



ŠĀH-NĀMA TRANSLATIONS I. INTO TURKISH

Turks have been influenced by the *Šāh-nāma* since the advent of the Saljuqs in Persia. Their last prince in Persia, Toğrel III, recited verses from the *Šāh-nāma* while swinging his mace in battle (Jovayni, II, p. 31). There is a great deal of evidence that this influence continued in a more powerful way in Anatolia in the 13th-14th centuries (Ebn Bibi, pp. 71-72, 126, 202; Riāḥi, tr. pp. 52, 55).

The oldest translation of the *Šāh-nāma*, rendered by an unknown author at the command of Sultan Morād II (r. 1421-51) in 1450-51, belongs to the period of the Ottoman Empire. Its second part is now kept in Istanbul, Vienna, Paris, and Ankara (Karatay, II, p. 58 no. 2154; Bağcı, p. 175 and 25; Flügel, I, p. 495-96, no. 505; Blochet, II, p. 220, no. 1279; Togan, p. 85, no. 44; Ankara Adnan Ötüken İl Halk Library, no. 06 Hk 3913). There is also a volume by an unknown translator in the library of the Topkapı Palace Museum (Hazine, no. 1116), which may be the first part of the translation done in the period of Morād II (Bağcı, p. 175 n. 25). It contains 320 folios and 6 miniatures, containing the part from the beginning of the *Šāh-nāma* to the war between Kay Ḳosrow and Afrāsiāb (Karatay, II, pp. 57-58, no. 2153; for other mss see. Blochet, II, p. 37, no. 702, pp. 93-94, no. 906-10; Flügel, I, p. 495).

The only known Turkish verse translation of the *Šāh-nāma* was made by Ḥosayn b. Ḥasan Šarīf, known as Šarīfi of Āmed (d. 1514), who later went to Egypt from Istanbul. He completed his translation at the command of Sultan



Qānşawh Ğawri (r. 1501-16), the last Mamluk sultan, in Cairo in 1510, which took him ten years to accomplish. This translation has the characteristic features of the Anatolian Turkish language in the 15th century, and provides a significant textual Turkish document due to its richness of vocabulary and proverbs. An interpreted copy of this translation, prepared for Sultan Qānşawh Ğawri's private library, consists of 56,506 couplets and is now kept in the library of Topkapı Palace Museum (Hazine, no. 1519/1-2; see. Karatay, II, pp. 58-59, no. 2155; for other mss of this tr. see. Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Library, Hazine, no. 1520-22; Karatay, II, pp. 58-60, no. 2156-158; Fatih Millet Library, no. 1184; Süleymaniye Library, Damad İbrahim, no. 983 (M); Togan, p. 85, no. 46; British Museum, The Oriental India Office Collections, no. O/C Or. 7204, Or. 1126, see. Rieu, pp. 152-153; St. Petersburg, no. 380, see Simirnow, pp. 78-82; Uppsala University Library, no. 147, see Tornberg, pp. 92-93; New York Public Library, Spencer Collection, Turkish Ms. no. 1; see also Kütüräl 1994; Beyreli 1994; Kütüräl and Beyreli). The verse translation of Šarifi was later made into a more basic prose translation by an unknown author (Fatih Millet Library, Ali Emiri, Edebiyat, no. 269).

Another translation of the *Šāh-nāma* that has reached us in its complete form was made by Darviš Hasan (Mahdi or Madḥi) in the first half of the 17th century for Sultan 'Otmān II (r. 1618-22). Copies of this translation are kept in Paris, Gotha, Uppsala, and St. Petersburg (Blochet, I, pp. 314-15, no. 326; Pertsch, p. 207, no. 258; Simirnow, pp. 82-87; Tornberg, p. 93, no. 147; Abdullaeva, pp. 49-57). There also exists an incomplete translation of the *Šāh-nāma* in Eastern Turkic (Uzbek), held at the Bibliothēque Nationale in Paris (Supplément 1010; Blochet, II, p. 129).

Individual episodes in the *Šāh-nāma* were also translated into Turkish. A version of the story of Kay Qosrow and Goštāsb (*Keyk-ūsrev ve Guštāsba dāir hekāye*) in old Anatolian Turkish, rendered by an unknown author, is kept at the library of Istanbul University in a manuscript copied by Moḥebb-al-Moḥarrami Yāzıjı in 1627 (no. TY 3287; see Bilgin, 2001).

Evliyā Çelebi (II, p. 186) reports that the *Šāh-nāma* used to be recited by the *maddāḥs* (professional storytellers and reciters of the *Šāh-nāma*) at coffeehouses in Bursa. In addition to Turkish translations that were originally done word for word directly from the Persian text, there were also other Turkish renderings that were done in a way that could be more easily understood in public meetings and at coffeehouses for the use of *maddāḥs*. An incomplete translation of three volumes (1,778 fols) for this type of meeting is



kept at the library of Istanbul University (TY, no. 6131-6133; see. Gökyay, p. 48; Bağcı, p. 175, n. 39). The date and author of this translation, which also includes quotes from different texts besides the *Šāh-nāma*, are not known. The first eighty pages of this translation became the subject of three different master's theses (Saadettin Şahin, 2000; Sema Demirel Şahin, 2001; Erhan Aktaş, 2005). This translation is especially significant as a source for the effect of the *Šāh-nāma* on Turkish folk literature.

The Bodleian Library in Oxford holds a 19th-century translation of the *Šāh-nāma* in Chaghatay Turkish by Šāh Hejrān Qalandar b. K̄vāja Neẓām-al-Din at the order of Ḥazrat K̄vāja Ya'qub K̄vājem (MS. Ind. Inst Turk. 2). It is done mainly in prose with some verses interspersed (Kut, pp. 159-60, no. 225).

In addition to the above-mentioned translations, there are others kept in various libraries, whose authors are not known (Chicago University Library, no. A 12082, see. Dānešpažuh, 1973, p. 9, no. 18; Cairo, no. 370, see. Ṭerāzi, I, p. 86; Monzawī, II, p. 993; Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Library: İsmail Saip Sencer, I, no. 3690; Muzaffer Özak, no. 1504, see. Anbarcıoğlu, p. 10; Süleymaniye Library, Hüsrev Paşa, no. 370; Millet Library, Ali Emiri, Edebiyat, no. 268-70; Gaziantep İl Halk Library, no. 27 Hk 3; Ankara Adnan Ötüken İl Halk Library, no. 06 Hk 2070). It, however, seems impossible now to determine which copy belongs to which translation, to make a connection between the copies of the *Šāh-nāma* kept in different libraries, or to come to definite conclusions concerning the Turkish translations until a collection of all of these manuscripts becomes available.

Lost translations of the Šāh-nāma: In addition to the translations that we possess, we have mentions in various records of Turkish translations that have apparently been lost. A Turkish translation of the *Šāh-nāma* is mentioned among the books kept in the catalogue dated 1503 in the private library of Sultan Bāyezid II (r. 1481-512), but there is no record of the translator's name (*Ketāb tarjama Šāh-nāma be'l-torkiya fi mojalladayn*; see. Maróth, p. 123). Jalili ḤOāmedizāda (d. 1569) is reported to have attempted to translate the *Šāh-nāma* during the reign of Sultan Süleymān (Solaymān) I the Magnificent (r. 1520-66), but we do not have any definite information concerning it, and the entire story "is probably a myth" (Āşeḡ Çelebi, fol. 66a; Gelibolulu Moştafā 'Alī, pp. 203-5; Kınalızāde, I, p. 258; Gibb, III, p. 159). An Ottoman poet, Ayyubi/Eyyubi, is also reported to have made a prose translation of the *Šāh-nāma* (Bursalı Meḥmed Ṭāhir, III, pp. 9-10). Šībāni/Šaybāni Khan (r. 1494-510), the Uzbek ruler of Bukhara, wished to translate the *Šāh-nāma* into Chaghatay



Turkish, but we do not have any information as to whether it was ever attempted (Köprülü, 1989, p. 163).

The *Loğat-e Šāh-nāma* by ‘Abd-al-Qāder b. Bāyazid b. Aḥmad Baġdādi (d. 1682) in 1659, and *Moškelāt-e Šāh-nāma* presented to Ebrāhim b. ḤOāfez Ža’efi, are among the leading works on the *Šāh-nāma* compiled in Ottoman territory (Öz, pp. 30-31).

Modern Turkish translations. Following the short translations by Muallim Cevdet in 1928 and Rıza Nur in 1934, Necati Lugal (d. 1964) embarked on a complete translation of the *Šāh-nāma* in six volumes, based on Johann A. Vuller’s version (Leiden, 1877-84). Only the first four volumes consisting of 20,000 couplets have so far been published (Istanbul, 1945-55). The short translation of Vasfi Bingöl in 1965 followed this work.

Šāh-nāma-K̄vāni

The effect of the *Šāh-nāma* on Turkish literature is not limited just to its translations. It also served as a model for a number of compositions. Bahā’-al-Din Aḥmad b. Maḥmud Qāne’i Ṭusi composed a *Šāh-nāma* in Persian for Sultan ‘Alā’-al-Din Kayqobād I (r. 1219-37), the Saljuq sultan of Anatolia, which consisted of 300,000 couplets in 30 volumes, and K̄vāja Dehhāni wrote a *Šāh-nāma* consisting of about 20,000 couplets in Persian, in the Ferdowsi style, about the Saljuq dynasty in the period of ‘Alā’-al-Din Kayqobād III (Köprülü, 1943, pp. 393-97). It is certain that this custom was continued by the Karamanids, evidenced by “the history of Karamanids” written by Yārjāni, who took the *Šāh-nāma* as his model in Persian at the command of ‘Alā’-al-Din Beg (Şekāri, pp. 8-9).

The prevalent influence of Persian language and literature in Anatolia ensured the continuation of this custom under the Ottoman sultans. During the period of Sultan Morād I (r. 1360-89), a poet at his court called Aḥmad read the *Šāh-nāma* to the sultan (‘Āşeḡ Çelebi, fol. 19b). Moreover, Mawlānā ‘Ali Çelebi Fenāri, who participated in the meetings of Sultan Meḥmed (Moḥammad) II (1451-81), would sometimes recite couplets from the *Šāh-nāma* of Ferdowsi to the sultan (Sehi Beg, p. 322). A record kept by Evliyā Çelebi demonstrates that this custom continued into the middle of the 17th century (Evliyā Çelebi, I, p. 317b).

The text called *Ġāzā-nāma-ye Rum*, written in Persian verse by a poet called



Kāšefi at the command of Abu'l-Faẓl Aḥmad b. Wali-al-Din Pasha in the reign of Morād II (1421-51), is the oldest existing example of the style of the *Šāh-nāma* in Anatolia (on the manuscript see. Tauer, p. 94; Hāšempur Sobḥāni and Āqsu, pp. 601-2; Riāḥi, tr. p. 145). Šehdi turned the first known Ottoman *Šāh-nāma* into verse in Persian at the command of Meḥmed II by imitating the style of Ferdowsi's *Šāh-nāma* (Sehi Beg, pp. 196-97; ḤOāji Kālifā, II, p. 288; Babinger, pp. 29-30). Unfortunately, the poet died after completing only 4,000 couplets of his work (Āšeq Çelebi, fols. 253a-b; Gelibolulu Moštafā 'Ali, pp. 138-39; Kınalızāde Ḥasan Çelebi, I, p. 528). In addition, Mir Sayyed 'Ali b. Możaffar Mo'ālī Ṭusi wrote an Ottoman history called *Ḥonkār-nāma* in Persian in the reign of Sultan Meḥmed II. It was inspired by, and in the style of, Firdowsi's *Šāh-nāma* (Anhegger, pp. 145-66; Balata, 1992).

Šāh-nāme-kvāni became an established type of civil service job in the period of Süleymān I the Magnificent (1520-66) in the Ottoman Empire. These *Šāh-nāmas*, inspired by the *Šāh-nāma* of Ferdowsi, and written to tell the deeds of the Ottoman sultans, were originally written in Persian verse by poets coming from Persia, or by Ottoman poets who had mastered Persian, but as time passed they also gradually began to be written in Ottoman Turkish. According to one document from the Ottoman archives dated 15 Muḥarram 1004/20 September 1595, there were two authors of the *Šāh-nāma* (*Šāh-nāmaguy*) in the Ottoman Empire during the latter part of the 16th century, the first of whom wrote in Persian and the other in Turkish (Afyoncu, p. 293, 301). This type of civil service worker, called *Šāh-nāmaguy* or *Šāh-nāma-kvān* (later *Šāh-nāmanavis*, *Šāh-nāmaji*) continued until the beginning of the 17th century.

Among the best-known Ottoman *Šāh-nāma* (Ottoman Turk. *Šehnāme*) authors are: Aḥmad Maḥrami (d. 1535); 'Abd-al-Raḥmān Ğobāri (d. 1566), who composed an incomplete *Šāh-nāma* (*Solaymān-nāma*) in Persian verse; Faṭḥ-Allāh 'Ārefi (d. 1561-62), the author of *Tawāriḳ-e-Šāh-nāma-ye Āl-e 'Oṭmān* consisting of five volumes and about 60,000 couplets in verse; Eflāṭun b. Šervāni, who continued 'Ārefi's *Honar-nāma*; Sayyed Loqmān b. Ḥosayn 'Āšuri Ḥosayni Ormavi (d. 1601), who was a well-known *Šāh-nāme-kvān* (*Šehnāmeji*) author in the Ottoman Empire and wrote five different *Šāh-nāma* works during the twenty-seven years of his official life; and Ta'liqizāda Meḥmed Šobḥi Çelebi (d. 1606), the author of two versified *Šāh-nāmas* and another one in prose. Ḥasan Ḥokmi was the last official *Šāh-nāma-kvān* in the Ottoman Empire. There were also authors who wrote *Šāh-nāmas* but were not officially employed as *Šāh-nāma-kvān*. These authors included Atiri/Eṭiri, who wrote his



work in the period of Süleymān I the Magnificent; Şamsi Aḥmad Pasha, who wrote *Şāh-nāma-ye Solṭān Morād* in the reign of Morād III (1574-95); Neṭāri, author of a *Şāh-nāma* about the Egri war and the victory of Meḥmed III (1595-1603); Ġanizāda Meḥmed Nāderi (d. 1627), who composed a *Şāh-nāma* at the command of 'Oṭmān II; and Ebrāhim Molḥemi (d. 1650). *Şāh-nāma-kvāni* lost its status in the middle of the 17th century after *waqāye'-nevisi* became the official writing style of historical works in the Ottoman Empire. There are a few copies in existence today that were presented to the Ottoman sultans by the best artists of the period (Babinger, p. 180; Bağcı, p. 165).

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