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HOW THE TURKS OF TURKEY DID PERCEIVED THE MUSLIM KAZAKHS OF CENTRAL ASIA IN THE 20TH CENTURY?

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The history of cultural and politic of the Muslim Kazakhs of Central Asia was not known enough by intellectual circles of Turkey in the early of 20th century. When 'Kazakh nation' is mentioned in intellectual circles in Turkey, Christian Slavic Kazakhs come to mind rather than the Muslim Kazakhs of Central Asia. Turkish nationalists and Turanians were mostly interested in the political and cultural history, language of Muslim Kazakhs in the context of Turkism and Turanism in Ottoman Turkey. In the time of the Ottoman Empire, this interest has been originated from Islam because Ottoman Sultans were the sole legal representative of the Prophet Muhammad in the World. The political situation of Muslim Kazakh of Central Asia was followed by Ottoman governments in Istanbul. Ottoman Archives of Turkey has a few reports, written in the Ottoman Turkish in Istanbul in the middle of the 18th and 19th century, on Central Asian Muslims, including Muslim Kazakhs and their khans. In 1714, Muhammad Khan the Hidden (Gaib), Kazakh Khan of Turkestan, sent his envoy Muhammed Kulu Bek to Istanbul with a royal letter to ask for the help of the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed III in his fight against the Kalmyks.

After Ottoman Empire was dissolved in 1918, modern Turkey was founded in 1923. Turkish nationalism was main foundation ideology of modern Turkey. In fact, this ideology's main source was the CUP, Party of Committee of Union and Progress, one of main parties of Ottoman Empire, set up in Thessalonica of Greece in 1889. From point of Central Asian policy, its main aim was to resist British imperialism and Russian expansionism toward Central Asia, with support and cooperation of Germany. After decade of the foundation of modern Turkey, Pan-Turkism and Turanism ideologies were partly discharged by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of modern Turkey, because the Turks were afraid of losing Anatolia. However Turkey officially accepted a political ideology based on Central Asia in order to strengthen his cultural and historical basis which were originating from Central Asia in the early 1930's. The researches of history, religion and language about Central Asian Turks officially continued in Turkey until 1936.

My paper is based mainly on news about Central Asia and Kazakhs that published in the *Cumhuriyet*, one of the Turkish newspapers of Turkey, founded by three Turks, Yunus Nadi (1879-1945), Nebizade Hamdi (1888-1869) and Zekeriya Sertel (1890-1980), in Istanbul, on 7 May 1924, defending Republican ideology for modern Turkey. I

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researched the article from the newspaper on all Kazakhs and shortly explained this news from Kazakh's point of view.

First news I met in the newspaper were connected with the Soviet-Kazakhstan. It was announced in 1930 in the newspaper that *'Turkey is interested in the Brothers (Central Asian Turks as an official name), who possess same history, religion and origin'*. This official thesis was accepted which claim the Turks of Turkey were originated from Central Asia until 1936. The cause of that interest was political because of a precaution for a possibly Russian threat against Turkey.

According to the official thesis, Turks of Turkey has been emigrated from Central Asia to Anatolia because of drought and famine that took place in Central Asia. In fact, some news published in the newspaper were false because of Soviet propaganda against Turkey. For example, an article that was published in *Cumhuriyet*, dated 27th April 1930, it was mentioned that *'there is a Kazakhstan Republic, where Kazakhs lives, with population of 6 million. They called Kirghiz Turks'*. The newspaper incorrectly calls Kazakhs as Kirghiz Turks. This definition was obviously due to Soviet influence on Turkey. In that years, Kazakhs was defined by Turkish nationalist of Turkey as Turks *'who has got no independent government'*. This distinction between 'Kyrgyz and Kazakhs nations' was not known among the Turks of Turkey. Turkish press also has been interested in the railway network of Central Asia.

A few articles which show differences between Muslim Kazakhs and Christian Kazakhs were published in Turkish press. In an article dated 1932 of the newspaper, Muslim Kazakhs were defined as *'native inhabitants of Turkistan and one of the branch of the Turks'*. Muslim Kazakh's language was also defined as *'dialect of Turkish language'*. Tartars and Bashkir intellectuals emigrated to Turkey from Russia had an important role in the formation of the identity. It is well-known that Ottoman governments have struggled with Russian Kazakhs in the Crimea, the Caucasus, Iran, Northern Balkan and the region of Black Sea from 17th century to the year of 1918. Russian Kazakhs (*Kazaks of Zaporaj (Potkali), Aghnad, Koshavi, Don, Rus, Akkerman, Kuban, Barabash, Tulcha, Moskov, Sarikamish* etc.) has raided Ottoman cities on the North of the Black Sea, and some Anatolian cities, located in the coast of Black Sea of Turkey, and some part of Istanbul. They were a vanguard force of Russian Army, well known by their courage and endurance among Turks. Apart from these groups, the Ottoman country was also damaged by groups called *Kazaks of Tatars, Kipchaks, Chechen, Kyrgyz, Iranians, Poles and Swedish*.

It is well-known that both Turks of Turkey and Central Asian Muslim Kazakhs did not have possibility to know and define each other correctly until the end of the Cold War. Even after 1991 when USSR was dissolved, false information on Muslim Kazakhs is continued to being learned in Turkey, although Turkey provided direct diplomatic and political connection to the Republic of Kazakhstan. Contrary to the mentioned cultural and racial connection, the differences in identification between Turks of Turkey and Muslim Kazakhs appeared. Even in 2000's, these 'two nations' (Kazaks and Turks of Turkey) could not perceive each other correctly. For example, secular Turks of Turkey generally have defined Muslim Kazakhs as Russian Kazakhs. Turks of Turkey have produced many Turkish words which define Russian Kazakhs (Cossacks, Slavic Kazakhs), not Muslim Kazakhs. While Russian Kazakhs were Christian and the enemies of Ottoman Empire, Kazakh of Central Asia were Muslims.

By the opera, film and other stage arts which were shown in Turkey in 1930 and 1940's, the history and culture of Russian Kazakhs were known in Turkey well.

Especially, the negative role of them against Turks in Armenian incidents and Sarikamish Tragedy has remained unforgettable among Turks.

One of the main factors which formed of Kazakh identity among Turks of Turkey was the settlements of Russian Kazakhs who had a sectarian difference, Molokanism, with the Russian government in Turkey. They live in 'Kazakh villages' which founded by Turkish governments in Anatolia. After a short period, they had to leave from Turkey to USA because of their economic and biological difficulties. Unlike Russian Kazaks, Altai Kazakhs were also settled in Turkey in 1952. While Russian Cossacks were Molokanist, Altai Kazakhs (Eastern Turkistan Kazakhs) were Muslim.

As for Muslim Kazaks of Central Asia, after 1991, new words which define Muslim Kazakhs entered to Turkish of Turkey like '*Kazakh kitchen and Kazakh oil*'. This situation was clearly due to economic connection with Kazakhstan. In fact, in the Ottoman past, the main reason of interest in Muslim Kazakhs by Turkey was Islam. In the 20th century, it was ideological and military as well as Islam. Turkish governments had worried about recruitment of Muslim Kazakhs to USSR Army because of the possible military usage against Turkey.

In the article, dated 25th October 1935 of *Cumhuriyet*, multiplicity of higher education and number of newspaper published in Kazakh language were praised by the reason of 15th anniversary of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Kazakhstan, as a result of Soviet propaganda.

According to the news, '*there were 25.000 university students in Russian Kazakhstan and there were 3 million newspapers published in Kazakh language in 1935. The newspaper praised the level of education and cultural developments in Kazakhstan*'. Another influx of Muslim Kazakh immigration to Turkey was occurred in the year of 1954. According to new, dated 20th November 1954, in *Cumhuriyet*, Kazakhs from Eastern Turkistan (Chinese Turkistan) were transferred to Turkey by an English ship, *Darressa*. An English journalist, Mr. Gottfrey, came to Istanbul to make an interview with emigrated Kazakhs to Turkey. In his article, he defines the event as 'Kazakhstan massacre'. Chinese Muslim Kazakhs who settled in Turkey have started to protect their tradition and culture in Turkey. According to the new, dated 21st February 1955, in *Cumhuriyet*, a Kazakh teenager named Keremullah have singed a Kazakh song with his instrument '*dombra*'. A picture of playing '*dombra*' was published at same newspaper for the first time. The '*dombra* instrument' became known among the Turks of Turkey as an identity symbol representing the Muslim Kazakhs from Central Asia.

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Turks of Turkey have possessed of correct information about Muslim Kazakhs who resisted the regimes of Communist Chinese and Soviet Socialist by way of emigrated Kazakhs. To news dated 30th January 1950, Kazakh political opposition movement

against USSR was continuing. In news dated 17th February 1954, it was mentioned that Russian general, *Panteleimon Kondratyevich Ponomarenko* (1902-1984), was sent to rule Kazakhstan from Bishkek. There was concern about this situation in Turkey. Turkish press has been stated their fear about possible 'Kazakh massacre' by Soviets.

In 1966, Turkey tried to support their resistance with Radio Liberty (*Hürriyet Radio*) with the collaboration of Germany. For anti-Communist propaganda, this radio have employed personnel who speak all Turkish dialects (in Kazakh, Uzbek, and Kyrgyz etc.) as well as broadcasting in Russian. Radio that supported by Turkish government was against to Russification, or Sovietization all Central Asian Turkic people who were lived under Soviet hegemony, including Muslim Kazakhs. Turkish governments during the Cold War accepts that USSR politically applied 'divide and rule policy' among Central Asian Turks and separates 'Turks of Central Asia' from one another and the Turks of Turkey. Unfortunately changing political situation of Turkey had prevented this policy to be constant.

In 1960's, Turkish press followed the news about the Muslim Kazakhs from the USSR Press from Moscow in general. A few secular Turkish intellectuals and journalist went to Kazakhstan to see the situation. A few Kazakh nationalist's name have appeared in Turkish newspapers. One of them was one of the Kazakh poets of 19th century *Abay Kunanbayev* (1845-1904), an important political symbol for Kazakh freedom. In *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, on 26th January 1967, *Abai's* name was published as *Abaf* incorrectly and he was defined as founder of New Kazakh Literature. In fact, the name of *Abai* was known in the circle of narrow Turkish intellectual of Turkey. The name of another Kazakh nationalist, *Amangeldi Imanov* (1873-1918), a Kazakh revolutionary who was leader of the Central Asian Revolt of 1916 in Kazakhstan against the Red Army, was mentioned on 29th January 1967 of the newspaper.

A Turkish journalist from Istanbul went to Almaty in 1961 to interview with *Muhtar Avozov* (1897-1961), a famous Kazakh writer and a social activist. His report was published on 30th January 1967 in *Cumhuriyet*. In his report, he did not mention the Kazakh resistance and nationalism against USSR. Ironically, a Turkish journalist has praised the value of the USSR and his literary writings. In the 1960s, Turkey tried to use the Turkic dialects politically against the USSR for the Central Asian 'Turks'. Interesting news was published on 15th August 1960 of the newspaper that announces '*all Kazakhs and Uzbeks sing Turkish songs always*'.

After the dissolution of USSR in 1991, the perceive of the Muslim Kazakh by Turks become clearer in Turkey. Old ideals, Turkey's historical connection to Central Asian Muslims, and political ideologies have revived in the Muslim conservative circles again. This politic attitude which based on same language (Turkish language), same religion (Sunni Islam), same history (Turkish history) was accepted.

Muslim revolutionaries and jadidists of Turkey saw Turkism and Turanism as an important danger, in the terms of international relations between the Central Asian states and Turkey. Some of them also supported Turkism and Turanism mainly for Kazakhstan-Turkey relations. They point out that these ideas were worth for working and a national duty for every Turk. However, defining each other correctly has remained a serious problem. On 30th November 1991, news was issued in *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, stated that Liberty Party leader of Kazakhstan, *Sabet Gazi Akatay*, visits *Hüsameddin Cindoruk* (d. 2023), the president of Great Assembly of Turkey. In the visit, Akatay said that '*our aim is to set up an independent Kazakh state named the Republic of Kazakh-Turk*'.

In fact, Turkish press had two main ideas. One of them was *Turkism*, the other was *Islamism*. The Muslim Kazakhs were defined mostly between Turkism and Islamism by Turkish scholars in Turkey. After the year of 2003, Islamism as a policy became more powerful than Turkism and Turanism. Actually, Turkey had made a good balance between Turkism and Islamism prior to 2000 thanks to the politics by Turkey's presidents Demirel (d. 2015) and Ozal (1993). Their priority was to introduce Turkish of Turkey and the Latin alphabet to the Central Asian Turks, in order to strengthen cultural and political ties with the Central Asian 'Turks'. However, this priority did not realize completely. We know that although Kazakh government have issued the order about Kazakh language to become the official language of Kazakhstan, it had remained as Russian, in de facto.

Turkey's some institutions, associations and foundations tried to create common values after between Turkey and Kazakhstan after 1992. A *state ministry* which was responsible for the affairs of Central Asian Turks was founded in Turkey. *International Turk-Kazak University* was founded in the city of Yassi (Turkistan) of Kazakhstan in 1992. *The complex of Ahmad Yassawi* of Kazakhstan was restored by TIKA, an official department of Turkey for Turkic World, belongs to Presidency of Turkey. Great Muslim mystic Yassawi's doctrines were introduced to the large circles of Turkey. Another important official organization of Turkey, TURKSOY, is organizing many cultural activities for the Central Asian states. Department of Religious Affairs of Turkey have educated *Kazakh imams* in Sunni form. Many mosques were built by the Department of Religious Affairs of Turkey in Kazakhstan. Many *Islamic publications* were sent to Kazakhstan from Turkey. *Nowruz* festival was also started to celebrate in Turkey regularly. *University students* exchange program started between Turkey and Kazakhstan. However, because of economic difficulties and without planning, this program did not reach the goal. In spite of this defect, many Kazakh students have learned *Turkey Turkish* and had the opportunity to visit Turkey.

In consequent, the activities declined its enthusiasm in Turkey in 2000's. Results were not satisfying for Turkey. Islamist and Turkish nationalists goes on their activities slowly. Relations between Turkey and Kazakhstan are slowly going on with effort of universities and press, particularly in the contextt of the Project of New Silk Road. However, many of Turkish university's curriculums did not contain the history of the Muslim Kazakhs. In the Turkish press, Kazakh intellectuals started to being mentioned less. For example, if we look at *Cumhuriyet* of 2012-13 years copies, we will see a few Kazakh intellectuals was mentioned. One of them, *Akbar Majit* ((b. 1954), Kazakh writer and novelist, editor, the other was *Dulat Isabekov*, Kazakh drama player, editor of '*Madeniyet*' publication. About history, literature and culture of Kazakhs, less publication were released in 2013. Many Turkish intellectuals still do not know Kazakh intellectuals. As far as I know, the most known Kazakh intellectuals in Turkey were *Abai Kunanbayev*, *Muhtar Avezov (1897-1961)*, *Shekerim or Şahkerim Kudayberdi*, *Magcan Cumabayev (1893-1938)*, *Mustafa Şokay (d. 1941)* and *Janbil Cabayev (d. 1945)*. Muslim Kazakh identity in Turkey was created not by the native intellectuals of Kazakhstan, but by the Bashkir and Tatar intellectuals who emigrated from Russia to Turkey as well as Muslim clergy, journalists, men of letters, politicians, administrators of public and private institutions.

Additional document: Professor Zeki Velidi Togan's (1890-1970) political views on Kazakhs and Kazakhstan in outline. One of the historians who gave correct information about the history of Kazakhs and Kazakhstan in Turkey was Professor Ahmed Zeki Velidi Togan (1890-1970), who was of Bashkir origin at the University of

Istanbul. He opposed Russian-Soviet policies toward Central Asian Turcic people. He advocates that they will be existed in their own national identities. His political and academic views have gained supporters in right-wing circles in Turkey. Turkish readers had the opportunity to learn the history of the Kazakh khanate and the activities of Kazakh intellectuals from the book titled Today's Turkili (Turkestan) and Its Recent History (Bugünkü Türkili (Türkistan) ve Yakın Tarihi), published in 1927 in Ottoman Turkish in Egypt. It was later published in Turkish with Latin letters. The political views of Çokan Velihan (Çingizoğlu Çokan), Abay Kunanbay Oğlu and Magcan Cumabay of Kazakhs were quoted to Turkish readers by him. He introduced many Kazakh intellectuals, Kazakh cities and names of Kazakh writers to the Turks of Turkey. He gave correct information about Kazakh literature, music and the concept of Kazakhism (Kazaklık or Kazakçılık, Ambitious Brigandage). He also stated his views on the political and economic problems of Kazakhstan and Kazakhstan during the Soviet period in his book titled "On the Destiny of Turkishness" (Türklüğün Mukadderatı Üzerine, Ed. Tuncer Baykara, Istanbul, Yağmur Publishing House). The problems Zeki Velidi criticized were essentially as follows: The occupation of Kazakh lands by the Russians. Russian immigrants was settled in Turkestan. Kazakhs who accepted Christianity. Russification of Kazakh dialects. Kazakh language was not given an opportunity to develop by distancing it from other Turkish dialects. Kazakh history was written from a communist perspective, from point class struggle of view, not a national one. Kazakh khans and sultans, Genghis Khan and Timur were portrayed as aggressors and oppressors in Kazakh history books. *Mukhtar Avezov's pro-Russian attitudes. Introducing Russian words into the Kazak language and distorting the syntax of Kazakh. Kazakhs were not primitive in terms of culture. The groundlessness of academic relations between Russians and Kazakh communists. Kazakhstan Academy of Sciences in Almaty was a satellite of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The alphabet problem and turning to the Russian language. Russification of Kazakh music. Determination of the geographical and historical borders of Kazakhstan. Beginning of Kazakh-Uzbek conflict. The political unification of Bashkirs, Kazakhs, Turkmen, Kyrgyz and some Uzbeks under one administration. The political unification of Sinkiyang Kazakhs and Uighurs under one administration. Sovietization of Kazakhstan. Kyrgyz, Kazakhs and Tatars were originated from the same nation. Local literary languages of Turkestan were used as tools for Russification policy. Turkestanis who were in abroad publish their magazines in different Turkic dialects The activities of Alash Orda, the National Party of Kazakh.