

GENERAL OUTLINES OF THE CHANGING TURKISH HISTORY AND THE ANCIENT TURKISH TYPE

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Abstract

The general outlines of Turkish history is dealt with in this first paper starting with the pre-Islamic period in the sixth century A.D., as depicted in the first written historical documents in Turkish, found in the basin of the Orhon and Yenisey rivers. The conversion to Islam gave impetus to a movement westward towards the Mediterranean, which culminated in the conquest of Anatolia in 1071 followed by the expansion of the Turkish people into Europe within a few years. The Seljuks were followed by the Ottomans in the thirteenth century and the establishment of Turkey as a Mediterranean, European power, in spite of their allegiance to Islam, was realized by the conquest of Istanbul in the middle of the fifteenth century. This resulted in the rise of the Ottoman Empire as the most powerful state in Europe and Asia for three centuries. This empire endured into modern times, lasting for over six centuries.

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History of the Turkish people before Islam (6th to 11th C. A.D.)

The Orhon Monuments (720/725, 732, 735 A.D.)

In starting to summarize the general outlines of the changing Turkish history and culture, it is usual to start with the T'u - kües

of the «Chinese Annals», who were in fact, Turks. In the year 209 B.C., the famous Chinese Emperor Shih - huang - ti had the splendid wall of China built to keep T'u - kües out, under their Emperor (Tanju) Mete (Mo-tun). But, I rather prefer to resort to the oldest Turkish records so far found, written in the Turkish language. These earliest documents were found at a place which they called Ötüken, in the Far East, now within the boundaries of present - day Outer Mongolia. These inscriptions give a first hand account of the military and social history of the Göktürk Empire which lasted from 552 to 745 A.D., extending from the Black Sea across Asia along the northern borders of Mongolia and China. It was a confederation of the Turkish peoples living in that vast area. Its governmental system depended on the subordination of different groups of Turkish communities and their temporary rulers (Kagans) to a central authority in the hands of a dynasty of the great Kagan (King). His statesmen included members of his family and other able and successful begs (or subordinate rulers). The inscriptions have been deliberately left to posterity by the East Gökturks around the first half of the 8th century A.D.

The information contained in the Orhon inscriptions provides valuable insight into the socio - cultural and psychological make - up of the ancient Turkish people. Three of the six monuments found in this area will be discussed in this paper. These are the Kül Tigin, Bilge Kagan and the Tonyukuk monuments. They are written in Orhon Turkish, the oldest Turkish dialect whose written records have come down to us. Almost 1300 years have passed since they were written, yet an educated Turkish person with some effort may still comprehend the overall meaning of these monuments. The Serment de Strasbourg the oldest written document in French including the oath of alliance taken by Charles II, and Louis I in 842, despite being a hundred years more recent than these inscriptions, no contemporary Frenchman can ever understand a word of it.

The polished style of these Turkish inscriptions suggests considerable earlier development of the language, and we can fairly easily guess that it closely resembles the Turkish spoken in the sixth century A.D. or even much earlier. Archaeological investigations indicate that the script used in these monuments was spread

over an extremely large area stretching from Mongolia to the Black Sea. This Turkish script probably began to be used as early as the middle of the 6th century, as the official alphabet of this Turkish Empire. (The Chinese chronicle, Chou-shu which was finished in about 629, says that 'The script of the T'u-küe resembles that of the Sogdians') (Tekin, 1968).

The Kül Tigin and Bilge Kagan monuments are located in the vicinity of the old course of the Orhon River, (ca. 47° north latitude and 102° east longitude) at approximately one kilometer distance from each other. (Ergin, 1970; Tekin, 1968). The Kül Tigin monument is a large four sided monolith of limestone or marble. It is 3.75 m. high. This monument was erected in honor of Kül Tigin (Prince Kül) the date of its erection was 1 August 732, as is known from the Chinese inscriptions on it.

The Bilge Kagan monument is a few centimeters higher than the other. This monument was erected in 735 in honour of Bilge Kagan who died in the fall of 734.

The Tonyukuk monument is found in the same territory, about 300 kilometers to the east of these two monuments. It must have been erected around 720/725. In this inscription, the eminent statesman Tonyukuk himself gives a brief report on the first two Kagans as well as his own achievements, and relates the military campaigns which he, together with the Emperors Ilterish and Kapgan carried on.

The author of Prince Kül and most of the Bilge Kagan monuments is the Emperor Bilge Kagan himself. One thing that makes the inscriptions on these two monuments unique is the fact that they were actually inscribed by their nephew Prince Yolluk himself. The style of these first examples of written Turkish is incredibly perfect. Its prose is very smooth and polished. The sentences are short but laden with meaning. One cannot remove a single word from the text without disturbing the balance and harmony of the whole text. The ideas expressed are remarkable for that time. Such perfection of language and level of contemplation is obviously the achievement of centuries of development. The inscriptions on the monument are beautifully executed, revealing the work of a highly

artistic and skillful mason and sculptor. The level of education and talent of the family of Bilge Kagan is even more remarkable since we know that they were mainly leaders, administrators and soldiers. Obviously, the whole family was well-educated, very talented and enlightened.

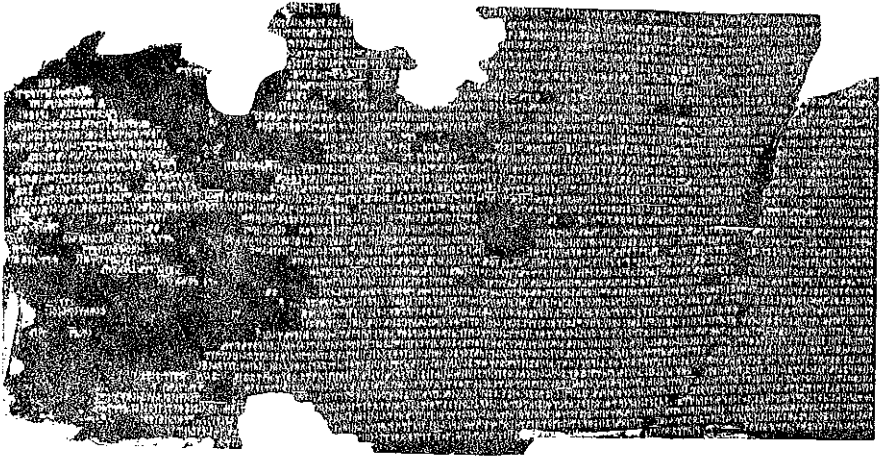


Figure 1. Eastern side of Bilge Kagan monument.

There are 40 lines on the east side of the Kül Tigin monument; for 25 of these lines the Emperor gives an account of the history of the Göktürk Empire starting with his ancestor Bumin Kagan in 552 A.D. up to his own accession to the throne in 716 A.D. The reader cannot help but be greatly impressed by the literary genius of the Emperor as he gives the account of 164 years of Turkish history in such a compact form with such forceful and realistic language. He gives the reasons for the ups and downs of certain periods of the Empire criticising cool headedly the behaviour of the rulers or of the people as the occasion requires. Between the 25th and 30th lines he describes the condition of his subjects and what he and his brother have done to improve their lot. Between the 30th and 40th lines the heroic deeds of his beloved brother between the ages of 16 and 27 are narrated. Lines 2 to 24 on the east side of the Bilge Kagan inscriptions, with the exception of

some slight divergencies, are almost identical with these lines 1 to 30 on the east side of the Kül Tigin monument.

The South side of the Kül Tigin monument contains Bilge Kagan's address to the Turkish people. The first eight lines of the north side of the Bilge Kagan monument is also identical with this south side of the Kül Tigin monument. Here the Emperor gives an account of his deeds to his people and to posterity. He narrates how he, with the help of his brother Prince Kül reformed the state creating a powerful Empire. He describes their successful campaigns against the enemy and also their efforts to unite and reorganize the Turkish people, the extent of the Empire and its new prosperity, and the new era of peace among his people and neighbours, his «amicable agreement with the Chinese people», inducing them to sell to his people «gold and silver and silk in abundance». He gives his people advice for the future especially warning them to beware of the «sweet words and the soft materials of their Chinese neighbours!», even though they are at present in peaceful relations with them.

He starts his address to his people with these words¹ :

I, the Heaven-like and Heaven-born Turkish Bilge Kagan, succeeded to the throne at this time. Hear my words from the beginning to the end, first of all you my younger brothers and sons, and my folks and relatives, you shadpit lords to the south, tarkans and buyrug lords to the north, you Otuz Tatar, and you, Tokuz Oguz lords and people! Hear these words of mine well, and listen hard! (KTS 1).

and further on,

See these writings and get a lesson (from them), all of you up to the descendents and subjects of the On-Ok. I had the memorial stone inscribed. (KTS 13).

His words are heard to this day, such is the magic of the written word.

¹ In this paper, for the English version of the Orhon monuments T. Tekin's (1986) translation was used.

On the north side of the Kül Tigin monument, Prince Kül's deeds and heroism from the age of 27 up to the time of his death are given in the first ten lines. The two lines following are literary masterpieces. There the Emperor's bereavement for the loss of his brother is rendered with great artistic eloquence. Bilge Kagan says:

My younger brother Prince Kül passed away. I mourned. My eyes which have seen became as if they were blind, and my mind which has always been conscious became as if it were unconscious. I mourned. Only God lives forever. Apparently human beings have all been born to die. I mourned in the following way: When tears came (down) from the eyes, I mourned holding them back, and when wails came (out) from the heart, I mourned turning them back; I mourned deeply. I worried that the eyes and eyebrows of the two shads and of my younger brothers, my sons, my lords and of my people could have been ruined (by weeping).

This north side of the monument ends with the magnificent funeral ceremony of Prince Kül giving the names of the Emperors, Kings, ministers etc. who have come from all over Asia to attend the funeral ceremony; from China in the East to Persia in the West from Tibet in the South; the nephew of the Chinese Emperor having been sent earlier to help in the building of the mausoleum and to help make the sculptures.

On the south-east side of the Kül Tigin monument and the south-west side of the Bilge Kagan monument Prince Yolluk indicates that he himself, who is also the nephew of the two leaders, has inscribed these monuments, the first in twenty days, the second in thirty-four days.

The north-east side of the Kül Tigin monument gives the date of the Prince's death and his funeral. The account of the Emperor's death is given this time by his son (probably his second son Ichen Turk Bilge Kagan who succeeded him) in the last four lines on the south-side of the Bilge Kagan monument.

*Turkish Society at the Time of the Göktürk Empire :**The Leaders and The People*

Historians agree that the leaders of these ancient Turks belonged to an aristocratic class, which is also depicted from the descriptions and the style on these monuments. The leaders of certain eminent families or dynasties fought with each other for leadership. So, it may not be too wrong to say that there were two classes in ancient Turkish society; the leaders and the people. I have deliberately used the word leader instead of the word ruler. For these ancient aristocrats unlike nobilities in other neighbouring non-Turkish societies, were actually and literally in the service of the people. These facts are forcefully and skillfully summarized by Bilge Kagan on the East side of Kül Tigin and Bilge Kagan monuments (KTE lines 25 to 31 and BKE lines 21-24).

In order that the name and fame of the Turkish people would not perish, Heaven, which had raised my father, the Kagan, and my mother, the Hatun, and which had granted them the state, in order that the name and fame of the Turkish people would not perish, (that Heaven) (BKE 26) enthroned me. I did not become ruler over a wealthy and prosperous people at all; (on the contrary) I became ruler over a poor and miserable people who were foodless in the inside and clothless on the outside. I and Prince Kül, my younger brother, consulted together. In order that the name and fame of the people, which our father and uncle had won, would not perish, and (BKE 27) for the sake of the Turkish people, I did not sleep by night and I did not relax by day. Together with my younger brother, Prince Kül, and together with the two shads I worked to death and I won. Having won and gathered in that way, I did not let the people split into two (opposite) parts like fire and water.

(When) I (succeeded to the throne) the people who had gone (in almost all directions), (BKE 28) came back utterly exhausted, without horses and without clothes. In order to nourish the people, I with great armies, went on campaigns

twelve times, northwards against the Oguz people, eastwards against the Qitan and Tatabî peoples, southwards against the Chinese, (and I fought ... times). (BKE 29) After (that), since I had fortune and since I had good luck - may Heaven be gracious! - I brought the people to life who were going to perish, and nourished them. I furnished the naked people with clothes and I made the poor people rich and the few people numerous. I made them superior to the peoples who have great states and (esteemed rulers). I subjugated all the peoples who live (in the four quarters of the world), and I made them harmless. They all submitted to me. They have been giving their services to me. After he had succeeded so much in making the state powerful, my younger brother, Prince Kül, passed away. When my father, the Kagan, passed away, my younger brother Prince Kül (was at the age of seven).

These words are written by an Emperor who in only eighteen years had restored his enormous Empire which stretched from China to the Caspian sea and even beyond, towards Crimea and from Tibet to Siberia. Man is primarily a social being and different societies develop different character structures in their members. Society qualifies the individual to function in the role he is to play in his group so that his desires coincide with the necessity of his social role. The concept of «social character» as developed by Erich Fromm (1941) is, I think, the best fitting theoretical approximation of this process. «Social character» embodies the ideologies and culture of a social group, the dominant traits of which become productive forces shaping the social process. In ancient Turkish society the people accepted a member of a leading family as a kagan (ruler) for themselves if they believed him to be chosen by Heaven, and his character was moulded accordingly. Initial heroic deeds done by him for the good of his people were signs of Heaven's favour. He was accepted for as long as he toiled to maintain peace and prosperity for his people. Bilge Kagan describes the approval of his people after his successful attempt in defeating his cousin and winning the leadership :

When I came to the throne, the Turkish lords and people, who were sorrowful as if they were to die, became pleased

and delighted, and their down-looking eyes looked upward. After I had mounted the throne, I put and ... this many important rules (for the people) in the four quarters of the world.

The ordinary Turkish people seemed to have a strong sense of independence and an ability to weigh the odds. If things did not go well, they simply left their leader and joined the stronger one whom they now accepted as being endowed with the heavenly spirit. The following is an example of the result of one of the many battles won by Prince Kül and Bilge Kagan brothers :

There (Prince Kül) again broke into (the enemy's lines) and captured by (his own) hands the Governor of the Az (people) who was the buyrug of the Türgis Kagan. There we killed their kagan and took their realm. The common Türgis people all submitted to us. We (settled) those people in Tabar. (KTE 39).

From these inscriptions it is obvious that the common Turkish people had a will of their own, a strong sense of freedom and a sense of their rights; also they were the decisive driving force behind their leader. This is clearly described on the east side of both monuments : (KTE 9 to 14 and BKE 9 to 12).

Those lords who were in China ... gave their services for fifty years ... For the benefit of the Chinese emperor they conquered countries. Then, the Turkish common people (EKT 9) apparently said as follows : «We used to be a people who had an (independent) state. Where is our own state now? For whose benefit are we conquering these lands?», they said. «We used to be a people who had its own kagan. Where is our own kagan now? To which kagan are we giving our services?» they said. By talking in this way (among themselves), they again became hostile to the Chinese emperor. (KTE 10) ... Having heard the news that (Ilterish) was marching off, those who were in towns went up mountains and those who were on mountains came down (from there); thus they gathered ... Due to the fact that Heaven granted strength, the soldiers of my father, the kagan, were like wolves, and his enemies were like sheep. Having gone on campaigns forward and backward, he gathered

together and collected men; they all numbered seven hundred men. (KTE 13) After ... (my father, the kagan) organized and ordered the people who had lost their state and their kagan, the people who had turned slaves and servants, the people who had lost the Turkish institutions, in accordance with the rules of my ancestors. He (also) organized there) the Tölis and Tardush (peoples). (TKE 14).

From these inscriptions one can sense a feeling of purpose and direction in all those struggles, battles and hardwork done by the leaders and the people. It is to attain law and order, and through it peace and prosperity. Bilge Kagan declares :

For the benefit of my Turks and my people, I have thus gotten victories in the best way. (BKS 10) ... we thus settled and organized the Turkish people ... (KTE 21) ... (KTE 22) We had such a well-acquired and well-organized state and institutions. You, Turkish and Oguz Lords and peoples, hear this! If the sky above did not collapse, and if the earth below did not give way, O Turkish people, who would be able to destroy your state and institutions?

Another similar statement :

... Both the lords and peoples were peaceable. For this reason, they were able to keep the state under control, they arranged the state rules and regulations. (KTE 3)

Thus, prosperity is achieved as a result of all the struggles and hard-work. Bilge Kagan discusses the wealth and prosperity of his people :

For the benefit of my Turks and my people I won and acquired their yellow gold and white silver, their hemmed silk cloth and hem-stitched silk fabric, their saddle horses and stallions, their black sables (BKN 12) and blue squirrels, and I made them free from troubles. The heavens above ... (BKN 13) nourish the people; do not trouble and torment (them)! ...

Another similar account from Tonyukuk, his Prime minister :

(TSI) we came as far as the Iron Gate ... The Turkish people had never before reached the Iron Gate (TS 3) and the moun-

tain which is called 'Son of Heaven'. Now, since I caused (the Turkish armies) to reach as far as these lands, (TS 4) they brought home the yellow gold and the white silver, girls and women, and crooked camels in great abundance. By virtue of his being wise (TS 5) and brave, Ilterish Kagan fought seventeen times against the Chinese, ... It was I (TS 6) who was his counselor, and it was I who was his wartime leader during these expeditions.

The Emperor Bilge Kagan, whose father, uncle and brother died in the service of the state and the people, knows the full value of the recently achieved peace and prosperity in his empire and as their leader and as a «father-figure» of the people advises and warns them against dangers that might destroy the harmony achieved by reminding them of some of the bitter examples of the past. He first discusses the deceitful and double-dealing habits of their enemy, (now their ally) the Chinese :

(KTS 5) ... The words of the Chinese people have always been sweet and the materials of the Chinese people have always been soft. Deceiving by means of (their) sweet words and soft materials, the Chinese are said to cause the remote people to come close in this manner. After such a people have settled close to them, (The Chinese) are said to plan their ill will there (KTS 6) (The Chinese) do not let the real wise men and the real brave men make progress. If a man commits an error (the Chinese) do not give shelter to anybody (from his immediate family) to the families of his clan and tribe. Having been taken in by their sweet words and soft materials, you Turkish people, were killed in great numbers.

He continues :

There the ill-willed persons made harmful suggestions as follows : 'If a people live afar (from them), they (i.e., the Chinese) give cheap materials (to them) : but, if a people live close to them, then (the Chinese) give them valuable materials : Apparently such harmful suggestions made, the ill-willed persons. Having heard these words, you unwise people went close to (the Chinese) and were (consequently) killed in

great numbers. (KTS 8) If you go toward those places, O Turkish people, you will die! If you stay in the land of Ötüken, and send caravans from there, you will have no trouble. If you stay at the Ötüken mountains; you will live forever dominating the tribes! ...

Since the lords and people were not in accord and the Chinese people were wily and deceitful ... The Turkish people caused their state which they had established to go to ruin. (KTE 6)

Another danger is lack of foresight and discipline that has afflicted the society from time to time and which has always brought great disaster with it to the people. Bilge Kagan accuses :

O Turkish people, you always regard yourselves as satiated! You do not think of being hungry or satiated; if you once become satiated, you do not think of being hungry (again). On account of your being so, (BKS 9) you went in (almost) all directions without asking the advice of your Kagan who had nourished (You). You were completely ruined and destroyed in those places. (Of you), those who survived there, utterly exhausted, were marching in (almost) all directions. Since Heaven was gracious, and since I was granted with fortune, I succeeded to the throne. Having succeeded to the throne (BKS 10) I gathered all the poor and destitute people together. I made the poor people wealthy and the few people numerous; or, is there any falsehood in these words of mine? O Turkish lords and people, hear this!

To continue :

Turkish people, regret and repent! (KTE 29) Because of your unruliness, you yourselves betrayed your wise kagan who had (always) nourished you, and you yourselves betrayed your good realm which was fine and independent, and you (yourselves) caused discord. From where did the armed men come and put you to flight? From where did the lancer come and drive you away? You, people of the sacred Ötüken mountains, it was you who went away. (Of you) those who meant to go to the east went away, and those who meant to go the west went away. In the places you went, your (only) profit was the following: your

blood ran like a river, and your bones were heaped up like a mountain; your sons worthy of becoming lords became slaves, and your daughters worthy of becoming ladies became servants. Because of your unawareness (KTE 25) and because of your mischievousness, my uncle, the Kagan, met his death.

These useful warnings to the people from the Emperor by giving examples from the past also reveal certain characteristics of the people. We had previously seen that, it was through popular support of the leaders that the empire was restored. We can also detect a habit of free choice in taking decisions, sometime without even consulting their leaders. Bilge Kagan complains that the people «went in all directions without asking the advice of the Kagan who had nourished (them)».

Another hint is the attraction of the people for the good and beautiful things in life, such as, gold and silver, and silk and many such things that make gracious, settled living possible. We also observe in these people and their leaders a great capacity of moving large distances very quickly without heeding the distances at all. This intense mobility, in its turn, is, of course, accompanied by an openness to change, still an important and sought after characteristic of the modern man.

The Character of Prince Kül

Prince Kül, is a pure example of the Turkish hero type of youth (called the Alp type in Turkish), the undaunted warrior, who pledges his own life for the welfare of his country. Here are two examples of his heroism as narrated by his brother the Kagan :

When he was twenty-one years old, we fought against (the army of) general Chacha. First he (mounted) Tadiq Chor's gray horse (and attacked there that horse) (KTE 33) was killed. Secondly, he mounted Ishbara Yamtar's gray horse and attacked. That horse, (too), was killed there. Thirdly, he mounted Yigin Silig Beg's dressed bay horse and attacked. That horse, (too), was killed there. They hit (him) with more than one hundred arrows on his armor and caftan; (but, he did not let the enemy hit him) even once on his face or head. (KTE 34)

Another episode :

We ordered (the army) to make a raid, while we left Prince Kül at home to command the camp (KTN 9). The hostile Oguz suddenly attacked the camp. Having mounted his white orphan (horse), Prince Kül stabbed nine men and did not surrender the camp. My mother, the hatun, and my (step-mothers), my elder sisters, my daughters - in-law, my princesses this many people who were going to survive would have become the slaves, and those of you who were going to be killed would have been left lying at the camp and on roads. (KTN 10) If Prince Kül had never existed, you all would have been killed.

This Turkish Alp type whose written records are first depicted in these monuments is a type of character that has persisted in Turkish society, in spite of the many enormous changes that the society has undergone; from geographical, to religious or political. He is, afterwards, called *Ghazi* during the Seljuk and Ottoman periods. We call him by the name of *Mehmetçik* now. He is the one who defended the Gallipoli in 1917, or fought the War of Independence in 1919 - 1923 or fought with the allies in the Korean War in 1950 - 1953.

The Character of Tonyukuk

The character of Tonyukuk is that of the respected wise statesman and brave soldier. This type is also reflected in many phases of Turkish history, upto the present day. He is usually learned and clever, something of a philosopher, yet a man of action, always in the service of the state. Here Tonyukuk tells us about his wise and brave deeds :

«Join me!» he said. It was I, Bilge Tonyukuk, who joined him (without hesitation). 'Shall I make him a kagan?' I said (to myself) and I thought: If lean bulls or fat bulls (TW 6) kick one from behind, one cannot distinguish between fat bulls or lean bulls, they say. Thus did I think. Then, since heaven granted me insight, I myself made him kagan ... It was I who was his counselor and his aide-de-camp.

Another episode,

I made my representations to my kagan as follows : 'If the Chinese, Oguz and Qitan, these three (once) form an alliance, (TS 6) we would be helpless. It seems as if we are holding the exterior with our own interior (i.e. with our own forces). That which is thin is easy to bend, they say; that which is tender is easy to break. If thin becomes thick, it is hard to bend it, they say; and if tender (TS 17) becomes tough, it is hard to break it, they say ... My Kagan deigned to listen to the representation which (I myself), Bilge Tonyukuk, made (to him). Lead (the army) according to your own will!» he said.

Tonyukuk's vigilance against the trickery of Bögü Kagan, who in 716 for a few months was pretender to the throne, before Bilge Kagan won it from him is obvious in the following event:

(TN 9) There came three scouts. Their messages were all alike : ... Having heard these words, I sent the news to the Kagan ... 'Stay there! he said, 'Place the vanguard and patrols properly, and do not let the enemy make a surprise attack on you!' Such was the message Bögü Kagan sent me. But he sent a secret message to Apa Tarkan, I was told. (This message was as follows:) 'Bilge Tonyukuk is malicious and evil-minded.' (TN 11) 'Let us march off with the army!' he will say. 'Do not agree with him!' Having heard this message, I ordered the army to march. We climbed over the Altai mountains without any roads, and we crossed Irtish river without any fords. We made (the army) to march (even) by night, and arrived in Bolchu while the dawn was breaking.

Others, also showing his services and his statesmanship :

(TS 1) We were dwelling there, nourishing ourselves on big games and hares. The people's stomach was full ... While we were dwelling in this manner, there came a scout from the Oguz ... After I heard these words, I had no wish to sleep by night, and I had no wish to relax by day. Then I made my representations to my Kagan. (TE 1) ... at (the age of) twenty-seven ... I enthroned Qaghan Kagan. Without sleeping by night

(TE 2) or getting rest by day, and letting my red blood pour and making my black sweat flow, I gave my services (to my kagans and people). I have sent (them) forward on far campaigns, (TE 3) I have made the fortifications and watchtowers great ... By Heaven's favor (TE 4) I did not let any armed enemy ride among this Turkish people, or any branded horse run around ... Since he won, and since I myself won (TE 6) both the state has become a state and the people a people. (Now) I myself am grown old; I am far advanced in years. If a people living anywhere (in the world) under a kagan (TE 7) had such a man (i.e., a man like me as their chief executive), what kind of trouble would it have?! (TE 8) I had (these inscriptions) inscribed in the reign of Turkish Bilge Kagan. I(am) Bilge Tonyukuk.

There are several important points in this early Turkish history that need emphasis :

1. The Turkish people between sixth and the middle of the ninth centuries is a far eastern power, neighbouring the Chinese in the east and the Mongols in the north, occupying the whole of central Asia; an empire of confederated Turkish groups.

2. Many of these Turkish people were not nomads at all, but lived in cities and practiced trade, as is depicted in the Orhon monuments. Archaeological finds in these regions have also proven that they had settled towns with artificial water supplies, agriculture, as well as animal husbandry. The forests around their capital were especially suitable for cattle breeding and hunting. They used silk and silver, gold and iron and all such instruments that any gracious living requires. The Gökturks wrote on wood and stone. The territory of the Göktürk Empire and their successors lay across the international caravan routes between Europe and the East. They allowed and even encouraged the peaceful passage of caravans through their territory, collecting from them in return the consumer goods that they carried. In fact, the Turkish people have never attempted to live by force. They have always brought law, order and prosperity to the lands they have chosen to live in.

It is not a static society, rather a poised but dynamic people lively, very active, unfrightened of distances or change. In the only surviving copy of the Oguz Kagan Legend written in the Uygur Alphabet (kept at the National Library of Paris, no. 1001) these lines bear witness to this adventurous spirit (Bang and Rahmeti, 1970).

Many more seas, many more rivers,
Let the sun be our flag, the sky our shelter...

Their mobility and fearlessness of great distances is a key Turkish characteristic that has endured to this day. (Ögel, 1984). This may partly explain the extraordinary internal and external migrations which are constantly in progress all over Turkey.

3. The leaders of the Turkish people never regarded their subjects as inferiors or slaves. The Kagan or ruler led the people for only as long as he had popular support.

4. They have an extremely advanced and well-developed language that has survived to this day. «Any visitor to Turkey will encounter at once the first and unmistakable sign of Turkishness - the Turkish language, which despite long subjection to alien influences survives triumphantly» (Lewis, 1962).

5. Another important point that needs emphasis here is the fact that the Göktürk people believed in one God only whom they called «God of Heaven» (Kök Tengri in Turkish). Later on as they moved southwards and westwards before being converted to Islam *en masse* in the tenth century, different groups of Turkish peoples tried some other religions like Manicheanism and Buddhism but they abandoned them quickly, for none agreed with the temperament of the Turkish people as well as Islam.

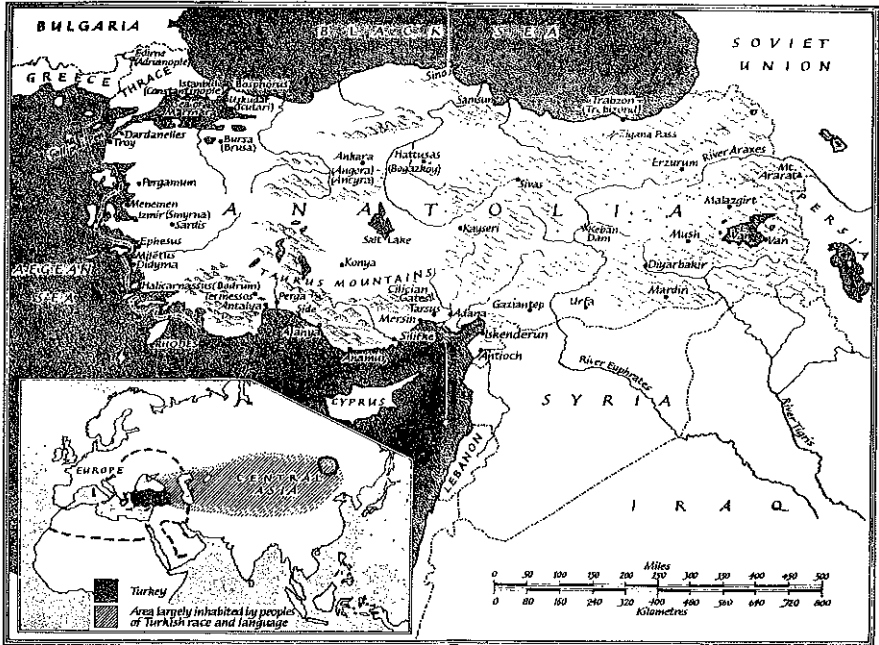


Figure 2. Turkish lands past and present. (Hotham, 1972. Dotted boundaries added by the author to indicate the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire in the 17th Century).

The First and Second Uygur Turkish States (745-940)

After the collapse of the Eastern Göktürk Empire in the mid eighth century the Uygur Turks dominated in this far eastern area for about a hundred years (until 845); after this they were displaced by the Kirgiz Turks coming from the north. The Uygur Turks had to move on towards the southwest to Turkestan. This is one of the landmarks in Turkish history, for from then on, all the new Turkish States or Empires continued this trend of ever moving westwards. The capital of the new Uygur Turkish State, Karahocho was situated 1400 kilometers southwest of the old Capital.

The Uygurs retained the Göktürk script for about a century as the official alphabet. Finally, it was replaced by the Uygur

alphabet. The Uygurs knew how to make paper, and also had an advanced technique of printing. They wrote and translated many books that are still being discovered.

History of the Turkish People After Islam

The Karahanlı Turkish State (940-1040)

The Uygur Turkish State in 940 was followed by the Karahanlı Turkish State, who ruled in Transaxonia until the 13th century. The capital of the Karahanlı dynasty was at Kashgar. The Turks are now in Central Asia, having definitely left their place in the Far East, and are continuing with their march towards the west. The Karahanlı period is important for a second reason. The Turkish people of their own free will, were converted *en masse* to Islam. Another branch of the Turkish people the Gaznevis who had also become muslims at the same time built an empire in Horasan, Southern Iraq and Afghanistan, moving southwards into India between the tenth and twelfth centuries (962-1187). Each of these Turkish dynasties revived and invigorated Islam, defending it from their non-muslim neighbors.

The Seljuk Turks (1040-1299)

Following the Gaznevis we find the Great Seljuks on the stage of Turkish history. They were the largest group of Oguz Turks who left Transaxonia and moved westwards, entering the Middle East in the tenth century. They first assumed the role of protectors of the Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad. In 1055 the founder of the Seljuk dynasty, Tuğrul Bey, forced the Abbasid Caliph to make him protector of Islam and to recognize him as Sultan. Establishing an empire in south-west Asia, the Turks continued with their westward drive. Within sixteen years they had defeated the armies of Byzantium at Manzigert (1071), and six years later they were in İznik (Nicaea). The Turkish people who had started a westward drive in the ninth century (845), establishing new empires or states along their westward route, had finally succeeded in reaching Asia

Minor within two centuries. I should like to add here that only twenty-four years separate Manzigert from the First Crusade in 1095. The victory in 1071 led to two developments: The creation of a basically Turkish Anatolia and a remarkable growth in the prosperity of the Anatolian uplands. Thus, within a few years virtually the whole of Anatolia became a Seljuk province. Urban civilization flowered during the Seljuk period. Konya, Sivas, Kayseri, Erzurum, Erzinçan and many others became prosperous centres of trade and culture, complete with mosques, schools (medreses), bazaars, hospitals, bath houses, fountains and caravansarays. Many of the buildings have survived to this day. Seljuk civilization was essentially Islamic, but it had an individual character. By the middle of the thirteenth century, however, the Seljuk dynasty was in decline, and Asia Minor suffered a wave of Mongol invaders from the East. The Mongols destroyed the central authority of the Seljuk Sultans of Konya, but they could not destroy the Turkish Muslim Civilization of Asia Minor. On the contrary, it stimulated a second great wave of Turkish advance. Among those who came was a leader named Ertuğrul, who, with his followers established themselves in the north-west of Anatolia, up against the boundaries of the diminished Byzantine empire. By the time of Ertuğrul's death in 1281, his territory had increased to about 5000 km². His son Osman, who succeeded him, achieved his independence in 1299, thus starting the Ottoman Sultanate.

The Ottoman Empire (1299-1923)

The rise of the Ottoman Empire to rule much of Europe and Asia is considered by historians as one of the most remarkable stories in history. In the 13th century, the Ottomans ruled only one of a number of Turcoman principalities. Within two centuries they had established an empire that included former Byzantine lands of south eastern Europe and Anatolia, Hungary and the Arab World. This empire was to endure into Modern Times right up to the end of the First World War.

In 1326 the Ottomans made Bursa their capital south of the Sea of Marmara. In 1365 Sultan Murat I shifted the capital to Edirne from where was mounted a campaign against Europe. In

1453 the last great Byzantine stronghold, «East Rome» which is Constantinople, fell to Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror. At its greatest extent, in the seventeenth century, the Ottoman Empire included the Balkan peninsula, the Crimea, Iraq and the western shores of the Persian Gulf, Syria, Palestine, west and south Arabia, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Algeria.

If the *Ghazis* or heroes were the most important factors in the successful conquests of all these places, it was the *dervishes*, belonging to various mystical orders who were the primary agents for settling the people in these lands. They were a socially cohesive force, around whose graves communities grew up. Of course in such an empire where religion and war was merged together, militant confraternities also rose, and janissaries were attached to such powerful sects as the Ahis and later the Bektashis. The Turkish conquest brought new prosperity to these places. Rich Muslim cities sprang up in Western Anatolia and the Balkans.

In the cities the chief institution moulding life was the *vakf* or pious foundation. Public or private benefactors set up these foundations for the upkeep of mosques, schools, hospitals and other charities. The foundations could own land, shops, even whole bazaars, bath houses and inns. Their presence was felt throughout the whole town, inspiring and integrating it within this Islamic community. Institutions such as the dervish houses, and craft guilds served the citizens, with reference to the interests of the faith. The Christian inhabitants usually settled outside the city walls, in the suburbs and the surrounding country side. They were never molested and were always encouraged to settle and maintain their trades. One of the striking features of the Ottoman Empire was the wide practical toleration accorded to all minorities.

With the advance of the Ottomans, in spite of wars, Turkish cities carried on profitable trade with Christian Europe. Bursa became famous for silk, the west Anatolian cities for minerals, grains and textiles. As prosperity increased, trade with it grew. Culturally, while the area was joined to the Muslim world in the east, it preserved and developed its economic links with the west.

I shall leave an analysis of the Turkish *ghazi* and *dervish* or *veli* types to another congress and finish my paper on this Turkish

period by quoting a passage from the French historian Braudel (1978) :

Eventually Turkey created throughout the Balkans, structures within which the peoples of the Peninsula gradually found a place, collaborating with the Conqueror ... This conquest brought a new order, a *pax turcica*. Let us take the word of an anonymous Frenchman who wrote in 1528 : 'the country is safe and there are no reports of brigands or highwaymen ... The Emperor does not tolerate highwaymen or robbers ... for many years the Turkish Empire remained to Christian eyes an extraordinary, incomprehensible and disconcerting example of orderliness; its army astonished westerners by its discipline and silence as much as by its courage, abundant munitions and the high quality and sobriety of its soldiers. (p. 665)

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