

TURCICA

KAPPLER, M. (ed.) — Intercultural aspects in and around Turkic literatures. Proceedings of the International Conference held on October 11th-12th, 2003 in Nicosia. (Mîzân. Studien zur Literatur in der islamischen Welt, Band 13). Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2006. (24 cm, 197). ISBN 978-3-447-05285-6. ISSN 0938-9024. € 49,80.

The book under review, edited by Matthias Kappler, includes seventeen of the papers presented at the conference organized by the Department of Turkish Studies, University of Cyprus. The conference was held over two days and included six sessions. Although most of the papers are included in this volume, Kappler stresses that the proceedings cannot reflect all the fruitful discussions of the conference. He notes that the objective of the conference was not limited to shedding light on contact phenomena and making stereotypes comprehensible. This is visible in the session topics of the conference as will be made clear below. The wide range of the proceedings makes it clear that this gathering had also aimed at reaching a “framework for cross-cultural literary exchange” (Kappler 7).

Martin Strohmeier’s prologue entitled “‘Tâtsiz türk bolmas, başsız bôrk bolmas’” is the first piece in the book. The author of the article reminds us that this conference follows the department’s two earlier conferences with its theme built around various aspects of the concept of encounter, this time with a focus on language and literature. The title of Strohmeier’s prologue is a saying from the 11th century which can be translated as: “a Turk without a Persian does not exist as much as there is no hat without a head”. He reminds us, however, that “under the umbrella of the umma, ethnic and regional differences and conflicts existed.” His point is that in the Ottoman era interaction evolved among the languages of the people living in the empire, and that “with the many words from the Arabic, Persian, Greek and other languages” in the Ottoman language we can appreciate the “exchanges between the communities.” However, this does not show that the multiculturalism in the empire was flawless or perfect, and the cause of the “obstruct[ing] and reduc[ing] [of] multiculturalism” was, as one would expect, “nationalism” (10-11).

The first paper of the conference, given within the framework of the *Introducing Interculturalism* topic, was by Stéphane Yerasimos to whom the proceedings volume was dedicated since he unfortunately passed away during the preparation of the publication of the proceedings. In his “Le cosmopolitisme ottoman: transition vers le nationalisme ou dépassement de l’Etat-nation?” [Ottoman cosmopolitanism: transition towards nationalism or overcoming of the nation-state?] Yerasimos focuses on the concept of cosmopolitanism at the closing of the Ottoman era. At the turn of the

20th century, the writer reminds us, the Ottoman Empire, like other empires, was in a “painful transition to a multitude of nation-states.” Yerasimos traces the concept of cosmopolitanism from its first use by Diogenes the Cynic through the times of the Roman Empire until when Christianity appeared “as a form of cosmopolitanism, as a universal monotheism transcending ethnic particularities and social differences.” He argues that this form of cosmopolitanism had its dominance and excluded other religions; and as this development came together with the struggle against heresies, ancient cosmopolitanism came to an end (13-14). Yerasimos, after a brief account of Ottoman cosmopolitanism, explains how the nationalist views started to affect the Empire from the eighteenth century onwards and nation-states were established at the high cost of “multiple exterminations and ethnic cleansing” (15). He aptly observes that, as these states have not achieved the success of plural-communities and as “supra-national entities” appear as an objective, “the legendary vision of an Ottoman cosmopolitanism is back on the agenda.” The acclaimed late historian concludes emphasizing that “cosmopolitanism is the ability to manage interdependencies, transform influences and syntheses” which is a tool against the hazards of globalization as well as nationalism (16).

Harry Z.G. Tzimitras, in his article “The emerging framework of Greek-Turkish relations: traditional clichés and new perceptions,” introduces a new concept to understand the relations between Turkey and Greece, which have changed notably since 1999, mostly after the earthquakes that have hit both countries. Tzimitras names this new state of affairs as *rapprochement*, but he argues that a sustainable *rapprochement* has to be institutionalized by a redefinition of traditionally perceived political and strategic interests which will result in alternative political languages and confrontation with the past (26).

All three papers of the *Stereotypes and the image of the “Other” : The Ottoman experience* session of the conference are included in the book. The first one of these is Vera Costantini’s “‘Contemptible unbelievers’ or ‘loyal friends’? Notes on the many ways in which the Ottomans named the Venetians in the 16th century.” The writer introduces a vivid vignette of the changing attitudes of the Ottomans regarding their Venetian neighbours based on the changing international political conjuncture. Quoting Braudel who describes Ottomans and Venetians as “compatible and antagonistic” (31) at the same time, Costantini presents interesting evidence of his point of view through archival material and concludes that the “16th century Ottoman system codified ‘others’ according to their relation with the imperial State” (34) and submits her case of Venetians as a powerful example of this argument.

The next article dealing with the concept of otherness is Matthias Kappler’s “The beloved and his otherness: reflections on ‘ethnic’ and religious stereotypes in Ottoman love poetry.” The writer touches upon a rather unexplored topic in classical Ottoman poetry, the ethnic and religious otherness in the context of the stereotyped image within the poetical canon. Concentrating on mostly Nedîm’s *divân*, he demonstrates that the beloved is frequently described as the infidel [*kâfir*] throughout a long tradition in the rhetoric of the Ottoman *divan* literature from the 15th to the 18th century (40). The infidel is basically characterized with three stereo-

typical features: great enthusiasm for wine, cruelty and being a sinner with no access to Paradise. Kappler also provides examples of how the infidel is connected with religious symbols especially from Christian iconography that takes him/her to a mystical level, as well as a social aspect that makes him/her “a menace to the conventions of the society” (44). The writer concludes his article with an analysis of a *gazel* by Nedîm in which the infidel is the subject of the entire poem.

Eftihios Gavriel, in “The perception of the ‘Other’: evidence from an 18th-century Karamanlidika manuscript” focuses on a text written in Turkish but in Greek characters, i.e. in Karamanlidika, which was a form of writing used by the Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians of the Ottoman Empire. The article deals with the perception of the other in this text, which is an adaptation of a work by the Bishop Dorotheos, named *Vivlion Istorikon* [History Book] (50). In the manuscript, which is a history of the world starting with the Genesis and ending at the time of the Ottoman Sultan Mustafa III (1757-1774) Gavriel examines different kinds of otherness. He concludes that otherness is not a fixed concept throughout the text and it is not defined in terms of language, ethnicity or religion (57). The writer of the manuscript evaluates people according to their contributions to the “continuation and the welfare of a community” (57), that is the community of Turcophone Christians. So, a Christian heretic can be regarded as a negative figure whereas an Ottoman Sultan can be praised.

Stereotypes and the image of the “Other”: Reflections between Turkish and European literatures

The following two articles deal with the image of the other in modern Turkish literature. In the first one, “The image of the Greek minority of Istanbul in Turkish literature; past and recent tendencies,” Iraklis Millas traces the image of the Greek community in Istanbul based on a reading of approximately four hundred novels written in Turkish. Millas shows different tendencies in Turkish literature under the categories Ottoman understanding, the transition to nationalism, the nationalist approach, Anatolianism, the Marxist as well as humanist approaches. The writer marks the Ottoman era as the period with the most positive representation of the other. He adds that the nationalistic approach slowly loses ground in the last decades due to the recent tendencies proclaiming suppressed identities. Millas underscores that “the Rums seem to be turning into a romantic myth” (77) after so many of them had to leave Istanbul for other countries in the last decades.

Oğuz Karakartal, following in the footsteps of Millas, examines the Italian image in Turkish literature in his article “The image of the Italian in modern Turkish literature.” He emphasizes two aspects of the representation of the Italians: the Italian characters defined in terms of their occupation and the characteristics of Italians. It seems that the representation of the Italians in the Turkish fiction goes hand in hand with the historical developments and politics. For instance, the Battle of Tripolitania (1911) causes a negative turn in the image which had been quite positive since the Battle of Crimea (1854). However, it is interesting that the Italian occupying forces after the First World War are not depicted as harsh as the others like the English, the French and the Greek. According to Karakartal, this was mostly due to the Italians’ endeavours in building roads and hospitals in the

Ottoman land as well as the help they have given to Turks upon the seizure of Izmir by the English. The other components of Italians’ image were their physical beauty in addition to some characteristics such as womanizing, materialism, benevolence and sudden changes of mind.

Stereotypes and the image of the “Other”: The Cyprus paradigm

Looking for the Greek influence in Turkish Cypriot literary texts, Mustafa Gökçeoğlu and Ahmet Pehlivan take a close look at folk literature in their article “Greek in Turkish Cypriot literature.” According to their observations, the first area of Greek language’s usage in Turkish Cypriot literature is the occurrence of Greek expressions and words, while the second is the re-production of Turkish Cypriot literary works in Cypriot Greek or in bilingual texts incorporating the two languages (84). This is a peculiarity of the Cyprus Island, where Greeks and Turks (also people of various other ethnic origins such as Linobambaki and Maronites) lived in the same villages together. The outcome of this cultural interaction was folk songs, epopees, folk poems, rhymes, proverbs and idioms which were written or told in Greek sometimes having the structure and form of the traditional Turkish poem (84). The writers provide interesting examples of the folk literature of this kind, one of them being the genre *chattizma*, a kind of folk poem that is told alternately, each as an answer to the previous one (85). Finally, the article stresses that the number of Greek words in Cypriot Turkish has decreased in the last decades, since it is no longer possible to talk about common areas shared by the two communities (88).

In the next article, “The image of the Turk in Greek Cypriot literature,” Michalis Pieris focuses on the modern Greek poetry. He argues that “the truest voice of the collective consciousness” (105) of Cyprus lies in the true poetry and he chooses three major Greek Cypriot poets whose works are very much engaged with the Cyprus issue but in a poetic manner. All three poets have “a humanistic, antiwar and antimilitary stance” (101) which depict “the deepest desires of a tortured people” (105) regardless of nationalities. In a way, the writer tries to build a bridge of mutual understanding via the medium of poetry.

Cross-cultural literary exchange and cosmopolitanism: Literatures and cultures in dialogue

Pinelopi Stathi, in her article “Language boundaries and translations of books in the 18th century,” explores the ways of building a common past and a continuity between the two cultures, namely Greek and Turkish, relying on various examples of translated books or manuscripts that were appreciated by both cultures. Stathi discusses the phenomenon of interculturality through different texts like *Sefâret-nâme* of Yirmi Sekiz Çelebi Mehmet Efendi, various manuscripts concerned with the topic *Mihr ü Vefa* and books written in Karamanlidika for the Turcophone Orthodox population of Anatolia. She also talks about the beginning of the translation-printing activities of the Turks from languages such as French, Persian or Arabic. In her article, Stathi also puts forward the idea of a research program for a comparative analysis between Greek and Turkish languages (111).

“Cosmopolitanism and nostalgia: remarks on İlhan Berk’s *Galata and Pera*” by Mark Kirchner is about the phenomenon of nostalgia growing out of the cosmopolitan heritage of

Istanbul. Kirchner searches the reflections of this phenomenon in İlhan Berk's, a distinguished Turkish poet, two books *Galata* and *Pera*, comprising of texts "with a hybrid and heterogeneous structure" (124) yet categorized as poetry. The books take their names from two areas of Istanbul that were mostly populated by Greeks, Armenians and Levantines during the Ottoman Empire, and in the last couple of decades have been an object of desire within the current of the nostalgia for Istanbul's cosmopolitan past; a nostalgia visible in culture and arts, as well as in various aspects of social life. Kirchner argues that these books "are far from being nostalgic in the true sense of the word" and describes them as successfully reflecting "the historical transformation from multicultural Constantinople to Turkish Istanbul" (135).

In "Detectives 'alaturka': crime fiction in Turkey", Börte Sagaster asks the question why Turkish crime novel has been in rise since the 1990s? She concludes that the first reason is the world-wide popularity of the genre during the era of post-modern literature. She adds to this the crime novel's capacity of bringing together a global form and stereotypes with "local elements of the content." Lastly, she argues that this genre has been useful in Turkey to discuss significant social issues (144).

Cross-cultural literary exchange and cosmopolitanism: Empires between past and present

Hendrik Boeschoten's "The Turkish avant-garde: forgotten greatness" starts with background information about contemporary Turkish poetry's canon and then focuses on its links with European avant-garde movements. It continues with a discussion on the Garip movement's connection with surrealism and argues that the following movement of the 'Second New' moved Turkish poetry out of the avant-garde approach.

The second French contribution to the volume is Giampiero Bellingeri's "Statues de chair entre classicisme grec et turcité soviétique" [Statues of flesh between Greek Classicism and Soviet Turkicisms]. Bellingeri analyses poems of a number of poets in this piece, including their French translations. Poems are from the Azeri poet Rasul Rza, who was also appointed in 1944 as the Minister of Cinematography in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, E.A. Baratynskij, Ilya Sel'vinskij and Molla Panah Vaqif. In this elegant piece of writing, which itself reads like poetry, the writer attracts attention to the combination of the Western and the Turkic influences in the selected poetry.

Fatima Eloeva, in her piece entitled "The Turkic Myth in Russian Literature" focuses on the concepts of the self and the Other within a Saussurian framework and argues that while in some cases the formation of the self is based on an opposition with the Other, at other times it develops through a combination with the other for various reasons which she briefly explains, and presents the example of "Russia and the Turkic element" for the latter (163). In elaborating her point, Eloeva gives a tentative sketch of the "ways of interpreting Turkic elements developed in the Russian tradition" (165), discussing four main points: Turkic Tatar-Mongol dominion's impact on the evolution of the Motherland Russia idea, portrayals of "Turkophone characters in Russian fiction", "interpretation of Turkic elements by the Russian romantic epistemic tradition" and "orientalism in the mirror of Russian fiction." This is obviously a very ambitious task to accom-

plish in nine pages, yet Eloeva's contribution to the volume can be regarded as a useful start for such a project.

Another piece in the book bringing colours of Central Asia is Vitaly Zaikovsky's "Cultural interaction in the epic tales of 'Köroğlu/Gorogli': archetypes and transformations, diffusion and interference." The writer starts with "the archetypal background to the story of the blind man" and gives a detailed account of the Köroğlu myth's journey, its transformation through different adaptations in a wide geography from the steppes of Central Asia to the mountains of the Balkans.

The volume closes with an *Epilogue* by Niki Marangou, "Ayşe and Fatma." Marangou talks in a subjective manner based on her fictional work, whose main inspiration is her memoirs as a child and as an adult in different parts of Cyprus. This touching, melancholic yet warm piece of creative writing closes the volume in a tone that invites all of us to contemplate once again the lost paradise in that beautiful island where the conference was held.

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BOESCHOTEN, H., — *Alexander Stories in Ajami Turkic*. (Turcologica 75). Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2009. (24,5 cm, 106). ISBN 978-3-447-05725-7. ISSN 0177-4743. € 39,80.

The medieval Alexander tradition in Europe, Asia and Africa is extremely widespread, complex and variegated. Hendrik Boeschoten, the editor of *Alexander Stories in Ajami Turkic*, rightly remarks, that the Eastern Turkic Alexander stories in this edition 'constitute one drip in the ocean of medieval stories about Alexander the Great'. With this first edition and translation Boeschoten disclosed a narrative cycle which has remained unknown and inaccessible, in its manuscript form, up to date.

This publication offers the means to a large public of interested readers and Alexander specialists to become acquainted with the contents of these stories, and also to become aware of a genre of exotic popular literature from a region and cultural background, which is not widely known. The stories in the manuscript appear to be quite unique. However, it cannot be ruled out that, eventually, comparative research will show a link with these stories in the vast and multifaceted Persian, Arabic and Turkic traditions.¹⁾

Boeschoten's introduction to the book is mainly informing the reader about linguistic characteristics of the text, which are indispensable for proper reading and understanding of the

¹⁾ In a more recent article (2012, see below) Boeschoten mentioned his discovery of related texts. Also my current research project *Beyond the European Myth. In Search of the Afro-Asiatic Alexander Cycle and the Transnational Migration of Ideas and Concepts of Culture and Identity* (VU Amsterdam, 2012-2017) may bring about new theories on the lines of transmission and interrelation.

particulars of this Turkic language, classified as Western Oghuz or Old Anatolian Turkish. On the basis of linguistic features the archetype of the texts in the manuscript is dated to around 1500. In this respect and also as to contents the narrative cycle represents a later offshoot of the oriental legendary Alexander tradition.

Like some of the Turkic languages, including Ottoman Turkish, the manuscript is written in the Arabic alphabet; the pages of the manuscript in facsimile have been added in an appendix to the book. For the edition Boeschoten has made a transliteration of the Arabic script into Latin script.

The text of the six stories in the edition of the book counts some thirty pages. In the manuscript, a miscellany, containing also Rabghūzī's *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'*, the text covers about thirteen pages (165v-171v of ms. C245 of the Oriental Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg), which makes it a rather small sized cycle. A last story, the seventh in sequence in the manuscript (172r-172v) has not been incorporated, because the last pages of the manuscript are badly damaged. Nevertheless, although small, it is a very interesting and particular compilation of narratives.

In his introduction to the booklet Boeschoten mainly focusses on the characteristics of the language. This has been done in a profound way and the linguist is well served, with noteworthy details. It only briefly addresses narrative aspects and is not primarily analyzing the narrative tradition. Due to this, the information about the Alexander tradition, and in particular the oriental one, is rather concise.

This inconvenience is balanced, however, by a more recent publication devoted to the cycle. It is titled 'Adventures of Alexander in Medieval Turkish' and published in the volume *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*. In this article, Boeschoten focusses on the contents of the stories.²⁾

An analysis of the stories of this cycle reveals that they are molded by the influence of the Arabic and Persian tradition, especially the genre of popular romances. In the Arabic *Sīrat al-Iskandar*, ascribed to Ibrāhīm ibn Mufarrij aṣ-Ṣūrī, as well as in the Persian *Dārāb Nāmeḥ* by Abū Taher Tarsūsī similar traits occur. Most remarkable is the position of the hero, or for that matter, the less significantly staged heroic character of Alexander.³⁾ Although he is the leading figure, he is not the principal actor, in many cases. He is permanently accompanied by one or more confidants, who advise him in crises and solve arising difficulties. These companions in the popular romances are often al-Khiḍr (Hızır), Aristotle, Plato, Balīnās (Apollonius), and in the case of the Turkic cycle also Socrates, Hippocrates and Gharāqī; these are the figures who really pull the chestnuts out of the fire in this genre of narratives.

Most characteristic of the narrative cycle is the fact that Alexander is staged as an adventurer and explorer, who is confronted with amazing buildings, mausoleums and magical contraptions, constructed by ancient kings or erected as memorials to rulers from an undefined past. These edifices are often completed with enigmatic inscriptions on a column or tablet. In contrast to the extreme riches and luxury of the objects in the enchanted castles, the inscriptions allude to the vanity of worldly power and fortune.

In general, it is very likely that the stories are a reworking of wandering narrative material, possibly also available in Persian or Arabic writings. The practice of relating 'historical' information to a place or travel report is reminiscent of the 'Ajā'ib-genre (mirabilia), for example the 'Ajā'ib *al-Makhlūqāt* by al-Qazwīnī (1203–1283). In this cosmographical dictionary the author describes a series of islands in the Indian ocean, many of which are connected with a story about Alexander. This is likewise in Story 2 (p. 51) of the Encircling Island, the name of which, Cāzīrā-yi Müstādīrā, has an Arabic origin. In Story 5 (p. 33 / 65) explicitly asks for 'acāyib ü garāyib (wonderful and remarkable things) be shown to him.

The narration style also recalls the one in the Cosmography, *Dürr-i Mekkūn* ('Hidden Pearl'), by the fifteenth century Ottoman author Ahmad Bican, who is known to have made also an Ottoman adaptation of Qazwīnī's work. An example is the description of the pillars of the castle in Story 1, which are said to have been made of fish teeth. In the *Dürr-i Mekkūn* (§ 7, 53-54) we find the description of a city, ذات الاطلاق, near Hind which is said to have a minaret, built of deer's hoofs.⁴⁾ Another reminiscent motif in Story 1 is the fact that Alexander, after having expressed his amazement about the castle of fish teeth, immediately commands to construct a similar castle and gallery. Then, within a week's time Platoon constructs 'a copula from fish teeth a thousand times as magnificent as the one mentioned.' (p. 50). In the Arabic popular romance *Sīrat al-Iskandar* Alexander, on his travel in Asia, finds a magnificent and beautifully adorned dome made of steel. Immediately after his visit to the dome he decides to construct a similar dome, which becomes known as the *Qubbat al-Fūlādh* (Dome of Steel).⁵⁾

As mentioned by Boeschoten (p. 3) Alexander in the oriental tradition is associated with, and identified as, the Koranic Dhū l-Qarnayn (the Two-horned). Therefore, it often happens that authors fuse the names together, or they take the name, Dhū l-Qarnayn, as an equivalent of al-Iskandar/Iskender. In this text, the narrator of the Ajami Turkic stories used the name, which is reproduced as Zū l-qarnāyn/Dhūlqarnain, alternately with Īskāndār/Skāndār (Alexander).

Boeschoten, appropriately, maintains the use of both names in his translation. However, the naming is not always consistent, at least not in conformity with the Turkic text. For example, Īskāndār (p. 17, line 4) is given in the translation as Dhūlqarnain (p. 49, line 4) and this alteration occurs more often. This is also the case for some other names with variant forms, like for instance Khamīr (p. 54, lines 5, 6, 7, 14, 15.), which also occurs as Khamīrī (line 9), but not in the same way and place as in the Turkic, Xamīrī⁶⁾ (p. 22, line 23) and Xamīr (lines 24, 25, 26, 31, 32). There is no explanation given for this change.

Moreover, the spelling of the names sometimes varies in the text: Zū l-qarnāyn (p. 17, 9) next to Zūlqarnāyn (p. 19, line 12) and Zū l-qarnāyn (p. 23). There is also the variant Zā l-qarnāyn (33)⁷⁾, but this represents a real variant spelling

⁴⁾ Laban Kaptein (ed.), *Ahmed Bican Yazıcıoğlu. Dürr-i meknün. Kritische Edition mit Kommentar*, 2007 (cf. *Bibliotheca Orientalis* LXIV (2007), 5/6, pp. 793-797).

⁵⁾ See Doufīkar-Aerts, *opus cit.* § 4.4.10, pp. 223-224.

⁶⁾ As written in the manuscript.

⁷⁾ Also in cases, where it doesn't concern a vocative case-ending (for example p. 29, line 5, p. 33, line 7). Sometimes, a vocative inflection

²⁾ R. Stoneman, K. Erickson and I. Netton, *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, Groningen 2012, pp. 117-126.

³⁾ Doufīkar-Aerts, *Alexander Magnus Arabicus*, § 5.4.3a, pp. 243-244, § 5.4.5b, p. 258.

in Turkic. In the translation we find Dhulqarnain (p. 49, lines 4 and 10,) next to Dhūlqarnain (p. 51, line 21, p. 52, lines 7, 15, 27), on page 55, alternately Dhūlqarnain (line 8, 11) and Dhulqarnain (line 32) and so forth. 'Aşim Garqānī (p. 74, line 27) next to 'Aşim Gharqānī (p. 75, line 1), Arṣatālīs (p. 20, line 15) vs. Arstaṭālīs in most other cases. Gharaqī (p. 4, lines 36, 40) vs. Gharāqī (50, line 30). Pseudo-Callesthenes (p. 4, line 21, p. 5, line 11/12) for the correct Pseudo-Callisthenes (p. 3, 25) and Olympia (p. 5, line 11) instead of Olympias. Furthermore, Richard Stoneman (*The Greek Alexander Romance*) may frown when he sees himself renamed as Michael (p. 15). Finally, it apparently escaped the editor's attention that in his English *apparatus criticus* note 17 and 20 are in German.

The shifting spellings may not be a crucial matter, but they may cause confusion for readers who are not familiar with this kind of literature and the foreign scripts. Moreover, there is no transliteration list of letters of the Arabic and Latin alphabets or an explanation of the used transcription system.

Aside from this the publication of the *Alexander Stories in Ajami Turkic* is a gain for the scholarly domain of Turkic linguistics as well as comparative literature. It opens a window to a fascinating tradition, which can be linked to surrounding languages and cultures.

As mentioned above, Boeschoten eventually traced a connection of the Ajami Turkic stories with chapters in an Ottoman *Iskendernāme*, preserved in hitherto scarcely investigated manuscripts. This prose text is written by the fourteenth century author Ḥamzavī, who is identified as a brother of Aḥmedī, the author of the famous poem *Iskendernāme*.

This find opens new perspectives for the research into the background, the lines of transmission and relations between these fascinating representatives of the Turkic Alexander tradition. The exploration of this tradition is a hardly trodden and promising field of research into comparative literature and cultural transfer.

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occurs in the text, in conformity with *Yā Dhā l-Qarnayn*, which would be correct in Arabic for the vocative: *Yā Zā l-qarnāyn* (p. 20, line 26, p. 30, line 21, p. 32, lines 7 and 28).

On page 26, line 19: *Yā Zū l-qarnāyn* without vocative inflection, which of course is not necessary for Turkic. On p. 20, line 8 *Yā Zī l-qarnāyn* (sic), which does not make sense, according to any system.