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ON TRANSLATIONS OF QABUS-NAMA DURING THE OLD ANATOLIAN TURKISH PERIOD*

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Abstract

Qabus-nama, is a kind of travelogue book written in Persian Language by Alexander's son Keykavus in 1082 on behalf of his son Gilan Shah. This work that comprises from fourty chapters occupies lots of fundamental and beneficial instructions that can be applied in any field in daily life. Some of those informations are about playing chess, larking, bathing, hunting, playing ball, having a concubine and slave, understanding horse breeds, medicine, astrology, sciences such as geometry, and being prepared for the administrative authority like becoming vizier or king.

Qabus-nama which is one of the basic pieces of Persian Literature is translated six times to Turkish Language in Old Anatolian Turkish Epoch that embraces from 13 century till 15century by different translators. First translator is not known. Second one is Seyhoglu Sadruddin's translation; Akkadiođlu's translation is the third one. Fourth is Bedr-i Dilsad's translation in verse: Muradname. Fifth is Mercumek Ahmed's and the last one is the second translation that the translator is not known.

In this article all those translations that we mentioned is going to be introduced in outlines, enlightened about translation copies, given examples from those copies, attempted to comparisons about translation techniques in those works and attached importance to language features.

Key Words: Qabus-nama, Alexander's Son Keykavus, Old Anatolian Turkish Language, Turkish Literature, Persian Literature.

Old Anatolian Turkish is a term used to call the Oghuz Turkish spoken and written in Anatolia and Rumelia in 13th-15th centuries. For this period of Turkish, the terms "Old Ottoman Turkish"¹ and "Old Turkey Turkish" are also used. Old Anatolian Turkish is a period which has a private place in the history of Turkish language. On one hand, Oghuz Turkish began to be a written language in this period, and it also put up a fight for existence against Arabic and Persian.

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¹ In German: "Alt Osmanische"

We don't know if any works were written in Oghuz Turkish in Anatolia during the period of hundred or more years after Oghuzs arrived in Anatolia. And from the 13th century, we have the works of authors such as Yunus Emre, Hoca Dehhani and Hacı Bektaş-ı Velî. Also in this period, there are couplets of Mevlana and his son Sultan Veled in Turkish.

In 14th century, a great deal of works were written in Anatolia. In addition, a lot of religious and literary works were translated from Arabic and especially from Persian. From this century, the first literary figures coming to mind are Hoca Mesud, Âşık Paşa, Gülşehrî, Şeyyad Hamza, Şeyhoğlu Mustafa and Ahmedî (Özkan 1995: 67-79).

One of these translations which provided a basis for a literary and cultural development in the geography of Turkey and had great effect on that the Oghuz Turkish became a written language (literary language) in 14th century is *Qabus-nama*.

Qabus-nama is one of the fundamental works of Persian language and literature and was written by Emîr Unsuru'l-Ma'âlî Keykâvus bin İskender bin Kâbûs bin Veşmgîr for his son Gîlân Shah in H. 475/ 1082 AD. The author of this work written in the form of religious sermon-political treatise, Keykâvus bin İskender was a member of Ziyârî dynasty which reigned in Teberistan and Gorgan provinces of Persia.

Also known as *Enderzname*, *Pendname*, *Nasîhatname* and *Kitâbu'n-Nasîhat*, the work gained wide currency with the name *Qabus-nama*. Orhan Şaik Gökyay says the following about the name of the work:

“As it can be understood, the name of the book would not be Kabusname, because the author wrote it on behalf of his son Gîylân Shah; but Kabus is the name of his grandfather. In addition to this, not only giving the name of the grandfather to the book was customary, but it is also possible that the name changed from Kâvusname, which came from the name of the author “Kâvus”. Also, the reason why the work is called with his name may be because Kabus was the known person in the family as having a great rank in Persian and Arabic literature and being among the notable people of Persia in verse and prose.” (1974: I-II).

The work consists of introduction and forty four chapters. These chapters include informations from all the areas of life such as meals, council and drinking parties (*işret* manners), playing chess, making jokes, being a guest and hosting guests, bathing, hunting, playing ball, taking concubines and slaves, medicine, being familiar with sciences such as astrology and geometry, being prepared for positions as sultanate and vizier.

“This work is a summary of applied philosophy. It was split up into forty four sections. The most important parts were devoted to morality, home and family management and the analysis of lots of important tradesman professions. However, politics has only a few parts. It is certain that in the study of the issue, the author partially bases on Greek morality. For instance, he gained from there some important concepts like stoicism in morality. On the other hand, his way of explaining and his examples are completely of Iran origin.” (Plessner 1952: 631-632).

“In addition to its historical and literary value, *Qabus-nama* is among the resources to benefit from in terms of education and teaching. The work, which also includes informations about Classical Iran and Islamic History; mentions the scientists, poets and famous people having lived from the very first Islamic ages to the date of writing of the work. One of the works which best reflects the moral structure, traditions, social and political situation of Iran before the Mongol period; *Qabus-nama* not only transfers the values of Islamic civilization before Mongols, but it is considered to be among the most beautiful, fluent and the most qualified works of Persian prose. Another important feature of the work is that it includes Persian traditions such as hospitality, manners of eating and drinking, children's education etc.. (Yıldırım 2001: 452-453).

Additionally, in accordance with the understanding of the age, elements supporting and explaining the topics told such as verses, hadiths and sayings were included in the work.

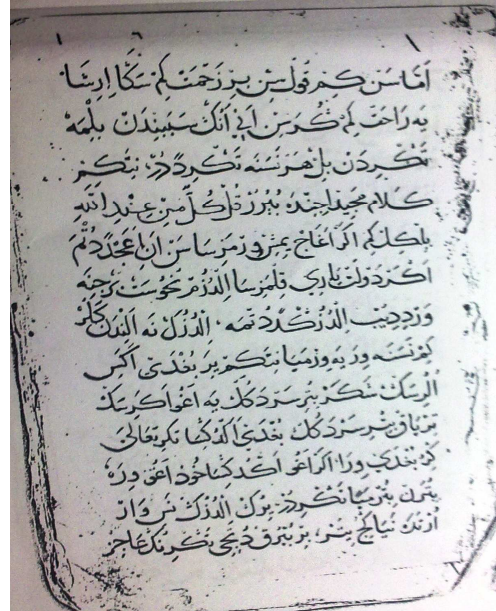
“That he tells his thoughts plainly and without preciosity and stylistic pretensions and his telling his subject matter with a basic but strong expression gave him a good place in Persian literature. Hakîm Senâî in *Hadîkatü'l-Hakika*, Genceli Nizâmî in *Husrev ü Şîrîn* and Ferideddin-i Attâr in *Esrarname* and *Mantiku't-tayr* borrowed stories and topics from this book sometimes by telling the name of the book and sometimes without making a reference (Gökyay 1974: III).”

Qabus-nama was first promulgated in Iran by Rızâ Kulî Han (Tahran 1285/ 1868), then in various dates nearly twenty publications were made. Mercümeke Ahmed translation of the work was published through the agency of Abdülkürun Şîrvânî in H. 1298/ 1880 AD. Besides it was translated into Kazan dialect by Kayyum Nâsırî and published two times (Kazan 1884, 1898). H. F. von Diez translated *Qabus-nama* into German (*Buch des Kabus*, Berlin 1811), A. Query into French (*Le Cabous Name*, Paris 1866), Reuben Levy into English (*A Mirrofor Princes*, London 1951) and Emin Abdülmecid Bedevî into Arabic (*Kitâbu'n-Nasîhat el-ma'rûf bi'smi Qabus-nama*, Kahire 1378/1958) (Kurtuluş 2002: 357).

This work was translated into Turkish for six times by different translators during the Old Anatolian Turkish period: 1.The first translation of which the translator is unknown, 2.The translation of Şeyhoğlu Sadrüddin, 3.The translation of Akkadioğlu, 4. The poetic translation of Bedr-i Dilşad: *Muradname*, 5.The translation of Mercümeke Ahmed, 6. The second translation of which the translator is unknown.

1. The first translation of which the translator is unknown (The copy of Yelkenci-Birnbaum):

Whereas the only copy of this translation belonged to the bibliopole Raif Yelkenci at first, Toronto Eleazar Birnbaum got it. Birnbaum used the watermarks of the copy as base to find out the date of translation. He says this work may have been written between the years 1370-1386 as the watermark of the manuscript is blanked and horizontal lined and he puts forward some data to prove his thesis (Birnbaum 1977: 11). The facsimile of *Qabus-nama* translation which was introduced to science world firstly by Sadettin Buluç (1969) was published by E. Birnbaum (1981). The beginning and end of the work are missing. On this copy that E. Birnbaum published, Aysel Güneş wrote a master's thesis.



The copy of Yelkenci-Birnbaum

2. The Translation of Şeyhoğlu Sadrüddin:²

Another translation of *Qabus-nama* was made by Şeyhoğlu Sadrüddin between the years 1361-1387 for Germiyans Bey Süleyman Shah. The date when this translation was written is unknown. Şeyhoğlu, who wrote *Hurşîdname* after *Qabus-nama* for Süleyman Shah, presented his work to Yıldırım Bayezid Han as Süleyman Shah died in H. 789/ 1387-88 AD. Şeyhoğlu himself states that his other work *Marzubânname* was translated before *Qabus-nama*. So, we can suppose the translation date of *Qabus-nama* to be between 1380-1385 by bringing it to a few years before the death of Süleyman Shah and the writing of *Hurşîdname*.

The 1459 copy of the translation made in the second half of the 14th century is today in the Cairo National Library. Written in naskh with vowel points, this copy has 107 folio.

The copy includes lots of words that have not entered *Tarama Sözlüğü*. These can be given as examples to the words that the work added to the historical dictionary of Old Anatolian Turkish: *av-*: “to rub”, *bilürsin-*: “to claim knowing something, but wrongly”, *burguç*: “swirl”, *egir*: “black (horse)”, *eleşdür-*: “to hold, grasp (?)”, *inamsuz*: “untrustable, traitor”, *kav-*: “chase, go after”, *merdek*: “bear cub, piggy”, *tarı-*: “become depressed, be bored”, *yapril-*: “to have drooping ears (horses)”.

One of the elements which makes the copy phonetically very precious, in fact the most important one is the way of “using a pair of vowel points on a single letter” which is seen in 143 words. We can comprehend this as the effort of the writer (copier) to make the reader feel the existence lip affinity using a second vowel point while at the same time leaving the examples of lip misfit which is one of the basic properties of Old Anatolian Turkish.

To this application we can give the following examples: “*alnuḡı ~ alnuḡı* (“your forehead”) (56/9), *aru ~ arı* (“pure”) (8/9), *çalucı ~ çalıcı* (“player”) (153/10), *değşürler ~ değşirler* (“they change”) (117/4), *dokınmaya ~ dokunmaya* (“he/she do not touch”) (156/13), *unutma ~ unutma* (“you do not forget”) (154/10), *uyır ~ uyur* (“he/she sleeps”) (54/14), *yavuzluk ~ yavuzluk* (“malice, evilness”) (90/8), *yazucı ~ yazıcı* (“scriptwriter”) (166/5).”



The copy of Cairo

² This translation was introduced to science world by us. (Enfel Doğan, “The Translation of *Qabus-nama* by Şeyhoğlu Sadrüddin and Some Evaluations on Phonetical Elements in the Work”, *International Old Anatolian Turkish Studies Workshop*, İstanbul 2010), following this, the scientific publication was made: (Enfel Doğan (2011a), *Qabus-nama Translation of Şeyhoğlu Sadrüddin, Text-Glossary-Index-Notes-Facsimile*, Mavi Publishing, İstanbul).

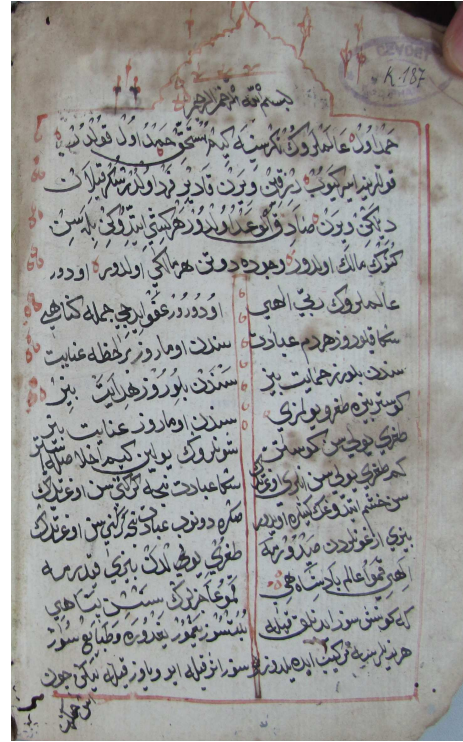
3) The translation of Akkadioğlu:³

The third translation was made by Akkadioğlu for the vizier of Yıldırım Bayezid's son Emir Süleyman (1377-1411) This translation has three copies two of which are in Turkey and the other in England (British Library) : a) Atatürk Library, Istanbul Library Department, 120 KEY, b) British Library, Or.7320. c) National Library, Adnan Ötügen Public Library Collection, 06 Hk 303.

We could not reach any data at the end of the scannings on classical anthologies of poets, biographical works and some parallel magazines to get information about the identity and the literary figure of Akkadioğlu. Also, we have not seen any poems of Akkadioğlu in this work. As Akkadioğlu made the translation of *Qabus-nama* in the name of and also by order of Hamza Bey, one of the viziers of Emir Süleyman, we suppose that the work was written in interregnum, between the dates 1402-1411 in Edirne.



The copy of London



The copy of Istanbul

4. The Translation of Bedr-i Dilşâd:

Bedr-i Dilşâd (Mahmûd b. Mehmed) translated *Qabus-nama* in verse in 830 (1427). The work is also referred as *Muradname* as it was presented to Sultan Murad II (1421-1451). While versifying *Muradname*, Bedr-i Dilşâd grounded on *Qabus-nama*, but he did not completely adhere to it and made explanations when he needed, made additions with subheadings and sometimes made restrictions such as shortening and combining; so the work almost became a new writing. The parts 27, 28, 32, 44, 45, 47, 48, 50 and 51 of *Muradname* are lacking in *Qabus-*

³ This translation and its copy was introduced to science world by us. see. E. Doğan (2011b). "On the *Qabusname* Translation of One of the Poets of Emir Süleyman Period Akkadioğlu and Its Copies", *Modern Türklük Araştırmaları Dergisi / Journal of Modern Turkish Studies*, C. 8, Sy. 1, Ankara, Mart 2011, 7-24.

nama. Similarly, the 43rd of *Qabus-nama* is lacking in *Muradname*. In fact, Bedr-i Dilşâd does not have an expression saying that the work is a translation of *Qabus-nama* (Ceyhan 1997: 44-50).



The copy of Ankara

5. The Translation of Mercümeğ Ahmed:

The most well-known translation of the work in Old Anatolian Turkish was made in the name of Sultan Murad II (1421-1451) by Mercümeğ Ahmed b. İlyas in H. 835/ 1431-32 AD. In the preface of the work, the translator tells in detail that he made the translation with the request of Sultan Murad II.

Mercümeğ Ahmed expanded this translation and made explanations when he thought something is lacking or unclear in the text. While making the translation, he adhered to the sentence structure of the work, that is he also used the wording in Persian (Gökyay 1974: XII). There are many copies of this translation in Turkish and world libraries.⁴

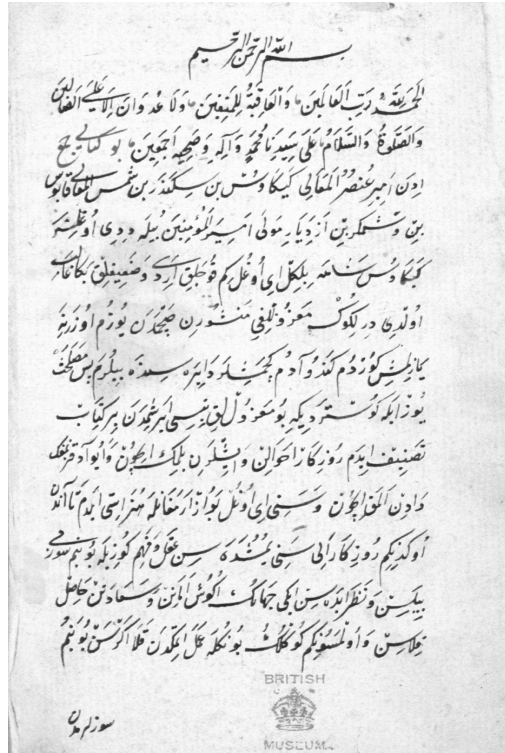


The copy of Ankara

⁴ For example see. Ankara Nat.onal Library., nr H. 941;TSMK, Hazine, nr. 1153; Nuruosmaniye Libr., nr. 4096; British Library, Or., nr. 1181, 3219, 4130; Bibliotheque Nationale, Suppl. Turc, nr. 530.

6. The Second Translation of which the Translator is Unknown

The translator of one more *Qabus-nama* translation made in Old Anatolian Turkish period is unknown. This translation is in British Library in England. (Or. 11281, 89 leaves, 15 lines, with vowel points). There are not any information in the work about the reason of translation, the date and the translator. The word is not lacking in form. Although the original Persian version of *Qabus-nama* has fourty four chapters, there are fourty one chapters in this translation. The translator combined some parts, and did not translate some others.



The copy of London

In 1117 (1705), Nazmîzâde Murtaza rewrote the translation of Mercümelek Ahmed according to the language of the day by command of the Baghdad Governor Hasan Pahsa. This was not a new translation, but only a kind of updating of the language of the translation of Mercümelek Ahmed.

Qabus-nama has also a translation in Chagatai Turkish the beginning and end of which are missing (British Library, Or. 9661).

Now we are going to take a part of the English translation of the original text and see how the translators translated this part:

COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE TRANSLATIONS:

“Chapter VIII: The Counsels of Nūshīrwān the Just to His Son

Nūshīrwān began by saying: As long as day and night come and go, never marvel at the vicissitudes of [human] affairs. Then he said: How is it that men commit actions of which they afterwards repent, although others before them have done them and repented?

How can a man who has acquaintance with kings lay himself down to sleep free of care?

How can a man count himself happy whose life has not gone according to his desires?

Why not account that man your enemy who secretly knows his generosity to be to the detriment of mankind?

Do not call him your friend who is the enemy of one of your well-wishers.

Form no friendship with men lacking merit, for such men are worthy neither of friendship nor of enmity.

Beware of the man who deems himself wise but is in actual fact a fool.

Do good of your own accord, thus may you be free of the [compulsion of the] lawgiver. (Levy, 1951: 45)"

The First Translation of which the Translation is Unknown

".....⁵ dürlü hällar degşürildüğünü hiç 'acablama.

İkinci: Biregü şol arada neyiçün peşimānlık yiye kim ol bir kez dahı peşimānlık yimişdür. Ya'nī bir kez peşimān oldugı işini bir dahı neye işler kim girü peşimān ola?

Üçüncü: Bir kişi neyiçün imīn yata? Ola kim ol kişinün pādīşāhlarla bilişlīgi olmuş ola.

Dördüncü: Bir kişi kendüzin diri bile kim anuñ dirliğı kendü elinde olmaya. Ya'nī ölüm, dirlik Tanrı elindedür. Ne vakt gelse kul ne bilür? Pes kendüyi diri bilmese gerek.

Beşinci: Senün dostın olur ol kişi kim senün düşmānuñ ola, vara dost ola.

Altıncı: Neyiçün düşmen dutmaya kişi şol kişiyi kim halkı incidici ola.

Yedinci: Bi-hüner kişiyile ne dost ol. Zīrā bī-hüner kişi ne dostlık bilür ve ne düşmānlığa yarar.

Sekizinci: Şol bilmezden sakın kim kendüzini bilür saña, hāl budur kim kendü bilmez ola. (Güneş 2001: 16-17)"

The Translation of Şeyhoğlu

"Sekizinci bāb, Nūşirvān öğütlerin bildürür ve altmış kelimedür:

Evvel kelimesi budur ki: Neçe ki erte gece gelici gidicidür. Hällar ayruksıduğın 'acebleme.

İkinci: Bir kişi ki bir kez bir işden peşimān olmuş ola, ol işi gerü neyiçün işleye?

Üçüncü: Bir kişi ki pādīşāhla bilişmiş [ola], emīn nēte yatur?

Dördüncü: Bir kişi ki dirliğı gönli dilegince olmaya, kendüyi ne-y-içün diri sana?

Beşinci: Düşmenüne dost olana dost dēme.

Altıncı: Ne-y-içün düşmen dēmeyesin bir kişiyi ki kendü erliğin kişiler incitmekte göre.

Yedinci: Hünersüz kişi-y-ile dostlık étme ki hünersüz kişi ne dostlığa yarar ve ne düşmānlığa.

Sekizinci: Sakın şol bilmez kişiden ki kendüzin bilürsine. (Doğan, 2011a: 141)"

The Translation of Akkadioğlu

"Bāb-ı sāmīn, Nūşin-revān-ı 'ādil sözlerin bilmekde:

⁵ The beginning of the sentence is absent in the script.

Evvel: Mâdâm ki gece ve gündüz oluyor, hâllar mütegayyir olduğın ‘aceblemeyeler.

İkinci: N’içün bir kişi bir kez peşimân olduğu işi gerü işleye?

Üçüncü: Bir kimse ki pâdişâhla bilişe, n’içün uyku uyuya?

Dördüncü: Çünkü bir kişinin dirligi kendü gönli dilegince olmaya, kendüyi dirilerden saymasun.

Bëşinci: Bir kişi kim anuñ cömerdligi halk incitmekdedür, aña n’içün düşmen demeyesin.

Altıncı: N’içün dost deyesin şol kişiye ki senüñ düşmanuña dost ola?

Yedinci: Hünersüz kişiye dost olma ki hünersüz kişi işe yaramaz.

Sekizinci: Kendüyi bilgilü sanan bilmezden kaç. (25a/17 - 25b/6)”

The Translation of Bedr-i Dilşâd

“Bâb-ı çihlünühüm ender mevâ’iz-i Nüşin-revân ve nasâyih-i ekâbir-i cihân

Didi tâ ki bu gündüz ile gece

Gele gide boyun dutagör güce

‘Acebleme ahvâl olursa ‘acib

Ulu kiçi olsa yirlü garib

Didi kim hünersüz kişiyle sakın

Varup döst olmaga olma yakın

Hünersüz kişi kim düşer benlige

Ne döstluga yarar ne düşmenlige

Didi kim niçün yata ola emîn

Şu kim pâdişâha olur hem-nişin

Didi kim özin nişe diri saña

Şu kim irmez eli neye kim suna

Didi döst bilme cihânda anı

Ki ol yâr idine saña düşmanı

Didi kimse niçe gide bir yola

Ki bir kez o yoldan peşimân ola

Didi er sakınsun şol erden özin

Ki bilmez bilür bilür ol kendözin (8990-8998th beyts) (Ceyhan 1997: 987-988)”

The Translation of Mercüme Ahmed

“Nuşinrevan’ın sözlerin beyan eder:

Nuşinrevan aydur: Çün görürsün ki gece ve gündüz birbirinin ardınca gelici ve gidicidir. Pes gerektir ki âdem olan dahı halden hale döndüğüne melul olmaya. Yani ki şazlık gidip kaygı gele; kaygı gidip şazlık gelirse mukayyet olmayalar.

Ve hünersiz kişiyi dost tutunmayalar ki hünersiz kişi ne dostluğa yarar ve ne düşmanlığa.

Ve dahı âdem olan bir işi bir kez işleyip sonra peşiman olmuş ola, bir kez dahı ol işi işlemeye.

Ve bir kişi kim padişahla biliş ola, gerek ki emin yatmaya.

Ve bir kişi ki dirliğı kendi dileğince olmaya, ol kişi özünü niçün diri sana.

Ve niçün düşman bilmeyeler ol kişiyi ki gayet ulu keremi halkı azarlamak ola.

Ve niçün dost deyesin biregüye ki dostlarına düşman ola.

Ve hünersiz kişilere dost olma ki hünersizler ne dosta yarar ve ne düşmana.

Ve sakın ol bilüsüzden ki kendüyü bilge sana. (Gökyay 1974: 71)”

The Second Translation of which the Translator is Unknown.

“Sekizinci bāb, Nüşirevān-ı ‘ādilün öğütlerindedür:

Evvel sözi bu-y-ıdı kim: Çün erte ve gece gelici ve gidicidür, ahvāllar döndüğinden ‘acebleme.

N’içün peşimānlık yeye biregü kim neçe kez peşimān olmuş ola.

N’içün emīn yata ol kişi kim pādīshāh-ıla bilişligi ola.

N’içün diriden sayā kendüzin ol kişi kim diriligi murādınca olmaya.

N’içün düşmān tutmayasın anı kim düşmanlarıñla dost ola.

Hünersiz kişi ile dostlık étme kim ne dostlığa yarar ne düşmanlığa.

Sakın bilmez kişiniñ sohbetinden kim kendüzin bilür sana. (24a/12 - 24b/4)”

CONCLUSION

At the end of our studies, it was determined that in the period of Old Anatolian Turkish *Qabus-nama* was translated into Turkish by six different translators.

The dates of two translations are clear: the translation of Bedr-i Dilşad was made in 1427, and the translation of Mercümeke Ahmed in 1431.

In addition, the dates of two translations are approximately estimated: for the date of the translation of Şeyhoğlu, we can think of the dates between 1361-1387 which is the reigning period of Germiyanoglu Süleyman Shah to whom the translation was presented. And for the date of Akkadioğlu translation, we predict a date between 1402 when Yıldırım Bayezid Han was defeated by Timur and captured in Ankara War and then declared his reign in Edirne palace and 1411 when he was killed.

Of two translations, not only the translators but also the dates of translation are unknown. But Yelkenci-Birnbaum copy is asserted to have been translated between 1370-1386 and to be the first known translation of *Qabus-nama* because of its watermark feature. Here we think that the period in which the Şeyhoğlu translation may have been written (1361-1387) should be considered and people should be careful about telling which translation is the first.

Of these, the translation of Şeyhoğlu was made by abbreviating. In fact, the translation expresses this: “It is not needed to make a word by word translation. Telling the words nicely is more important (3/6-7).” And in the second translation of which the translator is unknown, some parts were abbreviated and combined.

In the translation of Bedr-i Dilşad, there is not an expression telling it is a translation of *Qabus-nama*. The questions how much the author was influenced by *Qabus-nama* and whether that work is a plagiarism or an expanded translation is the topic of another study.

To assess the linguistic and stylistic features of these translations well and clearly and to reach some results; at first all of them must be transcribed and the scientific publications must be made. Then accurate results can be achieved by establishing some linguistic and stylistic criteria and making comparison with the original Persian copy.

In this article, only a general introduction to the translations is aimed.

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