

ON THE ANCIENT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TURKIC AND KOREAN PEOPLES

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In early periods there lived mainly *Turkic*, *Mongol*, *Tungus*, *Manchu* and *Korean* tribes in the northern and northeastern parts of the Asian Continent and they were neighbors to each other. According to linguistic studies of some researchers, those tribes in the origin were belonged to one linguistic family, i.e. to Altai Language Family and during the historical process they separated into several modern languages. However, today the relativity of *Turkic*, *Mongol*, *Tungus* and *Manchu* languages have been clarified thoroughly, and all of these language groups are accepted as “Altai language family” by world known linguists, the problem of dependency of the Korean to these group hasn’t been solved yet.

Although this is just a theory, the history of relations between the Turkic and Korean tribes started in the early times and it could be supported by the information not only from ancient manuscripts but also from archaeological and linguistic data. Among the written sources the Chinese chronicles of *Han-shu* (the 2nd c BC), *Shi-ji* (the 1st c AD), *Pei-shih* (the 7th c AD), *Sui-shu* (the 7th c AD) and *Tang-shu* (the 10th c AD) are very important ones. Besides this, the *Orhun-Yenisei* sources (the Old Turkic manuscripts of the 7th-9th c AD carved on stones) and the *Tibetan* manuscripts (the 8th-9th c AD) give a clear notion on this question.

According to the linguistic facts and written sources we can classify the relations of ancient Turkic-Korean peoples as following:

1. Lingual-Cultural Relations

The scientific problem of the relations between Korean and Turkic nations in the language aspect was put up into consideration at the end of the 19th century – the beginning of the 20th century in Europe. The scientific views concerning this matter was only on the way mentioned by most linguists, but as G. Ramstedt¹, N.

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¹ G. Ramstedt “Zur Verbstammbildungslehre der mongolisch-türkischen Sprachen”, *Journal de*

Poppe² studied “Altai language family” deeply. And among them the Korean Altaist Han-Woo Choi³ is considered to be the significant one.

This mainly appears in the similarity of the grammatical structures of these two ethnic languages and in their lexicology, where could be found some similar words in the shapes and meanings. For example, Ko. “*tong*” – T. “*tang*” (dawning); Ko. “*pchok*” – T. “*puchuq*” (half); Ko. “*kam*” – T. “*qam*” (shaman); Ko. “*ke-kwan*” – T. “*kaghan*” (king); Ko. “*tar-kwan*” – T. “*tarkhan*” (the title of *tarkhan*), etc.⁴ These similarities between the Korean and Turkic languages could be originated either from one linguistic root or from living of these tribes close to each other. This problem needs to be worked out.

Some similar words in the Korean and Turkic languages such as Ko. “*aguri*” – T. “*agir ~ agiz*” (mouth), Ko. “*al*” – T. “*al ~ ash*” (food), Ko. “*il*” – T. “*il ~ ish*” (work), etc. do not belong to the modern Turkic languages and they are considered to be either Pro-Turkic or Pro-Turkic-Mongol or even from the ancient Turkic languages of the Hun Period⁵. This proves the fact that the relations between these languages started very early. It is notable that, in the Korean language there are many words similar to the LIR Dialect of Turkic languages which is characteristic for the Western Turkic tribes (*European Huns, Onogur, Bolgar, Khazar, Sabir* and modern *Chuvash* peoples), rather than to the ŠAZ Dialect of the Eastern Turkic tribes (*Köktürk, Oghuz, Karluk, Uyghur, Kipchak*) which is comparatively closer to in distance to the Korean tribes.

It is important to emphasize that the scientific problem of Turkic-Korean nations dependency of each to other on the linguistic aspect still remains unsolved on the scientific base.

2. Ethno-kultural and Socio-political Relations

According to researchers studying on the basis of archaeological data the migration processes of Altai language tribes lived around the Altai and Tien-Shan mountains to Far East occurred in the end of III millennium BC – the beginning of the II millennium BC. Some Korean researchers believe that in that time Altai tribes (Tungus-Manchu) came to Southern Manchouria and Korea from the North and

la Societe Finno-Ougrienne, 28-3, Helsinki, 1912, pp. 1-86; “Remarks on the Korean language”, *Memoires de la Societe Finno-Ougrienne*, 58, Helsinki, 1928; *Einführung in die altaische Sprachwissenschaft Formenlehre*, Helsinki 1952.

² N. Poppe, *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies.- Memoires de la Societe Finno-Ougrienne*, 110, Helsinki, 1955; *Introduction to Altaic Linguistics*, Wiesbaden, 1965.

³ Han-Woo Choi, “A Comparative Morphology of Altaic Languages – Deverbal Noun Suffixes”, *International Journal of Central Asian Studies*, vol. 7, Seoul, 2002, pp. 23-40.

⁴ Z.V. Togan, *Umumi Türk Tarihine Giriş*, İstanbul, 1981, s. 15-16; Choi Han-Woo, “A Study of the ancient Turkic TARQAN”, *International Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. 5, Seoul 2000, p. 104-110.

⁵ Z.V. Togan, *Umumi Türk Tarihine Giriş*, s. 15.

North-West⁶. According to their opinion, the synthesis between those Altai tribes and Paleoasiatic tribes lived in Korea Peninsula started at this stage of time. Several researchers think that the Korean formed as a result of synthesis of Altai (Protokoreans) and Paleoasiatic tribes.

There is a lot of information in the *Li-ji* and *Shi-ji* chronicles that in the middle of I millennium BC the tribes which lived in Northern China and Mongolia moved to Manchouria and Korean Peninsula. The researchers think that these tribes were Protokoreans which synthesized with Paleoasiatic tribes of the Peninsula.

Ancient Turkic-Korean socio-political relations placed and organized through their historical states given below:

1) The relations between *Asian Hun Empire* (209 BC – 216 AD) and *Choson* (*Wi Man* dynasty; 3rd - 2nd c. BC), Three Kingdom *Goguryeo* (37 BC – 668 AD), *Baekje* (18 BC – 668 AD) and *Silla* (57 BC – 668 AD). As it is written in the *Shi-Ji* and *Han-Shu* chronicles the Emperor of Huns – Mo-tun (209 BC – 174 AD) enlarged his territory, after he had seized *Dun-hu* tribes and then became neighbor to Korea.

There are some records about political relations between Hun Empire and Korean kingdoms in the Chinese chronicles of *Han-Shu* and *Pei-Shih*. Particularly, there is an information that the King Wan Man (7-23y. BC) has sent Korean army against the Huns but the army refused the King's will⁷. There is also another record in *Pei-Shih* about Korean King Iimo (the last quarter of the 2 c. AD) who accepted to his country 500 Hun families⁸.

2) The relations between *Turkic Kaghanate* (552-744), *Uyghur Kaghanate* (745-840), *Khirghiz Kaghanate* (840-920) and *Goguryeo*, *Baekje*, *Silla*, *Unified Silla* (668-935). There is a lot of information about it in Chinese Chronicles like *Pei-Shih* (the 7th c AD), *Sui-Shu* (the 7th c AD), and *Tang-Shu* (the 10th c AD). For example, in 555 Turkic Kaghanate extended its territory to the Korean Gulf after it had invaded the *Shivey* (Far East), *Tatabi* (located in the Western part of the Xingan mountain), and *Kidan* (continental parts of Manchuria) tribes⁹. At that period some information was saved in the Chronicles of *Turkish Kaghanate* and China. There are some facts certified the Turkic and Korean commanders served for *Sui* (581-618) and *Tang* (618-906) dynasties in these chronicles. For instance, the *Tang-Shu* Chronicle informs that in 645-668 while *Sui* dynasty was trying to occupy Korea there were some Turkish commanders like *Ashina Shini*, *Ashina Mishe*, *Ashina Simo*, and *Kibi Kheli* who fought against Koreans for Chinese

⁶ История народов Восточной и Центральной Азии. М., 1986, с. 106.

⁷ Бичурин Н.Я. Собрание сведений о народах обитавших в Средней Азии в древние времена. М.-Л., 1950, Том II, с. 26, 51.

⁸ *op. cit.* P. 52.

⁹ Бичурин Н.Я. Собрание сведений о народах обитавших в Средней Азии в древние времена. Том I, М.-Л., 1950, с. 229.

Emperors¹⁰. There is an interesting text informing about a Turkish commander called *Kibi Kheli* who played a great role during those battles once injured by a Korean soldier (near *Bay-yay-chen* city). According to that fact, the Emperor *T'ai-tsung* ordered his men to capture that Korean soldier and gave death penalty. But *Kibi Kheli* immediately said to the Emperor: "He fought for his King. He is a brave and trustworthy soldier, I can forgive him"¹¹. By the way, there are some facts about Korean commanders who served for Chinese Empire. For example, there is information in *Tang-Shu* Chronicle about a Korean commander called *Kao-Sianchji* who represented the king of the *Tang* dynasty in the Western Regions who in 740 had led the Chinese army to Tibet and Eastern Turkistan. In the Chronicle it is written that in 751 during the battle between Arabs and Chinese some Turkic tribes fought for *Kao-Sianchji* near Talas valley. In that war *Kao-Sianchji* fought against Arabs¹².

3. Diplomatic Relations.

On this issue, the Early Medieval Old Turkic manuscripts, Chinese Chronicles, Tibetan documents, and the Wall Paintings of *Afrasiab* give quite important information.

In the ancient Turkic sources such as *Kul-Tegin Tomb Stone* (732) it was noted that when the founder of the Turkish Kaghanate *Kaghan Bumin* died (in 552) some people who represented Korean state *Bukli* participated in his death ceremony¹³. We think that these people were from the diplomatic corps of the Korean Kingdom who came in order to condole. According to the researchers, the term *Bukli* is the same as *Kao-li* in Chinese chronicles and *Mug-lig* in the Tibetan documents by which a Korean tribe used to be expressed¹⁴. On my opinion, Korea was situated in the Far Eastern part of the Turkic Kaghanate and therefore it was named as *Bukli*. That was asserted even in the manuscripts of *Kul-Tegin* and *Bilga Kaghan* in which it was stated that in 734 when Kaghanate was under the control of *Tabghach* (China) some Turkic commanders served for the Empire and sometimes fought with *Bukli Kaghanate*¹⁵. Here we must emphasize that by the term *Bukli Kaghan* a well-known *Gay-suvin* who struggled against Chinese Empire should be recognized.

According to most of researchers, among the *Afrasiyab* (Samarkand) Wall

¹⁰ op. cit. Том II, с. 106-123; Гумилев Л.Н. Древние тюрки. М., 1967, с. 231-233.

¹¹ op. cit. с. 110.

¹² op. cit. с. 314.

¹³ A. von Gabain, *Eski Türkçenin Grameri*, Ankara, 1988, s. 230.

¹⁴ Потапов Л.П. Новые материалы о древних этнографических связях народностей Саяно-Алтайского нагорья//«Труды XXV Международного конгресса востоковедов» Т. III, М.:1963.-С. 296.

¹⁵ H.N. Orkun, *Eski Türk Yazıtları*, Ankara 1986, 32-33.

Paintings (dated to the second half of the 7th century) there is a group of Korean ambassadors¹⁶. At that time Samarkand was the capital of Soghd (its King was *Avarkhuman*), while these palace pictures concern to the reception ceremonies. It is known that Soghd was one of the parts of Turkish Kaganate and Kings of Samarkand had a great role in the life of the Kaganate.

According to L.I. Albaum who studied Afrasiyab materials, Avarkhuman was from one of Turkic tribes and had a powerful army¹⁷. In the Afrasiyab Wall Paintings the soldiers who defend *Avarkhuman* were from Turkic tribes. Besides this, in this picture the people meeting the Korean ambassadors look as they were from Turkic tribes.

Chinese Buddha religious man *Huei-ch'ao* in 726-729 years traveled in the Western countries, and had been to some of Turkic countries. Originally he was from Korea, born in 700. He had been to the countries of Central Asia, Tibet, India, Tokharistan, Zabulistan, Kapisa (Afghanistan). *Huei-ch'ao* in his daybooks wrote about the dynasty of Turkic tribes of Syrdarya river, Tibet and Tokharistan, Zabulistan, Gandhara, Gibin (North-eastern Afghanistan and north-western historical provinces of India) who built their Buddha Temples¹⁸.

In the Tibetan documents (of the 8th – 9th c AD) there is information certifying that the *Khur (Uyghur) Kaghanate* sent expeditions to study the peoples of the northern and eastern regions. According to the messages from those expeditions it could be supposed that they also had been to Korea. In the documents it is noted that there had been a tribe called in the East in *Drugu* (Turk) language as *Muglik* and in Chinese as *Kao-li* located in the East of *Tatabi* (ancestors of Manchu's)¹⁹. According to the ideas of researchers, this fact is about the Koreans. We think that the expedition sent by *Uyghur Kaghanate* had diplomatic purposes.

We gave brief information below just about the relations between Turkic and Korean peoples in the spheres of culture, linguistics, social-political and diplomatic ties. Besides this, there were the relations between them in ethnic and religious processes caused some similarities in Folklore.

Finally, a brief notice to the written sources shows that the relations between the Turks and Korean nations were very close and had a deep root. It created the similarities in the their culture and living styles.

In order to study these relations between these peoples it is important to make deep investigations. Actually this process demands on wide linguistic, ethnographic and archaeological investigations.

¹⁶ Альбаум Л.И. Живопись Афрасиаба.Т.: Фан, 1975, с. 74-75, табл. VII.

¹⁷ op. cit. с. 38.

¹⁸ Бернштам А.Н. Тюрки и Средняя Азия в описании Хой Чао (726)//ВДИ 1, М., 1952, с. 187-195.

¹⁹ Абдухолик Абдурасул Али. Туркий халклар тарихига оид тибетча хужжат// Узбекистонда ижтимоий фандлар. №6, Т., 1997, б. 74.