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TÜRK DİLİ VE EDEBIYATI
Dergisi

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It was Edgar Blochet who first gave notice of the existence of the verses in four languages, namely Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Mongolian, at the end of a copy of Juvaini's *Tārtkh-i Jahān-gushā* ¹. He ascribed the authorship of these verses to Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Ḥasan b. Maḥmūd b. ʿAbd al-Ghafūr al-Samarqandi called Muḥammad Bakhshi, who copied them in Mardin on 1st Jamādi, II, 724 (26 May 1324). Some 34 years later Blochet, while cataloguing the Persian MSS. of the Bibliothèque Nationale, as a result of closer examination of the colophon, corrected his former reading of ʿAbd al-Ghafūr in ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, and modified his previous remarks, no longer stating that Muḥammad al-Samarqandi was the author of these verses, but merely holding him to be the copyist of the verses and the owner of the MS ². Hambis ³ and Poppe ⁴ who regarded the Mongolian poem as the composition of Muḥ. al-Samarqandi, obviously overlooked the later statement of Blochet, which amounted to a tacit withdrawal of the previous one.

In a recent article Igor de Rachewiltz having obtained a photocopy of these pages, leaving aside the Arabic and Persian verses, transcribes and translates the Mongolian section, and in the same article Poppe supplies the transcription and translation of the Turkish part ⁵. The author, although well aware of the second statement of Blochet, whom he quotes *in extenso*, attributes the authorship of all four poems to Muḥ. al-Samarqandi. The main merit of this article is, in my opinion, the fact that the author provides us for the first

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1. *Introduction à l’histoire des Mongols de Fadl Allah Rashid ed-Din*, (Leyden-London), 1910, 117,
time with the facsimile of the verses. This gives the opportunity for a fuller examination of this interesting document as a whole.

(a) Arabic

 فإذا كان في الفراق عنقل
جعل الله كل يوما فراق

For Arabic grammar requires يوم فراق یوما فراق

If there is an embracing as a result of separation, may God make each day a day of separation.

(b) Persian

پدر کر من روانش باد رنور
ما پریانه سندی داد مشهور
که از ب دولتان بکریل چون تیر
سرای کوی صاحب دولتان گیر

The father, may his soul be radiant through me, gave me a sage, well-known piece of advice: "Flay like an arrow from those without fortune, (and) make your home in the quarter of the people of fortune".

These two verses are from the Khusrau u Shīrīn of Niẓāmi. In the critical edition of this work, instead of sarā we find buna in the text, representing the reading of the earliest extant MS. (dated 763/1362), and sarā and waran in the apparatus as variants of the later MSS 6. Now the appearance of sarā in this document, which is some 40 years older than the earliest MS., justifies the restitution of this reading in the text.

6. Khusrau u Shīrīn (Baku, 1960), 484.
Was Muḥammad al-Samarqandī a polyglot poet?

(c) Turkish

Professor Poppe transcribes and translates this verse as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{qanī qanča bardīng ay-a dilberim} \\
\text{tudun-ya mu kirding ay-a dilberim}
\end{align*}
\]

Where to and when did you go, my beloved?
Have you reached (or 'have you arrived at') the Tudun, my beloved?

The translation of the second hemistich is not convincing. The word \textit{tudun}, which is explained as 'a well-known Ancient Turkic and Uighur title', is, in this context, out of the question. Moreover the verb \textit{kir-} means simply 'to enter', and not 'to reach, to arrive at'. I regard the \textit{tudun} or \textit{tutun} of this text as a scribal error for \textit{tutuq} 'veil, curtain'. Thus the translation would be: Did you enter the veil (did you hide yourself) o beloved? For \textit{ay-a} read \textit{ayā} (<Persian).

This verse is composed in the heroic \textit{mutaqārib}, which, in Turkish, can be considered a syllabic metre of 11 (6 + 5) type.

(d) Mongolian

De Rachewiltz divides the three lines of the text, which contains a punctuation mark after the sixth word, into a quatrain, and remarks that the first, third and fourth lines alliterate, and gives the following transcription and translation:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bilib ningen dalai buyu} \\
\text{göyar tendecē qariyu.} \\
\text{biligün yosuni} \\
\text{biliqī kūmūn medeyū}
\end{align*}
\]

Knowledge is a sea.
The jewel retreats before it.
The law of knowledge
The wise man knows.
For göyar read gūhār, this is not a loan-word from Persian gauhar but from its reduced form guhar. The letter γ in Uighur script of the Islamic period is used to represent beside γ, q, also h, ḥ, ẕ, ‘ain. The author's assumption that the poem is alliterative is due to an optical illusion. The alliteration in Mongolian (and Turkish) consists of the identity of letters (in the case of vowels) or initial consonants with their following vowels, provided that it is not the result of the repetition of the same word. Here it is the word bilig which has been repeated three times.

The presence of the Persian word guhar, and the absence of alliteration and parallelism (two major characteristics of Mongolian poetry) in this rudimentary stanza, induce me to think that it is a translation of a Persian verse. If this is correct, then the punctuation mark in the second line of the MS. would indicate a division between two Persian hemistichs and allow a tentative explanation of the second line, which remains otherwise obscure. qari- means 'to return', in our context we need a verb meaning not 'to return' but 'to come out', 'to emerge'. This is the Persian compound verb bar-āmadan. The translator has in fact confused the verbs bar-āmadan and būz-āmadan. The latter means 'to return'.

The fact that Muḥammad al-Samarqandi in the colophon calls himself no more than a copyist (kāṭīb) would be sufficient to exclude him as the author of the above verses. The Persian verses, as we saw, were by Nizāmī. The Arabic verse, which contains a well-known Sufi idea, can hardly be attributed to a man who commits a gross grammatical error in copying it. Were he the composer of the Turkish and Mongolian verses, he would certainly have introduced them by an appropriate formula, or, hinted to his authorship in the colophon.

In the circumstances, it seems likely that Muḥammad al-Samarqandi was not a poet, but a mere bakhshi, with proficiency in writing both Arabic and Uighur scripts, who had a certain interest in poetry and was familiar with four languages used under Ilkhanid rule.