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ON THREE ANONYMOUS TURKISH MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH OF THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES COLLECTION. THE PROBLEM OF AUTHORSHIP*

In the St. Petersburg branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies manuscript collection there are three Turkish manuscripts so far identified as works by anonymous authors. Two of them are of the same contents and, in the opinion of the authors of the catalogue of the Institute's Turkish manuscript collection, present the work translated into German by W. F. A. Behrnauer [1]. This work contains a collection of counsels which seem to be addressed to a person of the highest rank, to the Sultan himself. One of these two manuscripts (call number C 2339), bears the title "*Nasihat al-mülük*" (Counsels for Sultans). There is also a later note, most probably by the owner of the manuscript, — "Merhûm ve mağfûrla sultan saadetiyle tahta geçtikte işbu kanûnnâmeyi verdiler" (When the late Sultan Ibrahim, whose sins are forgiven, luckily ascended the throne, he granted these state regulations) [2].

This manuscript was described for the first time in 1897 by Russian turcologist V. D. Smirnov [3]. He thought that the manuscript from the National Library of Vienna translated by W. F. A. Behrnauer, and identical to MS C 2339, was a version of the same work. After studying the text of the St. Petersburg MS V. D. Smirnov came to the conclusion that the work was a collection of reports submitted to Sultan Ibrahim I (1640—8). According to V. D. Smirnov, an unknown author "taught the inexperienced Sultan the rules of governing the state" [4]. The scholar stressed the fact that the work could be composed only by some person of a very high rank, standing very close to the Sultan; it is obvious from the very special manner the author is addressing his sovereign as well as from the way he is treating the subject [5]. Nevertheless, V. D. Smirnov failed to identify the name of the author, although he probably came very close to the solution of the problem.

While studying quite another work on the history of the janissary corps written at the very beginning of the seventeenth century, I had a chance to compare it to MS C 2339, and was fortunate to notice that its text was almost completely similar to that known as the second treatise by

Kochibey. It has been translated into Russian by the late A. S. Tveretinova [6]. In her work she used the Turkish edition of the text made by A. K. Aksüt in 1939 [7], not even suspecting that the work she translated was present in the St. Petersburg Institute of Oriental Studies collection.

The text of A. K. Aksüt's MS was published in Latin transliteration. It is almost identical to the text of MS C 2339 and MS A 319 from the Institute's collection. Certainly, A. K. Aksüt was unaware that his manuscript was not unique. The publisher identified the work basing mainly on the marginal note in the manuscript where Kochibey was mentioned as its author. At the same time, he did not give much information on the manuscript which he considered to be unique. One can only learn that he found it in the library of Mehmed Fatih Djami. A. K. Aksüt probably thought that the information presented by the marginal note was sufficient to identify the author of the text. Indeed, there were some grounds for such a conclusion. I mean that the so-called second treatise by Kochibey in Aksüt's manuscript was attached as a supplement to the undoubtedly Kochibey's treatise on the government of the Ottoman state earlier submitted by him to Murad IV (1623—40). Moreover, it was known that Kochibey wrote another work. It was meant to be presented to Ibrahim I, according to the suggestion made by the nineteenth century Turkish scholar Ahmed Vefik. He thought Kochibey to be the author of the treatise submitted to Ibrahim I [8]. His assumption did not remain unnoticed both by V. D. Smirnov [9] and A. K. Aksüt [10]. For a long time it was believed that the work had been lost. When publishing his manuscript, A. K. Aksüt considered the second part of it to be the lost Kochibey's treatise. The published text includes 19 reports (or rather epistles) submitted to Ibrahim I and dealing with the ways of governing the state [11].

It is very likely that both works by Kochibey were copied by a scribe of the Aksüt's manuscript as one unit. If so, the marginal note might be an additional argument supporting the publisher's assumption.

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