

FOREWORD

The compilation of the present glossary of Ottoman historical terms took many years. I began to collect them while still a student, since their definitions in Redhouse¹ were imprecise, at times even misleading. During those years my three-by-five cards with references were handy for tests and exams. Eventually I began teaching, and instead of answering the questions on tests I had to put them together ; my yellowing batch of cards still served me well. As years went by the collection continued to grow. I copied glossaries from studies of my colleagues, appropriated felicitous phrases and scores of good definitions from the footnotes of scholarly monographs. Titles were culled from published Ottoman documents, terms copied from encyclopedias. Without the arrival of the computer age this dictionary would be still just cards in a box.

I got my first computer in 1983 and soon the cards were turned into files. The definitions were endlessly reedited and supplemented ; whenever it was feasible sources were attributed, their actual use in archival documents were noted. The history of the Ottoman Empire encompasses more than 600 years. In such a long span, terms and institutions evolved and fell into disuse, their functions altered; I endeavored to record these changes in the individual entries.

Throughout the centuries the English rendering of Ottoman terms created problems to contemporary writers, and numerous variants exist ; some of the early ones can be practically unrecognizable² to the untrained readers. For this reason I decided to observe a version of the traditional transliteration system of Ottomanists as listed in the inside cover of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Following that tradition I render words of Arabic and Persian origins rather closely but, only the consonants are marked in words of Turkish origin. Whenever in doubt I also consulted the *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary*³ since its system of indicating vowels is remarkably consistent. For students who do not know Turkish such fine distinctions might be irrelevant,

¹Sir James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon* (Constantinople, 1921).

²E.g. "caddeescheer" for *kādi'l-'asker*, "supreme justice," in Rycaut, p. 45, or "chiachia" for *kahya*, "steward, deputy," colloquial variant of *kethüdā* in Rycaut, p. 14.

³Istanbul, 1968.

but for specialists inexact rendering can be a source of irritation and possible misinterpretation.

Entries are often concluded with abbreviated citations in parentheses. Some of the forty-three cited works are encyclopedias, others are reference works, studies on aspects of Ottoman history, published contemporary Ottoman discourses, or collections of archival documents. Accordingly, the citations can indicate quotation of original occurrences, more thorough treatments of the subjects, or list of additional readings. I consulted two of these works with particular frequency; the *Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*⁴, a still unfinished international product of two generations of specialists on all aspects of Islamic cultures, the authoritative work of reference of nearly 10,000 pages, and the handbook of Yılmaz Öztuna⁵, a 1,200-page work on Ottoman institutions throughout the centuries. The two Turkish dictionaries of historical terms, those of Mehmet Zeki Pakalın⁶ and of Midhat Sertoğlu⁷ were always next to my computer. I would not venture to compete with the works of these two venerated scholars except that their dictionaries are of use only for those students who can read Turkish. I have also included some titles, terms and geographic names missing from their compilations. I gratefully acknowledge my debt to the authors of the above cited works, especially to Halil İnalçık, the internationally acclaimed doyen of Ottoman studies and author of a number of insightful entries in *EI*².

I am particularly grateful to two of my friends and colleagues, Alan W. Fisher and Cornell H. Fleischer. They kindly consented to read the manuscript at various stages of writing and offered numerous improvements as well as encouragement. I am also thankful to Karin Ford, administrative assistant in the Department of Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University, who proofread the manuscripts and made several corrections. Thanks are also due to the copy editor for the Isis Press who spotted several questionable definitions. He and the helpfulness of the Isis Press made the tedious task of the final preparation of the manuscript a pleasant experience.

I would like to dedicate this modest dictionary to the students I have taught at Indiana University for thirty years. Their interest in Ottoman history and their questions on terms and institutions were the inspiration for the published version of the present work.

⁴8 vols. (London and Leiden, 1960-1995), = *EI*².

⁵*Devletler ve hânedanlar: Türkiye, 1074-1990* [States and Dynasties: Turkey, 1074-1990]. Vol. ii (Ankara, 1989).

⁶*Osmanlı tarih deyimleri ve terimleri sözlüğü* [Dictionary of Ottoman Historical Phrases and Technical Terms], 3 vols. (İstanbul, 1946).

⁷*Osmanlı tarih lügatı* [Ottoman Historical Dictionary], enlarged second edition, (İstanbul, 1986).