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## THE IMPACT OF TURKISH ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE – AN OVERVIEW OF BORROWING IN THE MANIFOLD LEXICAL DOMAINS INFLUENCED BY TURKISH OVER THE CENTURIES

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### Der Einfluss des Türkischen auf die englische Sprache – Ein Überblick über Entlehnungen in den vielfältigen lexikalischen Bereichen, die im Laufe der Jahrhunderte vom Türkischen beeinflusst wurden

#### Abstrakt

Der vorliegende Artikel beleuchtet den türkischen Einfluss auf das englische Vokabular im Laufe der Jahrhunderte. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie basieren auf einer genauen Analyse eines umfassenden lexikographischen Korpus türkischer Entlehnungen, die im *Oxford English Dictionary Online* erfasst sind. Diese Studie gibt einen Überblick über die Vielfalt der Sach- und Lebensbereiche, die im Laufe der Zeit vom Türkischen beeinflusst wurden. In bestehenden Untersuchungen wurde dies bisher nur wenig berücksichtigt. Auf der Grundlage ihrer Bedeutungen wurden die verschiedenen Wörter türkischen Ursprungs in verschiedene semantische Bereiche eingeteilt, angefangen bei den Naturwissenschaften, der Gastronomie, über Leute und Alltag bis hin zu Glaube und Religion. Es werden eine Reihe typischer Beispiele für Entlehnungen aufgeführt, um die Auswirkungen des Türkischen auf das englische Vokabular aus historischer Sicht zu veranschaulichen.

**Schlüsselwörter:** Lexikologie, Online-Wörterbücher in lexikologischer Recherche, Sprachkontakt, der Einfluss des Türkischen aufs Englische.

## Abstract

The present article sets out to shed light on the Turkish influence on the English vocabulary over the centuries. The results provided by this study rely on a close analysis of a comprehensive lexicographical sample of Turkish borrowings listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. This study will provide an overview of the diversity of subject areas and spheres of life influenced by Turkish down the ages, which has as yet been considered little in existing investigations. On the basis of their meanings, the various Turkish-derived items have been grouped into several different semantic domains, ranging from the natural sciences, gastronomy, people and everyday life to faith and religion. A number of typical examples of borrowings will be given, in order to illustrate the impact of Turkish on the English lexicon from a historical point of view.

**Keywords:** Lexicology, Online dictionaries in lexicological research, language contact, Turkish influence on English.

## Introduction

Turkish represents a fairly minor donor language of words and meanings in the history of the English language. Yet, a number of lexical items have been borrowed from Turkish over the centuries which have become fairly common in English. The present paper will focus on the variety of lexical domains influenced by Turkish down the ages. Much value will be attached to comparatively widespread Turkish borrowings<sup>1</sup> which have made it into common usage.

The results presented in this article are based on the analysis of a comprehensive corpus of 207 Turkish borrowings collected from the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. The *OED* is being completely revised for the first time. The *OED* can be viewed online at <<http://www.oed.com>>, comprising the second edition of 1989 (*OED2*), the *OED Additions Series* of 1993 and 1997, and a multitude of updated and new lexical entries making up the third edition of the *OED*. The *OED Online* is being complemented every quarter with linguistic documentary evidence.<sup>2</sup> It includes a search option with which all the Turkish-derived words and senses can be retrieved from the dictionary: *Advanced Search: entries containing "Turkish" in "Etymology."*

A close evaluation of the numbers and proportions of borrowings included in the *OED* shows that words of Turkish origin have been introduced into English since about 1500. Serjeantson (1935: 232) rightly points out that

During the sixteenth century, English merchants, particularly the Levant Company, were trading with Constantinople by way of the Mediterranean, while others made their way to Turkey by the overland route. At this period the first direct loans from

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<sup>1</sup> *Borrowing* is the conventional expression for the process by which a word or a meaning is adopted from one language into another. It can also refer to the word or sense which is taken over in this process.

<sup>2</sup> For comprehensive information about the overhaul of the *OED* see Durkin (1999: 1–49).

Turkish into English were made. Among the sixteenth-century loanwords *turban*, *coffee*, and *caviare* are the best known; most of the words borrowed in this and the following century are names of Turkish products, or classes of people. During the eighteenth century there is an almost complete lack of Turkish loans, but a number of new words appear in the nineteenth century.

The majority of borrowings currently included in the *OED* entered the English language in the nineteenth century, among them an essential number of words derived from Ottoman Turkish, a variety of Turkish used for administrative and literary purposes in the Ottoman Empire. It was considered the official language of the Ottoman state during the reform period (also referred to as the *Tanzimat*) which emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the government tried to promote a common Ottoman identity among the Turkish population in a modernized state. The replacement of Ottoman Turkish by modern Turkish in official contexts was due to the Ottoman defeat in the First World War, which led to the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 (see also Kadercan 2017: 158–76). In 1928, the then President Atatürk initiated a writing reform as part of his policies, replacing the previously used Arabic-script alphabet with a Latin spelling system. The reader should observe that the *OED* records the Romanized forms of all the Turkish-derived lexical items, as is true for *pasha*, a borrowing from Ottoman Turkish which was initially spelt *پاشا* in line with the Arabic writing system.

The collection of Turkish borrowings was retrieved from the *OED Online* in March 2021. At that time, the *OED* did not document any lexical item which was taken over into English in the twenty-first century. The latest word that has been given a Turkish word origin in the *OED* dates from 1986.

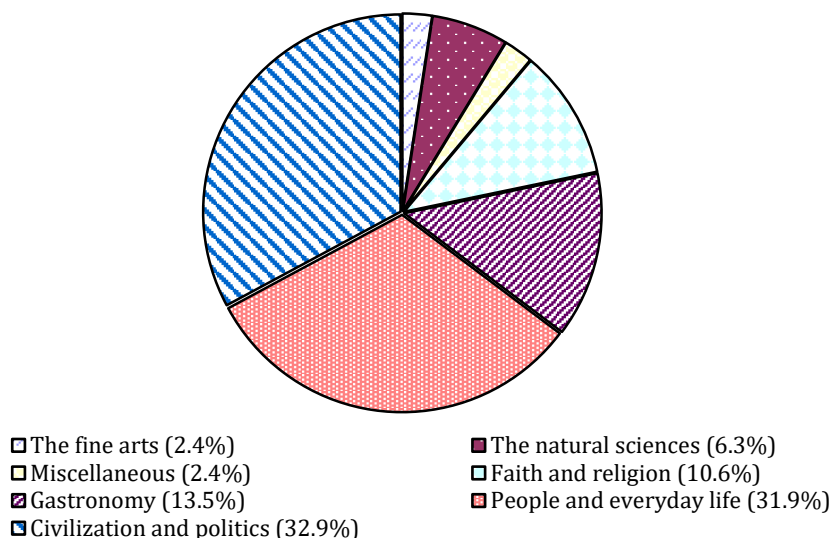
The list of borrowings under investigation also comprises a number of lexical items showing a complex etymology, i.e. lexical items which were partly influenced by Turkish and partly by another foreign language. All the different types of borrowed words and meanings attested in the *OED* were taken into account in this investigation. The various Turkish-derived items were identified as taken over from Turkish as the immediate source language. For example, the word *saz*, '[a] stringed instrument similar to the tamboura, found in Turkey, North Africa, and the Near East' (*OED2*), was categorized as a borrowing of the synonymous Turkish *saz*, although the Turkish original goes back to Persian *sāz* 'musical instrument' (*OED2*).

## Lexical-semantic domains influenced by Turkish

The total number of words and phrases<sup>3</sup> showing a Turkish word origin in their etymological description in the *OED Online* is 207 lexical items. The

<sup>3</sup> The grammatical terminology employed in the present paper is based on Quirk et al.'s *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (1985). For the concept of the term *phrase* see Quirk et al. (1985: 2.3ff and 2.25ff).

various borrowings were categorized into six subject areas and their subcategories. The assignment of highly specific, technical vocabulary was based on its classification in the *OED*. Yet, the general division of the Turkish-derived items is my own. Figure 1 reflects the proportions of the borrowings in the six overriding subject fields.



**Figure 1.** The proportion of Turkish borrowings in the various lexical-semantic domains

The following provides an overview of the numbers and percentages of the borrowed words and phrases in the different lexical-semantic domains with their related subfields. Domains including a comparatively high number of borrowings follow fields where the influence of Turkish was less intense. For each field, several illustrative examples of Turkish borrowings have been provided:

### **(1) The fine arts (five borrowings, i.e. 2.4%)**

(1.1) The arts and crafts (one borrowing, i.e. 0.5%), e.g. *macramé*, n. (1865), "[a] fringe or trimming of knotted string, thread, or cord; openwork formed by such knotting" (*OED3*).

(1.2) Music (four borrowings, i.e. 2.0%), e.g. *zill*, n. (1754), a variety of cymbal; *ney*, n. (1756), a type of flute; *saz*, n. (1870), a type of musical instrument resembling the tamboura; *zurna*, n. (1870), a musical instrument similar to a bagpipe.

### **(2) The natural sciences (thirteen borrowings, i.e. 6.3%)**

(2.1) Mineralogy (one borrowing, i.e. 0.5%), e.g. *medjidite*, n. (1848), a type of mineral.

(2.2) Botany (one borrowing, i.e. 0.5%), e.g. *Prophet flower*, n. phr. (1861).

(2.3) Zoology (three borrowings, i.e. 1.4%), e.g. *jackal*, n. (1603), a species of dog; *trehala*, n. (1862), a type of zoological substance found in insects; *Abdim*, n. (1867).

(2.4) Geography (eight borrowings, i.e. 3.9%), e.g. *samiel*, n. (1687), a variety of storm; *Rumelian*, adj. (1756), "a region in the Balkan peninsula formerly ruled by the Ottoman Empire" (OED3); *embat*, n. (1765), a type of wind occurring in Egypt; *meltemi*, n. (1765), a type of wind; *Balkan*, adj. and n. (1785), a geographical region; *Stambouline*, adj. and n. (1812), the Turkish designation of Constantinople; *kara-buran*, n. (1903), a type of wind in Asia; *yardang*, n. (1904), a feature in physical geography.

### (3) Faith and religion (twenty-two borrowings, i.e. 10.6%)

e.g. *Ramadan*, n. (about 1500); *dervish*, n. (1585), "[a] Muslim friar, who has taken vows of poverty and austere life" (OED2); *greenhead*, n. (assuming a meaning from Turkish in 1585), an obsolete term for "[a] person entitled to wear a green turban as a descendant of the prophet Muhammad" (OED3); *Bairam*, n. (1599), a religious feast; *softa*, n. (1603), a historical term for "a student at a madrasa; a student of Islamic law and theology" or, in later use, a depreciative term for "a religious fanatic; a bigot." (OED3); *Islam*, n. (1613); *mullah*, n. (1613), an expert in Islam; *madrasa*, n. (1616), "a school of Islamic theology and law" (OED3); *fatwa*, n. (1625), "[a] formal, authoritative ruling on a point of Islamic law" (OED3); *Mussulmanlik*, n. (1625), an obsolete term for "Islam; the religion of Muslims" (OED3); *namaz*, n. (1625), a type of prayer; *abdest*, n. (1667), a certain religious ritual; *Zindiq*, n. (1667), "an adherent of any of various sects considered to be heretical; a heretic; an irreligious person" (OED3); *tekke*, n. (1668), "[a] monastery of dervishes, esp. in Ottoman Turkey" (OED2); *Yazidi*, n. (1668), the name of a certain religious group; *minaret*, n. (1675), "[a] tall tower or turret connected with a mosque and surrounded by one or more projecting balconies from which a muezzin calls at hours of prayer" (OED3); *ulema*, n. (1688), a group of experts in Muslim faith and religion; *baba*, n. (1759), "[a] spiritual leader or minister of religion of a Sufi (esp. Bektashi) order", "the head of a tekke" (OED3); *woodoo*, n. (1794), "[t]he minor ablution of the Muslims" (OED2); *Iftar*, n. (1832), "[t]he breaking of the fast, after sunset, during Ramadan; the meal eaten at this time" (OED3); *millet*, n. (1861), "a division of the population according to religious or ethnic affiliation; a religious community or ethnic group having some degree of internal autonomy, esp. a non-Muslim one" (OED3); *Mudjur*, n. (1913), a type of prayer mat.

### (4) Gastronomy (twenty-eight borrowings, i.e. 13.5%)

(4.1) Kitchen Utensil (one borrowing, i.e. 0.5%), *mangal*, n. (1814), a type of brazier.

(4.2) Restaurant (one borrowing, i.e. 0.5%), e.g. *lokanta*, n. (1954), a restaurant in Turkey.

(4.3) Drink and tobacco (eight borrowings, i.e. 3.9%), e.g. *sherbet*, n. (1603), a type of beverage; *raki*, n. (1613), the name of a type of alcoholic drink; *boza/bosa*, n. (1656), a type of drink popular in Egypt; *visney*, n. (1733), an obsolete term for a type of liqueur; *narghile*, n. (1806), a type of pipe; *chibouk*, n. (1814), a type of pipe; *chi-*

*boukchy/chibouquejee*, n. (1814), “a pipe-bearer” (OED2); *Yenidje*, n. (1954), a variety of tobacco.

(4.4) Cookery (eighteen borrowings, i.e. 8.7%), e.g. *yogurt*, n. (1625); *baklava*, n. (1650), a type of dessert; *pilaf*, n. (1814), a type of dish; *borek*, n. (1830), a type of pie; *pastirma*, n. (1831), a variety of dish; *simit*, n. (1836), a type of bread; *lokum*, n. (1845), “Turkish delight” (OED3); *rahat lokum*, n. phr. (1845), “Turkish delight” (OED3); *halva*, n. (1846), an item of confectionary; *moussaka*, n. (1862), a type of dish; *eleme figs*, n. phr. (1879), a type of fig; *dolma*, n. (1889), a type of dish; *meze*, n. (1904), a type of dish; *shish kebab*, n. phr. (1914), a type of dish; *bulgur*, n. (1934), a variety of dish; *Imam Bayildi*, n. phr. (1935), a type of dish; *hummus*, n. (1955), a type of dip; *doner kebab*, n. phr. (1958).

## (5) People and everyday life (sixty-six borrowings, i.e. 31.9%)

(5.1) Healthcare (two borrowings, i.e. 1.0%), e.g. *imaret* (1613), a type of hospice; *Red Crescent*, n. phr. (1877), “the equivalent of the Red Cross in Muslim Countries”.

(5.2) Games and sports (two borrowings, i.e. 1.0%), e.g. *sheshbesh*, n. (1971), a type of backgammon popular in the Middle East; *jackal*, n. (first attested as a sports game in 2002).

(5.3) Measuring Units (four borrowings, i.e. 2.0%), e.g. *arshin*, n. (1557); *batman*, n. (1583); *pic*, n. (1584); *dunam*, n. (1857).

(5.4) Monetary Units (four borrowings, i.e. 2.0%), e.g. *manghir*, n. (1585), a historical term for a former monetary unit; *para*, n. (1687), a type of monetary unit; *metalik*, n. (1834), a former currency unit; *kurus*, n. (1882), a currency unit.

(5.5) Transport and travelling (five borrowings, i.e. 2.4%), e.g. *serai*, n. (1609); “[a] building for the accommodation of travellers” (OED2); *manzil*, n. (1619), “the distance between two halting places, a stage; a halting place, an inn or other resting place for travellers” (OED3); *turbeh*, n. (1687), a type of building; *araba*, n. (1783), a historical term for a certain means of transport; *dolmus/dolmush*, n. (1957), a variety of transport in Turkish-speaking countries.

(5.5.1) Navigation (four borrowings, i.e. 2.0%), e.g. *reis*, n. (1585), “the captain of a boat or ship” (OED3); *kelek*, n. (1684), a variety of raft; *sandal*, n. (1753), a variety of boat; *gulet*, n. (1986), a type of boat.

(5.6) Building, Habitation and Interior Decoration (ten borrowings, i.e. 4.8%), e.g. *se-rai*, n. (1609), “[a] building for the accommodation of travellers” (OED2); *oda*, n. (1625), “a room or chamber” (OED3); *selamlık*, n. (1838), “[a] room in a Muslim house set aside for business or the reception of male friends” (OED2); *haremlık*, n. (1850), a (chiefly) historical term for “the separate, private part of a house reserved for the women of the household, and access to which is prohibited to all except family members and female servants” (OED3); *konak*, n. (1852), “[a] large house, palace, or official residence, in Turkey, or in the (former) Ottoman Empire” (OED2); *yayla*, n. (1864), “[a] summer camping-ground in the mountains of Turkestan used by Kurdish and other semi-nomadic peoples; the encampment pitched there” (OED2); *kilim*, n. (1881), a variety of carpet; *Ushak*, n. (1901), a type of carpet produced in the city of Ushak in Turkey; *Afshar*, n. (1909), a type of Persian carpet; *yali*, n. (1962), a variety of house.

(5.7) Textiles, Clothing, Footwear and Accessories (thirteen borrowings, i.e. 6.3%), e.g. *dolman*, n. (1585), a type of garment; *zarcole*, n. (1585), a type of headgear; *caftan*, n. (1591), a variety of garment; *papoosh*, n. (1675), a variety of slipper; *babouche*, n. (1695), a type of slipper; *feridgi*, n. (1717), a type of garment; *Angora*, n. (1722), a type of fabric or dress material; *benish*, n. (1797), a piece of clothing; *fez*, n. (1803), a variety of cap; *jelick*, n. (1816), a variety of garment; *yelek*, n. (1836), a certain piece of clothing; *yorgan*, n. (1914), a variety of quilt; *charshaf*, n. (1926), a type of headscarf.

(5.8) Society (twenty-two borrowings, i.e. 10.6%), e.g. *redhead*, n. (1555), "[a] member of the Kizilbash, [...] a people noted for wearing red headdresses" (OED3); *Roumi*, n. (about 1576), "a non-Muslim European male; (formerly) *spec.* one from the European territories of the Ottoman Empire" (OED3); *Zingani*, n. (1581), "[t]he Romani people; Gypsies collectively" (OED3); *Oghuzian*, adj. and n. (1603), relating to a group of Turkic peoples; *Khoja*, n. (1625), "[a] professor or teacher in a Muslim school or college; a schoolmaster; a scribe, clerk" (OED2); *Osmanli*, n. (1704), name of a former Turkish dynasty; *rayah*, n. (1723), "[a] subject of the Ottoman Empire (esp. a non-Muslim) who is not a member of the ruling class, and is therefore liable to pay a poll tax" (OED3); *Kizilbash*, n. (1727), "[a] Persianized Turk of Afghanistan", "[a] member of any of several cultural or religious minorities in Asian Turkey" (OED2); *aimag*, n. (1729), a historical term for "a tribe, a clan" (OED3); *Uighur*, n. (1785), "[a] member of the eastern branch of the Turkish race, which was prominent in central Asia from the 8th to the 12th century" (OED2); *galiongee*, n. (1813), "[a] Turkish sailor" (OED2); *ulus*, n. (1815), the name of a type of tribe; *khanum*, n. (1824), "a lady of rank, the wife of a khan" (OED2); *Iliat*, n. (1840), "[o]ne of several tribes of nomads scattered through Persia (now Iran)" (OED2); *kadin*, n. (1843), a woman belonging to the harem of a Sultan; *Oghuz*, n. (1843), the name of a group of people; typically in the Ottoman Empire; *Yuruk*, n. (1869), the name of a people; *zaptieh*, n. (1869), a policeman from Turkey; *Abdul*, n. (1870), "a male Turk" (OED3); *khanjee*, n. (1893), "[t]he keeper of a khan or inn" (OED2); *Kizil*, adj. and n. (1898), "pertaining to a Turkic Tartar people of southern Siberia" (OED2); *ikbal*, n. (1910), "[a] member of the harem of an Ottoman Sultan" (OED3).

## (6) Civilization and politics (sixty-eight borrowings, i.e. 32.9%)

(6.1) Finance, trade and selling (two borrowings, i.e. 1.0%), e.g. *bezesteen*, n. (1656), "[a]n exchange, bazaar, or marketplace in the East" (OED2); *zakat*, n. (1802), a type of tax.

(6.2) Combat, war and the military (twenty-two borrowings, i.e. 10.6%), e.g. *jani-zary/janissary*, n. (1529), a former Turkish infantry unit; *aga*, n. (1542), "a military commander or officer" (OED3); *spahi*, n. (1562), "[a] horseman forming one of a body of cavalry which formerly constituted an important part of the Turkish army and was to some extent organized on a feudal basis" (OED2); *subashi*, n. (1589), a historical term for "an official, as a military commander, local governor, or constable" (OED2); *timar*, n. (1601); "[f]ormerly, in the feudal system of Turkey, a fief held by military service" (OED2); *topchee*, n. (1623), a historical term for "a gunner or artilleryman" (OED2); *kaimakam*, n. (1645), "[a] lieutenant, deputy, substitute; a lieutenant-colonel; a deputy-governor" (OED2); *dey*, n. (1656), "[t]he titular appellation of the commanding officer of the Janissaries of Algiers" (OED2); *deli*, n. (1667), a historical term for an adherent of a military unit; *hatchet man*, n. phr. (1668), "[a] person who works

or is armed with an axe or hatchet", or, more specifically, "such a person acting as a pioneer for a military unit" (*OED3*); *musellim*, n. (1668), "a deputy provincial governor or military commander" (*OED3*); *selictar*, n. (1684), an obsolete term for "[t]he sword-bearer of a Turkish chieftain" (*OED2*); *seraskier*, n. (1684), a historical term for "[t]he title of the Turkish Minister of War, who was also commander in chief of the army" (*OED2*); *Arnaut*, n. (1717), a historical designation of an Albanian who belonged to the Turkish military; *bimbashi*, n. (1819), "Turkish major, naval commander or squadron-leader" (*OED2*); *kavass*, n. (1819), "[a]n armed constable or police officer, an armed servant or courier (in Turkey)" (*OED2*); *redif*, n. (1836), a historical term for "a soldier belonging to the military reserve; (also) the military reserve itself" (*OED3*); *Nizam*, n. (1840), now an obsolete term for a type of army; *Bashi-Bazouk*, n. (1859), a type of soldier; *yuzbashi*, n. (1876), "[a] captain in the Turkish army; in the Turkish navy, a first lieutenant" (*OED2*); *comitadji*, n. (1903), an adherent of a military group, especially in Bulgaria; *Gallipoli*, n. (1915), "a campaign of the First World War which took place on the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey in 1915–16" (*OED3*).

(6.2.1) Weapons (three borrowings, i.e. %), e.g. *hanjar*, n. (1621), a type of dagger; *tophaike*, n. (1813), a type of musket; *yataghan*, n. (1819), a variety of sword.

(6.3) Politics, government and administration (forty-one borrowings, i.e. 20.0%), e.g. *solak*, n. (1520), a certain guard of an emperor; *sanjakbeg/sanjakbey*, n. (1524), a type of governor; *bashaw*, n. (about 1535), an earlier variant of 'pasha'; *sanjak*, n. (1537), "one of the administrative districts into which an eyalet or vilayet was divided" (*OED3*) in the former Turkish Empire; *vizier*, n. (1562), "a high state official or minister, frequently one invested with vice-regal authority; a governor or viceroy of a province" (*OED2*); *beglerbeg*, n. (1586), a "governor of a province of the Ottoman empire"; *defterdar*, n. (1589), a Turkish finance minister; *kehaya*, n. (1594), "A Turkish viceroy, deputy, agent, etc.; a local governor; a village chief" (*OED2*); *chiaus*, n. (1599), "[a] Turkish messenger, sergeant, or lictor" (*OED2*); *King of kings*, n. phr. (1608), a historical name of a ruler; *padishah*, n. (1612), "the ruler of a Muslim country or empire" (*OED3*); *effendi*, n. (1614), "[a] Turkish title of respect, chiefly applied to government officials and to members of the learned professions" (*OED2*); *hatti sherif*, n. phr. (1648), a historical term for a type of decree; *pasha*, n. (1648); *pashalik*, n. (1668), now a historical term for "[t]he jurisdiction of a pasha; the area governed by a pasha" (*OED3*); *Reis Effendi*, n. phr. (1668), a historical term for "an officer of state whose duties included those of Chancellor and Foreign Minister" (*OED3*); *ichoglan*, n. (1677), "[a] page in waiting in the palace of the Sultan" (*OED2*); *bashalic(k)*, n. (1682), now an obsolete term for "the district under the jurisdiction of a pasha" (*OED3*); *bostangi*, n. (1686), "[a] Turkish guard of the palace" (*OED2*); *cadilesker*, n. (1686), "[a] chief judge in the Turkish empire" (*OED2*); *majlis*, n. (1686), "an assembly for discussion, a council" (*OED3*); *Yasa*, n. (1722), "[a] codification of Mongol customary laws ascribed to Genghis Khan, and used as the basis of law in much of Asia under Mongol rule" (1993 *OED Additions Series*); *vali*, n. (1753), "[a] civil governor of a Turkish province or vilayet" (*OED2*); *didzar*, n. (1768), "[t]he warden of a castle or fort" (*OED2*); *mukhtar*, n. (1786), "[t]he headman or local government chief of a town, district, village, or tribe" (*OED3*); *zaim*, n. (1807), "[f]ormerly, in the feudal system of Turkey, a chief who supported a mounted militia bearing his name" (*OED2*); *ziamet*, n. (1807); "[i]n feudal Turkey, the estate or fiefdom of a *zaim*" (*OED2*); *elchee*, n. (1824), "[a]n ambassador" (*OED2*); *hatti hamayun*, n. phr. (1828), a historical term for a type of decree; *Seljuk*, adj. and n. (1834), "[t]he distinc-



tive epithet of certain Turkish dynasties which ruled over large parts of Asia from the 11th to the 13th cent." (*OED2*); *mudir*, n. (1844), "[t]he governor of a subdistrict in Turkey, or of a province in Egypt or the Sudan" (*OED3*); *Tanzimat*, n. (1850), a historical term for "[a] series of reforming edicts issued by the Turkish government between 1839 and 1876" (1993 *OED Additions Series*); *eyalet*, n. (1853), "[a]n administrative division of the Turkish empire" (*OED2*), now usually referred to as *vilayet*; *liwa*, n. (1856), a historical term for "a province or large administrative district" (*OED2*); *vilayet*, n. (1869), "[a] province of Turkey (formerly of the Turkish empire) ruled by a vali, or governor-general" (*OED2*); *mutasarriif*, n. (1873), "a governor of a sanjak or province" (*OED3*); *irade*, n. (1883), a type of decree; *kaza*, n. (1885), "[a] district in Turkey subject to a judge's jurisdiction" (*OED2*); *toughra*, n. (1888), "[a]n ornamental monogram incorporating the name and title of the Sultan" (*OED2*); *Kemalism*, n. (1959), "[t]he political, social, and economic policies advocated by Kemal Atatürk" (*OED2*); *Motherland Party*, n. phr. (1983), "a Turkish centre-right political party" (*OED3*).

## (7) Miscellaneous (five borrowings, i.e. 2.4%)

*serpet*, n. (1615), an obsolete term for a type of basket; *aoul*, n. (1828), a type of village; *kismet*, n. (1849), "[d]estiny, fate" (*OED2*); *bosh*, n. (1850), "nonsense", "foolish talk" (*OED2*); *zindan*, n. (1889), a type of prison.

Of the Turkish borrowings included in the *OED Online*, five words (i.e. 2.4%) cannot be clearly attributed to a specific subject field. This holds for *kismet*, for instance, which was taken over from Turkish in 1849. The word is defined as '[d]estiny, fate' in the *OED2*. The corresponding Turkish and Persian equivalents *kismet* and *qismet* are identical in meaning. They ultimately go back to Arabic.

As is evident, the fine arts comprise the smallest group of Turkish-derived words. Examples are the borrowings *macramé* and *zill*. The former has been recorded since 1865 in English, reflecting the Turkish *mikrama* and its colloquial spelling variants *makrama* and *mahrma*. It is used to designate a knotting technique from the Orient for the production of various objects, such as ornaments, textiles and jewellery. A perusal of the linguistic documentary evidence provided by the *OED3* reveals that it quite often occurs attributively in English, as in *macramé lace* and *macramé work*. *Zill* denotes '[a] type of cymbal traditionally used in Turkish and Middle Eastern music or dance' (*OED3*).<sup>4</sup> Its first attested use in the *OED3* dates from 1754.

The natural sciences equally encompass a fairly small proportion of Turkish borrowings. Most of them appear to be unknown to the 'ordinary' native speaker of English, such as *medjidite*, which was borrowed in 1848 as a technical term for a type of mineral first discovered in the region of Edirne in the North-West of Turkey. From the *OED3* it emerges that it was named

<sup>4</sup> For the meaning of additional uncommon Turkish borrowings see the relevant definitions included in the *OED*.

after Abdul Mejid, Ottoman sultan from 1839 to 1861. The natural sciences also contain several words of Turkish origin relating to flora and fauna. Examples are *Prophet flower*, apparently translating the Ottoman Turkish *gül-i peygâmbër*, literally ‘flower of the Messenger’ (see *OED3*), and *Abdim* (more fully *Abdim’s stork*), a type of stork living in the East of Africa. The latter reflects the name of *Bey El-Arnaut Abdim*, who was the governor of Wadi Halfa in Sudan in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century. *Rumelian* and *karaburan* serve as examples from the area of geography. The adjective *Rumelian* was derived from a proper noun, ‘relating to, or belonging to Rumelia, a region in the Balkan peninsula formerly ruled by the Ottoman Empire’ (*OED3*). A look at the *OED3* usage examples suggests that the borrowing is now confined to historical contexts in English, as in:

“2000 M. Greene *Shared World* iii. 105 In eighteenth century Istanbul, Cairo and many Rumelian cities, a large number of artisans were members of ... paramilitary corps.” (*OED3*)

*Karaburan* specifies ‘[a] hot dusty wind in central Asia’ (*OED2*). Its Turkish source was formed from *kara* ‘black’ and *buran* ‘whirlwind.’

A further domain influenced by Turkish over the centuries is the field of faith and religion. It comprises some borrowings which have become widespread terms, such as *Islam*, which was borrowed from the Ottoman Turkish *islām* and its Arabic etymon *islām* as early as 1613. This subject field also includes several culture-specific terms. Examples are *woodoo*, which was adapted from the Turkish *wazū* in the eighteenth century as a designation of ‘[t]he minor ablution of the Muslims’ (*OED2*), and *Mudjur*, a borrowing from the early twentieth century referring to ‘[a] prayer rug of a type made in or associated with Mudjur in central Turkey, usually with a deep border and an arch motif’ (*OED3*).

A number of Turkish borrowings which have been taken over into English belong to the field of gastronomy, such as *mangal*, a kitchen utensil, now a historical term for ‘[a] kind of charcoal brazier used in Turkey and the Middle East’ (*OED3*), and *lokanta*, denoting a restaurant located in Turkey. It also consists of Turkish-derived words in ‘drink and tobacco’, such as *raki*, the name of an alcoholic beverage originating in Turkey and the Balkans, *chibouk*, a ‘long tobacco-pipe used by the Turks’ (*OED2*), and *Yenidje*, which denotes a type of tobacco cultivated in the area of Yenidje in Turkey, after which it was named. In addition, the *OED* comprises several culinary terms which have their origins in Turkish, among them quite a few designations of food products, dishes, desserts and items of confectionary which have made it into common usage. Examples are *yogurt*, *halva*, *bulgur*, *hummus* and *doner kebab*. Of these, *yogurt* constitutes the earliest borrowing from Turkish: it has already been attested in English since 1625. *Halva*, a variety of sweetmeat, is given a fairly complex etymological description in the *OED2*: the

word was borrowed from the Turkish *helva*, the Greek *halvas* and the Arabic *ḥalwā* in the nineteenth century. *Bulgur*, *hummus* and *doner kebab* (also abbreviated as *doner*) represent recent acquisitions from Turkish. They were adopted into English in the twentieth century.

'People and everyday life' is the second largest domain influenced by Turkish. It encompasses seven subfields, comprising borrowings to do with healthcare, such as *imaret*, a culture-specific term for '[a] hospice for the accommodation of pilgrims and travellers in Turkey' (*OED2*), and *Red Crescent*, translating the Ottoman Turkish *Hilāl-i Ahmer* and the Turkish *Hilal-i Ahmer*. The phrase was originally introduced into English in 1877 as a term for 'the Turkish ambulance society identified and symbolized by a red crescent' (*OED3*). It now usually relates to 'the equivalent of the Red Cross in Muslim countries' (*OED3*). This area also includes Turkish-derived words referring to games and sports, such as *sheshbesh*, a type of backgammon common in the Middle East, and *jackal*, which was recorded as a sports term some time after its assumption into English. The item has already been documented in the *OED3* since 1603, denoting a variety of wild dog, especially a species native to Africa and the South of Eurasia. According to the *OED3*, *jackal* corresponds to both the Turkish *çaqāl* and its Persian etymon *šagāl* with the spelling variants *šagāl* and *šakāl*. *The borrowing expanded its semantic scope over the centuries. It has been recorded in a metaphorical sense since 1649 in the receiving language, specifying* '[a] person who acts like a jackal, esp[ecially] by behaving in an aggressive or predatory way, often operating as part of a group or gang' (*OED3*), or, in a more specific meaning, 'a subordinate who carries out menial, dull, or preparatory work' (*OED3*). Typical usage examples from the *OED3* are:

"1975 W. Kennedy *Legs* (1983) 214 The harsh spotlight that Judge Seabury, his reformers, and the Republican jackals were ... shining on the gangsterism and corruption so prevalent in New York City's Tammany Hall."

"2008 *N. Y. Mag.* 4 Feb. 65/1 A land of sadistic jackals who mow down women (or use them as sex slaves)."

*Jackal* came to be used as a rugby term in the early twenty-first century. Since 2002, it has been attested as a term for '[a] player who is skilled at or specializes in winning possession from the opposition by jackalling' (*OED3*) in English, as in:

"2016 *Daily Tel.* (Nexis) 18 Oct. (Sport section) 20 There are ways of managing the breakdown without having exceptional 'jackals' these days, as England have shown with James Haskell at seven." (*OED3*)

The field of people and everyday life also includes Turkish borrowings relating to measuring units, such as *arshin*, a borrowing from both Russian and Turkish, which denotes '[a] measure of length used in Russia, Turkey,

and the former Ottoman Empire, based on the length of an arm and equal to approximately 28 inches (70 cm)' (*OED3*). It also consists of some designations of types of currency units. An example is the word *kurus*, '[a] Turkish piastre,  $\frac{1}{100}$  of the value of a lira; a coin of this value' (*OED2*). The domain of people and everyday life also encompasses borrowings from transport and travelling, among them several terms to do with navigation. Examples are *dolmus/dolmush*, a culture-specific term for '[a] shared form of public transport (in Turkey), esp[ecially] a taxi' (*OED2*), and *gulet*, '[a] sailing boat, usually ketch- or schooner-rigged, chiefly used in the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea, esp[ecially] for holiday cruises' (*OED3*). In addition, the field encompasses Turkish-derived terms for building and habitation (e.g. *yali*, a type of house typical of the region of the Bosphorus), clothing (e.g. *jelick*, '[a] vest or bodice worn by Turkish women' (*OED2*)), and borrowings to do with society, including a considerable number of terms for individuals, such as *Abdul*. The latter represents a slang term in English, where it initially served as a pejorative expression for 'a male Turk' (*OED3*):

"1870 *Afr. Repository* Oct. 303 Turkish Consuls and other gentlemen have guarded their interests, and,... met with the Sultan of Turkey's regards, and the fate of many an election has been determined by a host of Abduls, whom Christian legislators and councillors have courted." (*OED3*)

The borrowing shows a particular meaning in Australian and New Zealand English, referring to a Turkish soldier in the context of the First World War, as is corroborated by the following *OED3* quotation:

"1915 *Argus (Melbourne)* 5 Aug. 5/1 Some of the Turks are acquiring the Australian idiom. On one recent occasion a voice called from the enemy position 'Say, blokes, aren't you tired of this yet?' and a Ballarat man called back 'Not yet Abdul, see which of us drops his bundle first!'"

In present-day English, *Abdul* is also documented as a nickname for an Arab, e.g.:

"2004 L. Beinhart *Librarian* xxvii. 179 The Abduls and Mohammeds didn't have a clue who an Alan Carston Stowe was." (*OED3*)

*Abdul* reflects an abbreviated form of the Ottoman Turkish name *Abdullāh* and its Arabic etymon 'Abdullāh (see *OED3*).

*The area of civilization and politics comprises the largest number of Turkish borrowings. It contains lexical items in 'finance, trade and selling', consisting of various culture-specific terms such as bezesteen, '[a]n exchange, bazaar, or market-place in the East' (OED2), and kurus, the name of a Turkish currency unit. In addition, it encompasses borrowings relating to 'combat, war and the military', among them several terms for weapons. Aga, hanjar and Gallipoli can be adduced as examples. Of these, aga represents the earliest borrowing: it was taken over from both French aga and its Ottoman*

Turkish etymon *agā* in 1542. It represents a culture-specific term in English, originally denoting 'a military commander or senior officer' (*OED3*) in Muslim countries, especially with reference to the Ottoman Empire. In present-day English, it refers to 'a civil officer or tribal chieftain' (*OED3*). *Hanjar* now mostly occurs as a historical term for a type of dagger. The word was derived from the synonymous Ottoman Turkish *hancar* and its spelling variants *khanjar* and *hancer*, which ultimately reflect the Persian *kanjar* 'dagger' (see *OED3*). *Gallipoli* was adopted into English in the context of the First World War, referring to a specific campaign undertaken on the peninsula of Gallipoli in Turkey from 1915 to 1916. The word also occurs in attributive position in English, as in *Gallipoli campaign* and *Gallipoli day*:

"1919 W. J. Denny *Diggers* 5 Every Australian officer and soldier who took part in the Gallipoli campaign shall wear a brass letter 'A.'" (*OED3*)

"1951 *Pacific Stars & Stripes* (Tokyo, Japan) 26 Apr. 2/3 The 36th anniversary of Anzac day, known in Britain as Gallipoli day, was commemorated Wednesday by British Commonwealth troops in Japan." (*OED3*)

'Civilization and politics' also consists of a substantial number of borrowings in 'politics, government and administration.' Examples are *kehaya*, '[a] Turkish viceroy, deputy, agent, etc; a local governor; a village chief' (*OED2*), and *Kemalism*, '[t]he political, social, and economic policies advocated by Kemal Atatürk, which aimed to create a modern republican secular Turkish state out of a part of the Ottoman empire' (*OED2*). In addition, there is *Motherland Party*, translating the Turkish *Anavatan Partisi*, 'a Turkish centre-right political party, founded in 1983 following Turkey's constitutional and electoral reforms of 1982, and elected to government under the leadership of Turgut Özal in that year' (*OED3*). *Motherland Party* belongs to the group of the most recent borrowings from Turkish: it is first recorded in the *OED3* in 1983.

## Conclusion

This paper has shown that a typical feature of the vocabulary introduced from Turkish into English throughout the centuries is its diversity. It comprises not only highly-specific, technical terms, but also borrowings which have become established in current usage. A characteristic of the sample of words and meanings which has been adopted from Turkish over time is the considerable proportion of culture-specific terms which fill a semantic gap in English. These words are chiefly embedded in contexts dealing with Turkish culture and history. One might thus conclude that Turkish has provided English with a number of lexical items that enhance the 'exotic' nature of its lexicon.

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## Appendix

In this article, the following abbreviations are used:

'...'	meaning
adj.	adjective
n.	noun
phr.	phrase
<i>OED</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>OED2</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i> , Second Edition
<i>OED3</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i> , Third Edition: in progress, available only electronically