TURKISH LITERATURE

A DEVELOPMENT OF TURKISH PROSE AND POETRY

The earliest surviving written documents of Turkish literature date from the first/seventh century. They consist of short inscriptions in the so-called "Runic" letters in the Upper Yenisei Valley in Siberia. Lengthier documents of the same linguistic type and in the same script survive in the valley of the Orkhon in Outer Mongolia and date from the second/eighth century. These consist of inscriptions on two stones in honour of two princes of the Turkish dynasty of the Eastern Kül Türk State, and a third erected in honour of its own chief minister. The history of the Eastern Kül Türk State is here related in a semi-legendary and artistic way. Other inscriptions in the same script, large and small, are known in Mongolia, Siberia, and Western Turkestan.

Manuscripts too, belonging probably to the third/ninth century, have been found. The language of the Turkish runic is characterized by certain archaisms in its phonetics, morphology, and vocabulary.

From the second/eighth century onwards the Uygur Turks became acquainted with Manichaeism, Buddhism, and Syriac (especially Nestorian Christianity in Northern China and East Turkestan) and developed a high culture within the framework of Far Eastern civilization which lasted until the seventh/thirteenth century. The surviving Uygur manuscript and xylographic literature is very extensive and proves a high cultural activity in the fields of religion, philosophy, and other sciences. The script used for these literary works was mainly the Uygur alphabet, derived from the Sogdian script. In addition to the Uygur alphabet, however, these Turks used, besides the ancient Turkish runes, the Manichae, Syriac, and Brahmi runes. The Uygur alphabet remained in use in the twelfth/thirteenth century among the Turks of China who did not adopt Islam. The conversion to Islam (from the fourth/tenth century onwards) of the Turks of Central Asia was followed by the adoption of the Arabic alphabet. However, the Uygur alphabet remained in use as the Court script. It was given a new lease of life in the Muslim territories by the Mongol conquest, and was used in the seventh/thirteenth to ninth/twelfth centuries among the Golden Horde and the Timurids for the Kipchak and Chaghatay languages. As late as the early tenth/sixteenth century there were still in the Imperial Chancellery in Istanbul archives skilled in writing the Uygur script.

The Uyghur Turkish or, to use a more suitable term, the old Turkish literary language (for the civilization that used it was wider than the geographical or historical limits of the Uygur State) shows, broadly speaking, the same dialectical peculiarities as the Kor Türk monuments. The few dialectical
divergencies are obviously in the main due to the passage of time and to influences from the outside.1


Islam was established during the fourth/tenth century in the Bulgar kingdom of Kama also. But data are lacking to enable us to decide if there also existed any literature. In any case Bulgar elements are found in the sepulchral inscriptions of the eighth/fortieth century in the Volga region.

The development of literary Turkish in Central Asia went on without interruption, but its centres changed from time to time. The absence of early manuscripts prevents us from giving a definite name to the language of the Bikmix, (theological didactic poems) of Ahmad Yasavi, the founder of Turkish mysticism, who lived in the sixteenth century in West Turkestan.

In the seventh/thirteenth century the various literary dialects of the Muslim Turkish world were not yet clearly differentiated from one another. The formation of the Mongol Empire, which embraced almost the whole Arabic world of the period, created for a time an atmosphere favourable to the development of a uniform language for a considerable section of the Muslim Turkish peoples. At first Turkish literary activity under the Seljuqs in Asia Minor was to some degree bound up with that of Central Asia and Eastern Europe. This seventh/thirteenth century, however, is an epoch of political agitations in Asia Minor and Eastern Europe. It is, therefore, only in the next century that literary works are mainly to be found.

Literary activity on the northern shores of the Black Sea, in Khwarezm which included the mouth of the Sir Darya, in the capital Saray, and in the Crimea attained a considerable development by the beginning of the eighth/fourth century but no uniform literary language developed. The elements of the literary language of the Karakhanid period were combined with those of the local spoken dialects. In Syria, Egypt, and Persia under Turkish or Turkified rulers there grew an interest in Turkish. Thus, we find a series of grammar books and lexicons in Arabic from the eighth/thirteenth century until the beginning of the tenth/sixteenth century. They all deal with the Kipchak but contain elements from other Turkish dialects in varying degrees.

The prose work *Qayr al-Ashqai* ('Stories of the Prophet'), with passages in verse written by N. Rabghizi, finished in 710/1310, although lacking

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aesthetic value, is of great literary importance. Another religious work in verse is the *Mwas al-Mawd al-Shahsh Shirif Kawiwja* (713/1315). The very attractive romance in verse, *Kurban wa Surat* of the poet Qub (742–743/1341–1342), although based on the corresponding Persian work of Neizan, has nevertheless many original passages. Kwarizmi's poem *Mawjubatulawd* (The Book of Love), composed in 754/1353, is another work of high literary merit. Selj-i Sary's translation of *Gulabon* (The Rose-Garden) that appeared in 782/1380 is another prose and verse book of high literary value. The religious work *Nakl al-Faradis* (Way to the Paradise) of Mahmut b. 'Ali (716/1315) is, properly speaking, a "Forty-Hadith" book in simple prose with no aesthetic aims. Finally may be mentioned the religious prose work *Mirjama* (Book of the Ascension) composed for didactic purposes.

Further, there are other works written in Egypt and Syria which are: a *Sihir* book composed in 784/1382; *Kashf al-Malak* w-al-Shadowi composed by Barks Pasch in 789/1387; *Kühb al-Faqi il-Latid al-Faqi*, originating probably from the ninth/eleventh century; *Kühb al-Im al-Naghka* so *Kühb al-Faqi al-Khuban*, a book on the art of horsemanship translated from Arabic for soldiers in about 808/1405; *Kühb al-Da'saw*, another book on the art of horsemanship also translated from Arabic in 844/1440.

We may date to the eighth/fourth and ninth/fifteenth centuries the beginning of the development of the different literary languages in different parts of the Muslim Turkish world.

The Chaghatai language and literature which developed under the Timurids, the descendants of the second son of Chingiz Khân, represent the most brilliant phase of the development of Central Asiatic Turkish literature. Names are known of a few Turkish poets who lived in the eighth/fourth century. But the works which have survived belong to the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century. Sahlkhi was a panegyrist. Another famous poet was

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From the fifth/eighth century onwards Turkish tribal and military units began to make raids into Asia Minor, so that Anatolia lay totally open to the Turks. Thus, the colonization of Asia Minor and Eastern Europe went on with great success. Thanks to the ability of three Turks to adapt themselves in course of time to the changing circumstances of life, they succeeded in founding on very firm bases a strong and lasting State.

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Parallel to the political and social development, Anatolian Turkish literature has had an uninterrupted development from the time of the Seljuqs down to the present day. It has, therefore, become the most important and richest branch of all the Turkish literatures and has exercised an influence on the literature of other dialects.

Seventeenth/Thirteenth Century.—Already in the seventh/thirteenth century there developed in Anatolia a Turkish literature based mainly on the Oghuz dialect. The well-known Persian mystic Jalil al-Din Rumi and his son Sultan Walad produced some Turkish verses; Ahmad Faqih wrote a fairly long mystical poem; and Gökyıldız Hamzâ left poems of different genres.

Yûmus Eyni was the greatest figure in this century. He is regarded as the best Turkish popular mystic poet. His art is essentially one of the people, i.e., it is Turkish. It was through his mystical verses that there developed a tradition of writing poems in the language of the people and in the popular syllabic metre, which did not lose its power even in the period when Persian influence was at its highest.

Classical prose literature had its first representative in Dâhâni. His poems were in an elaborate style and attained a high degree of perfection from the technical point of view.

Another poem of this century was Alâ’u’l-Gûşak-i Yûnsuf (Story of Joseph), representing linguistically a mixture of Central Asian literary Turkish and the vernacular Oghuz dialect. Moreover, other works of this and even next century had more or less the same peculiar features, and the rather pure Oghuz dialectical features in the manuscripts of works of this century are probably to be ascribed to the later copyists.1


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Eighth/Fourteenth Century.—The literary development followed the same line in the eighth/fourteenth century. A certain number of feudal princes in Asia Minor lacked Persian or Arabic culture, and this was the reason why the language of the people became important, why books were written in Turkish, and also why a number of Muslim works were translated from Arabic and Persian into Turkish. During this century there developed in Anatolia several cultural centres, such as Gûnyûl, Niğde, Ladik, Kastamonu, Sinop, Sivas, Konya, Bursa, and İzmir.

Among the leading poets Ahmad Gilâhâbi should be mentioned for his artistic merit. He put into Turkish the Ma'qûl al-żair (Speech of Birds) of the Persian poet 'Aṭâq, expanding it with stories from various sources. We also possess a number of isolated poems of his. Although a mystical, his literary aims were purely artistic.

The great mystic of this century is, however, 'Aṭâq Paşa with his long poem Gûshakismâsâk (Book of the Stranger). He is a more imitator of Jalil al-Din Rumi and Sultan Walad. There also exists a number of detached mystical poems from the pen of 'Aṭâq Paşa, but all are far from showing the lyrical merit of Yûmus Eyni.

In the second half of the century we find classical mystical poetry attaining high perfection in Namîti. He is a great poet whose mystical lyrics are most expressive. His style is simple but full of power and harmony. In his Dîvân we findâyûqas, a verse-form peculiar to Turkish classical poetry and we find Persian literature.

Romantic tales and fables were also taken from Persian literature. Among them is to be mentioned Mas'ûlî’s love story in verse, Sukail va Nushûk (two proper names), a translation or rather an expanded adaptation from an unknown Persian work. This story has considerable literary value.

But, with the exception of Namîti, Ahmadî is the greatest poet of this period. He is the author of the Iskandarnâmâsâk (Book of Alexander). The subject is taken from Persian sources, but he adds a long section dealing with world history including the Ottoman dynasty. His Dîvân is more interesting from the artistic point of view. Among his poems there are some which are of local interest.

Further, we must mention Qâlî Burkhan al-Din who has left a Fûrûkâ containing tâyûqas. His poems have a note of sincerity and passion of their own. He is the first to have attained perfection by the standards of classical rhetoric.

Of prose works are to be mentioned an anonymous translation of Kullâh

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sea Dinnek and the legendary tales of Dede Qoqut mainly about the Muslim-Christian struggle during the Turkish invasion of Anatolia and its vicinity, reflecting vividly the life, customs, and ideals of the Turks of the fifth/eleventh and sixth/twelfth centuries.*

Ninth/Tenth Century—In the ninth/tenth century Turkish increased in importance as a literary and official language. In the first half of the century there were three great princely families who were patrons of scholars and poets: Karaanmoghlu at Qanîyah, the Jandarglî at Kâfâmâna, and the Ortaam Prince in Edirne and Bursa. As in the preceding centuries, the literary activity under them was not confined merely to the translation of Muslim works of a classical character.

In popular religious literature we may mention the Muâsif (Birth of the Prophet) poem of Sülimân Chalaki and Ahmed. This fine work has the qualities of a masterpiece. It has been read by the people, for centuries particularly on the occasion of the religious commemoration of a dead person. In every century many similar poems have been written on this topic.

The most important classical poet of this period is Şâkîhî. His version of Khurram us-Sûrîn of the Persian poet Nîpânî is more than a mere translation. The Khurramâ (Story of the Donkey) is a masterpiece of satire. He is also the author of a Diwân which contains a considerable amount of panegyrics and love poems. His part in the establishment of classical poetry is great. His influence continued down to the tenth/eleventh century.

Another great classical poet of the period is Ahmâd Pâsha. He surpassed his contemporaries in panegyrics and love poems exercising, thus, a great influence on the poets of his time. Next to him in this field is Nişâtî.

A certain number of chronicles in verse belong to this period.

Prose also developed considerably. In this connection we may mention the anonymous commentary on the Qurîn, Muwafîkî al-Astîfî (Gems of Mothers of Pearl), and the more popular book Qârî Va'îr Hikayasî (The Tales of the Forty Viziers).

But it was mainly artistic prose that was cultivated, its most brilliant representative being Şahîn Pâsha with his Tâlâhare Nâmân (Book of Supplemen-


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to write as simply as possible. The examples which we possess of the prose of Fu'atî and Báqi show an elegant and relatively simple language.

As a reaction to the ornate language, the movement called türkî-i bastî (simple Turkish) has its second well-known exponent in Namzi of Edirne whose Diöös, though, again, in 'ariq verse, contains only Turkish words. But he has no artistic abilities.

In the field of historical works great progress was made. Besides rhymed chronicles, we find historical works in prose in continuation of the Sa'îdî tradition. A number of historical works were written in verse. With the exception of the Ottoman history by Huîddî they always deal with a single event or the victories of a single emperor or commander. General histories were composed by ibn Kamîl, Jalâhî, Muťâfa Chalâhi, Moştî al-Dîn Jâmî, Latîf Pîshâ, Kuwivâb Su'al-Dîn, and 'Ali. Some of these works are the sources for our knowledge of the social history of this period.

Among historical works those which deal with literary history occupy an important place. The first Ottoman collection of biographies of poets was produced by Şâhî Beg on the model of Nâwâ'î's work. This was followed by the works of Latîf, 'Âdhîq Chalâhi, 'Abî, and 'Hasan Chalâhi. 'Ali also give important notices of poets in his historical work.

It is in this century that there appeared geographical works and accounts of travels. Some are mere translations. The celebrated Bâhârâgh (Maritime Work) of Pîr Raû, and Muştî (Ocean) and Mîrû at the Mûmîdî (Mirror of Lands) of Sâîdî 'Ali Raû are the best works of this type. We have further records of voyages both in verse and in prose.

The first grammar of Anatolian Turkish, planned on the model of Arabic grammars, by Qâdiri of Pergamon, was also written in this century.

Alongside the works of Sinâî, the poetry of the Ottoman literary language spread among the Muslim lower classes generally and also through districts to the non-Turkish population or Turks speaking a non-Ottoman Turkish dialect. The influence of Turkish literature and culture is found as early as the tenth/sixteenth century in the use of Arabic script by the Muslim Hungarians and Croats. There are

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also found dictionaries of Turkish, Serbian, Turkish-Bosnian, and Turco-Greek in verse. Istanbul was always the centre to which men of letters and learning flocked from all parts of the Ottoman Empire and from beyond its frontiers.

The classical Turkish poetry of the eleventh/seventeenth century was in no respect below the level of the Persian models. The Turkic poets by this time were working on original themes, though the influence of the Persian and Indo-Persian poets was still felt.

Nağı may be regarded as the greatest master of eulogies (quaizda), on account of the power of his imagination, the richness of his language, and the elevation and harmony of his style. His love poems and his satires (kaşişiş-

yat), on the other hand, are less successful.

Another very important classical poet was Nâbir who is renowned for his refined didactic poems and descriptions. His verses are still quoted as proverbs. He was also the one who protested against artificial language, saying: "The ghazal book is not a dictionary."

The greatest figure in romance poems (mesâhesbâ) is Nâbir, who takes his subjects from the life of his time.

The number of religious and mystical works, lives of saints, and didactic works connected with different orders is very great in this century. Poetical forms were often used for them.

Literary prose follows the same lines as in the preceding century. The great stylist like Vâisi, Nâkarâ Shipşî, and others carried affection of language to still greater lengths. Yet works which were in their days considered to have no literary value are now being greatly appreciated.

As an encyclopedist, Kâtip Chalabi's name must be mentioned.

Histories in this century also took the first place among prose-works. There are several which have the character of semi-official chronicles. Malâi, though they are translations of general histories of Islam, there are also original works on the same subject, and general and special works and monographs on Ottoman history. The best historians are Kâtip Chalabi, Pehlavi, Nâ'ima, and Qochi Beg. The verse chronicles are much below the level of those of the tenth/six-teenth century. The most notable are those of Râshî and Qâdî-i Pâ'işî.

In the field of geography the most important works are those of Kâtip Chalabi and Abu Bakr Dimashqi. They use European as well as Muslim sources. The Seyyidînâmâsh (Voyage Book) of Abyla Chalabi is important as history of all aspects of social life.

The great popularity of the literature of the people continued in this century in all classes of society. The musician-poets became very numerous. We find them in the military classes and in the religious orders. The most important of them are Kâraân Oghlan Gavhari and 'Âqiq Umar. The influence of this popular literature is felt even among the upper classes.15

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sphere throughout the century and did not exercise any particular influence on intellectual and artistic life. Thirty-Third/Thirty-Ninth Century.—At the beginning of the thirteenth/nineteenth century Ottoman literature sank to a very low level which continued till the period of political reform. It was only natural that the old literary tradition could not disappear at one stroke. The prose of the period before the political reforms was not of much value, although its production was not less in quantity than that of the preceding centuries. The historical work by Mutarrem 'Lail was remarkable for its style and critical analysis. He used even simpler language in his translation of Burhan-i Qaši (The Definitive Proof) and the Qesma (Lexicon). Lastly, mention must be made of the celebrated poet and stylist Adil Hâfiz who, on account of several poems written in the popular metre and some works in simple prose, could be regarded as the first to have spread literary innovations. We also had representatives of popular literature. The best known musician-poets were Dertîl, Dîhûni, and Amrîb.

B

DEVELOPMENT OF TURKISH GRAMMAR AND LEXICOGRAPHY

1. Turkish is an agglutinative language. The root which is either verbal or nominal and which (except in the case of certain pronouns) is never inflected, always appears at the beginning of the word. Verbal forms are built from the verb-stem, which may be a simple root or a root modified by forma tive suffixes. The verb-stem is followed by suffixes indicating aspect and tense ("voice" and "negation" being shown by aspect suffixes), to produce the tense-stem which, without further suffixation, expresses the third person singular; other persons are indicated by the addition of a personal suffix. The resultant word is a unit as regards stress, intonation, and sound harmony, i.e., assimilation of sounds tending to conform the sounds of the suffixes to the root in general. Phonetic changes in the root or suffixes do not imply semantic modifications.

Nominal forms again are built out of the noun-stem, which may be a simple root or a root modified by formative suffixes.

Prefixes and infixes do not exist in Turkish. The syntax of the language is based essentially on the following principle.

The governing parts of a grammatical statement or of a group of statements


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follow the parts governed. Hence the principal part of the statement or of a group of statements, i.e., the finite verb or predicate, is usually placed at the end, the completed parts follow the complement, the qualified elements (nominal or verbal) are put after their qualifiers (adjectival or adverbal), and the principal statement follows the subordinate ones. Turkish in its original form did not include conjunctions. The only subordinate clause which is attested from the earliest documents onwards is the conditional.

The characteristics of the Turkish language outlined above are to be found in the earliest surviving Turkish documents, which date from the first/seventh century.

2. This "pure" language, however, underwent a considerable change when pegan Turks came into contact with the Far Eastern civilizations and religions. The Turkish literary output of the period before the adoption of Islam was mainly translations of the scriptures of various religions. Such translations of sacred texts had to be as literal as possible. Of course, it is no wonder that under the influence of the non-Turkish structures of the languages so translated, this literary dialect, while preserving its native participial and gerundial constructions, acquired new types of subordinate clauses, partly with defective constructions and developed conjunctions formed from Turkish roots. In the field of vocabulary also we find technical expressions borrowed from the more developed languages of the Far East. This does not, however, mean that such borrowings were numerous. On the contrary, a great number of expressions were more Turkish translations from these languages.

3. As to linguistic peculiarities of the first Islamic literary dialect in Central Asia, it differed but slightly from Old Turkish. Religious terms markedly connected with the Far Eastern religions were no more to be found. In their place, we find Islamic terminology. But this latter was not so widespread as one would expect or find in later literary works. Instead Far Eastern terms or Turkish calques from them were still common. The development in the direction of an analytical sentence structure was less pronounced. Though subordinate clauses of the Indo-European and Semitic types began to develop in general, the Turkish sentence with its participial and gerundial forms still prevailed. Nevertheless, new conjunctions were created out of Turkish words or borrowed from Arabic and Persian, and these to a great extent encouraged the development of new Turkish subordinate clauses.

On the other hand, popular words of the Karakhanid period show very little foreign influence. Both in syntax and lexigraphy, this influence was restricted to the minimum. In this respect the popular literary products of the earliest Turkish Islamic literature resembled the runic inscriptions.

4. In the Khwarismian period, Arabic and Persian exercised an increasing influence on Turkish syntax. Both in verse and in prose, the basically fixed Turkish word-order became more flexible and the rich stock of terminations that henceforth developed in the language prevented ambiguity and gave it

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greater clarity. The borrowings from the two main Islamic culture languages, Arabic and Persian, increased. Vocabulary was further enriched by the use of Arabic and Persian loan-words, though the Far Eastern loan-words were still common, and inversion, particularly in verse, was now used to a greater extent. Until the nineteenth century, Anatolian Turkish also reveals the same characteristics.

5. During the classical period of Ottoman literature, the syntactical influence of Persian in the construction of sentences did not increase. Rather it diminished in the course of time.

The old Turkish type of sentence with only a single finite verb, but using many participal and gerundial forms was particularly in use in Ottoman prose. This made the formation of very long sentences possible. Inversion, however, particularly in verse, was greatly practised. Persian and Arabic loan-words and grammatical forms became more numerous and Far Eastern loan-words were totally forgotten.

6. In modern Turkish, the syntactical influence of Persian in sentence constructions has left few traces. On the other hand, modern writers have drawn fully on the resources of popular speech; the language has thus been greatly enriched and rendered much more expressive, thanks to the harmonious combination of the synthetic structure of the old language with the freer construction and more vivid turns of expression of everyday spoken Turkish.

New constructions of subordinate clauses with conditional or temporal force, formed from a finite verb followed by the interrogative ending, have become meaningless.

In the Turkish vocabulary, Persian and Arabic loan-words have become much less numerous, giving place to Turkish words, some of which have even been invented. Loan-words from the European languages, mainly at first from Italian then from French, are to be noticed.

7. Thus, we see that in the process of evolution, owing partly at least to the influence of languages of other structural types, both Eastern and Western, Turkish has developed conjunctions, other types of subordinate clauses, and a freer word order in the sentence.

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Architecture


Part 2. Fine Arts

Chapter LV

ARCHITECTURE

A

THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES OF MUSLIM ARCHITECTURE

Arabia, at the rise of Islam, does not appear to have possessed anything worthy of the name of architecture. Only a small proportion of the population was settled and lived in dwellings which were scarcely more than hovels. Those who lived in mud-brick houses were called ahl al-madar, and the Bedouin, from their tents of camel's-hair cloth, ahl al-sudur.

The sanctuary at Mecca, in the time of the Prophet Muhammad, merely consisted of a small roofless enclosure, oblong in shape, formed by four walls a little higher than a man, built of rough stones laid dry. Within this enclosure was the sacred well of Zamzam.

When the Prophet Muhammad, as a result of the hostility of the unbelieving Meccans, migrated to Medina, he built a house for himself and his family. It consisted of an enclosure about one hundred cubits square of mud-bricks, with a portico on the south side made of palm trunks used as columns to support a roof of palm leaves and mud. Against the outer side of the east wall were built small huts (hājarāt) for the Prophet’s wives, all opening into the courtyard.

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