

Languages of Turkish Poets^{*, **}

In Eastern Anatolia, so the biographer of poets Āşîq Çelebi informs us, there lived a teacher and companion of the Dûlqadir prince ‘Alî Beg b. Şehsuvâr (d. 1522),¹ a certain Şükrî by name. When the Ottoman Sultan Selîm I (1512-1520) ascended the throne, Şükrî addressed him with a request to enter his service. His petition (*‘arz-i hâl*), as far as the passages that interest us here, reads:

Hear, oh falcon on the Lote Tree,
 My word that the heavens praise!
 I am the servant Şükrî, presently without office,
 An insignificant bondsman of the Sultan...
 I know Traditions and Koran commentary,
 Have studied jurisprudence and interpretation.
 (Am skilled in meter and rhyme,
 an expert in enigma and riddle).
 I am a poet. Behold, my work lies before you.
 I have composed *gazels* in six languages.
 In Turkish I write poems as fluently as Navā’î,
 And do the same in Persian, like Bannā’î.
 I speak Arabic and am a speaker of Kurdish...
 The Armenian language I know to perfection,
 And I am proficient as well in Indian.
 I was once a professor and a judge,
 And in past times also a preacher.

(Some description follows of how irresistible his preaching was).

I know what a good horse is and a good dog,
 I am knowledgeable about falcons and hunting panthers.
 I draw a crooked bow and shoot a straight arrow;
 I speak my mind frankly and do not sell myself.

* Translated by John O’Kane.

** What follows is a revised translation of my inaugural oration as Professor Extraordinary at the Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, given in German, on 16 September 1977.

1 This detail comes from ‘Alî: see F. Babinger, *Die Geschichtsschreiber der Osmanen und ihre Werke*, Leipzig 1927, p. 51.

With Turks I'm a Turk, with Kurds a Kurd,
 At home I'm a sheep, abroad I'm a wolf...
 I also propose myself as a boon companion:
 The friend who weeps I bring round to laughter.

Despite all these gifts of intelligence, he goes on to say, science has brought him no profit. Only through poetry has he made a name for himself. He is therefore ready to compose poetry about whatever the Sultan commands. This simple poem which the Ottoman 'Āşîq Çelebi presents along with its element of Āzerî Turkish² in which Şükri still wrote at that time,³ in fact brought its author a high post in the Ottoman provincial administration and a position of trust at the court.⁴

Şükri's request provides a good illustration of one possibility of Ottoman multilingualism in which Turkish, Persian, Arabic, Kurdish and Armenian were normal and only "Indian" stands out as unusual. We are accustomed to hear about "the three languages" which Turkish poets used during the 14th to the 16th century, i.e. at a time when Turkish and Turkish-speaking dynasties ruled the Near East from Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and Syria/Egypt across the Iranian plateau up to Western Central Asia and maintained various forms of contact among one another.

Being "cultivated" in that world was, practically speaking, a synonym for being bilingual or multilingual.⁵ The ability of the educated to communicate effortlessly was impressive. On journeys as well as when accompanying commanders during war, they found the opportunity to exchange ideas with local people.⁶ When the Ottoman government secretary for the Sultan's monogram (*nîşāncı*), Celālzāde Muṣṭafā, was in Tabriz with the Ottoman army in July 1534,

2 *Meṣā'ir üş-Şu'arā or Teżkere of 'Āşîq Çelebi*. Edited by G.M. Meredith-Owens, London 1971, fol. 249a-b. Compared with fol. 331 of the Vienna manuscript, Flügel II, p. 371, no. 1219, that Meredith-Owens refers to as T.

3 The very polemical *qaṣīda* with which Şükri at a later time attempted to rouse Sultan Süleymān to wage Holy War against the Qızılbaş maintains a stately Ottoman Turkish throughout: 'Āşîq Çelebi, op. cit.

4 He received a "fief" (*ze'āmet*) in the region of Diyārbekr, became an intimate courtier of Selīm I whose Qızılbaş campaign he described and he accompanied Sultan Süleymān on his campaigns against Belgrade and Rhodes, without living long enough to participate in the latter's campaign against the Şafavids. 'Āşîq Çelebi op. cit.; F. Babinger, *Geschichtsschreiber*, pp. 51 f.

5 U. Weinreich, *Sprachen in Kontakt. Ergebnisse und Probleme der Zweisprachigkeitsforschung*, München 1977, p. 105. Cf. Uriel Weinrich (1926-1967), *Languages in Contact. Findings and Problems*, New York 1953, The Hague 1963.

6 After the capture of Tabriz by the Ottomans in 1526 Ta'liqizāde conversed with notables of the

while conversing he presented some high-ranking local religious scholars with excerpts from a history work dealing with his era (i.e. the era of Sultan Süleymān) which he had written in Turkish, and had the satisfaction of receiving in return Persian verses of praise which he incorporated in his book.⁷

One could cite innumerable examples of non-Arab writers of that time, including many Turks, who dealt with specific subjects in Arabic, as well as examples of non-Persians who wrote in Persian. The reverse situation – non-Turks who wrote in Turkish – is without a doubt less common but can also be demonstrated. Here a multitude of factors play a role, in particular cultural dominance and the usefulness for an individual of mastering and employing a language. Just as in Christian Europe where in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance Latin was in international use,⁸ there were always reasons that led individual authors to employ a language other than their mother tongue in order to communicate their ideas to the public.

For religious and scientific purposes it was common practice to employ Arabic which in the ranking order of the three Islamic languages – based ultimately on religion – occupied first place. Aside from the fact that it was the language of revelation and the Traditions from the Prophet, Arabic possessed a vocabulary that was indispensable for treating scientific subjects. We are here speaking of Middle Arabic, used by writers in the established disciplines in as “classical” a form as their *medrese* education made possible but which inevitably succumbed to a certain interference from an author’s mother tongue. It brought considerable prestige to the person who mastered it. An example from the Ottoman court illustrates this point. The Persian religious scholar and physician Qazvīnī, by means of the elegance with which he presented his medical explanations in Arabic, amazed the physicians of the Porte who beheld “how Ibn Nubāta (d. 1014), the most correct of Arab men of elo-

city: J.R. Walsh, “The Historiography of Ottoman-Safavid Relations”, in *Historians of the Middle East* (eds. B. Lewis and P.M. Holt), London 1964, p. 202.

7 *Ṭabaqāt ül-memālik*, manuscript of the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. quart 1961, fol. 250b-251a. I owe my knowledge of this passage to the late Dr. Petra Kappert, who was then preparing her edition of the text, which appeared as *Geschichte Sultan Süleymān Kanūnīs von 1520 bis 1557 oder Ṭabaqāt ül-Memālik ve Derecāt ül-Mesālik von Celālzade Muşafā genannt Koca Nişāncı*, in Facsimile herausgegeben von Petra Kappert, Wiesbaden 1981.

8 Fundamental for our subject are: H.J. Chaytor, *From Script to Print. An Introduction to Medieval Vernacular Literature*, Cambridge 1952, especially Chapter III “Language and Nationality”, and L. Forster, *The Poet’s Tongues: Multilingualism in Literature*, Cambridge 1970.

quence, looked like a barbarian alongside this non-Arab" (wordplay with *'acam*).⁹

To the extent that the Turks were adherents of the Ḥanafī School of jurisprudence, in principle their language too might have profited from the dispensation according to which, in the last resort, the ritual prayer of a believer who did not know Arabic was also valid in Persian.¹⁰ But with regard to this long-standing controversy, which ultimately went back to the issue of the Koran's untranslatable character, Sunnī theologians mostly held the viewpoint that the believer who did not master Arabic could all too easily come into conflict with the religious law. After being cautioned to that effect, the Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Ḥasan (ruled 1453-1478) on one occasion felt constrained to wash down some pages on which he had written his religious thoughts which in any case were not in Arabic but possibly in Turkish.¹¹ Whereas in pre-Ottoman Turkish Anatolia of the 14th century it seemed that Turkish could be used freely and without compunction not only for the "external" sciences but also for religious-ethical purposes,¹² in the 16th century two great Ottoman religious scholars endeavored to discourage the use of non-Arabic, i.e. Persian and especially Turkish, in Islamic ritual practice. Persian had won second place in the hierarchy of Islamic languages but not without a struggle, as the following hostile *ḥadīth* testifies: "The language most hated by Allāh is Persian, the language of the satans is Khūzī, that of the dwellers in Hell Bukhārī and that of the blessed in Paradise Arabic."¹³

9 'Âşîq Çelebi (see here fn. 2), fol. 246b, Ms. T 325b-326a. On Şāh Muḥammad Qazvīnī cf. H. Sohrweide, "Dichter und Gelehrte aus dem Osten im osmanischen Reich (1453-1600). Ein Beitrag zur türkisch-persischen Kulturgeschichte", in *Der Islam* 46 (1970), pp. 266 f. and passim.

10 R. Brunschvig, "Kemâl Pâshâzâde et le persan", in *Mélanges d'Orientalisme offerts à Henri Massé*, Teheran 1963, p. 59.

11 W. Hinz, *Irans Aufstieg zum Nationalstaat im fünfzehnten Jahrhundert*, Berlin/Leipzig 1936, pp. 119-20.

12 Cf. my "Faḥrīs Ḥusrev u Şirīn vom Jahre 1367", the first chapter in this volume.

13 J. Fück, *Arabiya*, Berlin 1950, p. 112; cf. R. Brunschvig, "Kemâl Pâshâzâde", p. 56. When Hoca Neş'et (d. 1807-8) was asked whether Persian was indeed the language of hell, he replied: "If it is so, it were as well to learn it; one can never tell where one may go..." E.J.W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. IV, edited by E.G. Browne, London 1905, reprint 1967, pp. 214-215. "While the religious scholars' studies required mastery of Arabic, Ottoman scribal intellectuals needed to study Persian as well. Some of the pious would say of this: 'Whoever studies Persian pays half of his debt', Carter Vaughn Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom. A Social History*, Princeton 1989, p. 36f., in his assessment of Ottoman *adab*-culture.

Clearly alluding to this, the encyclopaedist ʿAṣḥab al-ʿIlm Aḥmed Efendi (d. 1561), who for the most part wrote in Arabic, warned preachers against using Persian and non-Arabic (by which he obviously meant Turkish) in their sermons, both being “languages of the dwellers in Hell”.¹⁴ It is true that in a small text the Mufti Kemālpaşazāde (1468-1534) extolled, with religious arguments, the Persian language, but that was as far as he would go; he would not allow the use of any other language for ritual practice.¹⁵ Both attempted to restrain the uncontrolled advance of their vernacular language and were also certainly concerned on behalf of Arabic as the language of religious scholars.

It may be that Kemālpaşazāde, who was called “the mufti of human beings and angels”, had in mind a further attack on some very specific “dwellers in Hell”, namely the Şafavids whom he himself had actually condemned as heretics in a well-known *fetwā*.¹⁶ The latter did indeed make use of the vernaculars for their religious propaganda; not only Turkish among their Anatolian and Azerbaijani followers, but also Persian among their Persian adherents. They took as their authority the founder of their order, Shaykh Şafi, who had said that the lack of Arabic did not matter among speakers of Turkish, Tajik and Kurdish, as long as the heart understood the – Arabic – language of the Lord.¹⁷

As far as language was here brought into the religious-political struggle, it should be noted that in this case the Ottoman side did not in fact push forward the promotion of its own language. The Ottomans, having now become a great Islamic power, in an equal measure fostered Arabic as the language of Islamic ritual and theology, Persian as the esteemed language of poetry, while their own Ottoman Turkish became the official language throughout the vast Ottoman bureaucracy.

No language was suppressed – otherwise Şükrî whom we mentioned at the beginning would scarcely have boasted of his native language; but due to the higher social status that it conferred Ottoman Turkish in the long run pushed the non-Turkish local languages into the background.

In the past much has been said about the fact that political hostility toward the Şafavid state in no way diminished the aesthetic appreciation of educated

14 *Miftāḥ as-saʿāda*, translation by O. Rescher, Stuttgart 1934, pp. 62-63. A preacher should choose “the most excellent of languages”, i.e. Arabic which is the language of Paradise; conversely, one should not use non-Arabic and Persian, both of which are the language of the dwellers in Hell, except in an extreme emergency” (in Rescher: “in this context [cf. ‘both of which!’] obviously Turkish”).

15 R. Brunschvig, “Kemāl Pâşhâzâde”, pp. 52-59.

16 Ibid., p. 64.

17 E. Glassen, *Die frühen Safawiden nach Qāzī Aḥmad Qumī*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1968, pp. 7-8.

Ottomans for the literary culture that found expression in the Persian language. Likewise, in the East the poet prince, Mīr ‘Alī Ṣīr Navā’ī (d. 1501), when he set up his “court of arbitration regarding the two languages” Turkish and Persian, paid a respectful tribute to Persian culture: in the realm of ideas and science the Persian was more subtle, and more penetrating in his thinking; the Turk, however, possessed the gift of quicker perception and a more pure and salubrious temperament.¹⁸ When Navā’ī, faced with the arts and sciences, philosophy and men of letters among the Persians, deploys the loyalty, sincerity and straightforward honesty of the Turks, it makes one think of the apologetic voices that were once raised to promote the European vernaculars in opposition to Greek and Latin. The Germans too saw themselves and their language as rough and uncouth, and attempted to make up for it by referring to their steady character and loyalty.¹⁹

Navā’ī’s appeal for the use of Turkish as a language for poetry is so impressive because he is the first to apply philological criteria to prove that his language is richer in morphological possibilities, is more expressive (thanks to a greater number of nuanced expressions), and is richer in homophony, and above all in vocabulary. It is clear that in his professed intention to encourage the poets of his homeland to use their Turkish mother tongue, overtones of affection play a role in his relationship with the language. Devereux’ assessment of this attitude as linguistic “chauvinism”²⁰ loses its credibility through his own translation.²¹ But it is noteworthy that precisely among the Eastern Turks, where at the time in question the Persian element is in fact described as culturally dominant, a state of awareness manifests itself which Uriel Weinreich has called “language loyalty”, i.e. a sense of one’s language being threatened that emerges from a situation of close linguistic contact and frustrated feelings of superiority.²²

For the Western Turks a long road still lay ahead before a new idea, born in the European Romantic movement, would emerge, namely that an official language was to be seen as a national heritage, indeed the embodiment of a

18 Mīr ‘Alī Ṣīr Navā’ī, *Muḥākamat al-Luġatayn*, ed. E.M. Quatremère, *Chrestomathie en turk oriental contenant plusieurs ouvrages de l’émir Ali-Schir...*, Paris 1841, pp. 1-39. This text is reprinted in Devereux (see here fn. 20).

19 From among many possible examples I cite H. v. Hofmannsthal, *Wert und Ehre deutscher Sprache* (19271), pp. 146 and 179.

20 R. Devereux, *Muḥākamat al-Luġhatayn by Mīr ‘Alī Ṣīr. Introduction, translation and notes*, Leiden 1966, p. ix.

21 As long as no critical text-edition and literal translation exist, one can best consult the Turkish translation by İ.R. Işıtman, *Muhakemet-ül-lûgateyn*, Ankara 1941.

22 U. Weinreich, *Sprachen in Kontakt* (see here fn. 5), pp. 131-35.

people's soul, as a property well as worth fighting for; a property that needed purifying, a task of purism, and protection against purism – the cause of the anti-purist counter-movement. In the Turkish Republic which by law protects its citizens, for example, from Kurdish publications from abroad,²³ alongside the purists anti-purist voices have more recently made themselves heard which defend borrowed vocabulary as war booty from the glorious old days that has become indigenous, as a possession which one ought not to renounce any more than one would renounce a piece of the homeland.²⁴

But let us return to the era of Sultan Selīm I, surnamed the Grim, before whom Şükri could so unabashedly present himself as a Kurd. Like other sovereigns of his time Selīm enjoyed conversing about linguistic matters. He once said to Kemālpāşazāde who accompanied him on the campaign in Egypt: "It seems odd that Seyyidi 'Alizāde should write a commentary in Arabic on the *Gulistān* which is after all in Persian." "How should he do otherwise?", retorted the mullah. "He doesn't really know any Persian and why should he set out on an erroneous path by doing it other than in Arabic?" And so at the same time "he unmasked the commentator in a jocular way".²⁵ For his part the Egyptian Sultan Qanīşawh al-Ġawrī, against whom Sultan Selīm had set out on campaign, as a born Circassian felt proud of the eight languages he mastered, liked to discuss in his evening conversations the question of the origin of language (Adam spoke Arabic in Paradise), and to inform himself about what was spoken and written at other courts. Having a sound grasp of Ottoman poetry and having himself composed poems in that language, at the same time he showed an interest in the Timurids and consequently also had something recited to him in Eastern Turkish: in this way a verse by Ḥusayn Bayqara (d. 1506) found its way into the Arabic minutes of his evening gatherings.²⁶

23 According to law no. 6/7635 of 25/1/1967, "the import and distribution of printed matter, phonograph records, cassette tapes and suchlike in Kurdish is forbidden". *T.C. Resmî Gazete* of 14/2/1967.

24 "The words that our nation has conquered so as to dominate other nations not only by the power of the sword but also by the power of culture and the mind, she has phonetically and semantically Turkified and made use of them thus", E. Bayrakdaroglu, cited by T. Yücel, *Dil Devrimi*, Istanbul 1968, p. 30. "From regions they entered with a sword in one hand and a firebrand in the other the Turkish armies did not take away with them words on some temporary basis or as a loan. They (the words) are a kind of 'war booty'. Whatever pleased them they added to their language – the way they added a beautiful princess to their harem", H.N. Zorlutuna, cited by Yücel, op. cit. – "To rob Turkish of those words which have become indigenous here is as false as to give away a piece of the fatherland", E. Bayrakdaroglu, cited by Yücel, op. cit.

25 'Aşiq Çelebi, fol. 38a, 20-22; cf. Ms. T, fol. 46a.

26 Cf. my "From the Evening Talks of Ġavrī", no. 7 in this volume.

It is tempting to investigate the reality of the linguistic diversity as it is reflected in many contemporary sources. But before we turn to consider briefly the paths of reception of Turkish literature, we should visualize for ourselves how linguistic differences found expression in the narrative literature of these societies that were so interested in philological matters. Was the difficulty of communication between different peoples represented at all? In narrative literature as in *ğazel* poetry one finds brief remarks along the lines of: "I am a Turk and cannot speak Persian."²⁷

If we consider the more historical sections in the *Shāhnāma* where Turks appear, we see that Firdawsī does no more than indicate the difference between *pahlavī/pahlavānī* and *turkī* (rarely *tūrī*), to bridge which interpreters (*tarcumān*) are employed.²⁸ Since in the *Shāhnāma* and in the epic poetry it has inspired many letters come to be written, scribes are continually engaged who are "also in the service of non-Muslim, even non-human rulers."²⁹ They read out letters and write answers without any language difficulties ever being indicated. Thus the Sassanian Shah and the Emperor of Byzantium can exchange friendly or irate letters, and in so doing it comes to pass that the Byzantine Emperor deciphers a letter from Chosroes Parvīz "written entirely in Pahlavī" without the help of a scribe.³⁰

From authors who treat an imaginary world of fantastical history and vague topography we cannot expect any consistency in matters of language.³¹ In the Turkish *İsqnāme* (1397), the kings of India, Kashmir and China fight one another in complete understanding as far as language is concerned, they hasten from country to country and are never lost for an answer if someone asks them in a friendly manner: "Now brothers, where do you come from? What are you buying and selling here?"³²

27 Cf. the *ğazel* written in Chagatay by Qaramanlı Nizāmī (the first hemistich is in Persian): *Türk oğlanı men anglamanam didi 'acem-ni*: "I am a Turkish youth", he said, 'and do not understand Persian'" (O.F. Sertkaya in *TDED* XIX [1971], p. 173).

28 Kowalski has pointed out that the Turks in the *Shāhnāma* appear as one uniform hostile mass without distinction being made between nomads and sedentary people or entering into any linguistic differences; T. Kowalski, "Les Turcs dans le *Šāh-nāme*", in *RO* xv (1939-40), pp. 93-95 and 98.

29 F. Meier, *Die schöne Mahsatī*, Wiesbaden 1963, p. 71.

30 E.E. Bertel's (ed.), *Firdousī, Šāch-nāme*, vol. ix, Moscow 1971, pp. 88 f. – Similarly, the Emperor's offers to give his daughter in marriage to the Iranian king which are recounted in the *Shāhnāma* and later in the *Humāy-nāme* are not hindered by any linguistic obstacles.

31 H.J. Chaytor (see here fn. 8), p. 26.

32 S. Yüksel, *Mehmed. Işk-Nāme*, Ankara 1965, verse 5805; A. Tietze, "Meḥemmeds *Buch der Liebe*", in *Festschrift. O. Spies*, Wiesbaden 1967, p. 677.

In Turkish works with a historical background such as the *Düstūrnāme*, the epic poem about the naval hero Umur Pasha, things happen with somewhat more nuanced distinctions. As in the *chansons de geste*, the Turkish sea-*gāzīs* and the Frankish knights call out greetings to one another or insults on the field of battle. One example from among many: a Frank, the son of the dauphin, introduces himself thus: "I am the son of Torfil. Now tell me what your name is."³³ Two infidel women fall in love with the Turkish hero of the story, the beautiful Despina whom he meets while hunting and the mistress of the castle at Thermopylae who offers him her thirteen strongholds. Without having to call for an interpreter, they declare their love to him and he makes it clear to them that he cannot love them because he must fight against his carnal soul, the *nafs*.³⁴ Here as well letters are understood without any problem; even a religious dispute can be conducted without any language barriers. The Franks begin the dispute: "You (Umur Beg) have one God, we have three".³⁵ Only on one occasion in the *Düstūrnāme* is attention also directed to differences of language when an envoy of the Catalans says something "in his language" *dilince*.³⁶

But why this preoccupation with how language is treated in stories? The differences in treatment could give us help with making distinctions within narrative literature. Take for example the *Dānişmendnāme* whose prose version is dated round about 1360/61. Here one notices a significantly greater closeness to reality when it comes to language. There is frequent mention of Greek, *Rūm dili*;³⁷ the Greeks declare in the Rūm language that they would prefer to become Muslims rather than to die.³⁸ Language as an obstacle to understanding is portrayed in an episode in which a Greek sings something *Rūm dilince* that the hero does not understand.³⁹ The Turks use their knowledge of Greek for ruses in war: by passing themselves off as people from Trebizond, they overrun a fortress; they write letters in Greek and send a female spy in disguise who knows their language. Small scraps of phrases are quoted such as: *Titi miti sunb-i ħar-i Īsā*.⁴⁰ This rather realistic treatment of Greek in the *Dānişmendnāme* should be examined in terms of its function in the work's structure and could result in new perspectives concerning its dating.

33 I. Mélikoff-Sayar, *Le Destān d'Umūr Pacha*, Paris 1954, p. 121, verse 2241.

34 Ibid., verses 559 and 1802.

35 Ibidem, verse 2029.

36 Ibid., verse 1087.

37 I. Mélikoff, *La Geste de Melik Dānişmend*, vol. II, Paris 1960, p. 26

38 Ibid., p. 236.

39 See here fn. 37.

40 Ibid., pp. 250, 260-61 and 270. On the scraps of Greek cf. the editor, *ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 184 f.

However, Turkish poets, generally speaking, did not learn Greek. All Turkish men of letters, before they made creative use of their own or a foreign language, were readers of Arabic and Persian. In the domain of poetry, the language they learned was Persian, even though – for the reasons already mentioned – it was kept out of the *medrese* and was taught rather in children's schools, in some dervish convents and (despite the general tendency) in a few *medreses*.⁴¹ The first verses written were in this acquired Persian language. The mistakes that still appeared one had corrected by a competent teacher.⁴² This is how the young poet was introduced to the common Islamic heritage of poetic themes and set phrases. The relatively limited subject matter and the fact of working with transnational forms and topoi facilitated for poets a fluent literary mastery of a language that was not their mother tongue. The models had become imprinted on their mind. Thus one can understand why Navā'ī remarked that it is easier for beginners to write in Persian: it has also been said of Renaissance poets that it was often easier for them to write Latin than their own vernacular.⁴³

The active participation of both Western and Eastern Turkish writers in Persian literature is a subject in its own right which cannot be dealt with here. But let us mention one of the tools of the trade which facilitated the learning process for them: dictionaries and commentaries.⁴⁴ In the world of Persian and Turkish artistic poetry there existed, to quote Uriel Weinreich: “a constant need for synonyms, an onomastic low pressure area, as it were. Wherever synonyms originating from another language were available, they were gratefully adopted.”⁴⁵

41 F.R. Unat, *Türkiye Eğitim Sisteminin Gelişmesine Tarihi Bir Bakış*, Ankara 1964, pp. 6 and 9; H. İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire. The Classical Age 1300-1600*, p. 201.

42 Şâdiqî, who was born in 1532 in Tabriz and for three years studied treatises on the science of poetry (*şîir ilmi*) in his home city under Mîr Şun'î from Nishapur, was a student of Fezâ'î from Hamadan and in his early youth had his poems corrected by Hâfîz Şâbûnî: T. Gandjei, “Sâdikî-i Afşar'ın Türkçe şîirleri”, in *TM* XVI (1971), p. 20.

43 L. Foster, *The Poet's Tongues*, p. 29.

44 The Western Turks appear to have especially distinguished themselves in this area. The following dictionaries may be mentioned: the *Luğat-i Halimî* compiled for Meḥmed II in 1477/78, the *Şâmil al-luğa* put together for the latter's son Bâyezîd II, the *Tuhfe-i Şâhidî* from 1514/15, the well-known *Daqā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq* by Kemālpāşazāde, the *Luğat-i Nîmetullâh*, a *Tuhfet es-senîye ilâ'l-ḥazret al-Ḥasenîye (Luğat-i Deşîsiye(?))* from 1580-83, the *Tuhfe-i Vehbî*; as well as the special dictionaries for the *Shâhnâme*, the *Meşnevî* and *Waşşâf*. And Turks have written commentaries on 'Attâr, Calâleddin Rûmî, Sa'dî, and Hâfîz, among others. In the Azerbaijani domain one may mention the *Tuhfe-i Hüsâm* (see *Fundamenta* II, p. 635) and later the *Sanglah* (which used Rûmî sources as well).

45 U. Weinreich, *Sprachen in Kontakt*, p. 82.

Moreover, the flow was not always simply from Persian into Turkish. Not only had a large quantity of Turkish words flowed into the Persian language since the time of the Īlkhāns,⁴⁶ but Turkish poetry, especially since the time of the Šafavids for the reasons already indicated, had also come to occupy a stronger position in people's awareness. Persians translated Turkish works into their own language, compiled dictionaries, wrote occasionally in Turkish themselves, and imitated certain Turkish poets in Persian.

To sum up, the poets still presented their first works in an acquired language to which, for the sake of their public and in order to be understood, they might also switch over permanently (to Arabic, Persian or as in Šükri's case to Turkish). But many took delight in exploiting the resources of their mother tongue, exercising it for serious poetic creation while expressing allegiance to their acquired languages: an acknowledged achievement known as *imitatio* in European literature.⁴⁷

And then there was a further possibility of multilingualism for Turkish poets in the time period we are speaking about. To make oneself understood to a public who lived spread out across immense regions from Central Asia to the near East and whose dialects had drifted apart, three dialects that served as literary languages were available: Old Anatolian-Turkish or Ottoman (called *türk*, *türkī* and in the Mamlūk state *türkmenī*); East-Turkish (called *türkī* and later *çagatāyī*); and thirdly, Āzerī which lay between the other two and was designated as *türkī* or *türkmenī*.

Likewise, within these three literary dialects, by a certain analogy to the language hierarchy discussed earlier, there was the most respected of the dialects: East (Middle) Turkish. How did this come about?

The originally religious stimulus that had spurred on the study of Arabic as a native or a foreign language (e.g. its vocabulary or its pronunciation) likewise came to benefit Turkish, on behalf of which one could also cite the *ḥadīth*: "Learn the language of the Turks, for their rule will be of long duration." Under the influence of Arab philological methods and certainly under the influence of the Arab endeavor to preserve the language's purity, Maḥmūd al-Kāšġarī, who in 1072 undertook to describe Turkish languages for the first time, also spoke of the "purest" and "most correct" among the Turkish languages.⁴⁸ Al-Kāšġarī clas-

46 G. Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen*, vols. II-IV, Wiesbaden 1965-1975.

47 L. Foster, *The Poet's Tongues*, p. 33.

48 Tuḥṣī and Yağma; B. Atalay (translation), *Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk Tercümesi*, I, Ankara 1939, p. 30; cf. A. Caferoğlu, *Türk Dili II*, Istanbul 1964, p. 35. – On the cited *ḥadīth* cf. B. Atalay, op. cit., p. XVII. Robert Dankoff in collaboration with James Kelly, *Maḥmūd el-Kāšġarī*.

sified his own East Middle Turkish literary language, Karakhanid, if not as the most correct, in any case as the finest and clearest Turkish. The Oguz, whose poetry, *şî'r-i ğuzzî*, the Persian poet Manūchehrī in a frequently cited verse had placed on an equal footing with the *şî'r-i türki*,⁴⁹ al-Kāşġarī reproached because of their bilingualism which he said resulted from their having lived so long with the Persians and had led to their forgetting their own words and adopting foreign ones.⁵⁰ Since a series of Turkish grammars written after al-Kāşġarī's great pioneering description have not survived, we only once again meet with this linguistic judgment, which became the basis for establishing a hierarchy among the Turkish dialects,⁵¹ in Ibn Muhannā⁵² and in the Mamlūk glossaries. It appears to have become an axiom that the language of the Türkmēn – which in the meantime is what the Oguz for the most part came to be called – was “not pure”. As late as in 1759 the author of the *Sanglah* criticizes the Western Oguz (the Turks of Rūm, i.e. the Ottomans) for their bilingualism, this time, however, not because of their contact with the Persians but because of their frequent “relations and intercourse” with the Arabs due to which they have “Arabized, corrupted and contracted certain of their words”.⁵³ That many western Turcologists embraced comparable views should not be overlooked.⁵⁴

In any case, the hierarchy in question was not so strict that it could hinder the “less pure” dialects from developing into literary languages. Turkish poets made use of the possibility of adopting suggestions from neighboring Turkish literatures. This inner-Turkish reception, as I would like to call the literary exchange between Eastern and Western Turks, between Azerbaijanis and Turkish-writing Mamlūks, still furnishes scholars with interesting research tasks.

Compendium of the Turkic Dialects (Dōwān Luġat at-Turk). Edited and Translated with Introduction and Indices, Harvard University Printing Office, 1982, Part I, p. 70: “Learn the tongue of the Turks, for their reign will be long”, and p. 84: “The most elegant [Turkish] is that of the Khaqani kings”.

49 A. Bombaci, *La Letteratura Turca*, Milan 1969, p. 87

50 On polemics by Arabs eager to defend their language “against the foreign corrupting influences that living together with subjected peoples exerts on the language”, see G. Flügel, *Die grammatischen Schulen der Araber*, Leipzig 1862, pp. 22 f.

51 Cf. R. Blachère, *Histoire de la Littérature arabe I*, Paris 1952, p. 70, on the hierarchy among the Arabic dialects.

52 G. Doerfer, “Woher stammte Ibn Muhannā?”, in *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, New Series vol. 9 (1976), pp. 243-51.

53 G. Clauson, *Mahdī Khān al-Astarābādī. Sanglax. A Persian guide to the Turkish language*, London 1960, pp. 14-15.

54 On views of Westerners about the priority of Chagatay cf. A. Caferoğlu, “Çaġatay Türkçesi ve Nevaî”, in *TDED* 11/3-4 (1948), especially pp. 144-46.

Of these the most obvious would be a description of the reception of Chagatay poetry among the Ottomans. For this purpose studies are already available in which the social determinants of immigration and change of language are dealt with among religious scholars and poets from the East who settled in the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁵ Material for the study of Ottoman reception is provided by recently published Chagatay poems that were penned by Ottomans,⁵⁶ texts which, as far as I can see, have not yet actually been subjected to questions of a specifically literary nature – perhaps because one imagines that such questions have already been answered with the shorthand phrase “influence of Chagatay poetry”. But scholars are not so completely in agreement: this is shown by the centenarian dispute revolving around the question of whether the 15th-century Ottoman prince of poets, Aḥmed Paşa, had been under the influence of Navāʾī or not.⁵⁷ Assertions to that effect and counter-arguments will not advance matters as long as one does not apply methods involving criticism of style and motifs in an attempt to understand in what terms the Ottomans viewed Navāʾī (characteristically only him, as being the greatest), and in what way their poems, possibly conditioned by different expectations on the part of the public, differed from his. The strange fact that in this case a dialect suddenly became a literary fashion, a dialect which with its typical forms (future using -GAY) had actually not been popular in 14th-cen-

55 In 1964 A. Caferoğlu collected together in the *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, vol. 11, pp. 640 f., those poets from Azerbaijan who moved to Turkey. Cf. now H. Sohrweide, *Dichter und Gelehrte aus dem Osten im osmanischen Reich* (see here fn. 9), pp. 263-302; E. Birnbaum, “The Ottomans and Chagatay Literature. An Early 16th-Century Manuscript of Navāʾī’s Dīvān in Ottoman Orthography”, in *CAJ* XX (1977), pp. 157-90. Birnbaum’s designation of the Ottoman Empire as the “Land of Promise” is rather general; his anachronistic comparison (the era of Bāyazīd II!) with conditions in Seljuk Anatolia (p. 161) brings to mind earlier ideas of the Ottomans as rough pioneers of the Western frontier (cf. B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, London 1961, p. 325).

56 K. Erarslan edited in *TDED* XVI (1968) the Chagatay *ğazels* of Seydi ‘Alī Re’īs; O.F. Sertkaya, “Osmanlı Şairlerinin Çağatayca Şiirleri IV”, in *TDED* XXII (1977), pp. 169-89, contains details about four earlier articles on this subject by the same author.

57 M.F. Köprülü seemed to have written the final word on the matter in *İA* I, p. 190, but now O.F. Sertkaya in *TDED* XVIII (1970), pp. 133-34, has again been adamant in claiming that the *naẓûre* recorded by ‘Aşîq Çelebi (Meredith-Owens 36a, Ms. T 43b; cf. A.N. Tarlan, *Ahmed Paşa Divanı*, Istanbul 1966, p. 125, no. 4) is not a parallel poem.

tury Anatolia,⁵⁸ could be considered in connection with the other fact that the Ottomans Ottomanized their Chagatay texts.⁵⁹

Conversely, it is apparent that among the Oguz and the East-Turks living in Iran, Herat and Samarqand – and certainly among the Mamlūks – Anatolian-Turkish literature was read and highly esteemed, indeed it even prompted a literary fashion in *gazel* poetry.⁶⁰

While volume II of the *Fundamenta*, published in 1964, is still considered authoritative regarding scholarship that deals with Turkish literature, nonetheless we see the Ottoman and Chagatay inventory which is conveniently arranged there as bearing fixed labels, some of which have perhaps become obsolete. Looking for Mamlūk Turkish literature in the Oguz language⁶¹ and for the older Azerbaijani-Turkish literature, one finds oneself on shaky ground. There a Šādiqī Beg (see here ft. 42) – even in the index – is split into three persons and distributed over three domains of literature, and Nešātī, writing in Shiraz (called Nišātī on p. 670), is transferred to Khorasan on p. 369, while his translation of the Šafavid *Šafvat al-šafā* is left linguistically hovering between Chagatay and Azerbaijani.⁶²

Areas like this in which our present state of knowledge is still incomplete are particularly attractive. The tasks that result for scholars – making available individual works when the situation regarding manuscripts is difficult,⁶³ working out interrelations between literature and the society which produces it, and the deciphering of aesthetic factors – continue to pose a challenge for the whole of research in the domain of Turkish literature.

58 One might recall Doerfer's thesis according to which the original Ottomans had spoken East-Oguz with *-Gay* having been borrowed early on: "Das Vorosmanische", in *TDAY-Bel-leten* 1976, pp. 85 and 100.

59 E. Birnbaum, op. cit., pp. 175 ff.

60 Fazlallāh b. Rūzbihān, the court ideologist of the Uzbek Khān Šaybānī, in his *Mihmān-nāma-yi Buḥārā* lavished enthusiastic praise on Aḥmedī's *Iskender-nāma* (ed. by M. Sütüda, Teheran 1962, p. 151). On Chagatay literature see H.F. Hofman, *Turkish Literature. A Bio-Bibliographical Survey*, Utrecht 1969. – The very borrowings Eckmann and Doerfer dismissed as "only literary" – J. Eckmann, *The Divan of Gadā'ī*, Bloomington 1971, and G. Doerfer, *Das Vorosmanische*, pp. 99, 116 and 142 – are in fact what is of interest in the context discussed here.

61 See my paper "Zum Stand der mamluk-türkischen Forschung" published in *Die Akten des 19. Deutschen Orientalistentags*, Freiburg 1975.

62 Apparently Nešātī is concealed in the "Bisātī" mentioned by Abdülbāki Gölpınarlı, *Mevlana Müzesi Yazmalar Kataloğu III*, Ankara 1972, pp. 430 f., no. 1172. On Nešātī as a writer see my article "Die Hamburger Handschrift von Yūsuf Meddāḥs *Varka vü Gülšāh*", in *Hungaro-Turcica. Studies in Honour of Julius Németh*, Budapest 1976, p. 272, ft. 13.

63 E. Birnbaum speaks of the neglected state of Turkish manuscripts in Iran, op. cit., p. 171; and cf. *ibid.*, p. 158.