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THE \textit{BELAGAT-\textit{i \OŞMÂNİYE}} OF AHMED CEVDET PAŞA AND ITS CRITICS

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For the educated Ottoman, the Tanzimat was a period of instability and transformation which witnessed change in almost every aspect of life, not least of all in language, literature and even literary criticism. It is by examining in some detail the \textit{Belagat-i \Oşmânîye}, a work of literary rhetoric, that we may obtain some insight into one of the most influential minds of the Tanzimat, that of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa. This article will attempt to evaluate not only the \textit{Belagat-i \Oşmânîye} but also examine the immediate reaction it evoked in some of its readers. For, at the same time as some authors, such as Recâ'izâde Mağmûd Ekrem, had chosen to look to the west in order to find inspiration for a rhetoric of the Ottoman language, Cevdet Paşa chose to remain conservative in his approach. Curiously the strongest reaction to his rhetoric is not from the western-looking reformers but from traditionalists who were not altogether happy with the direction that was being taken by an essentially conservative man like Cevdet Paşa.

\textit{The Belagat-i \Oşmânîye}

Cevdet Paşa (1822-1895), the author of the \textit{Belagat-i \Oşmânîye}, was one of that small group commonly known as the Men of the Tanzimat. While Muşâfâ Reşid Paşa (1800-1858), 'Ali Paşa (1815-

and Fu'ād Paşa (1815-1889) all rose to the highest positions in the government, Cevdet Paşa's role was less that of a statesman and more a civil servant responsible for the actual task of drawing up legislation, and consequently he failed to attain the supreme offices of state.

The three great statesmen of the Tanzimat all had similar careers; having acquired experience in foreign affairs, they all occupied at sometime the post of Minister of External Affairs, the Grand Vizierate and, with the exception of Reşid Paşa, the presidency of the Council of Tanzimat. Cevdet Paşa, on the other hand, occupied many important ministerial positions concerned with the direction and implementation of the Tanzimat reforms, but for a variety of reasons, at no time did he acquire a premier position in formulating the overall policy of the State. He was considerably more educated than his colleagues, and being somewhat younger than them it was natural that his best chances of advancement lay in attaching himself to their retinue. Receiving his first official appointment at the age of 26, he was within two years promoted to the Meclis-ı Ma'arif and shortly afterwards to the directorship of the Dārī'ī-ı Mu'allīmīn. Thereafter followed numerous directorships and ministerial posts, mainly in the field of education and law, areas in which Cevdet Paşa's education in the İlimiye gave him an advantage over his colleagues. This classical background and his deep grounding in the traditional curriculum probably rendered him psychologically unsuited for the highest positions in the Tanzimat governments, where an uncritical belief in reform for its own sake was necessary rather than the conversancy with the traditional Islamic sciences which Cevdet Paşa could offer.

His ministerial duties and official commitments were allowed to occupy only part of his time, and much of his energy was devoted to drafting legislation, as well as to providing text-books for the educational institutions for which he was responsible. While his colleagues were enthusiastically engaged in propagating wide-sweeping reforms, it was to Cevdet Paşa that they delegated the task of actually implementing them.

2 The sources for the biography of Cevdet Paşa can be found in A. Ölmezoglu's article on him in İslam Ansiklopedisi.
In all things a moderate, he saw only too clearly that the reforming zeal of his colleagues arose from a shallow appreciation of the foundations of Ottoman culture, and he feared that their admiration for things European might lead them to question many of the established values, the preservation of which was for him the principal inducement to the reform of the state institutions. The classical conception of the Ottoman State was that of an organic unit centered around the person of the ruler, whose duty it was to protect, maintain and foster Islam and all thereto pertaining. As the basis of Islam was the Arabic Koran so, too, should Ottoman culture reflect the dominant position of those traditional sciences which found their origins in the study of the Holy Book. European pressure for the establishment of a secular constitutional state, thereby reducing the dominant position of the Şer'i, would not only endanger the executive power of the Caliph but bring into question many of the cultural values which were held sacrosanct by Cevdet Paşa and most of his countrymen. He was not, however, a reactionary, for he realised that without institutional reform the State could not survive; and he consequently channelled his immense energies into reconciling the classical institutions with prevailing conditions. Yet, as earnest as was his zeal for reform, no less was he wholeheartedly committed to the preservation of Ottoman culture as he conceived it.

To Cevdet Paşa was delegated the task of codifying the whole of Ottoman law, a monumental project which resulted in the publication of a twelve volumed codex entitled the *Mecelle-i Aẖkâm-i 'Adliye*, a work which was instrumental in preserving the fundamental position of the Şer'i in the legal system. Cevdet Paşa's motives for introducing the *Mecelle* are clear, he feared lest the theory and practice of Ottoman law be replaced by a Western model which was seen to operate well for its own society. He appreciated that unless he could provide the Empire with a comprehensive and modern legal system, forces, both within and without the country, would impose a legal framework which would be alien to the Ottoman spirit.

In matters of education too, he exhibited a marked reluctance to throw out the content of the classical curriculum. In the early years of his public life he began to prepare text-books for the new schools which had been established by the reforms. There being no question of replacing the old medrese system of higher education, the reformers contented themselves with establishing a parallel system of schooling in which new subjects would be taught. Common to both systems, however, was a need for instruction in grammar and composition, the ignorance of which was so painfully apparent in many of the employees of the government. In the medrese it was Arabic alone that figured in the syllabus, and consequently the new schools had to provide a similar education in the Turkish language, including the formal study of literature. Cevdet Paşa assumed the responsibility for writing all the necessary text-books for the study of the vernacular.

In a preface to the Belâğat-i Osmanlıye, Cevdet Paşa outlined his programme for the study of the Ottoman language. Acknowledging that it was greatly indebted to Arabic which he saw as the principle source of Ottoman, he felt it necessary to discuss the Arabic linguistic sciences as applied to the Ottoman language (pp. 3-5)¹. The Ulûm-i Edebiye, as formulated by Cevdet Paşa, are eight, with four «branch» sciences:

- 'Usûl-i şemâniye: luğat, şarf, iştikâh, na'h, me'anî, beyân, 'arûz ve 짜fiye fennleridîr.
- Fûrû'-i erba'a: inşâ, ężârz-ı şî'r, muhâzarât ve hatî, ya'ni imlä, fennleri (p. 6)

The basic sciences can, therefore, be notionally translated as: lexicography, morphology, etymology, syntax, semantics, exposition, prosody and rhyme. The four branch sciences are prose composition, poetic composition, the art of the anecdote and calligraphy². Within this framework he produced a series of works which would serve

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¹ References to the text are to the first edition (İstanbul, 1298/1881).
² In the Beşânû 'i'-Uwa'n (İstanbul, 1273/1857), Cevdet Paşa gives a summary of the linguistic sciences (pp. 34-35) in which he defines the four «branch sciences» thus:
as text-books for some of these literary sciences. The first was the *Kavûd-i 'Osmânîye*, a work produced in cooperation with Fu'âd Paşa, while residing in Bursa in 1849. This was the first Ottoman grammar to be written in Turkish and was intended to serve the needs of the pupils at the newly established *rüşdiye* schools. Cevdet Paşa combined within this work the 'ilm-i näh và the 'ilm-i şarf, having decided that the former science was too insubstantial to stand on its own when applied to the Ottoman language. In 1865 a shortened version of the work, entitled the *Medîkat-i Kavûd*, was published in order that the students at the primary schools might study it in preparation for the *Kavûd-i 'Osmânîye*. The work was further simplified and published in an edition of 15,000 copies as the *Kavûd-i Türkiye* (1875).

«Fûrû olaraş daşî dîger dîrî fenn vârdîr:

fenn-i şâsî ve fenn-i kârî-î gîrî ve fenn-i

înşâ ve fenn-i muhûzarâtîr. Zîrâ bahş, eger

nuşîs-î kîtîbete dîrî olursa, fenn-i şâsî ve eger

kêlâm-î manşura mâhsûs olursa, fenn-i

kârî-î gîrî ve eger kêm-î manşura mâhsûs

olursa, fenn-i înşâ ve eger manşım ve

menşûrdan birîne mâhsû olmîrak ikdînê

daşî gîmîlî olursa fenn-i muhûzarât temîîye

olunur.» (pp. 36-37).

Cevdet Paşa’s use of the term *muhûzarât* in this classification is rather idiosyncratic, and one cannot be quite sure what exactly it is that he means. The definition provided by Ahmed Taşköprüzâde in the *Miftâhü ‘s-Saràde* (vol. I [Hyderabad, 1899], p. 182) would hardly make it appropriate to what seems to be the general intention of Cevdet Paşa in this analysis. The definition runs: «This is the subject from the study of which is derived the ability to quote the works of others in respect of the appropriateness of their general sense and their particular relevance. He goes on to distinguish *muhûzarât* and *sârî* specifying the first as having particular relevance to the topic under discussion while *muhûzarât* is the use of the words of eloquent men in the course of conversation, introduced as anecdote appropriate to the situations.»

6 This was first published in 1281/1864. It was reprinted seventeen times, three times under the title: *Kavûd-i ‘Osmânî*. See *Tezükir*, IV, 45; *Belûgat-i *‘Osmânîye*, 3.

7 This was first published in 1292/1875, and thereafter reprinted six times. See *Tezükir*, IV, 126. Ziya Gökalp in *Türkçülüğüm Beyâtlov* argues that Cevdet Paşa failed to recognise the status of Turkish by calling his grammar the *Kavûd-i ‘Osmânîye* in contrast to Sîleyman Paşa who preferred *Sarî*.
At the end of the *Kavâid-i ʻOsmâniye*, Cevdet Paşa committed himself to compiling a work on Ottoman rhetoric, for he felt that although his grammar provided the student with the means of giving correct expression to his intended meaning in the Ottoman language, he would nevertheless be unable to express it eloquently without a knowledge of rhetoric. During one of his terms as Minister of Education, he had formed a committee to organise the curricula of the public and specialist schools, and he was himself later commissioned by this committee to write a work on rhetoric. However, the pressure of the work entailed in fulfilling his numerous commitments prevented him from turning his attention to this immediately. In 1879 he was reappointed Minister of Justice and opened the first modern school of law, the curriculum of which was to include the teaching of *belâğa*. In 1881 the second year students of the Mekteb-i Hûkûk began their studies and Cevdet Paşa took it upon himself personally to teach the students *belâğa* once a week. His lecture notes became the basis for the *Belâğat-i ʻOsmâniye* which was finished during a vacation in Şaban of 1299 (June 1882). Shortly afterwards the work was published and subsequently ran into six editions between the years 1881 and 1908.

The syllabus of the Mekteb-i Hûkûk included both traditional subjects as well as new courses which were to be taught for the first time. In the curriculum were the following subjects: *Fi ḥ, Meccel-i Aḥkâm-i ʻAdîrîye, Uṣûl-i Fi ḥ*, General Survey of Law Systems, Law and Institutions of the Ottoman Empire, Roman Law, Commercial Law, Court Procedure, Criminal Law and Interrogation Procedure, Maritime Law, International Law, Treaties, and finally Political Economy. Rhetoric was taught in addition to these basic courses, probably on the recommendation of Cevdet Paşa, who personally taught the class despite the pressure of work entailed in the post of Minister of Justice which he filled at this period. The relevancy of rhetoric to the study of law was accepted by traditional Čerki, overlooking the fact that Cevdet compiled the *Kavâid-i ʻOsmâniye, Principles of Turcism*, trans R. Devereux (Leiden, 1968), 4.

8 See *Belâğat-i ʻOsmâniye*, 4-5; *Tezkiir IV*, 196 ff. and 214-215; also O. Ergin, *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi* (Istanbul, 1941), 890 ff. The title page of the 1st edition gives the year 1298, which could possibly refer to the financial year.
scholars who, realising that law was transmitted through the medium of language, taught the linguistic sciences in the medrese. Cevdet Paşa certainly realised that the students of the Mekteb-i Ḥukūk would become the first generation of Ottoman jurists and as such would be required either to draft or to interpret new laws; the study of Turkish composition would therefore complement their legal studies.

The Belāğat-i ʿOsmāniye is, as its title implies, the classical Arabic theory of rhetoric rendered applicable to Ottoman, little more in fact than the Telhīş in Turkish. Its arrangement, consisting of a muḥaddime and three chapters devoted to meʿanī, beyān and bedʿ, mirrors that of its Arabic model, with little effort at the adaptation of the theory to a different language, a different educational system and the demands of a different society. To the introduction, Cevdet Paşa appends a brief discussion of language, taken from the science of logic, the chapters on meʿanī and beyān, however, remaining more or less the same. The bedʿ section presents a selection of the numerous figures found in the Telhīş, to which is added a faṣl on chronograms.

It must, however, be recognised as utterly failing in its avowed purpose of providing a rhetorical system for Turkish, and its inadequacy can be attributed to the confused conceptions held by its author concerning the nature and scope of the subject itself. Cevdet Paşa seems to have regarded rhetoric as an absolute science of

9 The relationship between the linguistic sciences and the study of law is succinctly formulated by Ibn Ḥaldūn in his Muḥaddime, a work with which Cevdet Paşa was very familiar, having translated it into Ottoman: «The pillars of the Arabic language are four, lexicography, grammar, syntax and style (beyān), and literature. Knowledge of them all is necessary for religious scholars, since the source of all religious laws is the Qurʾān and the Sunnah, which are in Arabic» (Trans: F. Rosenthal: Ibn Khaldūn, An Introduction to History: the Muqaddimah, Abridged ed. [London, 1967], p. 433.

10 Cavid Baysun, in the index to vol. IV of Teskîr, suggests that Cevdet Paşa adopted the Muḥtaṣar as his model. While it can be established that he relied on one of the commentaries it is virtually impossible to determine which of Teftâzânî’s two serhs, the Muṣawa or the Muḥtaṣar, he used (p. 286, entry «Belāğat-i ʿOsmāniyye»). The Telhīş is properly known as the Telhīş fi ʿUlûmī ʿl-Belāğa written by Câleddîn Muḥammad b. Abdûrrahmān, Ḥatib el-Ḵazvînî. The edition referred to is Cairo, 1932.
universal application, much as mathematics or physics, the laws of
which governed all languages; consequently, he could confidently
assume that those Arabic texts with which he was familiar could
serve the demands of Turkish by merely modifying a few details.
Whereas the proper approach would have been to deduce law and
principle from his own literature, he was content to seek in it only
those examples which illustrated the foreign system.

While it is true that most literary modes in Ottoman Turkish
were borrowed, usually from either Persian or Arabic, and under­
went a development which can be identified as stages of translation,
adaptation, imitation and, finally, imitation with some original fea­
tures, they then developed into established forms within the body of
Turkish literature. In this sense the Belağat-i 'Osmâniye can be
regarded as a work that goes beyond mere servile translation but
yet cannot be acknowledged as having adapted itself to its Turkish
context. The greater part of the work is no more than translation
and rearrangement of familiar materials with lip service to the
fact that it was intended as a rhetoric of the Turkish language.
Although the very title of the work declares the intention of the
author to write a rhetoric of the Turkish language, the fact that
throughout the text very few definitions apply particularly to Tur­
kish, would suggest that the author did not feel that the Turkish
language required a distinct rhetoric of its own but could manage
well with the rhetorical system of the Arabs provided that it was
translated into Turkish and with illustrations in that language.

Cevdet Paşa is undoubtedly justified in regarding the rhetorical
features of beyân as of equal validity to either Turkish or Arabic,
simile, metaphor and metonomy being common to all languages. He
is not justified, however, in expecting a translation, albeit adapted,
of the Arabic text of the Telhiş to convey much more meaning than
the original Arabic. Indeed, one can only suppose that the Arabic
definitions were somewhat obscure both in their original form and
in their subsequent translation, and that their authors relied on the
illustrations to convey the actual force of the argument.

Cevdet Paşa adopted in extenso the classical Islamic expository
style employed in the Telhiş: definition, explanation, illustration and
elucidation of the illustration. The first, step definition, is intended
to be succinct, often to the point of unintelligibility, necessitating
the second step, explanation. The illustration was by far the most
important step, for it is the means by which the reader can recog-
nise the feature under discussion in a concrete form. The illustration
was often of two types: the first, a statement coined by the author
which contains the feature under discussion in its simplest form:
as in «Zeyd is like a lion» to illustrate the simile; the second, which
in the Telhif is invariably culled from poetry, gives validity to the
rhetorical feature by attesting to its existence in poetry - and hence
in literature. The first type of illustration should not be thought of
as in any way being an example of the feature in prose, but rather
as a non-poetical statement in which the feature is illustrated in
isolation, reduced to its barest essential. The final optional step is
the elucidation of the illustration which is provided, not always
because the beyt or msta in question contains some inherent diffi-
culty, but often because the author is at a loss to find a categorical
illustration which will exemplify the feature in question and that
only. The elucidation can therefore be thought of as an attempt
to reconcile the illustration to the definition. In fact, in this form of
presentation the classical system reverses the order in which the
science of rhetoric developed, for it is generally obvious that the
definition proceeds from the example rather than the reverse. Those
striking features of expression in a literary work which would detain
the reader are inspirational in origin, and it was the attempt of the
scholastic mentality to reduce these to formal definition that gave
birth to rhetoric and consequently to the ambiguities and inade-
quacies of most of its foundations and definitions. One could react
to the effective literary passage in a variety of ways which, taken
together would constitute what we today call criticism; it was
because the Islamic rhetorician regarded his subject as an appendix
to grammar that he felt required to reduce these features to a sys-

Cevdet Paşa’s major contribution to the understanding of beyan
lies in the illustrations taken from the corpus of Ottoman poetry,
which he provides generously, for as has already been suggested it
was the illustrations that made the definition intelligible. The Tur-
kish illustrations also serve to attest to the existence of the rhe-
rheorical feature and hence to give it validity. It is to Cevdet Paşa's credit that he departed from the narrow concept of rhetoric as a function of poetry to the extent of providing a true illustration of a form of teşbih as attested in a passage of prose. He often omits illustrative beyts, providing only the essential exemplary statement to serve as the example. This economy of style would be entirely laudatory were it not for the suspicion that Cevdet Paşa was at a loss for a beyt to illustrate exactly the point in question, a suspicion reinforced by the fact that the section on simile-a relatively easy rhetorical feature to understand-is abundantly illustrated whereas the section on the mecz-ı mürel has but one beyt.

That the definitions in the Belâ'at-ı 'Osmâniye depart little from the Arabic originals would suggest that Cevdet Paşa expended no great effort in attempting to turn the language of the Telîş, which in itself is often difficult, into intelligible Turkish. His attitude would seem to have been that a work with which he himself was so familiar merely required transposition into a Turkish syntactical framework, with the minimum change in vocabulary to meet the needs of the students for whom the book was intended. The difficulty of the original is not so much a matter of Arabic syntax, but lies in the economical use of language which renders complex concepts even more obscure by stripping all statements down to their barest essentials. Because Turkish syntactical structure differs essentially from that of Arabic in its development of the idea, these definitions in the Belâ'at-ı 'Osmâniye become often even more obscure than their counterpart in the Telîş.

The inadequacy of Çevdet's definitions and his servile reliance on his Arabic model can be observed in the following passage, where he attempts to explain the nature of the mecz-ı 'âkî. He begins as usual with the definition:

Mecz-ı 'âkî, bir fi'îlî mä hüve lehine, ya'ni, 'inde 'mûtekellîm şâkî olan mülabesine ismâd itmeyüb de mä hüve lehîn gîyri olan mülabesine ismâd itmekdir. (p. 125)

based on the following passage from the Telîş:
Cevdet Paşa fails to tell his reader that this «Turkish» definition is borrowed not from the beyân section of the Telifîş, but from the section on me'ânî. As this discussion belongs properly to the latter than the former, the reader can be forgiven for wondering what the terms isnâd and fi'l, which are particular to me'ânî, are doing in a discussion which has been transposed to the section on beyân. Furthermore he uses the word mülâbes with neither an indication of its vowelling, nor an explanation of its meaning which would normally be ascertained from its context, which in this case, of course, does not exist.

The determined student would understand the definition to mean: «Intellectual Trope occurs when the verb is not attributed to what is intrinsic to it, that is to say, when it is not attributed to something intimately connected with it, in the opinion of the speaker, but rather to something which is not intimately connected with it.» It is quite clear that this definition needs expansion, so Cevdet Paşa proceeds to explain it:

Fi'le, fa'ilî mülâbesi olduğu gibi, zaman ve mekân ve sebebi daîî mülâbes olur. Ve bunların fi'le mülâbesede fa'il ile ıştıtrakları mecaz-ı açılımî 'alâkasıdır; façaît buna daîî karîne-i mâni'e bulunmak şarîdîr. (p. 126)

Again he follows closely the original Arabic:

Ve-le-hü mülâbesâtı şîttâ, yûlûbîsî
'l-fâîîle ve mef'ûle bi-bî, ve-'maşdare
ve-'z-zamânî ve-'l-mekânî ve-'s-sebebe. (p. 46)

He adds a condition to the original, thus relating the discussion for the first time to beyân. The above passage can be understood as meaning: «Just as the subject of the verb is intimately connected to it, so too are its time, place and cause. Their sharing together
with the subject, a common intimate connection with the verb, is the adjunct of the intellectual trope, with the proviso that there also exists therein restrictive adjunct. This statement does little to clarify the definition, indeed it adds to the existing confusion by introducing additional factors which themselves need explanation.

The third step, the illustration, makes the above statements much clearer, by offering for the first time a statement which may be understood in its absolute form, without requiring the reader to refer to context in order for it to convey a meaning. The concrete image presented in the following illustration is the pivotal point of the whole discussion:

Even in the example he follows closely the Arabic:

Cevdet Paşa’s simple illustration entirely elucidates the preceding definition and explanation. In fact, his argument, as presented at this stage, could well stand on its own, little expansion being necessary to make this statement completely explanatory and the previous statements redundant.

Cevdet, having defined mecâz-ı ‘âkî, at least to his own satisfaction, now proceeds to exhaust all the possibilities which this trope encompasses:


[4] Ve «zamânî ncv-civânlığı otlari inbat hyleli» didigimizde müsnedün ileyî mecaz, müsned haşîkat olur. (pp. 126-127)

The above passage is based on:

Ve-âksâmü-hü erba‘atîn: Li-enne tarafey-hi

The bare statement of the Telîşî is considered to be insufficient and Cevdet Paşa here has recourse to the Muğavvel bibliography to elucidate the figurative nature of «şibâbî ‘z-zamâmî» and «ahve ‘l-arzî»:

11 Properly known as the Muğavvel ‘a¤e ‘t-Telîşî by Sa‘eddîn Meş‘ûd b. ‘Omer et-Tefîzânî. The edition used is Berlin, 1271/1854.
Fe-inne 'l-murâde bi-iḫyä'i 'l-arzi,
tehyiçä 'l-kuve 'n-nâmîyeti fi-hä ve-iḫdâşi
nażâreti-hä bi-envä'i 'n-nebâti; ve iyâyå'u
fi 'l-ḥâğiḳätä 'r'ā'ū 'l-ḥâyiṭā ve-hîye
ṣifatünn ta'ḳaṣzä 'l-hissâ ve-'l-ḥârekäte
'l-irâdiyetâ ve teftektırâ ile 'l-bedênî
ve-'r-rûjî ve ke-że 'l-murâdü bi-ṣibâbî
'z-zamâni, izdiyâdû ḱvâ-he 'n-nâmîyeti ve
hüve fi 'l-ḥâğiḳätä 'ibâretüün 'an kevni
'l-ḥâvyâni fi zamâni, tekâni ḱârayîدت-hî
'l-ğarîziyetü muşbûbûten, ey ḱâviyeten
muṣṭa'aleten. (p. 62)

The Arabic of the Telb'öş is both precise and clear; it notices
that there are four possible permutations of the statement consisting of
a subject and predicate, here classified as mecaz-ı cabî. The context
of the Telb'öş - the chapter is entitled «Aḥvâl 'U-ṣnâdi 'L-ḥabertyî»
and definitions are provided for all the terms - indicates that the
ṣarasän are the müsned (predicate) and the müsned ileyhe
'[z-zamâni, izdiyâdû kuva-he 'n-nâmîyeti ve
hüve fi 'l-ḥâğiḳâti 'ibâretüün 'an kevni
'l-ḥâvyâni fi zamâni, tekâni ḱârayîدت-hî
'l-ğarîziyetü muşbûbûten, ey ḱâviyeten
muṣṭa'aleten. (p. 62)

Having completed the classification of the mecaz-ı 'aklî accord-
ing to whether its two elements are figurative or real, Cevdet Paşa
introduced three examples to illustrate three further points, the
exact nature of which will probably elude the reader:

etdi» didigimizde ẓarafeyni ḱâğiḳat oldûn
hâlde, mecaz-ı 'aklî olur, günkü ḱâğiḳat-ı
hâlde diişmeni münhezim iden, ser-därni
The first example is based on an illustration from the Telbiş: "Heseme 'Emirü l-cünde" (p. 50), which also illustrates mecaz-ı 'aqlî. The point made is that the «Commander» is made the subject of the sentence rather than «his army» by attribution of the act of «destroying» to him rather than his army, which in logic is the true subject of the action. This is done because the concept of «commanding», on the basis of a causal relationship, is bound closely to the idea of «destroying».

The second example comes from the Telbiş: «Maşhabetîi-ke ca'aret bi iley-ke» (p. 50); «serret-nü rîlyetû-ke» (p. 51). In classifying them as of same type as above [... cümleleri dahî bu kabildendir], Cevdet Paşa does not specify either «mecâz-ı 'aqlî» or «... sebebine isnâd kabili ...» as the referent.

Cevdet expands the argument presented in the previous paragraph, providing an appendix to the section on Mecâz-ı 'aqlî:
Ber vech-i báná muzáf haźf olmub da, muzáfün
ileyh anı bıkámına ḫâme olunduğu ḫâde «mecáz-ı
haźf» denilir. Yerine göre bu daş bi ḫarık-i
meslîkdur, faṣaṣ mütellimînî ḫarzîná 'a'id bîn
mescîndir.

Nîtekîm bir şeyi öğrenmek için «ehl-i ḵârîyeden
sor» denilsece gider «خرىден sor» denilsе,
meçáz-i ḫâzî olur. Emmâ bir kimse ḫâzîb, ve
ehâlîsî nâ-yâb olan bir ḵârîyênı önünden geçen
îken nûş-u-_wheel yolunda reפיqîne, yâ-ḥod
'ibret-u-_wheel yolunda kendî kendîye: «su
خرىeye sor ki ehâlîsî ne oldu» dese meçáz-i
haźfiyyey ḫaml olunamaz.

KEZÂLİK Ber vech-i báná «fulân âdâm «adaletdûr»
denisce mubâlîğa ḫuşûlî için, meçáz-i 'aĥliye
ḫaml olunmak muhûsîb olmaz. (p. 128)

This is based on the following passage from the Teşek:

Ve-ḫâz yu-latêk 'l-mecázî 'alâ kelîmetîn
tağâyere ḫûkmû ḫâbî-ha bi-haźfî laḏfîn
... ke-kavî-hî Te'âlâ: ve-câ'ê rebbê-ke
ta 's'elî 'l-خرىeye... ey emrû rebell-ke,
ve ehlî 'l-خرىyeti ... (p. 336)12

The Belâğat-i 'Osmaîye remains in many ways a very unsatis-
factory work. Retaining the format of a rhetorical system which
had already proven itself inadequate to the needs of society, it was
a defiant rebuttal of the arguments for change advanced by the
modernists under the influence of Western literary standards. Although
completely inadequate as a Turkish rhetoric, it did, however, have
the positive merit of providing an exposition of classical Islamic
rhetorical theory. Despite its numerous obscurities, it at least ren­
dered the Arabic examples into Turkish, or even produced original Tur­
kish examples, with the aid of which even the least proficient of

12 Compare Cevdet Paşa'ın treatment with the commentary on this pas­
sage in the Muhammed (p. 48).
Arabic scholars could have access to Islamic rhetoric through the medium of Turkish. It need hardly be pointed out, however, that such attainment was hardly what was required by students of modern law in the changing society of late Nineteenth Century Turkey.

The quality of the scholarship is uneven: on the one hand, it manifests flashes of genius such as Cevdet Paşa's rendition of la ıla ilü ılah into Turkish as »yoşdur şapacak çalabdır ancak« (pp. 8-9), while on the other hand it is marred by basic errors when, for instance, he attributes examples to the wrong poets. However, its chief fault lies in his failure to significantly improve and build upon the contributions of two of his predecessors, Ahmed Hamid'i's Belağat-i Lisan-i 'Osmanî and Mîşâlî Muşafa Efendi's Zübdet-i Beyan 14. The Belağat-i 'Osmâniye mirrors to a large degree the treatment in the Belağat-i Lisan-i 'Osmanî, a work published at the behest of Cevdet Paşa. That, however, is not to accuse him of plagiarism, for both works follow the argument of the Telliş so closely that most similarities may be attributed to their common source. Nevertheless certain coincidences cannot be ascribed to this, as for example, the fact that both works illustrate garabêt with the Turkish word çalab 15. It is Cevdet Paşa, however, who is credited with the aut-

13 One instance of this is Hayâli's murâ': »O mâhiler ki derya içredi deryayı bilmezler« wrongly attributed to Fuadî (p. 41).

14 For descriptions of these works see C. Ferrard, »The Development of an Ottoman Rhetoric: Part I, Osmanlı Araştırmaları, III (1982), 181-186.

15 The text of the Belağat-i Lisan-i 'Osmâni reads thus:

»Garabet istimâli gayri me'nâs ve vağfi olan elâçdır. Meşelî eski Türkçe'de Allah - te'alî - şahrelerine çalab... denîlir diye tekkellûm ve ignîda kullanılmak mâyî- efâbatdır.« (p. 6)

The text of the Belağat-i 'Osmâniye:

»Garabet. Kelimenî vağfi olması, ya'nî me'nâsî l-iisti'mâl ve zâhirî l-mân'î olmamasıdır...

La ıla ilü ılah 'ibare-i şerifesini eş Tîrâkîsi Yoşdur şapacak çalabdır ancak 'ibaresidir. Ve Türkçe çalab laشا çalabdan teresmesidir, likin şâni lisânında müsta'îel değildir.« (pp. 8-9).
horship of the first Ottoman work of rhetoric. While there is no doubt that the Belağat-i Osmâniye is an improvement over the Belağat-i Lisân-i Osmâni, its superiority to the Zübdetül-Beyân cannot be argued so strongly. In method and approach as traditional as the rhetorics of Cevdet Paşa and Ahmed Hamdî, this latter work does however restrict itself to beyân and consequently offers a treatment which is defensible. This second section of the tripartite formulation of Islamic rhetoric, containing an analysis of figures of speech relevance to all languages, stands well on its own, and to treat it as merely the second of the three Islamic sciences of rhetoric can only be a retrograde step on the road to a Turkish rhetoric.

However the quality of the Belağat-i Osmâniye is only a secondary consideration in the evaluation of its impact on the succeeding generation of students. Whatever the defects inherent in the works, it cannot be denied that this book became extremely popular, and the favourable reception that it received must in part be attributed to the eminence of its author. Cevdet Paşa’s aim was to supply the uniform system of education, which it was hoped to bring into the Empire, with a text-book which would find the same universal acceptance as had the standard Arabic works of the medrese, which were now losing both relevance and usefulness. Just as the new centralist government of the Tanzimat required a uniform code of Ottoman law, so, too, was it desirable to have a uniform course in rhetoric. In the same way as Cevdet Paşa’s Mecelle was to relegate the books of fîkh and codes of şâmâns to the libraries and archives, the Telbîş was made redundant by his Belağat-i Osmâniye. Such an innovation, however, did not pass without comment.

The similarity in the wording of the definition may be attributed to the common source, the Muvavvel:

Ve-ı-zârîbetû : Kevnu ‘l-kelimetî vağfîyetem,
şayre zâhireti ‘l-mâ’nâ ve-lâ me’nûsête
‘l-istî’mâlî. (p. 18)

16 See footnote on page 13 of the Ta’lim-i Edebiyat of Ekrem Bey.
The Criticism And Defence Of The Beloğat-i Osmâniye

The Beloğat-i Osmâniye became the subject of a heated debate among some prominent men of letters and some students at the Mekteb-i Hüükü. In 1299 (23 November, 1881/11 November, 1882), the year following its publication, no less than eight works were written in criticism or defence of this school text-book. The controversy confined itself to the preface (pp. 2-6) and the mukaddime (pp. 7-40) of the Beloğat-i Osmâniye, the former section consisting of a statement on the utility and origins of rhetoric, the latter being a discourse on the concepts of bel ağat and fe şa há t after the model of the Telhüs, for which Turkish illustrations are provided. An essay on logic and epistomology follows this discourse (pp. 28-40).

The debate was opened by 'Abdürrahmân Şüreyya (d. 1322/1904), a correspondent for the Ceride-i 'Askeriye. Born and educated in Baghdad, he moved to Istanbul where he completed his schooling and found employment as a journalist (1871), and later as a teacher at the Dürü{l}-Fünün and the Dürü{l}-Mü'allimin. He wrote several works in Arabic and a few in Turkish, among which the most notable are two contributions to the study of the Turkish language: the Mızının {l-Belğa (1303/1885), which consists of a complete grammar of Turkish in the classical mold and the Şefne-i Belğat (1305/1887), a commentary on the Mızın. As he is credited with a command of French and Kurdish, as well as the eşine-i šelâse, we may presume that his mother language was Kurdish, while the fact that he received his early education in Baghdad would suggest that his first literary language was Arabic rather than Ottoman. In the course of the literary debate, he was often the victim of gibes at his weak command of Turkish from which he attempted to defend himself, declaring that although he was not Turkish, his «nationalité» was Ottoman, in which fact he took great pride. These attacks on his linguistic ability in Turkish are quite groundless, for it is clear that 'Abdürrahmân possessed a very fine prose style in Otto-

17 Meşmed Tahir, "Osmâni Müellifleri" (İstanbul, 1921), II, 339-40.
18 Taşhîl-i Hal, 41.
man. Although this literary debate afforded him no opportunity to demonstrate this ability, he was able to devote some pages of his Mızanü ’l-Belâğa to a general discourse on the development of rhetoric, which serves as a persuasive demonstration of his complete mastery of the language.  

The debate was opened by ‘Abdürraḥmān’s Ta’lîkât-i Belâğa-i ‘Osmâniye, in which he offers a critique of the Belâğa-i ‘Osmâniye in the guise and format of a traditional commentary. The work found its defenders in El-Häcc Ibrâhîm, a member of the board of directors of evkâf and author of the Temyîz-i Ta’lîkât, and in an anonymous work entitled the Hall-i Ta’lîkât, the authorship of which was attributed to a student at the Mekteb-i Hûkûk. In fact, the student in question was ‘Ali Sedâd Bey, Cevdet Paşa’s son, who discarded the veil of secrecy in his later contributions to this debate, and openly claimed the work as his own.  

These two works were in turn criticised by the author of the Ta’lîkât, in a work entitled the Taḥḥîl-i Hall, to which ‘Ali Sedâd replied in the Redd-i Taḥḥîl, written in collaboration with two classmates, Mehmed Fa’îk Ef. and Mâhîmîd Es’ad Ef. ‘Ali Sedâd also wrote the Temyîz-i Temyîz in order to supplement the Temyîz-i Ta’lîkât, while Mâhîmîd Es’ad wrote a complementary work, the İtmâm-i Temyîz. The last of these eight contributions to this controversy was the Nazîre-i Ta’lîkât, attributed to ‘Abdürraḥmân Şüreyyâ. The development of this literary polemic may best be summed up in the following diagram:  

19 Mızanü ’l-Belâğa, 2-3.  
20 The chronological sequence, together with the day of publication when known, in which these works appeared is as given below:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belâğa-i ‘Osmâniye</td>
<td>Cevdet Paşa</td>
<td>1881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temyîz-i Ta’lîkât</td>
<td>El-Häcc Ibrâhîm</td>
<td>1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taḥḥîl-i Hall</td>
<td>‘Abdürraḥmân Şüreyyâ</td>
<td>1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İtmâm-i Temyîz</td>
<td>Mâhîmîd Es’ad</td>
<td>30 March, 1882.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İkmâl-i Temyîz</td>
<td>‘Ali Sedâd</td>
<td>4 April, 1882.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazîre-i Ta’lîkât</td>
<td>Anon. [‘Abdürraḥmân Şüreyyâ]</td>
<td>1882</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Belâğat-i 'Osmâniye

Ta'liḳat-ı Belâğat-i 'Osmâniye

Ḫall-i Ta'liḳat

Temyîz-i Ta'liḳat

Taḥlîl-i Ḥall

Redd-i Ḥall

İtmâm-i Temyîz

İkmâl-i Temyîz

Naẓîre-i Ta'liḳât\textsuperscript{21}

This controversy is remarkable in a number of aspects, not least of which is the fact that all the works were published in 1299, the year following the publication of the Belâğat-i 'Osmâniye, and of these at least six appeared within the space of ten weeks. Although the debate was conducted in an atmosphere of bitter hostility and mutual vituperation, it was couched in the format familiar to all Islamic scholars, textual exegesis through the medium of commentary and super-commentary. Probably most remarkable of all is the fact that a work on rhetoric, such as the Belâğat-i 'Osmâniye, should arouse such intense passions and give rise to such protracted hostility.

In the preface to the Belâğat-i 'Osmâniye, Cevdet Paşa states his reasons for writing a rhetoric of Turkish: civilised societies (Tava'if-i mütemeddine), he theorises, have consolidated the rules governing

\textsuperscript{21} The exact date of publication is not known, but it must have appeared between 12 March and 11 Nov., 1882.
their own language into a particular science, the Arabs showing the greatest zeal in this respect. Arabic, the language of the Koran, became the object of intensive study, which was regarded as a religious duty by Arabic scholars, and was consequently preserved from decay (pp. 2-6). Cevdet Paşa does no more than summarise what was universally accepted among his peers, ideas which neither presented occasion for controversy nor required elucidation or comment. The introduction (muşaddîme) likewise is conservative in its approach: following closely the model established by the Telhîş, he discusses two concepts fundamental to rhetoric, belâğa and faşâha, enumerating the faults incidental to the latter. He provides examples in Turkish to illustrate each of these faults. To this is added a lânîka, in which he deals with speech (keleme) as a philosophical concept, and examines some of the rules of logic in reference to it.

The Ta'rikat begins its critique of the Belâğat-i 'Osmâniye by analysing every element of Cevdet Paşa's first sentence:

«Tava'îf-i mütemeddine kendi lisanlarını kaşvâ'dîni cem' ile bir fenn-i maşûs olarak tedvin idegemister.» (Belâğat-i 'Osmâniye, p. 7)

«Tava'îf», we are informed, is the plural of «tâ'îfe», signifying a portion or part of a thing; in its original meaning, a people accustomed to travel, these signifying a grouping. To this statement he appends a footnote in which he suggests that had the words «milel» or «açvâm» been employed in place of «tava'îf» then the adjective «mütemeddine» would have been more appropriate. «Mütemeddine» belongs to the tefâ'ûl group of derived verb forms, its function being that of an active participle, the primary maşdar being «müdün». Although this would mean «settle in a place and make it one's residence», it is no longer used in its basic form. The word «medine» signifying a large town is derived from this trilateral root, and although lexically it signifies what pertains to a town, «mütemeddin», used figuratively, implies the qualities of one who inhabits a centre of polite usages (terbiye merkezi) and «medenîyet» has now acquired the connotation of correct upbringing. The

22 The muşaddîme begins on p. 7, the lânîka on p. 28.
construction between «tava’if» and «mütemeddine» is adjectival, the adjective being singular, the qualified noun, plural; this apparent incongruity being reconcilable as the adjective is both singular and feminine.

«‘Lisân’», we are further informed, «is a piece of flesh which serves as the instrument of speech in human beings; the Persian equivalent being ‘zebân’ and the Turkish ‘dil’. Its plural forms are ‘elsine’, ‘elain’ and ‘lisân’, and ‘lisân’, signifying an instrument [of speech], is feminine, and used figuratively (mecaz-ı mürsel), it means argument or speech; according to the lexicon, the phrase ‘That man speaks with the tongue of truth’ means ‘He is speaking [using] the arguments and speech of truth’. Here ‘lisân’ is used in its lexical signification.

«‘Kavâ’id’ is the plural of ‘ka’ide’ [rule], which signifies those statements which comprise the generality of its constituent parts; e.g. the statement ‘Fâ’il merfu’dur’ is a rule established by grammarians, in which the fa’il comprises all its parts and individual instances.»

‘Abdürraşmán proceeds to parse «fenn» and «sedvin», so that by the middle of page seven of the Ta’lîkat, the reader knows a good deal of the morphology of the opening sentence of the Belâghat-i ‘Osmânîye. On page eight he takes issue with Cevdet Paşa over the use of the phrase «ulema-yi ‘Arabîye»; ‘Abdürraşmán prefers «ulema-yi ‘Arab» and cites as his authorities Ebû ‘Ali Farisi (d. 987), ‘Abdülkâbir el-Cûrcânî (d. 1078) and Ebû ‘Ali Şevlûnî [or Şelûnî; d. 1247], three grammarians of which the latter is most notable for his meagre literary output, consisting of no more than two commentaries23. Cevdet’s definition of the ‘ilm-ı sarf as «zât-ı kelime-nîn alyâlinden baş bir fenn» is condemned as imprecise, on the grounds that the science of etymology, too, may be thus defined. Failing to recognise that Cevdet’s exposition is summary and not intended as a definitive description of the literary sciences, which had already been provided in the Beyânü ‘l-‘Umvân, the Ta’lîkat attempts to correct the inadequacy of most of the definitions given.

23 For Şelûnî, see Brockleman, Geschichte Der Arabischen Litteratur (Leiden, 1945-49), G. I, 208; G. II, 279.
in this section. The description of rhetoric as a «science» acts as a stimulus to ‘Abdürraşman, who reacting predictably suggests that «İlm» would be an improvement on «fenn», and then goes on to a gratuitous summary of the epistemological arguments of three philosophical schools, the first represented by Er-Razi (d. 935), the second by El-Gazâlî (d. 1111) and El-Cüveyni (d. 1085) and the third being subdivided into seven separate views, each of which is attributed to one or other of the ancient scholars. He further dissect each of the definitions in Cevdet’s argument, with scarcely a trace of evidence to suggest that he actually understood it, or was even aware of its existence. Ignoring page six of the Belâgat-i ‘Osmâ’iye, in which Cevdet presents a classification of the literary sciences, ‘Abdürraşman alights on the word «mükaddime» and wrestles with its various meanings for two and a half pages. This discussion, in its total irrelevancy to the text, must surely mark one of the low points in Tanzimat literary criticism.

Addressing himself to the contents of the mükaddime, ‘Abdürraşman once again dismantles the definitions provided, examines each constituent word in minute detail, and then discards it in favour of another. Cevdet Paşa defines tenâfür-i hurâf thus:

«Kelimenin lisân üzere şişletini ve telaffûzunuñ ‘usretini feáb eden bir keyffyetdir ki hiss-û -gevük ile bilinir. Mürtefi’ ma’na’sinda müsteşgir ve istatistik kelimeleri ve işsiz ve güçsüz lafları gibi» (p. 8)

Although this description is far from adequate, it is sufficient to allow the reader to identify the linguistic phenomenon through his instinctive reaction to euphony and harmony. This linguistic fault could well have been explained according to the canons of Arabic phonetics: two consecutive consonants sharing the same point of articulation but differing in voice and affrication will require an intervening vowel to facilitate pronunciation. However such analysis would be redundant where most readers, we may presume, were aware of this phenomenon, and instinctively avoided it without necessarily being able to explain it in phonetic terms. Cevdet’s choice
of "işsiz" and "güçsüz" as Turkish examples of tenfüür-i huruf are not as persuasive as the Arabic example taken from the Telhiş24.

'Abdūrrahmān however, resists the temptation to pursue these lines of criticism, preferring instead to dwell on those elements which are irrelevant to Cevdet Paşa's presentation. He devotes three-quarters of a page to pointing out that "müsteşâr" does not mean "mürtefî", and devotes several lines to arguing that "ıstatistik" (Fr. statistique) should be correctly spelt "statistik"; while he concedes that its orthography has not yet been established in some languages (among which we presume he includes Ottoman); he uses this fact as an argument for including it in the section dealing with garəbət rather than tenfüür. It is curious that he should wish to dwell on this illustration as he seems to be in ignorance of its meaning, equation it with "mizāniye" (budgeting or balancing of accounts). Although 'Abdūrrahmān may have felt uneasy about the inclusion of "işsiz" and "güçsüz" within the category of tenfüür, he does not object to them, but rather seems to accept them implicitly when he offers the phrase "tuzsus şanâlî" from the text of the Beliğat-i 'Osmaniye as a more convincing illustration of this fault 25. This attack on Cevdet's style falls short of its mark in three aspects: firstly, while Cevdet objects to a combination of a çim or a şin with a sün, he may well have considered them quite compatible with ta, or za; secondly as "şana'lı" is ğasıh in itself, one may presume that 'Abdūrrahmān disapproved of the construction "tuzsus şanâlı", in which case what is being illustrated is not tenfüür-i huruf, but rather tenfüür-i kelimât; finally, the implication that Cevdet Paşa's own style lacks førâhat does not in any way invalidate his argument.

'Abdūrrahmān's unbridled zeal in casting doubt on the quality of the scholarship in the Beliğat-i 'Osmaniye allows him unwittingly to criticise Cevdet's interpretation of his own poetic composition. The Menâzûrû'l-lnsâ illustrates ta'şid with the following beyt26:

24 Telhiş, p. 24.
26 For an analysis of the Menâzûrû'l-lnsâ, see C. Ferrard, "The Development of an Ottoman Rhetoric up to 1882: Part II" Osmanî Araştırmaları, IV, 19-21.
Men ne-mı-ayem ez ân der kây-ı tî
Tâ tîvânem did dâ′îm rûy-ı tî

which Cevdet translates into Turkish as:

Dergeh-i luftûne gelmem zîrâ
Seni her dem göre-bilmek dilerem (p. 20)

Cevdet, following the Menâşrû ‘-İnsâ, interprets this beyt as meaning: «to come to the convent of the beloved presumes absence from him. The [writer’s] wish is that he may return from exile and always be there [in the presence of his beloved]. In other words, I will not leave your convent, because I wish to see you always» (p. 15).

This explanation is too far-fetched for ‘Abdürrâşmân, who, seemingly unaware that this illustrative beyt was a translation of a Persian original, attributes its composition to a dervish, no doubt suggested to him by the word «dergeh», which is employed by Cevdet in a purely figurative sense.

The commentary offers several more observations and criticisms and, leaving off at page eighteen of the Belâğat-i ‘Osmâniye, recommences at page twenty-eight with renewed vigour, ‘Abdürrâşmân devotes more than nine pages to a critique of the first two pages of the lâhûka (pp. 28-29). The Ta'lîfât does not offer a consistent treatment of the text, rather it alights only on those passages which offer scope for criticism. Not all of it is groundless however; on several occasions ‘Abdürrâşmân identifies faults in the Belâğat-i ‘Osmâniye. Cevdet Paşa’s felicitous rendition of the Arabic formula, «Lâ üâ-ke ulla ‘lâhâ», as «Yoğdur ıapaca Çalabdır ancağ», is criticised by ‘Abdürrâşmân, who felt that the translation made for bad Turkish and offers the pedantic alternative: Çalabdan başka ıapaca ıok- dur. While our commentator is hypercritical of Cevdet’s definition of mûhâlefet-i ıyâs on several grounds, all of which are tenuous, he does however make one sound observation, but in a footnote, almost as an afterthought: the definition, «Kıyâsa mûhâlefet: kelîmenî, ıavāid-i ‘Osmâniyeye ve ehî-i lîsâni isti’mâline mûhâlîf olmasîdir», he points out, is tautological”.

27 Ta’lîfât, 24-25. Cevdet’s version, «Yoğdur ıapaca Çalabdür ancağ», is couched in the form generally associated with Turkish proverbs, e.g. «Tacîdan ıorâna ıuldan ıorâma» or «Taş atar uğur arar». 
The Tar'likat can best be characterised as a vehicle for a personal attack on Cevdet Paşa, rather than a constructive review of his work. 'Abdürrahmân Şüreyyâ does not seem to represent an ideological viewpoint; the bases of his criticism and the form in which they are couched suggest that the author is venting his personal dislike of Cevdet Paşa rather than reviewing the Belğat-i 'Osmâniye in a constructive way. The commentator's contempt for the Paşa is evident in many passages, and it is obvious even to the most casual reader that the aim of his commentary is to discredit Cevdet's scholarship. However, certain passages, such as the three-page gloss on the word «muşaddimes», do not offer any criticism of Cevdet's treatment, being an extrapolation of the text, totally irrelevant, but in no sense hostile to it. These passages may well have been included in order that the Tar'likat could be presented as a commentary rather than a critique, so that the true purpose of the composition could be disguised, a direct attack on an eminent statesman such as Cevdet Paşa by a correspondent of the Coride-i 'Askeriye being considered unacceptable.

The basis for 'Abdürrahmân's enmity for Cevdet Paşa is not clear from the text of the Tar'likat, any suggestion will of necessity be speculative. The impression left by the Tar'likat is that its author was a scholar of the old school, educated in a medrese, and completely immersed in the trivial arguments fostered by a system of education which could only accommodate itself to changing social values by the introduction of yet a further gloss to the body of commentary on a text written several centuries before. This accords with the fact that he was born and partly educated in Baghdad where, we may presume, he received a good grounding in the traditional sciences, and this may have aroused in him resentment against Cevdet, whom he may have perceived as undermining the status of the Arabic language by translating the Arabic sciences into a Turkish context. Although the official language of government had always been Turkish, the language of higher education was Arabic, this fact alone offering an advantage to scholars in the Arab lands which partly made up for their disadvantage of living at a distance from the centre of the Empire, Istanbul. Cevdet Paşa's plans to replace the medium of instruction with Turkish would have effectively removed this advantage.
Although the Ta'lıfat required no refutation, the triviality of the points raised in the work serving best to relegate it to the dusty shelves of scholastic pedantry whence Cevdet Paşa was attempting to drag the Ottoman educational system, it did however attract two rebuttals. The first of these, entitled the Hall-i Ta'lıfat was written by a student of the Mekteb-i Hukuk, who otherwise remains anonymous. In a later work entitled the Redd-i Taḥsil, the identity of the student is revealed as 'Ali Sedad Bey, Cevdet Paşa's son. In the introduction, which is remarkable for its freedom from stylistic artifice normally associated with the dibace to a work, he accuses 'Abdürrahman of perpetrating many errors, some of which he will attempt to correct, leaving the majority of them to someone more competent than himself in Turkish composition.

The format of the Hall-i Ta'lıfat is that of a review, 'Ali Sedad takes each offensive passage, quotes it in full, and then subjects 'Abdürrahman's opinion to critical analysis. The work is uncompromisingly hostile to the Ta'lıfat, no attempt being made to disguise the author's animosity. In reacting to the trivial nature of the critique presented by the Ta'lıfat, 'Ali Sedad is led to replying in an equally petty manner. It would, indeed, be too much to expect a student to rise above the mediocrity of his elders and to abandon the time-honoured format of serial commentary on a text, in which every opportunity for an attack on the author is relentlessly pursued to its logical end and often beyond. It Cevdet Paşa's son would have done himself more credit had he merely ignored the Ta'lıfat, allowing it to condemn itself. It may be assumed therefore that 'Ali Sedad's counter-attack stemmed not only from filial duty, but was a response to a body of opinion current at the time.

The method of presentation of the Hall-i Ta'lıfat is less like a classical commentary than an undergraduate review, which in fact is precisely what it is. More than half the work consists of quotation from the Ta'lıfat, 'Ali Sedad's contribution being purely critical. This technique is effective in that it presents the arguments of the Ta'lıfat in toto, allowing the reader to appreciate their banalitiy. The refutations, which in some cases consist of only a few words, are often restricted to short contradictory sentences. When, for example, the Ta'lıfat criticises Cevdet Paşa's Turkish style, the
Hall merely observes that «Orasını Türkçe bilenlerden şormalı» (p. 6). The effect of this type of brief response is to dismiss with contempt the contribution of the Ta'rikat, as for example, when the Hall offers the following appreciation of a beyt, considered the model of elegance by ‘Abdürrahmân: «İste bu beyt Kürdeyi ağırlar» (p. 27). There is no doubt that this insult refers to ‘Abdürrahmân's ethnic origin; in a previous comment ‘Alî Sedâd questioned ‘Abdürrahmân's competence to pronounce judgement on selâset thus: «Eş'âr-ı Osmanlıyênin selasetini üdeba-yi Osmanlıye aîlər, yoîsa Türkçe bilmem bir Kûrî aîlayamaz» (p. 26). ‘Alî Sedâd will however argue his case at some length when he feels it is necessary.

Prefixing the formula «Bi-’llah mine ’ş-şeytani ’r-recam» to the bismillâh, ‘Alî Sedâd begins his work with a studied insult, and then proceeds to the text of the Ta’rikat, where he objects to the suggestion that «milel-i mütemeddine» or «akvam-i mütemeddine» would have been preferable to Cevdet’s «Tava’if-i mütemeddine». ‘Alî Sedâd maintains that a millet (singular of «milel») is a social group based on religion, and as every schoolchild knows from his catechism (‘ilm-i fâl), nation and religion are one and the same. The argument is not well developed, and far from clear. Our law student seems to have erroneously presumed that «mütemeddine» (radicals: M-D-N) is derived from «dîn» (radicals: D-Y-N), and therefore objects to the tautological expression «milel-i mütemeddine». «Tava’if», he believes, is a commonly used expression in Ottoman, and needs no gloss or explanation, indeed servile dependence on etymological derivations culled from the Arabic lexicon can often lead to errors (pp. 4-5). In other words he is implicitly adopting the position that commonly used Ottoman words have their own validity, based on the usage of the people; to ascribe to them significations based exclusively on their original form in the language from which they have been borrowed will produce nonsense: common usage and the context will always be the surest guide. It is unfortunate that his lapse into grave error on a question of etymology will inevitably arouse in the reader the suspicion that ‘Alî Sedâd’s mistrust of the Arabic lexicon stems from his weakness in the language rather than his concern for defending the authority of Ottoman usage. Following the gloss on «Tava’if Mütemeddine» in
the «Ta'likt, he takes issue with the grammatical analysis of the construction: 'Ali Sedad read it as a terkib-i vasfi (!) rather than as an ızəfet, and in either case would have preferred «mütemeddine» to have been written with a «ta'-i ıvaılı» (sic!). It is clear that 'Ali Sedad's views are unacceptable, not only according to the canons of Arabic grammar, but even in the context of Ottoman usage.

Many of the criticisms levelled against the Ta'likt are on questions of Ottoman usage: when 'Abdürrahmān objects to the use of «diyānet» in the phrase «diyānet-i İslamiye», presumably preferring «dīm», 'Ali Sedad points out that the word, far from being unacceptable, is commonly used and he encourages his readers to continue using it (p. 6). Dealing with the word «istatistik», 'Ali Sedad rejects the explanation offered in the Ta'likt on the grounds that the word had been used for several years and there was no longer any need to explain its origins. Ottoman usage required the initial hemze to allow it to be more easily pronounced, its original form being irrelevant in the light of popular acceptance in the Ottoman orthography.

However, 'Ali Sedad is unable to divest himself of all the conventions of classical scholarship, and will occasionally have recourse to the authorities, as when he quotes a passage from the Muṣavvel, restricting his own comment to: «Buraları görülmüş olsaydı, böyle şübheye düştüılmemdi» (p. 28). Far more significant is the way in which he mercilessly exploits the fact that 'Abdürrahmān had failed to recognise that a beyt quoted by Cevdet Paşa was a translation from the Persian of the Menāẓūrī 'l-Inṣā. He subsequently cites the book as an authority, and expresses the opinion that it had not been studied by the commentator (p. 23).

Although the Hail-i Ta'likt consists of little more than a series of ill-prepared arguments, dwelling on trivia, and motivated by a passionate desire to discredit a scholar of the old school, it can nevertheless be presented as an inarticulate plea for a fresh approach to the Ottoman language. Our student author is appealing for the abandonment of the accepted principles governing the writing of Ottoman, the time-honoured criteria founded on the didactic classification of the Arabic linguistic sciences, which having been brought to fruition through centuries of scholasticism and subse-
quently fossilised in a body of knowledge, every bit as immutable as the holy scriptures, now held the Ottoman language in the vice of pietist conservatism. Ottoman was for ‘Ali Sedad, a dynamic living language, fully entitled to borrow and adapt features from other languages without the necessity of submitting to the constraints of grammar and orthography or usage peculiar to the language of the source. «İstatistik», he argues implicitly, is an Ottoman word borrowed from French and phonetically adapted to suit the Ottoman speaker, the original orthography and pronunciation being irrelevant to all but the pedant.

The Ta’līkāt attracted a second commentary, the Temyüz-i Ta’līkāt by el-Ḥäcc İbrāhīm (d. 1891), an Arabic scholar who had studied in the Hicaz and subsequently moved to Istanbul where he opened the Darū ‘i-Ta’lim, a private school which aimed at providing an education in the Arabic language and literature in five years. The Temyüz, representing the first of his contributions to the study of the classical languages, was followed by a commentary on the Belğat-i ‘Osmāniye (1301/1883); and two translations of Arabic work on grammar, Naḥv Tercemesi and the Şarif Tercemesi (both 1304/1886); and a work on literature the Edebiyät-i ‘Osmāniye (1305/1887).

El-Ḥäcc İbrāhīm professes to having been shocked by the manner and severity of the criticism offered in the Ta’līkāt. It is, he maintains, conventional for commentators and super-commentators to present criticism in an acceptable form, the purpose of their work being a sincere desire to establish the truth of the matter (hakikat-i ḫal). As the author of the Ta’līkāt had overstepped the bounds of propriety, El-Ḥäcc İbrāhīm felt it incumbent upon himself to correct some of the errors in the work. It is interesting to note that the function of commentary is perceived as that of «establishing the truth» (hakikat-i ḫal meydana çıkmak) and not of understanding, interpreting, or presenting it to the student.

The Temyüz-i Ta’līkāt defends Cevdet Paşa’s contribution to the study of belğat against the unwarranted attacks of ‘Abdūrrahmān.

28 Ṭürkçe Mu‘ellifleri, I, 287; O. Ergin, Türkiye Maarif Tarihi, III (İstanbul, 1941), 777-781.
However no matter how much he may pretend to be shocked by the hostile tone adopted by the Ta'liktat, his own work is not free from the petty insults and gibes which characterise both the Ta'liktat and the Hall, and the standard of scholarship evinced in it is not worthy of a schoolteacher. As we cannot reasonably accept that the principal motivation for this critique was a sincere desire to further the cause of the study of Turkish rhetoric, we are justified in presuming that El-Hac İbrahim is intent on discrediting 'Abdülrahman, either for reasons of personal enmity or in the hope that by doing so he may attract the favourable opinion of the great statesman who was author of the Belaghat-i Osmanîye.

In form, the Temyiz-i Ta'liktat resembles very much the Hall-i Ta'liktat, and what is more curious, is the fact that many of the ideas, arguments and choice of word and phrase suggests that one of these works is dependent on the other. The criticism levelled at the Ta'liktat in many of the passages are based on the same criteria in each of the works, and what is more damning, both works fall into similar errors, as when the Temyiz objects to the tautological expression, «mile-e mütemeddine», based on the paradigm that millet and din are one, and the mistaken presumption that «mütemeddine» is derived from the root of «din». Internal evidence would tend to suggest that the Temyiz plagiarised the Hall, of which it is about half the size, and argues only a third of the issues raised in the latter work; of these only five quotations from the Ta'liktat are not to be found in the Hall. Apart from the textual evidence, there are very good reasons for postulating that the Hall appeared prior to the publication of the Temyiz. When 'Abdülrahman wrote his rebuttal to these two books, he divided it into two sections, the first of which dealt with the Hall, and the second with the Temyiz. One of 'Ali Sedâd's subsequent critical reviews of the Ta'liktat is entitled the Ikmal-i Temyiz, which is devoted to the part of the Ta'liktat which the Temyiz omitted to deal with, its very title suggesting that it was intended to supplement the Temyiz, which must, therefore, have appeared prior to it, but presumably after the Hall.

The author of the Temyiz is guilty not only of too literal a dependence on the Hall, but also of misrepresenting the work he is reviewing. On one occasion he totally distorts 'Abdülrahman's ex-
planation, and then proceeds to attack it, not forgetting to add to it a calculated insult. The Ta‘līkāt analyses “Tava‘if-i Mütêmeddine” thus:

“Bu taşdirce ‘Tava‘if-i Mütêmeddine’ lafzına izâfesi şifatı ve mevşûfa izâfesi kabîlinden club, şifat müfred ve mevşûf cem’ olmak hasebi-yile şifat ve mevşûfün ‘adem-i muşâbâkası gibi bir kâ‘idesizlik hâşûra gelirse de her bir cem’, cem’at ‘tibâri-yile hem müfred ve hem de mü‘ennen olduğundan muşâbâkat hâšûl olmuş olur.” (p. 5)

The Temyîz, however, argues:

“Şifat ve mevşûf cem’ olmak hasebi-yile şifat ve mevşûf ‘adem-i muşâbâkası gibi bir kâ‘idesizlik hâşûra geliyor, demesi dahi yüksek almıyor, çünkü bundan evvel şâhib-i Ta‘līkât Tava‘ife şifat ve mütêmeddineye mevşûf demiş idi. Burada ise şifat müfred ve mevşûf cem’dir diyor ki bundan Tava‘ife müfred ve mütêmeddenilen cem’ olmasi lazım geliyor. Subîhana’llah, bu ne kadar galat ve ne kadar gasledir.” (p. 5)

The Taḥîl-i Hall, by ‘Abdürrahmân Şüreyya, appeared soon after the publication of the Temyîz-i Ta‘līkât, and was intended as a refutation of the attacks made on the Ta‘līkât, by both the Hall and the Temyîz, and is accordingly divided into two sections. The first of these is no more than a concentrated ‘counter-attack on the Hall, from which eighty-three passages are quoted and refuted; ‘Abdürrahmân concentrates on the task of parrying each of ‘Ali Sedâd’s criticisms, allowing himself no digressions. The triviality of the arguments render the work virtually unreadable to all but the partisans of the debate. The second section of the Taḥîl is devoted to answering the criticism presented in the Temyîz, most of which are exactly the same as those of the Hall, and not surprisingly he goes
over much of the same material covered in the first section. 'Abdurrahmān does, however, restrict himself to answering only fifteen of the criticisms levelled against the Ta'ālīkāt, and allows himself more space in which to argue his points. This second section is in essence as trivial in argument as the first, but by confining the debate to a limited number of topics, it is rendered far more readable than the former, which hardly has the dignity of a literary debate.

In order to counter 'Abdurrahmān's Taḥīl-i Ḥall, 'Ali Sedād joined with two of his fellow students from the Mekteb-i ʿUṣūl, Maḥmūd Esʿad and Meḥmed Fālīk, in the authorship of a work entitled the Redd-i Taḥīl, which is unredeemed by any intrinsic merit, reducing the arguments to absurdity. Whereas the Taḥīl presents the material in the form of a script with three dramatis personae, the Taʿālīkāt, the Ḥall and the cewāb, the Redd-i Taḥīl adds yet another, so that in some of the eighty-two individual topics of debate the dialogue is developed through the texts of the Taʿālīkāt, the Ḥall, the Taḥīl and the Redd. Many of the points are not argued but are merely repetitions of previously-stated positions, an economy of language, even to the point of incomprehensibility, being the keynote in this work. The following dialogue (p. 19), although the briefest and therefore an extreme example, can with some justification be considered indicative of the tenor of the whole work:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ḥall} & : \text{İkisi muğaf ileyhi ilh [i̇lā ašiṛi-hi]} \\
\text{Taḥīl} & : \text{Bu da yahli̇g̣ḍir.} \\
\text{Redd} & : \text{Ni̇çin?}
\end{align*}
\]

Not satisfied with having the last word in this debate, Maḥmūd Esʿad and 'Ali Sedād each prepared a further word which was intended to supplement the Temple-i Taʿālīkāt. The first of these, the İtmām-i Temple, by Maḥmūd Esʿad, is devoted to a discussion of three epistemological questions raised in the Belağat-i 'Oğmāniye and subjected to criticism in the Taʿālīkāt. The İkmāl-i Temple, by 'Ali Sedād, was published five days after the İtmām, and is in both appearance and content very similar to it. In the İkmāl we find western sources cited for the first time in the course of this debate. 'Ali Sedād introduces Descartes' epistemological argument, summed up in
the syllogism, «cogito ergo sum», by way of a fresh approach to the classical presentation (pp. 5-8). The rest of the book is devoted to discussing issues raised by four passages in the Təlıkät. This essay concludes with the advice that the reader should refer to the European sciences in order to understand the relationship between rhetoric and logic (p. 24).

The last contribution to the debate, the Nasıre-i Təlıkät, is ostensibly the work of 'Abdürrahmān Şüreyya. However the sarcastic tone of the work - it is in fact a parody of the pedantic style which characterised some of these polemics - casts doubt on the authorship of this lithograph. As a contribution to the discussion of the merits of the Belağaät-i 'Osmâniye, it is worthless, serving only to illustrate the bitterness that could be engendered by a debate such as this 29.

The importance of this polemic lies not in its content, but rather as an illustration of the primitive level to which literary criticism had sunk in the early period of 'Abdülmãd's reign. The scholarship evinced is at best trivial; but worse, it is faulty, truth and accuracy having fallen victim to vituperation. Although the style and format is that of the classical gloss, these works were mere parodies of commentaries, the real function of which is to view a body of received knowledge, in the light of new experience and perspective. These works, with the sole exception of the İkmâl-i Temyâz, make no attempt to introduce new ideas from the West, thus retaining the faults of the classical mode of presentation without the redeeming feature of some new idea worth communicating. If this controversy mirrors the intellectual ambiance in which the Belağaät-i 'Osmâniye was written, - and there is no reason to assume that it did not - then we can only liken Cevdet Paşa's contribution to that of the sower casting his seed on stony ground.

It would seem that for many of the «idebâ»}, the sole criterion for critical appraisal was whether the statement was true or not.

29 This work was described by a contemporary thus: «Heyhat, bunlar [the previous works in the controversy] kâfî değişmiş de bir başqa eglence daha lâzım imiş. O da eâ şofra kimi (araşdand neçr olunduğu bilâmiyeyi teyîf-sâmedir ki: ser-s-pa eglenceden ibaret olub muhâvediyiinden bir netice-i edebîye çıkaranlamaz.» (Câzerîn, Belğât [İstanbul, 1304/1886], p. 10).
Furthermore a partial truth or proximity towards it, seems as unsatisfactory to the commentator as complete falsehood, nothing less than the complete and absolute truth will do. At no point in the debate, is the question raised as to whether the Belağat-i ‘Osmānye is successful in its goal of providing a suitable text-book for students. This fault is common to much of classical Arabic scholarship, the same criteria of criticism being employed for all written works, whether they be addressed to the schoolboy, the student or the scholar. Even the defenders of the work fail to make the point that the Belağat-i ‘Osmānye succeeds in its goal of providing law students with a text-book for the study of the Ottoman language, and as such, filled a serious gap in the new syllabus. They, too, are totally committed to the quest for the absolute truth of the statement rather than the utility of the work. Nowhere do these literary critics attempt to balance the deficiencies of the work against its merits.

The introductions to some of these works which have been discussed allow us to form some idea of the society for which the Belağat-i ‘Osmānye was written. The social life of much of the intelligentsia of Istanbul consisted of literary soirées where students and teachers discussed the latest works and ideas. Cevdet Paşa’s work must certainly have circulated in these gatherings and would naturally have provoked discussion. Whereas we might have expected a negative reaction to an essentially conservative work to have come from the modernists with their insatiable appetite for western ideas, the opposite was the case: ‘Abdülrahmān’s objections emanated from his anxiety to preserve the authority of Arabic grammatical principles in the Ottoman language. His opponents, on the other hand, merely took the moderate viewpoint that the Ottoman language had its own integrity, and was free to develop without the constraints imposed by adherence to a system of grammatical rules alien to Turkish morphology and syntax.

Cevdet Paşa’s contributions to Ottoman grammar and rhetoric had the effect of endowing the language with an autonomy it had

30 See the introductions to the Ta‘lif-i, the Hall and the Temyiz, where the authors explain that the idea of writing their works came about in the course of literary soirées.
previously lacked. Ottoman had hitherto developed as a body of conventions, unrestricted by a universally accepted theory of style. It was a language divorced from scholarship, being the property of the governing class; scholars discussed literary theory only in respect of Arabic. By introducing the study of Ottoman language and rhetoric into the educational system, Cevdet Paşa had broken the monopoly which Arabic had held in the field of literary theory.

It is only in the light of this controversy that we can appreciate the value of the *Belägat-i 'Osmaniye*. It initiated a debate, in which Cevdet Paşa was implicitly proposing that the Ottoman language was a viable medium of communication, and possessed all the attributes of a language, a morphology, a syntax and a rhetoric, characteristics which many Islamic scholars conceived of as being peculiar to Arabic. Opposing the proposition, lay a body of opinion which believed that the criteria for determining correct Ottoman were to be found in the classical theory of the Arabic linguistic sciences.

One cannot divorce this debate from its historical background: in 1881 'Abdüllâhîm had barely consolidated his basis of support in the state, most of the Balkan territories had been lost, and the Arab *cilâyets* had acquired an importance within the Empire previously denied them. As the parliament of 1876 had been prorogued, there was no forum in which the Arab intelligentsia could voice their claim to a greater share in the direction of state policy. It may be argued that one way in which Arab scholars could exert their influence in the cultural reorientation of the Empire was by demanding that the Ottoman language adhere more closely to the rules of Arabic grammar, rather than merely pay lip-service to some of the conventions of the language from which it had so freely borrowed its vocabulary.

It is significant that 'Abdürrâhîm Şüreyyâ had been educated in an Arab province, his prestige as a scholar undoubtedly depending to some extent on his skill in Arabic, an advantage which he would naturally wish to guard jealously. It is unfortunate that his education conditioned him to argue his case at its most trivial level. While one might have wished that the other participants had raised the tone of the debate, it should be remembered that they too were probably products of the same educational system. In this respect
the debate is of crucial significance to the study of Ottoman rhetoric: it illustrates most vividly the intellectual ambiance in which both the Belağat-i ‘Osmâniye and the Ta'lüm-i Edebiyat were written. The appallingly low standard of critical awareness current in this period gives to these works a preeminence which intrinsically they do not merit.

It is ironic that an essentially conservative work such as the Belağat-i ‘Osmâniye was able to arouse an impassioned debate on language in a way that neither the Mehâni ‘l-İnşa, the Ta'lüm-i Edebiyat nor Nâşik Kemâl’s «Müllâhâzât» had done31. These latter works were influential, but their revolutionary nature deprived them of a wider readership, the concepts discussed therein being so unfamiliar to contemporary society that the reaction to them remained one of cautious silence. Western criteria of literary criticism — indeed the very concept of «a literature» — was alien to most Ottomans with a traditional education. Cevdet’s book elicits a response precisely because all the concepts are familiar, it discusses not «literature» but language, a field of study with which the Islamic sciences could cope adequately. By offering a new handbook of rhetoric to his students, Cevdet Paşa provoked a reaction which focused the students’ attention on language. Some of ‘Ali Sedâd’s observations could well have been in response to Kemâl’s plea for a new and more pragmatic approach to Ottoman language, but they were not: rather they evolved naturally as replies to ‘Abdûrrahmân’s pedantic criticisms. Cevdet Paşa had, in other words unwittingly introduced the Turkish language into the arguments and debates which had previously characterised the discussion of Arabic within the medreses, and it was now able to benefit from the highly developed theory of language, up to then applied only to Arabic.

31 See C. Ferrand «The Development of an Ottoman Rhetoric up to 1882», Osmanlı Araştırmaları, IV, 23-27.