, but also to matters of state governance. In order to rule the state, one must acquire wisdom and also become a philosopher since virtue, justice, goodness, and temperance are best understood by the philosophers. The primary requisite for being able to govern a state is thus the attainment of knowledge and wisdom.<sup>20</sup> So too in the *Lughāt*, Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī also makes use of the expression “kut belgüsi bilig,” meaning “knowledge is the manifestation of bliss and happiness”<sup>21</sup> alluding to the thought revealed in *Knowledge of Bliss (Kutadgu Bilig)* by his contemporary Yusuf Khass Hajib, with whom Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī shared a common homeland. In this way, he points out that knowledge is vital for proper order to be established in the state and society, and that without knowledge virtue and justice cannot be achieved.

### 2.3. The Conception of Morality

Perhaps the most comprehensive and profound perspective in *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* emerges in regard to the question of morality, which is among the most ancient subject matter of human thought. The large body of thought on morality has produced, approaches that consider a “morality of happiness,” “moral duty,” and “hedonist morality,” among others. Such approaches are gathered under the disciplinary umbrella of “ethics.” *Ethics* is derived from the Greek word *ethos*, meaning temperament, nature, or character. In Turkish, *ahlâk* (ethic) is derived from the Arabic word *hulk*, which similarly means creation, temperament, nature, or character.

In the *Lughāt*, regarding the formation of the idea of ethics; “us” has an important place which means “reason/mind” in Turkish. Reason (*akıl*) implies the ability to distinguish benevolence from malice, good from evil.<sup>22</sup> However, morality is not merely seen as a human faculty and as a requirement of reason; individuals and societies, culture and beliefs also play a role in its formation. Although, when viewed from this perspective, *ethos* in Ancient Greek culture and *ahlâk*, which means morality in Turkish, are defined using the same words,

<sup>19</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 148.

<sup>20</sup> Yusuf Has Hacib, *Kutadgu Bilig*, 2: 131.

<sup>21</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 428.

<sup>22</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 36, 286.

we see that the world of meaning each word points to is different. In the Age of Enlightenment, philosophers attempted to comprehend and ground morality within the frame of reason, as evidenced in Immanuel Kant's work *Critique of Practical Reason (Kritik der praktischen Vernunft)*. The latter is characteristic of secular world perception, which constitutes one of the basic principles of the Age of Enlightenment. The approach to morality in the *Lughāt* is not based solely on reason; "Tengri nomi" (*God's commandment*) plays a significant role in it as well.<sup>23</sup> In the logic of the *Lughāt*, it can be observed that reason and *Tengri nomi* do not contradict each other, but on the contrary support and justify one another; it can be conceived that from the togetherness of these two, the order of existence that is called morality and virtue is derived.

The aim is to be a good person, and this is not easy to achieve. In fact, this task represents the most important issue faced by humankind throughout its history. The remediation of one's character, temperament, and nature, and the ability to discipline one's own ego and to purify oneself of crude and selfish emotions require strenuous efforts but if pursued lead to self-dignity and enrichment of all humanity. In the *Lughāt* one runs across many expressions that relate to temperament, character, and human nature.<sup>24</sup> For instance, we encounter the word *yorik*, which means temperament.<sup>25</sup> Moral values such as temperament, nature, character not only force us to confront ourselves, they also bring us face to face with others and with the reality of the existence of other people. My morals, temperament, and character can only manifest themselves in light of others, together with others, in a state of relationship and communication. This reality corresponds to a value in which morality reveals itself too. The entire field of ethics suggests that one first seeks to purify oneself, to beautify his/her own temperament, and to enter into a relationship with others as a unique personality. In the *Lughāt*, the concept of "essence," which is frequently mentioned, implies a person's own self (in Arabic, incidentally, the "self" is given the name *nafs* which carries a religious connotation). Thus, when a person talks about himself or herself, he or she says "my essence" (Turk. *özüm*), meaning his/her own "self" (Turk. *kendim*). Morality is the primary striving towards the creation of one's own essence, its purification. In the *Lughāt*, something clean is referred to as *arığ* or "purified," as a "clean object".<sup>26</sup> Genuine purity is purity within, which pervades the self

---

<sup>23</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 137.

<sup>24</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 15.

<sup>25</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 376.

<sup>26</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 12, 63.

and one's emotions. In a like manner, the notions of "clarity" and "cloudiness," which in the physical world describe the different possible states of water, are used in the *Lughāt* to express the emotional states of a human being. The main thing communicated in these parts is that the emotions and heart should not be cloudy, but rather pure and refined.<sup>27</sup> Turkish *uvut*, meaning bashfulness,<sup>28</sup> and *özük*, meaning a woman who is pure of heart,<sup>29</sup> both denote temperance and moral conduct. To be offensive, rigid, and cruel, is not to be out of sync with the reality of existence and with the values of sublime virtue that can exist in a human being. Tenderness of heart as an inner discipline is the most harmonious state of human existence, which by nature is mortal, bounded, and sooner or later destined to suffer. In the *Lughāt*, the word *tüzün* refers to a "tendered person."<sup>30</sup> Tenderness as an attribute of character is further exemplified in the following verse: "People do not look at a person who is loveless, scowling, and strict. My sonny, acquire a sweet temper, so you may gain a fair reputation, which will remain to the future."<sup>31</sup> As we see, the ethical content in the *Lughāt* centers around good intentions, goodwill, and overall moral attitude;<sup>32</sup> hard work is glorified for its goodness and merit.<sup>33</sup> All the aforementioned might be summed up in the following piece of advice: "Do not look for the beauty or ugliness of countenance, but rather search out virtue in people" (*Yüzge körme erdem tile*).<sup>34</sup>

The *Lughāt* deals with those values that underpin morality as well as with the kinds of living and conduct that corrupt and debase it. One such negative influence is greed. The verb *çukdı* means "descend" or "land," and is exemplified by the verse: "Because of possessions men have corrupted altogether; when they see goods, they descend upon a corpse just like an eagle" (*Eren kamuş artadı nenğler udhu/ Tawar körüp uslayu eske çukar*).<sup>35</sup> Another verse also emphasizes that a person ought not to base his own value and existence on worldly fortune, earnings, and possessions: "Do not rejoice at finding a horse, a stallion, a foal, a mare, gold, silver, or silk. Instead, turn them into

<sup>27</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 238.

<sup>28</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 83.

<sup>29</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 71.

<sup>30</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 10.

<sup>31</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 250.

<sup>32</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 91.

<sup>33</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 64.

<sup>34</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 143.

<sup>35</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 17.

benevolent deeds for your own sake<sup>36</sup>. In the *Lughāt*, the expression *yayıg kişi* is used to indicate an unreliable, renegade and untrustworthy person, who is inclined to this and that, as opposed to wearing one's heart on one's sleeve.<sup>37</sup>

In ancient tradition, morality is viewed as a state of order and temperance which enables human beings to attain bliss, either individually or collectively. Different aspects of this order and temperance are variously reflected concerning the individual, society, or the state. For this reason, every moral structure can be related to an individual person, or to the society and state system in which they live. The ordering of the state and society involves the concepts of law, justice, and action. Social order does not just materialize within the framework of customs and traditions; it also takes the form of laws. When we look at the philosophies of ethics that have emerged in the history of thought concerning the state and society, we find that individual happiness is not separate from the social order and the social order is not isolated from individual virtues. The social order and individual temperance, as well as individual happiness and the social order, are deeply intertwined. Such has been the case from antiquity up until the present day. This conception arose from such works as Plato's *Republic (Politeia)*, Aristotle's *Politics (Politikos)*, Farabi's *The City of Virtue (al-Madinah al-Fadilah)*, and Yusuf Khass Hajib's *Knowledge of Happiness (Kutatgu Bilig)*. We can observe in the *Lughāt* similar concepts and examples. When we examine the concept of *kut*, we understand it to imply bliss, energy, and the power of life. In the *Lughāt*, it is also employed in the expression *kutaldı er* (man becomes happy).<sup>38</sup> However, *kut* also means "state".<sup>39</sup> Yusuf Khass Hajib uses *kut* in his *Knowledge of Happiness* to infer both meanings. Whether it means "state" or "bliss," it is plain to see that both ideas support each other and are both considered in relation to "knowledge." Accordingly, knowledge is the cornerstone of happiness and justice. As integral to "knowledge" we can include the three other ancient virtues—justice, courage, and temperance—as manifested in Plato's *Republic* and Farabi's *City of Virtue*. Within the context of the state and society, justice and order are achieved solely through laws. The concept of law also occupied the minds of philosophers, chiefly Plato, Aristotle, and Farabi. Rousseau, in his work *The Social Contract (Du Contrat Social)*, established the concept of a modern constitution. Locke and Montesquieu introduced the principle of the

---

<sup>36</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 17.

<sup>37</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 23.

<sup>38</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 121.

<sup>39</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 320.

“separation of powers.” In the *Lughât*, the word *nom* refers to a law or an act. *Nom*, closely related to the word *nomos*, which passed from Greek into Arabic as *namus* (honour), means “law.” However, this is not a law that arises only within the human mind; it also signifies God’s commandments and will. In this respect, when in the *Lughât* we read *Tengri nomi*, we understand this to mean: “Allah’s religion, and the order of life and law which is faithful to it.”<sup>40</sup>

The *Lughât* uses the expression *öz konukı* to mean “an entity moving inside the body or soul”.<sup>41</sup> This apprehension emphasizes the temporal character of human existence. This theme has become one of the most discussed issues in contemporary philosophy. Death does not merely set us apart from society, it sets us apart ontologically as well. In other words, each person occupies his or her own place and his or her own death. In his work *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*), Martin Heidegger sees death as the last stage of existence; as if the last apple were plucked from the tree of life. Yet Heidegger does not derive pessimism from this, but on the contrary, extracts from it a philosophy of optimism and vitality. Since the human being moves irreversibly towards death, every instant of life possesses a unique value. *Öz konuk*, an entity moving inside the body or soul, as employed in the *Lughât*, is made transparent in Yunus Emre’s statement, “My soul is an imprisoned bird in the cage of my body/ In the instant of hearing from Friend (God) one day my bird would fly off” (*Benüm cânım bir kuş durur gevdem anun kafesidür/ Dostdan haber geliceğiz bir gün uçar kuşum benüm*).<sup>42</sup> The same thought is eloquently expressed in the verse, “Herein the Almighty witnesses this wording, this soul is the guest in the body/ One day it goes out as a bird fly off the cage” (*İşbu söze Hak tanukdur bu cân gevdeye konukdur/ Bir gün ola çıka gide kafesden kuş uçmuş gibi*).<sup>43</sup> A proverb cited in the *Lughât* regarding the temporality of human life says: “Time passes, and human does not hear / Human does not remain eternal” (*Öd keçer kişi tuymas/ Yalñguk oğlu menğgü kalmas*).<sup>44</sup> In another place in the *Lughât*, we find the following expressions: “One does not live eternally; therefore, he who goes down to the grave does not return” (*Yalñguk menğgü tirilmes, sinka giren geri dönmez*).<sup>45</sup> Yet another verse goes: “Days of time, hasten to impoverish the strength of man; rush to void the world of humans; he who runs away from death must meet it” (*Ödhlek küni tawraturl/*

<sup>40</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 137.

<sup>41</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 46.

<sup>42</sup> Yunus Emre, *Dîvân-ı Yûnus Emre* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992), 169.

<sup>43</sup> Yunus Emre, *Dîvân-ı Yûnus Emre*, 317.

<sup>44</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 45.

<sup>45</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 65.

*Yalnğuk küçin kewretür/ Erdin ajun sewritür/ Kaçsa takı artılır*).<sup>46</sup> We can conclude that the *Lughāt* too derives a philosophy of life from its apprehension of the temporality of human existence. If one exists in this world as *öz konuk* (a soul moving inside the body), one ought to live accordingly, seeking to be purified of arrogance, greed, jealousy, evil sensations, and as Yunus Emre puts it to be purged of the “vermins of self (*nafs*)”. Purification activates positive emotions as humbleness, mercy, and compassion.

In his work *The Sickness Unto Death (Sygdommen til Døden)*, existential philosopher Søren Kierkegaard suggests that the real deadly sickness comes from losing belief in eternity, in essence from despair. In this respect, as long as one does not lose this sense of eternity, then no matter how physically ill one might be, one shall not become fatally sick in reality. When Jesus walked towards the tomb of Lazarus and shouted “Lazarus, come forth!”, he also blew this hope into the soul of humanity.<sup>47</sup> The immortality of the soul in Islamic belief is also reflected by the *Lughāt*’s worldview. Its notion of *menğgü* means “eternal,” “eternity,” “everlasting,” “immortality.” *Menğgü ajun*, is used in the *Lughāt* to signify the “land of immortality” or the “hereafter.” In one verse, the conception of eternity or immortality is depicted as follows: “The man who is born does not remain forever. [ . . . ] Humankind perishes, but his name dwells on.”<sup>48</sup>

In *Dīwān Lughāt al-Türk*, the statement *erdem başı tıl* expresses the idea that language is the chief of all virtues and that virtue itself is rooted in language.<sup>49</sup> Language (Turk. *tıl*) as mentioned in the *Lughāt* must be dealt with in a broad perspective. To come before virtue; the language must be viewed as the signification of reason, heart, knowledge, wisdom, commonsense, and conscience. In its broadness of meaning, “language” here corresponds to *logos*. The thought of the period in which the book was written strove to establish the relationship of a human with other humans, with himself, and ultimately with God through language. In this sense, language is not a curtain of the “heart,” but rather its mirror; it may even be the heart itself. Language as the chief virtue boasts such an authentic structure. In this context, language emerges as an ethical, social and philosophical component. Yusuf Khass Hajib also considers language to be the foundation of all good, but also of

<sup>46</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 336.

<sup>47</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 37.

<sup>48</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 384.

<sup>49</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 336.



all evil; and he once again points to the value of language as a virtue, saying; “It is the tongue that brings a man esteem, so he finds fortune, and it is the tongue that brings a man dishonor so that he loses his head”.<sup>50</sup> This thought recurs in the verses by Yunus: “There is a word that ends the war and a word causes a man to lose his head/ There is a word that produces honey and butter from poisonous food” (*Söz ola kese savaşı söz ola bitüre başı/ Söz ola ağulu aşı balıla yağ ide bir söz*).<sup>51</sup>

Accordingly, a “language of virtue” must exist prior to virtue itself; this language defines virtue and leads man onto the path of virtue. In this framework, morality ceases to be merely a coincidental behavior pattern and becomes a matter of knowledge, wisdom, will, and conscience. This reminds us of Socrates, who equates knowledge with virtue. An act that takes place without employing the language of virtue does not comply with the conscious and free structure of virtue. For virtuous behavior to become manifest, one must know, understand and will virtue into existence. To communicate one’s being through the ground of language and meaning is a basic expression of existence. The mental structure of Turkish centralizes the word, knowledge, intellect, and wisdom. According to this approach, knowledge is the chief virtue, comprising “language” in all its broad mental content. Maybe this is the reason the *Lughāt* mentions hadith’s principle that “Man is hidden beneath his tongue.”<sup>52</sup>

## 2.4. The Conceptions of Aesthetics and Art

Another philosophical concept emerges in relation to the subject of aesthetics. Aesthetics articulate the sensation of beauty inside man. Every object that impresses man, whether in nature or art, evokes a sense of beauty inside him, thus producing the concept of beauty. In traditional societies, people more frequently articulated the beauty that exists in nature, and daily life; correspondingly, beauty was more outshined in art and literature. On the other hand, human beauty was also embraced in the world of heart as one of the most impressive aspects of beauty; works of art articulated love and passion in a manner that revealed beauty in the attitude of one human towards another. We can dig to the heart of the relationship between love and

<sup>50</sup> Yusuf Khās Hājib, *Wisdom of Royal Glory (Kutadgu Bilig), A Turko-Islamic Mirror for Princes* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 44-45.

<sup>51</sup> Yunus Emre, *Dîvân-ı Yûnus Emre*, 81.

<sup>52</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 384.429.

beauty by looking back into the history of thought as articulated by Plato's dialog *Symposium*.

Multifarious words are uttered in the *Lughāt* carry the meaning "beauty." One of these is *körk*, which means "beautiful and elaborate";<sup>53</sup> *Körk* or *görk* is also used to imply "good." We witness here the identification of the good and the beautiful. A thing that is good is beautiful, and a thing that is beautiful is good—as such, beauty is freed from being a quality that is bounded by physical appearance, and it is furthermore transformed into internal beauty, the beauty of temperament and character. In the *Lughāt*, the beauty of the dress,<sup>54</sup> the beauty of man,<sup>55</sup> the beauty of countenance,<sup>56</sup> and the beauty of spring<sup>57</sup> are all wrapped up together in the concept of beauty. By suffixing *edhti* to *körk*, we get *körkedhti* which means "beautified," or "having become beautiful;" *körklüg* in turn denotes "beautiful" and "prominent".<sup>58</sup> The Turkish word *yaxşı* which we find in the *Lughāt* implies "beautiful," or "the most beautiful of everything," and is exemplified by the expressions "beautiful object" (*yaxşı nenğ*), "beautiful work and beautiful act" (*yaxşı iş*).<sup>59</sup> Accordingly, any absolute, perfect, nice, or elegant phenomena in the domains of nature, the human world, and work or human activity are characterized as "beautiful." Also, in *Dede Korkut Stories*, we see the word *körk* finding expression in the expression *görklü tanrı* ("beautiful God"). In its opening chapter, we read: "When I open my mouth and give praise, the God above us is beautiful" (*Ağız açup öger olsam üstümüzde Tanrı görklü*).<sup>60</sup> In such contexts, *körk/görk* is no longer, solely a quality in regards to the physical world, but also carries metaphysical implications. Perceived differences among artistic beauty and natural beauty, beauty in behavior, and beauty in art; began to form distinctively towards the end of the Age of Enlightenment. Baumgarten described aesthetics as the knowledge of sense (*cognitio sensitiva*). Kant subjected aesthetic perception to a thorough analysis and isolated it from craft, practical benefit, and moral good. In this respect, the identification of values that the concept of beauty had maintained from antiquity until the 1750s was dissolved, and each value attained individual qualities through the separation of ethics, aesthetics, and

<sup>53</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 384.353.

<sup>54</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 45.

<sup>55</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 319.

<sup>56</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 43.

<sup>57</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 2: 340.

<sup>58</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 1: 362.

<sup>59</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 32.

<sup>60</sup> Muharrem Ergin, *Dede Korkut Kitabı* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 2014), 75.

craft. As mentioned above, the perspective offered by the *Lughāt* did not allow for distinctions to be made among the different values of beauty; no such need was perceived in the context of the prevailing culture and mentality of the time. Therefore, the dominant apprehension present there implies: good is beautiful, beautiful is good, good and beautiful are fair as well. In such a view, art is not a special field of occupation, but rather extends to all areas of life. It reveals itself in a work of craftsmanship, a moral act, an artistic *frieze*, the face of a person, or nature. In spite of their different possible manifestations, good is beautiful and beautiful is good. As a matter of fact, what is beautiful can even be an object used in daily life: a carpet, a tray, a tile, a jug, a lace, a door, or a plafond. However, we must also explore the idea that true beauty in the human world is inner beauty and inner purity, and that what is essential is not that which we can see superficially but that which lies within. Thus, the verse exhorting “Do not look for the face of beauty, but search instead for virtue” (*Yüzge körme erdem tile*) is grounded in both ethics and aesthetics.<sup>61</sup> A beautiful temperament, beautiful morality, and inner purity are considered to represent true beauty; the beauty of appearance remains but an empty word and state—even harmful in some cases—if it is not filled in with internal beauty.

## CONCLUSION

At the end of his book, Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī says: “We have carried out the conditions laid down in the “Introduction” of the book: to gather herein the dialects of the Turks; to set forth their principles and to explain their rules, and to arrange their divisions into good order. The promise is fulfilled, and the goal is reached. I have discarded all extras, frills, superfluities and fillers. The book has come to its conclusion, and is immortalized as an everlasting treasure.”<sup>62</sup> As we can understand from his manner of expression, Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī considers the *Lughāt* to be more than a dictionary, more than a mere textbook; he considers it to be a book of wisdom, so to speak, and the virtue of a nation which conveys its experience and knowledge across hundreds and even thousands of years.

As a language has its own capacity, so too do human beings have a capacity of their own. As a language possesses its own wisdom, so too does each individual human being have a wisdom one of his or her own. At some point, language transcends being a mere “instrument” and transforms into a

<sup>61</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*, 3: 143.

<sup>62</sup> Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī, *Compendium of The Turkic Dialects*, 2: 381.

state of mind or consciousness that reflects in its own body the accumulation of millennia. Therein, people feel as if they were swept along in a vigorous river that comes flowing through the depths of the history, becoming ever greater and stronger as it flows. Philosophy, as the activity of deep thinking, emerges at the point where the capacity of humankind converges with the capacity of language, where the accumulation of language intersects with the accumulation of human beings. When the capacity of language is met by the faculties and strivings of mankind, it moves beyond mere potential and becomes an active force. Every language possesses its own mental structure and worldview. A language, which reflects a worldview, culture and the philosophy of a nation, also possesses a philosophical quality with a unique conception of being, knowledge, and values it encapsulates. This is certainly true of *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*. While the *Lughāt* is not a dictionary in a simplistic sense, it occupies the position of a work of art which reflects with the vocabulary it transmits; in this case, the apprehension of thought, belief and morality of the Turkish mind, as the latter exists in the frames of being, knowledge and value, and in its purest and most concise form. This rich context enables us to read it not only as a dictionary but also as a book of knowledge, culture, and wisdom.

Nevertheless, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* is not a work which thoroughly reflects the Turkish of the period. Since its primary aim was to teach Turkish to Arabs, any vocabulary that had been transferred from Arabic to Turkish was not reflected in the dictionary, and so “approximately 8,000 Turkish words found their place” in the work.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, when we look at the Turkish of the period as a whole, in terms of vocabulary that is both included and excluded, we see that the possibilities of expression are far broader than what was reflected in the *Lughāt*. The book’s language also does not include the rich experience of Arabic, which was enriched by knowledge of “House of Wisdom” (Ar. *Bayt al-Hikmah*) that existed in the same cultural basin as itself, and which increasingly became a language of science, culture, and philosophy. When races and cultures encounter one other, their mutual influence is irreversible. Turkish experienced its main transformation through the Turks’ acceptance of Islamic religion, and it integrated its own experience with the Islamic conceptions of being, time, space, mankind, and value. For this reason, the philosophical depth of the Turkish of the period should not be evaluated solely

---

<sup>63</sup> Mustafa Kaçalın, “Dīwānū Lügāt’it Türk”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1994), 9: 446-449.

through the lexicology included in the *Lughāt*, but through what is excluded from it as well. Only then can the accumulation and potential of the Turkish of the period be revealed as a whole and comprehended in its fullness.

As a result of this discussion, we can say that considering all of its characteristics, *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* belongs to the present day rather than to olden times. It speaks much more to the people and societies of today than to those living at the time it was written. In this respect, it is a living text, a text that has a function, a text that conceives of humans and the world in a specific way, a text that has a mission. It exhorts the Turkish people to unite around a common destiny and around the ideal of a common language; it encourages them to reproduce their accumulation of experience in this language. In this context, the map drawn by Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī demands rethinking and reinterpretation today. Only then can it continue to be a source of inspiration and ideas regarding the future of the Turkish people.

## REFERENCES

- Dankoff, Robert. Editor's Introduction, Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī, *Compendium of the Turkic Dialects*. Vol. 1. Harvard: Harvard University Printing Office, 1992.
- Ergin, Muharrem. *Dede Korkut Kitabı*. Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 2014.
- Kaşgarlı Mahmud. *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk*. C. 1-3. Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 1982.
- Kaya, Mahmut. "Beytülhikme". *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*. 6: 88-90. Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1992.
- Kaçalin, Mustafa. "Divânü Lügât'it Türk". *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*. 9: 446-449. Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1994.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *The Sickness Unto Death*. London: Penguin Books, 1989.
- Mahmūd al-Kāšrārī. *Compendium of the Turkic Dialects*. Vol. 1-2. Harvard: Harvard University Printing Office, 1982.
- Plato. *The Republic of Plato*. Tr. J.L. Davies – D.J. Vaughan. New York: A.L. Burt Company Publishers, 1924.
- Platon. *Şölen*. İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1995.
- Yunus Emre. *Divân-ı Yûnus Emre*. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992.
- Yusuf Has Hacib. *Kutadgu Bilig II*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1959.
- Yusuf Khās Hājib. *Wisdom of Royal Glory (Kutadgu Bilig)*. A Turko-Islamic Mirror for Princes. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983.

