

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Tatar Poets of the First Great War

Author(s): Gerard Clauson

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 2 (1969), pp. 151-160

Published by: [Cambridge University Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25203137>

Accessed: 25/08/2012 10:57

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Cambridge University Press and Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

TATAR POETS OF THE FIRST GREAT WAR

By SIR GERARD CLAUSON

THE FIRST GREAT WAR was remarkable for the number of groups of people who started it fighting on one side and finished it fighting on the other. In the east the best known group was the Arabs, who started the war in the Turkish army and finished it taking part in the liberation of their countries from the Turks. A much less well-known group was the Turkish-speaking Moslems, mainly Tatars, who started the war in the Russian army and finished it in the Turkish army.

In the summer of 1917 when I was a General Staff Officer at the General Headquarters of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force and one of my duties was the examination of captured enemy documents, a Tatar battalion appeared on the Euphrates front opposite us, and in that September I received a small packet of documents in Tatar which had been captured from them. I reported that they contained nothing of immediate military importance, but might contain some interesting historical material, and was ordered to retain them until I had an opportunity to examine them more closely. It is a matter for regret that this opportunity did not occur until almost exactly fifty years later.

It is not difficult for anyone with a thorough knowledge of early Turkish, or even of Osmanli/Republican Turkish, and a sound knowledge of Russian, to acquire a working knowledge of Tatar. Tatar has diverged rather further from early Turkish than Osmanli, both in its phonetic structure, in its accidence (more particularly the conjugation) and syntax, and in its vocabulary, the last largely, but not only, because of the numerous Russian loanwords which it contains. So far as accidence is concerned, the language of these documents is intermediate between the language described in Mirza A. Kasem-Beg's *Allgemeine Grammatik der Türkisch-Tatarischen Sprache* published in Leipzig in 1848, nearly 70 years before these documents were written, and that described in the grammatical appendix to the standard dictionary of modern Tatar, *Tatarsko-Russkiy Slovar'*, published by the Kazan Institute of Language, Literature, and History of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow in 1966, nearly 50 years after they were written. One difficulty in using this dictionary to interpret these texts is that it is in the official Cyrillic script now used in the Tatar Republic, and most of the Russian loanwords are in their Russian spelling, while the documents are in Arabic script with the Russian loanwords spelt phonetically. Another is that they contain a number of old Turkish words, which are sometimes marked in the dictionary as "obsolete" or even omitted altogether.

A working knowledge of Tatar is not, however, a sufficient basis for a critical edition of these texts. Such an edition could be produced only by a Tatar, or by someone intimately acquainted with the language. I have therefore sent a set of reproductions of all the important documents to Professor Aysla Valitova of the Institute of World Literature of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow. She is herself a Tatar who has specialized in folk poetry, and I understand that she wishes to consider the possibility of publishing the texts in full.

In addition to the documents described below, the collection included three copies of a propaganda leaflet in rather laborious Tatar circulated by the Germans among their

Tatar captives, two picture postcards, one of five soldiers in four different kinds of Russian uniform, the other of five soldiers, not all the same, in Turkish uniform, and a few odd sheets of paper with fragments of prayers, religious literature, and rather unsuccessful attempts by the Nurmukhamet mentioned below to write his name and address in Russian.

I. The most important document is a small notebook, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, in a cardboard cover, rather incongruously bearing the English (or French) word "Notes", containing 40 leaves (80 pages) of white manuscript paper ruled with 21 faint blue lines to the page, set between four leaves, two at each end, printed in German with the calendars for 1915 and 1916, lists of Christian, special Roman Catholic, and Jewish festivals, postal and telegraph rates, and so on. There is a list of names on the inside of the front cover, one in Russian script with the address Kuberle Station. This is in the northern Caucasus area about 47° N., $42^{\circ} 15'$ E., which suggests that this individual, though no doubt a Turkish speaker, may not have been ethnically a Tatar. This entry is followed by five names in Arabic script, the first repeating the previous name. After this entry, a second owner turned the book upside down and started writing from the front page onwards but of course from right to left. The whole of the manuscript leaves are filled with the text of ten poems, written 11 lines to the page, about 870 lines in all after allowing for one or two titles etc. Finally opposite the first page in the bottom (now top) margin of the printed page is a note, "let people know that the owner of this notebook (*defter*) is Şehidullah Şababov(?)". There are some differences between the script of the poems, which are all in the same hand, and that of this note, which suggests that this individual was not the author of the poems but acquired the book later.

II. Hardly less important is another identical notebook, much battered, the cover and most of the printed pages gone, the manuscript pages dog-eared but almost intact. In this case the book was written from back to front, each page being numbered in European and Arabic figures, the first one surviving being 5 on the last (first) manuscript page.

It must have passed through several hands. Forty-three of the pages (not all together) are blank. The rest contain four short religious texts, a short autobiography, seven poems, and three short texts written in a style which suggests that they are notes taken during lectures; one of eight lines headed "the City of Babel" refers to Vaxt Nasar (Nebuchadnezzar). Another is a list of names of places (about 20 in all, one or two indecipherable), nearly all on the Euphrates between northern Syria and the Persian Gulf. The third, rather longer, and headed "worldly occupations", contains notes on the cultivation of cabbages, melons, and apple trees. It also contains one or two rough sketches and maps and mathematical calculations, multiplications, etc.

III. The third is three sheets of paper containing the rough drafts of four letters, two in ink, the only appearance of ink in these documents, sewn together to make six leaves in such a way that the texts of two of the letters are not continuous. The letters, which are obviously drafts taken down to dictation, recopied at some central point in the camp, and then given back to the senders, are from two Tatars in the Prisoners of War Camp at Zossen, 20 miles south of Berlin, whose addresses are given in inaccurate Russian as "Germany; the town of Tsosin (Zossen) near Berlin; Vinbrgi (sic,? Weinberg) Camp; 5th Battalion, 4th Company; No. 4753 Nurmukhamet Yarmukhametov and No. 4758 Ğumer İbraĝimov." Ğumer was a relation, probably a nephew, of Nurmukhamet and instructions at the foot of the letters

indicate that they were to be sent to "Uncle Shahmukhamet" at an address in Moscow for despatch to the ultimate addressees at Malaya Yalchik Station; Kazan Governorate; Middle Baltay Province; Upper Baltay Village. One of the letters is dated 13th (Old Style, i.e. 26th) November, no doubt 1915, nearly two years before the documents were captured.

Apart from a few sentences in faulty Russian all the documents are in Tatar written in Arabic script with European numerals; the parts which are written in pencil (almost the whole) are often faint or rubbed and difficult to read, but only a very few words are illegible. There are three different hands in I, at least three in II, and two in III. They vary in quality; most of them are unsightly but legible; but the scribes who took down the drafts in III obviously wrote very fast, and some words, if removed from their context, would be quite illegible. The orthography varies from hand to hand. The poet in I never puts a dot on *xā* or *ğayn* and always writes final *-t* as *tā' marbūʿa* (dotted *hā'*). Most hands usually distinguish between *p* and *b* and *kāf* and *gāf*. *Ṣād* and *ṭā'* are hardly ever used in words with front vowels, but almost invariably in words with back vowels. *Qāf* is always used in Tatar words with back vowels, but never in Russian loanwords. *V* is usually represented by *wāw* with three superscribed dots. *Alif*, *yā*, and *wāw* are used fairly freely to represent vowels, but not as freely as in Osmanli; in particular *wāw* is used more sparingly than the other two. Arabic words, like Russian, are spelt phonetically, vowel letters often being used to represent short vowels.

The autobiography in II gives an interesting account of the author's war experiences and is worth translating in full:—

(*fol. 2 r. 1—v. 5*) "This is my life. Events which passed over my head. In 1914 I was a soldier in Russia. I went to the war to Germany (*Almaniya*) and became a prisoner on 8th (21st) December. On 15th (28th) December, 1915, I became a soldier of the Moslem Emperor of Turkey, abandoning my native land, and went to fight against the infidels for the sake of the Moslem faith in the way of God. Proof of the existence of God and of His oneness. (Partly Arabic) 'Say, "He is God, I honour his *Sūras*; God Almighty is one and existent." God Almighty was not born of anyone, and did not give birth to anyone; he is not dependent on anyone. Muḥammad Mustafa', God's blessing upon him, is the Prophet of God.' Proof, 'there is no God but Allah, and Muḥammad is the Prophet of Allah'. (Written later, with a sharper pencil) *Tamashu, Hammerstein, Sosin, Berlin, Belgrade.*"

(*fol. 3 r. and v.*) "Poor dear heads. At 9 p.m. on 13th (26th) May, 1916, we set out, traversing Austria-Hungary. At every place they met us, like our comrades, at the stations and sent us on. After that we passed through Serbia and Bulgaria. In Bulgaria we bathed in the Danube. We left there for Turkey. We all went by train. We reached the barracks at mid-day and lodged there. They met us at İstanbul with a band. The people of İstanbul looked at us as a sheep eyes a wolf. They made us . . . (two words illegible). There was food and drink. Three days later we went to pray at the mosque of Aya Sophia. There there was a gift for us from the Emperor, three (?) packets of fruit each. We stayed at İstanbul for a few days. Then we went to the museum (*muzeyxana*) and went again to pay our respects to the Emperor's mosque. We saw the Emperor. After that we went to a village called 'Alamdār; there we had very strenuous training. The meal was at 6 o'clock, two pounds (*kadak*) of bread for each man for 24 hours and one cauldron of soup for nine men twice a day. In July our officers, and in one or two regiments non-commissioned officers (*unterofiser*), were appointed(?). After that we went to Arabistan. The commander of the 156th Regiment

ordered us to advance against the infidels at Hilla, and they sent us hungry and naked to the Jezira. At the town of Rumadiya we came under the fire of the English guns and machine-guns; they sent(?) us in with our weapons; seeing these lions the enemy's eyes were frightened and they were forced to retreat."

The four letters in III, two each from Nurmukhamet and Ğumer, consist mainly of greetings to numerous relations, complaints of being underfed, "if you saw us now you would weep and say that we had risen from the grave; we are mere skin and bone", and urgent appeals for money by return of post, "a man with money is not exposed to hunger". But almost identical passages in Nurmukhamet's two letters give some account of the steps which were taken to persuade the Tatars to join the Turkish army:—"We are 12,000 Moslems living together in one camp 30 *versets* (20 miles) from the city of Berlin. The place where we live is good. The Emperor of Turkey sent six *mulla's* to lead us in prayer. Those *mulla's* live in the same camp as us and give us (religious) instruction. All six of them can recite the Koran by heart. A very important Pasha came for the feast of Ramadan and conducted the ceremonies. At the feast of Qorban an equally (?) important Pasha came. The offerings were very impressive. The Germans have built a mosque for us to worship in. In each regiment we receive instruction in a *medrese*."

Putting these passages and other references scattered through the poems together, we can reconstruct something of the war history of this little group of men. The poet in I was mobilized on 24th July (6th August), 1914 (*fol. 5 v. 6*), that is during the month of Ramadan (*I r. 4*; in 1914 it started on 24th July), and was sent to the Polish front. He went into action on 3rd (16th) August (*5 v. 8*). There were some initial successes; "we captured a German town in our first engagement" (*12 r. 8*); but they must soon have been driven back. "They sent us and stationed us in the city of Warsaw" (*35 r. 8*) probably refers to this move. "The Germans opened fire, saying 'we will take the city of Warsaw'" (*36 v. 3*). The city was evacuated; "on 2nd (15th) November we abandoned the city and left" (*37 r. 3*), after heavy fighting; "how much blood they shed in the city of Warsaw" (*13 r. 7*). The poet was finally captured at 11 a.m. on 18th (31st) December, 1914 (*4 v. 1—2; 6 r. 3; 7 v. 3*), after a period of trench warfare (*7 v.*). The first action of the Moslem soldiers after capture was to recite the *tekbir* ("God is great . . ."; *7 v. 5*). He was marched "across the steppes" in very cold weather (*4 v. 5*); "we went hungry for six days after we were captured" (*6 r. 10*); the first food he had was army biscuits (*4 v. 4; 6 r. 7*). He was first sent to a collecting centre at Lowicz, a little west of Warsaw, and thence to Germany (*4 v. 3—6*). Apart from complaints about inadequate food and boredom there are no specific references to his period of imprisonment, and none whatever to his enlistment in the Turkish army, but in the tenth poem, which must have been written after this event, he says "I set out on the 25th and went to Vienna" (*32 r. 6*); "they (*sic*) set out at 10 o'clock on Sunday with a band" (*33 r. 8*).

The author of the first poem in II (*6 r. 1 ff.*) says that "the European war broke out in the month of Ramadan 1915 (*sic!*); we set out on 17th (30th) July taking our swords and rifles, and marched to take up battle positions. After marching a few days we were captured."

The autobiography in II gives a fairly clear idea of the author's war history, but only four dates. He was captured on 8th (21st) December, 1914; joined the Turkish army on 15th (28th) December, 1915; left (Zossen?) for Turkey on 13th (26th) May, 1916, and there was some reorganization of the Tatar contingent in July (1916).

The letters in III give some further information. Nurmukhamet was captured on 15th (28th) April, 1915, and met Ğumer in the Prisoners of War Camp. He says that he was continuously on the move for three months after being captured, but at the time of writing was at Zossen, which was obviously the final collecting centre for the 12,000 Moslem prisoners of war. Ğumer, who gives no dates, except 13th November (1915) for his second letter, but was probably captured before Nurmukhamet, says that he was first sent to a collecting centre at Shirke (?) and thence to Zossen. No dates are given for the arrival of the six *mulla*'s at Zossen, but it was probably before Nurmukhamet reached there. If he was on the move for three months after being captured near the end of April he must have reached Zossen only shortly before the feast of Ramadan, which was on 14th August that year. The feast of Qorban was on 10th October, and his letters must have been written soon after that date. By the time the feasts came round in 1916 they must all have been in Turkey.

The most interesting of the texts are of course the poems. The ten poems in I are of different lengths and in a variety of metres. They are not great poetry, but they have a fascination of their own and give a very clear picture of the personality of the author, who nowhere mentions his own name. Both his parents were alive, he is constantly thinking of them and regretting his separation from them and the country where he was born and grew up. He had a wife and at least one child, but there is only one reference to them, with the nouns in the singular and the verbs, rather oddly, in the plural; "my child have remained an orphan and my wife (*xatunim*) a widow" (13 r. 4). He was a pious Moslem, and came from a mountain village (12 r. 10) in the neighbourhood of Kazan.

He was, in his own way, quite an able prosodist, and clearly felt some connexion between subject and metrical form. There is of course no suggestion of quantitative verse of the Arabic or Persian type; the metres are purely syllabic, or perhaps governed by stress, since there is some variation in the numbers of syllables in the line, even in the same poem. The poems were obviously written at different dates; he sometimes ends one poem with a blunt pencil, and starts the next one with a sharp one; but no specific dates of composition are mentioned. The first poem was written in 1915 after he had been taken prisoner (5 v. 4) and the last one after he had started for Turkey, since in it he mentions seeing the city of Vienna (32 r. 6). Even in the ninth poem he is still complaining of the hardships of captivity, so its composition is likely to have preceded his enlistment in the Turkish army. It is, at first sight, suspicious that the last poem ends so neatly at the last line of the last page, but the plain fact is that by this time he was running out of inspiration and repeating himself, and may have welcomed a "natural" end to his last and longest poem. We can, I think, feel sure that this is the complete *opus* and the only copy that was ever written.

Five of the ten poems, the first (1 r. 1 ff.) headed *Suğış beyété* "a war poem"; the third (9 v. 7 ff.) headed *Üçünçé tarix* "third story"; the sixth (18 v. 9 ff.); the eighth (26 r. 7 ff.), and the tenth (32 r. 2-40 v. 11), are in self-contained rhyming couplets, in the technical terminology of prosody the *mesnevi* style. Each half-couplet contains 14, or less often 15 or 16, syllables, divided by a caesura in the middle, usually after the 7th, less often after the 8th. The first couplet in the book gives a fair example:—

**Célda iké ğıt bula, béresé korban ğıdı
Béz eytebéz séz dıñlegéz bu suğışnıñ beyté.**

This is the metre used by the poet for his narrative poems, but none of them are straight narrative in the ordinary sense of the term. Quite apart from the fact that the narrative is often interrupted by the "linked lines" which are described and illustrated below, the poet jumps from one subject and one point in time to another in the most confusing fashion. The following tentative translation of the first two pages of the first poem is a fair specimen of his style, the "linked lines" being left untranslated and represented by X. (*fol. 1 r.*) "X We are reciting, do you listen to, a poem about this war. We went to the war in the month of Ramadan, 1914. When we went to the campaign many people wept; all our kinsfolk were distressed and lamented. When we got out of the train we settled down very late. We reached the frontier, crossed it, and drove back the Germans. We lay down at the frontier and waited for the German enemy. When I heard the guns fire, I thought that I was going to leave this world. X (*1 v.*) I should not have gone to the war, but my eagerness (?) drew me to it. The German soldiers dig trenches and lie in them; when we begin to approach them they hurry to the rear. While the Germans are sitting and eating we go and fire on them. When we begin to approach them they find no way of escape. It thunders and rains, and we lie in the trenches; after we see the Germans we fire continuously. When we advance against the Germans my heart beats fast; when a shell bursts in my soul fire flashes from my eyes. We lie in a line on the low ground; when we see the German enemy we fire day and night."

It is interesting to compare this with the shorter eighth poem (*26 r. 7 ff.*), in which the narrative has become a series of disjointed reminiscences of battle and prison life, with one characteristic "linked line" about life in Kazan:—"I wrote this poem to record the things which pass through my mind; the black-faced men called Germans destroyed us. When soldiers go into an attack they all rush forward together; bayonetting one another they go in and are pierced. (*26 v.*) The high officials (*türeler*) in Kazan hit about them with home-made whips; the officers drive our unfortunate soldiers forward. The Germans never feed us so that our throats are satisfied; oh Lord! deliver my dear head before it is destroyed. When I go to bed at night and lie thinking, I see my native country; no other man can see my place as I see it. When different people think, different things come into their minds; when soldiers go into battle many of them are killed. We go into battle putting hope out of our souls; we go into the attack in a straight line like wild geese."

The second poem (*8 r. 9 ff.*), headed "Second story", was planned as a series of quatrains, the first three lines of each rhyming with one another, and the fourth of all of them ending with *İmdé* "now", but two of the eight quatrains contain only three lines. This is the commonest metre in the poems quoted in *Kaşğari's Divân luğâti'l-turk*; in the technical terminology of prosody it is a *murebba'*. There are 11 to 13 syllables in each line with a caesura before the last four. It is a lament on the horrors of war and begins:—"In this war many souls were broken; they lie, some without arms, some without legs; these times do not benefit anyone; the Deliverer must deliver us now."

The fourth and fifth poems (*13 v. 5 ff.*; *15 r. 9 ff.*), headed respectively "Songs of a captive" and "Fourth story", are similar in subject and metre. The metre is thoroughly chaotic; the lines usually contain 7 syllables, occasionally only 6, sometimes as many as 10 or 11; in principle they look like half-lines of the *mesnevi* style of the first group, but two consecutive short lines often rhyme with one another. It is not, however, possible to detect any consistent rhyme pattern. The fourth poem begins "In captivity is my head (*başlarım*);

from my eyes there flow unceasingly my tears (*yaşlarım*); to my country where I grew up, will my dear head (*başlarım*) ever return?" This looks like a quatrain with the first, second, and fourth lines rhyming; but in the next four lines only the second and fourth lines rhyme, and those imperfectly, and in the following four the first and third and second and fourth. The fifth poem begins:—"Do not hold it a shame, my friends, to rise so early, to pour the samovar, to rise early, recite a prayer, and intercede for us".

The seventh and ninth poems (22 r. 8 ff.; 27 r. 1 ff.), the latter headed "this is a prayer (*mönetecet*)", are both prayers. The seventh is in principle a series of quatrains, the first three lines of each rhyming, and the fourth usually ending "Oh God Almighty!" or "Oh Prophet of God!", but this pattern breaks down from time to time. The ninth is of the same chaotic character as the fourth and fifth poems. In both poems the lines usually contain 8 syllables, sometimes fewer but seldom more. The seventh begins "I have made this beginning, and remembered the name of God; if any one remembers His name, God gives him his desire"; and the ninth "I have written my greetings for the record (*xisab*), reading and studying the book. May my readers, weeping, send up a prayer for us."

As I mentioned above, the flow of the narrative poems, and less often the other poems, is from time to time interrupted by the insertion of "linked" lines, that is lines on quite irrelevant subjects, which seem to be inserted for no better reason than to supply a rhyme for the line to which they are linked. The technique is in fact that of the nursery rhyme,

"One two, buckle my shoe;
Three four, knock at the door;
Five six, picking up sticks", etc.

Oddly enough they are often the first line of the couplet, and vary in character from totally irrelevant lines, through lines with some tenuous connexion of subject, like the one in the eighth poem quoted above, to lines which might be regarded as rather inconsequent additions to the narrative. In extreme cases the linked line is so irrelevant as to become almost grotesque, for example "On the fence behind my hut I have hung out my washing (*yavlıgım*); if fate permits I shall return home happy, if God gives me health (*savlıgım*)" (18 v. 11), and "before beginning dinner they recite a prayer (*malitva ukıylar*); when they advance shouting 'hurrah' they stop firing (*atışudın tukdıylar*)" (35 r. 4).

The linked lines are of particular interest as showing the kind of things which caught the poet's eye on the battlefield and in Germany: "when the German rifles fire no smoke comes out" (2 r. 9); "when the German guns fire flames come out of their muzzles" (2 v. 7); "the officers' horses all have silken picketing ropes" (5 r. 11); "the German people's houses are solid stone" (6 r. 1); "in the German transport instead of horses there are machines" (6 v. 6); "the German cavalry (*kazakları*) all have black horses" (7 r. 7); "the Germans all have brass helmets on their heads" (7 r. 9); "they put lampposts (*mayak*, or 'lamps') at the side of the road at mid-day" (11 r. 10); "the Germans have farmyards and geese in the farmyards" (11 v. 1); "in Germany there is a stone pillar (i.e. kilometre post) at every *verst*" (13 v. 3).

Other linked lines show the poet's interest in nature, wild animals, etc.: "the black-headed grass-snake lies at the foot of the reeds" (20 r. 2); "the white hares are astonished at the amount of snow falling this year" (20 v. 3); "the pine is a strong tree, the oak useful for splitting into lengths of timber" (21 r. 2); "the nightingales (*sandugaç*) sing flapping their

wings" (21 r. 4); "the wild geese swim in a line on the lakes" (21 r. 8); "the nightingale's (bilbil) chick opens its mouth and waits for food" (35 r. 2). There are several other references to these and other wild animals.

But clearly the poet's strongest emotion, after his deep love for his parents and his native country, is his abiding hatred of the Germans (*néms, gérman*), who are described as "nauseating" (*toşı*, a corruption of Russian *toshny*), "black-faced", "accursed", "enemies of the faith", and "infidels". Perhaps his most violent couplet is, "Our city of Kazan is like the city of Moscow; the black-faced Germans are like pigs' young" (*duñğız balası kébék; 19 v. 2-3*). It says much for his courage, or at any rate his confidence that his captors could not read Tatar, that he should have written this in a German Prisoners of War Camp.

This hatred extends also to the German Emperor: "the wickedness of the nauseating German Emperor is really shameful" (11 r. 5); "God punish the nauseating German Emperor" (18 v. 9); and even to the police: "the German police walk about saying *bij bij*" (11 r. 8); "the German police have wounded us and gone away" (18 r. 10).

On the other hand he is loyal to his own country, and constantly refers to "us Russian soldiers". This loyalty extends to the Czar; "our Russian Emperor had sympathy with the soldiers" (13 r. 9); but, like many private soldiers, he has some hard things to say about his officers.

Like all old soldiers, he is constantly preoccupied with food. There do not appear to be any references to his rations in the Russian army, but copious references, mainly derogatory, to the food which he received as a prisoner of war; "in the hands of the nauseating Germans we never had a square meal; they gave us half a *kadak* of bread for 24 hours" (19 r. 11). *Kadak* is conventionally translated "pound", but in this context it can hardly be as little as the pound avoirdupois. Bread was obviously the main diet; other foodstuffs mentioned are army biscuits; uncleaned, or unsalted, potatoes; various vegetables (*ülen*, literally "grass"); salt fish soup; cabbages; stinking fish; muddy broth; beans and haricots; chick-peas and cockles (*bakıra*, Russian *bakra*). The oddest statement is "early by night and day our food is *baltuşki*" (9 v. 11). *Baltushki* in Russian means "scrambled eggs", but that cannot be the meaning here, perhaps a vegetable potpourri of some kind.

The poems in II are not bulky; taken together they amount to no more than 92 lines; like those in I they are very probably the original and only copies, at any rate in some cases. They are far more sophisticated, and their authors have, on the whole, greater literary ability and technical skill. The fifth, sixth, and seventh poems are in quite difficult metres, which are handled adroitly. The fourth and fifth poems are in different hands, and probably by different authors from the rest, but there is no reason why the rest should not be by the same author, and the sixth and seventh, which have the same refrain, must be.

The first poem has the same heading *suğış beyété*, and is in the same metre, as the first poem in I, except that the refrain *bu kön aman*, "today alas", is inserted between the two halves of the second line in each couplet, of which there are twelve, most of them numbered with European numerals. The title is somewhat of a misnomer, the poem is in effect recruiting propaganda for the Turkish army. In the following tentative translation the refrain is represented by R. "In the year 1915 (*sic*) the European (*yevropa*) war began, R, in the holy month of Ramadan. 2. On 17th (30th) July we set off for the war; taking rifles and swords in our hands, R, we went and took up battle positions (*pazıtsa*). 3. After marching for a few days we were captured by the Germans; we Moslems have been assembled, R, by

the decree of fate. 4. Our Islamic nation (*millet*) is scattered over the face of the earth; there has striven to assemble it, R, the German government. 5. We have been doing (military) service in the hands of an infidel nation; let our lives be a sacrifice, R, in the way of a Moslem nation. 6. We went to war without in the least understanding the circumstances; now let us thank God, R, that we did not die for the sake of the infidels. [7] Here we have ascertained our situation; the infidels devoured our property; as the Qāḍī asks us, R, let us set our souls at rest. [8] The ways have now become open; together with our friends let us scatter the infidel enemies of the faith, R, and blacken their faces. 9. Now the ways have become open, Moslems and friends; let us rise for this task, R, taking rifle and sword in hand. 10. Much blood has been spilt, many dear lives have been lost; we assemble and mourn together, R, for all who were Moslems. 11. Pray, spiritual (?) comrades, for all of us; may your prayers be accepted, R, for the people of God's Prophet. [12] The holy month of Ramadan is the Moslems' festival; they write all those who pass away, R, on the surface (?) of the Treasured Tablet (*lawḥu'l-mahfūz*)."

The second poem (7 v. 6 ff.) which is headed "Prayer" and immediately follows the first, contains seven couplets in the same metre but with a different rhyme pattern. In the technical terminology of prosody it is a *ghazel*; both lines of the first couplet end with *könleréméz*, "our days", and the second lines of the remaining couplets with that word or one rhyming with it. In this and some later poems some lines are too long to fit into a single line of the page and the text is written continuously, lines being separated by a European figure 8. The exigencies of the metre have produced a text more difficult to understand than the previous one; the following is a tentative translation. (7 v. 7) "Once upon a time were the days when we controlled the world, the days when we made the enemy weep blood in our souls. 2. (Our) realm (*devlet*) extended from sunrise to sunset, the days when we co-ordinated (?) our rule (*xökmémézné*) with our friends. 3. In all our deeds and undertakings showing compassion to the world, the days when we made our voice heard everywhere. [4] Was it because misfortune overtook us? We were humbled by our enemies, and those were the days when we, so to speak, were passing through a pitch-black night. (8 r. 1) [5] We were cultured and powerful in the world; we are restoring our reputation for it by thus pouring out our blood. [6] Now we all know that we have an opportunity; if this is so with us, it makes our days bright. [7] There are no cowards in our family; sheep are not born of lions; our heroes are famous from old times for their blood."

The third poem (8 v.), headed "a prayer in captivity", is also a *ghazel* of seven verses. It begins, "for several years my head has been sitting in this prison alone; my food is a bowl of soup and a hunk of bread"; and ends, "where has the time of my youth gone, and the kindly people with whom I grew up? The horse I rode was worth 100,000 gold pieces."

The fourth poem (9 v.) is in quite a different, and exceptionally difficult, hand, with some odd spellings. Unlike the other hands in the book, this is in some ways like an Osmanli hand, but some letters, for example *yā'* in isolation, are definitely Tatar not Osmanli, and the language is certainly Tatar. It hardly merits the title of poem; it is merely an unrhymed couplet, repeated twice and followed by a commentary, of 18 lines. "The head has gone, youth has gone, everything has gone; let anything that I see go, I see peace." The commentary (*beyan*) begins, "God knows what the author is writing"; its general purport is that rest is only to be found in the grave.

The fifth poem (11 v.) is in another hand and in quite a different style. Like the first and second poems, it is in effect a eulogy of the Ottoman Empire. It is headed "prayer of Tuğaev (?)" and consists of six rhymed couplets, which, though probably not really quantitative, could be read in a variety of the *remel* metre very popular in Turkey, - - - - / - - - - / - - -. The first couplet is:—

**Ehl-é Balkan kéçkéne bér et idé;
Türkiye kükde oçkan bürküt idé.**

I cannot elucidate the fourth couplet, the rest reads:—"The people of the Balkans were a tiny dog; Turkey a golden eagle flying in the sky. This envious dog went on barking for a long time, seeing the bird of sovereignty (*saltanat*) flying in the sky. It barked and barked at the bird, disturbing (?; *itken xerab*) the sky; it stood with a filthy mouth gazing at the skies. . . . This phenomenon does not alter for a long time; the state of Turkey is fine (*közel*), that of the dog bad. The golden eagle has flown through the wide air, free and happy; rise happy nation, and happy Sultan Reşad."

The sixth (36 v.) and seventh (37 r.) poems are obviously by the same author. Both consist of three quatrains, with the second and fourth lines of each rhyming, and the meaningless refrain *zılıluk* inserted between the third and fourth lines. They give the impression that they are intended to be in a quasi-quantitative metre, but it is impossible to determine what metre was intended. The first quatrain is:—

(36 v. 1) **Cılay méskéngéne yaşın tüge
başkınaşın kuyup tézéne
minéngé dünya kıtem (read kíte?) balam dip, zılıluk,
zağif kolun sıpay yüzéne.**

They are pure lyrical poetry with no political implications. The sixth is remarkable for containing four archaic diminutives, *méskéngéne*, *başkına*, *kaysıgına*, and *alğanğına*, the last a participle and a very odd form. The negative verbs in the second quatrain are surprising; prima facie positive verbs would have made better sense. A word *bağanağ* occurs twice in the seventh poem; it is not in the dictionary; the nearest word is *buğalak* "a trap", and as this makes reasonable sense I have assumed that it may be an older form of that word.

(36 v. 1) "The poor little man weeps pouring out tears, putting his little head on his knees. Saying, 'my world is departing, my child', R, he wipes his weak hand over his face. Some few rich men at this time do not pluck out an angel's wing; Satan taking a little of your security (*amanıñı*, or 'your faith' *imanıñı*), R, does not lament, saying 'this is hellishness (*cehennemlék*)'. Now tears pour from your eyes, as water pours from a river; birds coming over the top of your head sing, R, saying 'he has drawn back his hand from this transitory world'."

(37 r.) "You speak of traps (?) in the soul, your face yellow, the colour of a leaf; my heart cannot endure without moving, R, your eyes gaze in deep distress. [I can make nothing of the second quatrain.] I saw your good fortune at night (i.e. in a dream), and at once felt profound happiness; may the oppressor thus soften towards you, R, and in kindness remove the trap (?)."