PRESENTING THE MANUSCRIPT

M. Dehgan

A LATE OTTOMAN TURKISH VERSE VERSION OF XANĪ'S MEM Û ŽĪN IN THE MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION OF THE ISLAMIC CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY LIBRARY I*

The collection of modern and medieval Turkic manuscripts in the Islamic Consultative Assembly Library I contains a lot of valuable materials on the Islamic literature and history. Some of them are well-known and exist in hundreds copies throughout the world, but a few items are rare or unique. This article is not aiming to give a full scholarly analysis of the Turkic manuscripts preserved in the collection of Islamic Consultative Assembly Library I. Our aim is much more modest — that is, to arouse only attention of specialists to a valuable Turkish version of Xanī's Mem Û Žīn (written in 1694).

Among the early Kurdish poets of Kurdistan, if we leave out the great founders of Kurdish literature [1], the name of Emīned Xanī (1651—1707) [2] is entitled to hold one of the most distinguished places. The Mem Û Žīn [3], or the most important work of Xanī in its broadest sense, is one of the great works of Kurdish literature. The study of the contents of this work, which centre about the tragic love story of Mem and Žīn, is important not only because they form the folkloristic belief of the Kurds, but particularly also because of their nationalistic aspect [4], their linguistic nicety, and their intrinsic value. If we leave the written Kurdish Mem Û Žīn wholly out of account we are still able to draw from other sources material for the study of Xanī's literary masterpiece. First and foremost, we may study the picture of the work of Xanī that can be drawn in outline from the oral versions of Mem Û Žīn [5]. This may be further supplemented through the use of material found in a version which Xanī's follower for his interest in him caused to be recorded in a non-Iranian language — that is, the Turkish translation manuscript which we would like to discuss in this brief presentation [6].

The Kitāb Mami wa Žīn (“The Book of Mami [sic] and Žīn”) is an anonymous manuscript (call No. 9385, 59 folios, 19×22 cm) mentioned neither in the "FIHIEST

* I would thank Professor Martin van Bruinessen of Utrecht for reading the first draft and valuable suggestions. I also owe an immense debt of gratitude to Simin Sidiyidi, Librarian of the Islamic Consultative Assembly Library I, for her help and support.

© M. Dehgan, 2007
After that he gives his translation of the poem in Turkish verse which contains a poem of more than 1,900 lines in rhyming couplets (matnawiy). The author does not mention the individual sources from which the Turkish version was compiled. However, the contents of the text reveals that the sources used included the written Kurdish Mem ʿā Zin and many oral versions. The Turkish translation, as other literary translations, naturally indicate only the notions underlying the Kurdish text, but the unknown translator also strove to maintain the genuineness of the Kurdish version in its own translation and free adaptations. Some minor Turkish verses are evidently “wrong”, because the translator either misunderstood or paraphrased the Kurdish text. Most of the points used by this translator concern the equivalents of individual words, but a number affect the meaning of the Kurdish version.

Notes
1. For a brief debate on the traditional Kurdish poets see A. Jaba, Raccolte di notizie e di ricetti curduri (St. Përësëru, 1860), pp. 8—11.
2. The biography of Xanî and some analytic notes on his works are given in full in I. M. Resul, Ahmad Khani (Bagdad, 1979).
3. There are numerous studies on Mem ʿā Zin from folkloric and linguistic perspectives as well as from political point of view. The one that follows contains only the best and complete edition of the text of Mem ʿā Zin and its Russian translation, see: M. B. Rudenko, Mem ν Zin, kriticheskii tekst, peperev., predvolovoe i ukazateli ("Mem ʿā Zin", critical text, translation, introduction and index) (Moscow, 1962).
4. The nationalist sympathies of Xanî and the originality of the diwâne of Mem ʿā Zin, of course, attracted some cautiously criticals; cf. M. van Brünnessen, “Euhemeri Xanî’s ‘Mem ʿā Zin’ and its role in the emergence of Kurdish national awareness”, Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism, ed. by A. Veli (Costa Mesa, 2003), pp. 40—57; A. Sultani, “Aya Ehemdi Xanî Sereray Mem ʿā Zin Xanî Nâsiwel”, Melemb XVII (Kôhê, 2008), pp. 65—7. Although the problem whether Xanî’s diwâne including nationalist sentiment is originally related to the mother MS of Mem ʿā Zin or not is unclear, yet the Turkish version, in my opinion, is the best one to follow in critic’s steps, myself I have no idea.
5. See, for example: M. L. Chyet, And a Thornbrush Sprang up Between Them: Studies on Mem ʿā Zin, a Kurdish Romance, PhD thesis (University of California at Berkeley, 1991), which is based on a corpus of eighteen oral versions.
6. Translation of the book of Xanî, is also available in modern Turkish, cf. M. E. Bozarslan, Mem ʿā Zin (Istanbul, 1975, repr. 1978, etc.)
8. The subject has a large bibliography; cf. Y. Pîstamî, Fihrist Kânûhêbên Mağiât Shûrât Millî (Teherân, 1932); Y. Kûsîk, Fihrist mağlûbât Kéhîši Mağiât (Teherân, 1969); ‘A. Sadrî Khânî, Fihrist mağlûbât Kânûhêbên Mağiât Shûrât Islâmî (Qum, 1997); and S. M. Tarakibîbî Bîbîbânû, Fihrist mağlûbât Kânûhêbên Mağiât Shûrât Islâmî (Teherân, 2002)—in progress.

Illustrations
Fig. 1. Mamm wa Zin ("The Book of Mami and Zin"). 19×22 cm. Islamic Consultative Assembly Library I, call No. 9385, fols. lv—lv. 2. Teherân, 1273/1852. Courtesy of the Library.
Fig. 2. The same MS, fols. 58v—59v.

Book Reviews

K. Smull, E. Puin

UNESCO CD OF SANʿĀʾ MSS. PART 3: QURʿĀN PALIMPSESTS, AND UNIQUE QURʿĀN ILLUSTRATIONS

Introduction

This third index is intended to complete a detailed reference index to the UNESCO CD-ROM of the important Qurʾān manuscripts found in Sanʿāʾ in the mid-1970s. For this third part, I have had the invaluable assistance of Dr. Elisabeth Puin, who has done painstaking work examining and cataloguing more features of the CD, has co-authored the text of this article, and who, with her husband Dr. Gerard R. Puin, has provided first-hand insight into these fascinating and priceless manuscripts. I would like to offer them my heartfelt thanks for making this index a much more valuable research tool.

With this last instalment two more offerings of the treasures on this CD are described: pictures of rare Qurʾānic palimpsests manuscripts, and descriptions of two unique illustrations from 1st century AH Qurʾāns. These will be discussed further in the article.

First, here is how the complete index is organized: Part 1 of this index (published in the March 2006 issue of Manuscripta Orientalia) listed the Qurʾān manuscripts on this CD as they are found on the CD. It used the manuscript designations found on the CD and listed the manuscripts and their contents in the order one would find them in normal usage of the CD.

Part 2 (published in the June 2006 issue of Manuscripta Orientalia) lists the manuscripts in the order of the passages of the Qurʾān that they contain. This index lists them in sura and dary order, so that researchers can quickly look up a particular passage they are interested in studying. Again, the manuscript numbers found on the CD were used for this index [1].

Part 3 builds on these two prior indices and adds a number of important additional features:

First, it provides the manuscript catalogue numbers as they are found in Sanʿāʾ according to the system devised by Dr. Gerard R. Puin and improved by Dr. Hans-Casper Graf von Bothmer. There is a slight difference in how the manuscripts are listed on the CD compared to how they are actually catalogued in the Sanʿāʾ collection. Also, the manuscripts listed on the CD with the “showcase” designation have been given their actual manuscript number in as many cases as possible without visiting the collection. The showcases in view here were the actual showcases of the exhibition of manuscripts in Sanʿāʾ. These have since been dismantled and the manuscripts that they contained must be accessed according to their original manuscript designation.

Second, this index provides a number of corrections to the information contained on the CD. In a project of the scope of this invaluable CD small mistakes are bound to be made, and corrections are here humbly offered to enable the CD to be used with greater precision. These corrections involve mainly a few citation errors and some typographical errors.

Third, this index provides additional information to the other two. There are now columns giving information concerning the format of the manuscript pages, whether they are of a vertical format or a horizontal one, and also the sizes of the manuscript pages. Also, the individual picture file reference numbers to each manuscript are provided, as they are found in the database of images at the heart of this CD. They can be accessed by looking at the contents of the CD and clicking on the images folder. This will facilitate study by allowing the researcher to go directly to the best image for studying a specific manuscript. Also, this last instalment provides detailed explanatory notes concerning each of the categories used in the index and an explanation of the manuscript signature system for the Sanʿāʾ manuscripts devised by Dr. Gerard R. Puin and Dr. Graf von Bothmer.

© K. Smull, E. Puin, 2007
CONTENTS

TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH .......................... 3
D. James. More Qur'ans of the Mamluks ........................................... 3

TEXT AND ITS CULTURAL INTERPRETATION ...................................... 17
M. Reissner. The Life of the Text and the Fate of Tradition. VIII: Criteria of Language Norm in the Assessment of Masters of Persian Ghazal of the 11th—Early 18th Centuries .................................................. 17

PRESENTING THE COLLECTION ........................................................ 24
O. Vasilieva. Christian Manuscripts of the East in the National Library of Russia .............................................................. 24

PRESENTING THE MANUSCRIPT .......................................................... 55
M. Dehjan. A Late Ottoman Turkish Verse Version of Xani's Mem 'a Zin in the Manuscript Collection of the Islamic Consultative Assembly Library 1 ..................................................... 55

BOOK REVIEWS ................................................................................ 59

Manuscripta Orientalia in 2007, vol. 13 (list of contributions) .............. 72