

TURKS IN INDIA: THEIR PRESENCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO ISLAM AND CIVILISATION: AN HISTORICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY

Haila Abdurrahman Al-Sahli
Princess Nora University history department
Riyadh, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
dr-haila@windowslive.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to provide an historical analysis of the Turks' presence in India throughout the Middle Ages until the collapse of the Mughal empire. The main argument presented in this paper is that, although India has been subject to invasions by foreign peoples throughout history, the Turks were the only invaders who became the ruling elite and settled in India for a long time. The start of the first millennium saw the Turks' rapid rise to international power of the Turks. The term 'Turk' serves as the common name of the peoples descended from the nomadic warrior tribes of the steppes of Central Asia. Since the Turks are ethnically and culturally related to each other, it is reasonable and accurate to use the same designation to refer to all of them.

It has been well established that Turks of all tribes willingly accepted Islam and held a simple version of faith more fiercely than the Persian intellectuals. Thus, the Turks became part of Muhammad's nation and integrated into Islamic society. It is difficult to deny their great role in spreading Islam or to overlook their contributions to Islamic civilization. Indeed, the Turks played a unique role in the course of Islamic history.

In light of Turks' important role throughout Islamic history and civilization, especially after they became active members of Muslim society, this paper aims to trace the Turkish presence in India from medieval times through the beginning of the modern era. This paper is also intended to show the contributions that the Turks made to the Indian civilization and efforts to spread Islam throughout the country. It has been claimed that the Turks come from Central Asia to India with the armies of Mohammad Ghoris. Therefore, this paper seeks to address some questions: When did the Turks emerge in India? What did the Muslim historian Almsudi say about this matter? What were the reasons for the Turks' migration to India? How were the Indians affected, and how did the Indians influence the Turks? How did the Turks succeed in controlling such an enormous area such as the Indian subcontinent and remain in power for hundreds of years? What efforts did the Turks make to spread Islam in India? What were the differences in the Turks' and Indians' systems of governments? How did Turks contribute to the elevation of Indian civilization? Why did the Turkish language not prevail in India or at least become the language of art and the ruling elite?

Keywords: Turks, Indians, civilization, Persians, Mughal, Ghaznavid, Ghoris

INTRODUCTION

Turks in India: Their presence and contribution to Islam and civilization: An historical and analytical study

As contact arose in the Turks and Muslims in the early 8th century AD, numerous Turks chose to follow Islam whole-heartedly. Many Muslim Turks gained offices in the Abbasside government, and consequently, great interest in the Islamic world spread among the Turks beyond the River Ceyhan. This interest became more pronounced when, in 835 AD, Caliph Muatasim established an elite army that consisted only of Turks. Muslim Turkish tribes formed families and many Islamic states which worked in various ways to protect Islam and extend its boundaries. Such expeditions went in different directions and reached remote places and regions in both the East and the West, including the Indian subcontinent. The Turks arrived in India after the Arabs and were dedicated to Islam.

The Turkish tribes served as a major source of support the Muslim conquerors and rulers who made India their home. The Turkic attacks began in Sabuktin during the first half of the 11th century AD, while the establishment of their kingdoms in north and west Hindustan commenced in the late 12th century A.D. Although Arabs occupied Sindh during the establishment of the Abbasside Caliphate in the 8th century, they played only a

less significant role in influencing the culture and civilization of Hindustan. The Turkish presence in the Indian subcontinent began in first half of the 11th century A.D. and lasted for more than 500 years. Ghaznavid rule was followed by that of Ghoris. Next, the Slave dynasty was founded by the Turkish slave Qutb al-Dīn Aibak, a favorite and the most trusted officer of Sultan Muḥammad of Ghor. Later, another Turkish dynasty, the Khilji, ruled India from 1292 to 1320 A.D. until they were replaced by the Tughluqs, who governed from Delhi from 1320 to 1414 A.D. Eventually, the Mughals seized control of the whole Indian subcontinent; their rule lasted until British colonization (See Jackson, 1906, p. 34–35).

Origins and Immigration

Al-Masudi uses the expressions "Turks sects" and "Turks nations" to refer to the Turk tribes and their different clans. He depicts them as nomadic warrior tribes from the steppes of Central Asia and often stresses this image in many parts of *Meadows of Gold*. For instance, Al-Masudi (1841) writes, "The Khakan of Khakans is one of their hoard, all Turkish nations obey him, and all other Turkish kings are their vassals" (p. 312) and later,

On this river the Turkish city named Newton is situated, amongst the population of which some were Muslims, but the majority were Turks. The population of Newton consisted of Chizians who were mostly nomadic Turks but some were settled. They were Turks by origin, and divided into three hordes, the higher, middling, and lower horde. These were the bravest of all Turks, and had the smallest eyes, and most diminutive stature. (p. 239)

When discussing the Chizians tribe, Al-Masudi draws readers' attention to their physical characteristics: "These are the bravest of all Turks, and have the smallest eyes, and most diminutive stature" (p. 239). He also states, "Beyond this Ribat live various unbelieving nations, as the Turks" (p. 242) and describes them as having a strong physique and as being experts in warfare and very brave warriors (pp. 240,312). In addition, in the eighth chapter, Al-Masudi assigns these Turks to the sixth climate when discussing the seven inhabited climates and regions. (p. 200).

The Turks are ethnically and culturally related to one another and live in northern, eastern, central and western Asia, northwestern China and parts of Eastern Europe; therefore, it is reasonable and accurate to use the same term to designate all of them. Al-Masudi states that the Turks are descended from Japheth or Yapheth Ben Noah, one of the four sons of Noah. The King James Version lists Noah's sons in the order of "Shem, Ham, and Japheth" (Genesis 5:32, 9:18). Japheth is often regarded as the youngest son, though some traditions count him as the eldest based on the reverse order in chapter 10, which means that he is considered to be of Indo-European origins. "The historians do not agree respecting the Chinese and their origin; many of them say they are the children of Abur ben Batwil Ben Yafeth Ben Noh" (Al-Masudi, 1841, p. 309). According to Al-Masudi, Turks are Aryans who came to India during a wave of immigration along different routes: "One descendent, Abur reached the frontiers of India" (Al-Masudi, 1841, p.312). This opinion accords with recent studies which assign Turks to the White race and classified them among the three human races on earth: the Alayurobed, Altoranid, and Almgoolad (Saray, 1999). Al-Masudi is believed to have been an observer who offers eyewitness accounts of events during the period which he chronicled. Such testimony is one of the most important types of evidence for historians. Since Al-Masudi's material came from the same time, culture and political climate as the events he recorded, readers receive a much more accurate report of how those events were viewed and consequently a clearer picture of the Turkish presence in India. Al-Masudi met Indians of Turk origin during his visit to India in the 10th century A.D. and recorded how their physical appearance had changed: "The climate of the country impressed its characteristics upon them, and they have complexions like Hindus, and not like other Turks. Some of them are settled, whilst others are nomadic" (Al-Masudi, 1841, p. 313).

When discussing observable human physical characteristics, the most obvious aspect is skin color, or the degree of melanin present in a person's skin. The external, physical transformation Al-Masudi describes in the Turks in India would not have happened overnight but rather, over many generations, resulting from marriage between Turkish immigrants and local Indians, along with climate change. This changed would have emerged in the second, perhaps the third generation. Several factors influence human diversity and observable inherited variations in physical appearance. Observable physical traits are passed on through genetic exchange during reproduction. The primary reasons for such variations are adaptation to climate shifts and population changes caused by immigration to different climates as early humans took many different paths taken out of Africa into Asia, Europe, the South Pacific and the Americas. Effects on resident indigenous populations have been further complicated by the most recent form of migration, colonialism (See L. L. Cavilli-Sforza, 2000, *Genes, Peoples and Languages*; N. Wade, 2006, *Before the Dawn*; D. Jensen, 2006, "End Game," *The Problem of Civilization*, Vol. 1).

Ibn Khaldun discusses the influence of climate upon human characteristics in *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* and, after considering many patterns of characteristics among inhabitants of different areas, concludes that "if one pays attention to this sort of thing in the various zones and countries, the influence of the varying quality of the climate upon the characteristics of the inhabitants will become apparent" (Ibn Khaldun, 1986,

p. 157, 175). Al-Masudi's account supports the theory that white Huns' raids occurred in the 4th century BC when the Huns set out from the Altai Mountains in central Asia on their great westward migration. By around 375 BC, the later Huns following Attila had already crossed the Volga and were advancing westwards. Another group turned south, invaded the region of Sogdiana (in what is now Uzbekistan), crossed the River Oxus (Amu Darya) and settled in Bactria (now northern Afghanistan). From there, they crossed the Hindu Kush range into Gandhara, Uddiyana (Swat Valley), Punjab (in what is now Pakistan), and northwestern India. In addition to language, established differences between Aryans and Dravidian people include a difference in skin color, changing from northern to southern India. Southerners have a darker skin color, though northerners do not have light skin color by Western standards, with the exception of some people in the far northwest). Though a less pronounced difference than that of language, skin color has been linked to language differences under the assumption that race and language must be the same. Al-Masudi did not discuss the causes of the Huns' or the Turks' exodus, but it is generally agreed that the first Turkic people lived in a region extending from Central Asia to Siberia, with the majority living in China historically. This Turkish people became established after the 6th century BC. (Zieme, 2005/2006, p. 64). The earliest separate Turkic peoples appeared on the peripheries of the late Xiongnu confederation contemporaneous with the Chinese Han Dynasty (Findley, 2005, p. 29).

The first historical references to the Turks appear in Chinese records of approximately 200 BC. These records refer to tribes believed to be ancestors of the Turks, who were called the Hsiung-nu, an early form of the Western term 'Hun', and lived in an area bounded by the Altai Mountains, Lake Baikal and the northern edge of the Gobi Desert. Specific references in 6th century A.D, Chinese sources state that the Hun tribes, called the Xiongnu or Xiongnu by the Chinese, originated from the Siberian branch of the Mongolian race (Pitman, 1987). During the third and second centuries BC, they rose to great power and became a tribal confederation. During Emperor Mo-tun's reign (208-175 BC), the Xiongnu were at the zenith of their power and occupied a huge territory from Lake Baikal in the north to the Ordos plateau in the south and the Liao River in the east. By 55-34 BC, their political influence reached as far as the lower Volga and Ural foothills. This westward expansion significantly increased trade with the Western world (Marx, 1998). Under the newly established Chinese Han dynasty (206-220 AD), China expanded its borders, and the Xiongnu empire lost ground. Weakened by the loss of men and animals in constant battles and by internal dissension, the tribes of the confederation one by one began to accept a position of vassalage under China. The northern Xiongnu moved from Outer Mongolia into what was then Dzungaria, where they founded a short lived, empire. With the beheading of their leader by a Chinese army, the group disappeared from history (Marx, 1998). This series of events explains why Al-Masudi places the Turks and Chinese in the same chapter (Marx, 1998).

Turks' Contribution to Islam and Civilization

Islamic influence was first felt in the Indian subcontinent with the arrival of Arab traders in the early 7th century A.D. Arab merchants visited the Malabar region, which served as a link to the ports of Southeast Asia, even before Islam emerged in Arabia. According to Elliot and Dowson in *The History of India*, as told by contemporary historians, the first ship bearing Muslim travelers was seen off the Indian coast as early as 630 A.D. The first Indian mosque is thought to have been built in 629 A.D., purportedly at the behest of an unknown Chera dynasty ruler, during the lifetime of Muhammad (PBUH) (c. 571-632 A.D). This mosque was situated in Kodungallur, in the district of Thrissur, Kerala, by Malik Bin Deenar. In Malabar, Muslims are called Mappila (Lane-Poole, 1906). Islam expanded throughout India through invasions, first by Arabs, then by Muslim Turkish armies. Indeed, the major motivation for Muslim conquest was the spread of Islam. Muslims conquered Kabul, Punjab and Sind before rushing into India. India's wealth was an allure for some Muslim rulers. In addition, the rivalries between the kingdoms in India paved the way for the Muslims' entry into India (Sturrock, 1894-1895).

While the Arabs first brought Islam to the Indian subcontinent, the Turks completed their mission. According to Lane-Poole, "the real Mohammedan conquerors of India were not Arabs, but Turks. When the armies of the Saracens spread out over the ancient world in the seventh century AD, they overcame most human obstacles" (Lane-Poole, 1906, p.2) However, it is unfair to downplay the role of the Arabs who opened the door for the Turks to invade the Indian subcontinent¹. In *A History of the Sikhs*, prominent Indian historian and journalist Khuswant Singh discusses the early days of Islam in India and strongly asserts that Islam was spread in India, not by the Muslim rulers, but by the Muslim spiritual masters and missionaries. It cannot be denied, though, that some Muslim rulers contributed to this mission, whether through military invasion or other means (Singh, 1963, p. 20-28).

¹ Trade relations have existed between Arabia and the Indian subcontinent from ancient times. Even in the pre-Islamic era, Arab traders used to visit the Malabar region, which linked them with the ports of South East Asia. AD. (see H.G. Rawlinson, 1963. Ancient and Medieval History of India).

Objectivity demands acknowledging that some Turkish kings and emperors in India did not care much about the expansion of Islam. They highly prized the wealth and treasures of the subcontinent and used religion for political purposes and worldly advantage. Objectivity, though, also requires recognizing those who were truly sincere in their service to Islam. In fact, the conquests of Turkish warlord Mahmud Ghaznafi, who was devoted to Islam, opened the way for future Muslim expeditions to India and the expansion of Islam in the Indian subcontinent. Ghaznafi, his successors and their armies worked relentlessly to expand Islam in this part of the world. The sultans in Delhi, who were originally Turks, did their utmost and used every possible means to spread Islam as far as they could in the Indian subcontinent. For example, Firoz Shah, one of the greatest sultans of Delhi, exempted everyone who converted to Islam from tax (*jizya*), declaring:

I encouraged my infidel subjects to embrace the religion of the Prophet, and I proclaimed that everyone who repeated the creed and became a Mussulman should be exempt from the *jizya*, or poll-tax imposed on non-believers. When this information came to the ears of the people at large, great numbers of Hindus presented themselves and were admitted to the honour of Islam. Thus they came forward day by day from every quarter, and, adopting the faith, were exonerated from the *jizya* and were favoured with presents and distinctions. (Lane-Poole, 1906, p. 170)

Turkish rulers welcomed Hindus and other unbelievers who wanted to embrace Islam. Indians who wished to convert to Islam simply had to enter the sultan's palace and make the two testimonies, and the sultan would bestow upon them a golden necklace. Obviously, the Turkish rulers adopted this procedure to encourage Hindus to accept Islam (Abud Alrauf, 2005, p. 276). Some Turkish rulers, including Firoz Shah and his cousin Muhammad Tughlaq, tried to correct heresies, false practices, and superstitions that ignorant people and Hindus had introduced among Muslims in the Indian subcontinent. Such rulers worked to spread the true knowledge transmitted in the Ahl as-Sunna as reported by the Prophet's companions. In addition, Muhammad Tughlaq had strong friendships with students of prominent Muslim imam and scholar Ibn Tamimiya, which indicates his keenness to acquire Islamic knowledge. Furthermore, Tughlaq openly welcomed scholars who came to his court in Delhi and benefited from their knowledge. Tughlaq was extremely strict about religious matters, especially prayer, as recorded by Ibn Bututa, an Arabic traveler who visited India during Tughlaq's reign. Sultan Firoz Shah enlightened many Muslims in India; in the history which he wrote, he identifies heresies, false practices, superstitions and unorthodox doctrine that have arisen in the Indian subcontinent. He respected the Qur'an and Hadith and encouraged people to follow them (Elliot, 2008, p. 332). Following in his lead, the emperor Aurangzib followed was, by natural propensity, a great worshipper of God and noted for his rigid devotion to religion. He prioritized the needs of Islam and Muslims and built many beautiful Masjids, which still dot northern India. He nearly exterminated newly invented Islamic religious doctrines and other heresies. Aurangzib also appointed a virtuous man called a muhtasib to act as a censor of morals, prevent drinking and make Islamic changes to Quranic Laws. Aurangzib never compromised Islam and demonstrated its strength to the whole world.² In general, Aurangzeb ruled as an orthodox Sunni Muslim and tried to remain within the framework of Islamic law. Due to the efforts of these Turkish rulers, Islam persists in the Indian subcontinent.

The Turkish rulers also welcomed Muslim scholars and Sufis who escaped to India after the Mughal invasion. They were successful at spreading Islam in India because many aspects of Sufi beliefs and practices had parallels in Indian philosophical literature. The Sufis' orthodox approach to Islam made it easier for Hindus to practice the religion. For example, Ahmed Rida Khan contributed much to the defense of traditional and orthodox Islam in India through his work *Fatawa Razvia* (Ziauddin, 2005, p. 140–146). Muhammad Tughlaq had been on the throne for 18 years when he began to be troubled with doubts about the legitimacy of his rule, because he had not received the confirmation of the Abbasid caliph. He made inquiries of many travelers and discovered that there was a caliph named Mustakfi in Egypt. Muhammad Tughlaq entered into correspondence with the caliph, and when a diploma of investiture was sent from Cairo, Sultan Muhammad received it with a great deal of respect, had the Caliph's name inserted in Khutbah and struck upon his coins, and sent rich presents to the Caliphate in return (Arnold, 1924, p. 104).³ Muhammad Tughlaq's pious successor, Firuz Shah (1351–1388) made a similar submission to the Caliph in Cairo (1924, p. 104).

The spread of Islam increased during the Mughal era because of the policy of equality and tolerance. Hindus became more familiar with the teachings and morals of Islam. Particularly in the Aurangzeb period, some powerful rajas, including those of Kashmir Raja, Punjab, and other northern provinces of India, and their subjects were

²He occupied much his time in worship and said the required prayers, first in the mosque and then at home. See Jadunath, Sarkar. (1924), *History of Aurangzeb: Condition of the People in Aurangzeb Reign*, Calcutta, Vol. 5.

³Arnold described Muhammad Tughlaq as a strict, pious man who abstained from wine and scrupulously observed the precepts of his faith. (See Arnold, 1924, p. 104)

extremely enthusiastic in spreading Islam (Abud Alra Auf, 2005, p. 277). Though some writers accused Aurangzeb of being intolerant towards Hindus, this claim is false because a careful reading of historic sources shows that he exercised forbearance and tolerance toward Hindus. According to histories, Aurangzeb brought about administrative changes. Some senior Hindu officers in the finance ministry were retained and even promoted, while in Banaras and other places Brahmins were harassed and Hindu temples demolished by mobs. Aurangzeb stopped these violations (Sarkar, 1924).

The Turks in the Indian subcontinent also contributed significantly in many ways to Indian civilization and Islamic civilization as a whole. In particular, the Turks improved the process of decorating books. Artists painted portraits of the monarchs and sultans and occasionally the events told in the books. Such art was likely introduced to India by the Turkish rulers themselves because they brought with them books illustrated with beautiful Persian miniatures.

The influence of Turkish culture in Hindustan lasted during the Turco-Afghan period of India's history from the late 12th century to the early 16th century and continued during the Mughal period (Singh, 2003) When Turkish rulers entered India, they introduced their own customs while accepting Indian customs, such as the class system. The art and architecture of the Delhi Sultanate epoch was not similar to the purely Indian style. An Indo-Islamic style of architecture developed as a mixture of the Indian and Turkish styles. The Turks also brought with them Arabian and Persian traditions of architecture. Indian decorations and methods were incorporated in buildings with Islamic domes and arches. Among the legendary buildings from this time are the Qutubminar, Quwat-ul-Islam mosque, Alai Darwaza, tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, Ferozshahkotla and citadel at Tuglaqabad. Sultan Ahmad I (1422–1435 A.D.) constructed the fort at Bidar. According to Ferishta (1974), it took nine years to complete the fort's defenses. It was completely rebuilt under the supervision of Turkish engineers in the late 15th or early 16th century A.D. These fortifications built by Turkish mercenaries possess a certain resemblance to medieval European forts, especially in their barbicans, covered passages, and bastions (Yazdani, 1947, p. 23). The moat was apparently the work of Hindu masons, while the massive walls constructed of stone and mortar were designed and built by Persian and Turkish architects from the court of King Ahmad I. It is recorded that Ahmad I formed a unit of 3,000 archers from Khorassan, Turkey, and Arabia in his army (Bolar, 2012, p.422) The manuscript entitled *Ajaibul Makhluqat of Al Qazwini*, written in 1560 A.D., dates from King Ali I's reign. It was inspired by Ottoman Turkish paintings and does not exhibit any local Deccani influence (Nayeem, 2008, p. 254). An elegant portrait decorated by Muhammad Adil Shah is considered one of the greatest structural triumphs of Indo-Perso-Ottoman architecture of the Adil Shahi period (Nayeem, 1974, p. 25). In addition, the Turks introduced the Unani system of medicine and the art of papier-mâché and enameling skills, while wood painting and carving were developed under the Vijaynagar rulers. They also enhanced Indian architecture and added their own distinguishing touches. During this era, new magnificent buildings emerged in India which are counted among the wonders of the world.

In short, architecture in the Indian subcontinent flourished under Turkish domination. Forts were simple but sturdy. Turks built arches above the doorways and windows instead of the beams used by Indians before the arrival of Muslims. They also added tall, well-made towers or minarets to their buildings, although pillars were also used for support. In India, Turkish architecture became delicate, beautiful, and elegant. The exteriors of domes were covered with designs of rich, colorful tiles. The sultans also founded towns such as Agra, Fatehabad, HissarFiroza (UP), and Jaunpur and built bathes (Mahajan, 1970 , p. 280–290).

Between the Persian and Turkish Languages

A new study has suggested that the origins of some Indian languages can be traced to Anatolia, which encompasses modern-day Turkey). These languages include Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Kashmiri, Oriya, Marwari, Bhojpuri, and Urdu which, along with English, belong to the Indo-European language family. These studies did consider the south Indian languages because they have a Dravidian origin (Ray, 2012). Historical evidence supports this hypothesis. First and most importantly, the Turkish language was used as the language of the ruling elite, royal household, nobles, administration, and literature under Turkish rulers before the emergence of the Mughal emperor. In addition, the Turkish language had a notable impact on Indian politics under the sultans of Delhi and the early Mughals. Several Turkish words were commonly used in Hindi, Urdu, and other regional Indian languages. Some evidence indicates that Turkish was used for various purposes in the Indian subcontinent during the 10th and 11th centuries. Documents from these centuries, which originated in the Turfan region and can be seen in Berlin, cover such subjects as medicine and the calendar based on Indian sources. Of course, the Turkish in these documents is different than the present-day Turkic languages (Uighur and Cagtai group) spoken in Eastern Turkistan (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and the Sinkiang region of China). As many philosophical, spiritual, and religious terms of Buddhism and even Hinduism did not exist in Turkish, they were adopted from Pali and Sanskrit. Thus, the Turkish language acquired many words of Pali and Sanskrit origin, some of which were incorporated into other languages; for example, *ratan* become *ardhani*. The adaption of the Buddhist word *dhyana* (meditation) as *jhan*

in Chinese and *zen* in Japanese illustrates how words change (Singh, 2003).

Although the influence of Turkic languages on Indian languages began in earnest in the 11th century A.D. (as explained later), various Turkish tribes began interacting with Hindustan much earlier. After the collapse of the Mauryan Empire in the 3rd century B.C., a number of Central Asian Turkic tribes, known as Sakas in India and Scythians in the West, settled in Hindustan. Sakas were forced to Hindustan by the Central Asian tribe Yueh-chih, which also later entered Hindustan (Singh, 2003). However, Persian and Arabic appear to have been used widely than Turkish in Islamic Indian schools (madrasas) established during early Muslim rule in Delhi. This fact can be inferred from the works of both Barani and Mutahar, a well-known poet and historian respectively who praised the comprehensive knowledge of Jala-ud-din Rumi, the head of the institution. Rumi wrote in Persian, and his Mathnawi remains one of the purest literary glories of Persia and one of the crowning glories of the Persian language. In fact, the Persian language competed with Turkish in India before the Mughal era and, along with Turkish, became the official language of the Delhi Sultanate. Many causes have been proposed for this development. For example, many of the sultans and much of the nobility during the Sultanate period were Persianized Turks from Central Asia who spoke Turkic languages as their mother tongue. Another reason was the immigration of Persian writes to the Delhi Sultanate after the Mongol invasion (Singh, 2003).

According to historians' accounts, when the Mongols devastated the cultural centers of Central and Western Asia, poets, scholars, and scientists from these areas took refuge in Muslim India. Balban, who only appointed persons of good families to high offices of state, welcomed these eminent refugees, and during the rule (1296–1316 A.D) of Ala-ud-din Khalji, the general prosperity engendered by his conquests enabled the nobles, not only the sultan, to become literary patrons. This development likely explains why Barani could devote 14 pages to an historical account to the scholars, poets, preachers, philosophers, physicians, astronomers, and historians who flocked to Delhi in the days of Ala-ud-din Khalji (Law, 1961, p. 181). It appears that the Turkish rulers acted as liberal statesmen when interacting with those whom they ruled. The Turkish did not insist on imposing their language on their new subjects, although the languages of some of those whom they ruled were much more developed than the Turkish language (Singh, 2003). In addition, the early invaders such as Mohammad Bin Qasim, Mehmood Ghaznavi, Mohammad Ghauri, and their subjects mixed with locals and, in the markets of Lahore, Delhi, and Punjab, tried to speak in Turkish. This interaction eventually led to the introduction of many Turkish words into the Punjabi language, which emerged as an amalgamation of local dialects and the languages of the invaders. This language was to become Urdu. Additionally, Mahmud Ghaznafi adopted the Persian language when he occupied India because he was brought up in the court of the Samani, who were originally Persians. Although Turkish did not spread among locals, it paved the way for a new language to form. The Urdu vocabulary consists of approximately 70% Farsi, with the remainder a mix of Arabic and Turkish (Hoiberg, 2000). However, Turkish rulers outside of Iran and India, such as the Ottomans in Turkey and the Uzbeks in central Asia, did not favor the Persian language, nor, in India, was it held in eminence in the courts of the early Mughals. It is well known that Turkish was the first language of Babur and his sons, Humayun (d.1556) and Kamran who wrote poetry in Turkish (Reis, 1975, p. 47, 49–53).⁴ Babur devoted his life to raising the status of Turkish, but his son Humayun neglected it in deference to the sensibilities of the Persians at his court, as well as his own preference for Persian. Humayun was deeply versed in Persian literature (Chowdhury, 1951, p. 186), and early in his reign, Turkish poetry enjoyed a significant audience at his court, even after his return from Persia with reinforcements to reconquer Hindustan (Reis, 1975, p. 47, 49–53). Bairam Khan, a notable, prominent early Mughal noble during Akbar's reign (d.1556-1605), also made his mark as a Turkish poet (Munshi, 1969, p.194).

As discussed, it would have been natural for the Turkish language to become the dominant language in the whole Mughal empire, but the reality was otherwise. The Persian language became the official and first language of the entire empire. Among the various explanations, the Indian Mughals, initially Humayun in particular, attempted to promote the Persian language and its literature by introducing it as the court language. Jauhar Aftabchi writes that the Emperor Humayun loved Persian, and whenever he wanted to be understood by only few people, he talked in Turkish; otherwise, he spoke in Persian. Jauhar entered Humayun's personal service at a young age and attended him faithfully during his retreat and flight from Hindustan (Ziauddin, 2005, p. 163). This situation was the result of political circumstances. During the Humayan era, a large number of Iranians accompanied Humayan on his return from Iran, where he had taken refuge following his defeat by the Afghans, and assisted him in reconquering Hindustan. Later, Akbar encouraged them to join the imperial service in order to overcome the difficulties he faced from the ambitious Chaghta'I nobles. Earlier, the Iranians had also helped Babur in his fight against the Uzbeks after the destruction of the Timurid power in Herat (Saray,1999). All of these events contributed to the expansion of the

⁴ In his memoir, Babur (d.1526), the founder of the Mughal empire in India, recounted the story of his exploits in Turkish. The prince was a noted poet and writer of Turkish in his time. (See Babur, 1970, pp.422- 459).

Persian empire into Mughal India. Akbar's unusual interest in promoting social, cultural, and intellectual contacts with Iran, in particular, is worth noting (Babur, 1970, p. 459- 60).

The Turkish dialect's rapidly dwindling influence at the Mughal court was more obvious during Akbar's rule than under Humayun. No Turkish work is included in the inventory of books by Abul Fazl, nor has any composition of his verse or translation of another's work in Turkish been found. Furthermore, none of the available histories record a conversation in which Akbar speaks in the Turkish language. This decline was chiefly due to the richer Persian language taking precedence over Turkish (Ziauddin, 2005, p. 166). Only a quarter of the chieftains were Turkish. Akbar took some strategic steps to reinforce his friendly relationship with the Persians. He first sent an embassy to the Iranian court and, then in 994 A.H./ 1585-86 A.D, Hakim Humam, brother of the famous Hakim Abul Fath Gilani, with the mission to persuade Turan and Iran to increase friendly contact with the empire. This mission was also aimed to convince intellectuals to immigrate to India. Later, the emperor commissioned the famous poet Faizi in approximately 999A.H\1591A.D to submit a report on the literati in Iran. After making enquiries of travelers and traders from Iran, Faizi prepared and submitted a report to Akbar.⁵ In response to this report, Akbar sent an invitation to Chalapi Beg and ordered an Iranian trader to arrange the scholar's journey to India. "On his arrival, Chalapi Beg was made the principal teacher at a royal madrasat Agra" (Islam, 1979, p.106-7). Following this invitation, a great number of Persian writers and poets and others flooded into the Mughal empire. Persian immigrants to India outnumbered those who left for Central Asia or Ottoman lands. The constant immigration to the Indian subcontinent played a key role in its politics, literature, language, and administration.⁶

The Persian intellectuals and staff deeply affected the Mughal court. Even after political changes, Persian remained the official language. Iranian clerks retained noticeable control of accounts and carried out their jobs with efficiency and integrity at the peak of the Mughal empire. Aurangzeb, the last of the Great Mughals writes, "No other nation is better than the Persians for acting as clerks. And in war, too, from the age of Emperor Humaytin to the present time, the Persians were steadfast in the face of adversity. Moreover, they were never found to be guilty of disobedience and treachery"(Alam, 1998, p.325). However, as the Iranian clerks insisted on being treated with great honor, it was very difficult to get along with them well. Akbar seems not to have been keen to pass the Turkish language on even to his descendants; instead, he brought his children up to speak Persian. His son and successor, Jahangir (1605-26) did not have a good command of Turkish, but he had his own style in Persian and wrote his memoir in elegant prose. He was also a good critic of Persian poetry and composed several verses and ghaz als (Abud Alra Auf, 2005, p. 276). For him the Jayasi's Padmavat was translated into Persian; however, the work was recognized only as an Indian fable (*afsana-iHindf*) and not as a Hindi book on Islamic mysticism (Elliott, 2008, p. 332). Still later, in volumes of letters and edicts, Aurangzeb (1656-1707 A.D) established himself as a leading prose writer of his time.

Akbar himself abandoned his mother tongue. Contemporary historical resources confirm that his library contained hundreds of prose and poetical works in Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Greek, and Kashmiri but not in Turkish. In addition, the books to which he repeatedly had recited were all in Persian. Akbar could also compose verses in Persian and Hindi, but Mughal sources record generally only his Persian couplets, and a thorough search finds only a few Hindi verses attributed to him. Moreover, only Persian poets had the privilege of enjoying royal patronage at Akbar's court (Alam, 1998, p. 323). He was the first among the Indo-Islamic kings of northern India to declare Persian the formal language of administration at all levels (Alam, 1998, p. 323). Consequently, many Mughal kings and princes became patrons of Persian poets and poetry and themselves composed poetry in Persian. Their example of generous patronage of Persian poets was followed by their ministers and other members of the nobility. Also contributing to the prominence of the Persian language in literary circles, the Persian wives of the Mughal emperors spoke Persian and helped spread throughout the empire, became patrons of Persian poetry, and composed and recited much of their own Persian poetry. From Babur on, it became a tradition among kings' wives and daughters to compose Persian poetry. The most famous such women are Babur's daughter, Gulbadan Begum; Salima Sultana Begum, the niece of Humayun; Nur Jahan, the wife of Jahangir, and Jahan Ara, the daughter of Aurangzeb (Ziauddin, 2005, p. 27-246).

⁵ He says in this report: "Chalapi Beg is a savant of excellent disposition and wide culture, and he deserves a place in His Majesty's majlis. Educated at Qazwin, he has during the last twelve years made a great name for himself and is universally well-spoken of. He now lives at Shiraz" (Abul Fazl, 1877, 747; Mulla Heravi, 1979, p. 35, 203-13, Islam, 1979, p.106-7).

⁶ The causes of Persian immigration to Mughal India were various. Some found it an opportunity to seek better conditions, and others sought to escape the religious and political oppressions of the Safavid regime. (See Ziauddin, 2005, pp. 153-190.)

The Turkish Administration and System of Government in the Indian Subcontinent

The Turks governed the vast area of the Indian subcontinent for approximately 800 years, which raises the question of how they managed such a long-lasting feat. It is worth mentioning that members of the Turkish dynasty in India had personal abilities that made them good rulers. Most were good, efficient administrators, and these qualities helped them maintain their presence in India for hundreds of years. The administrative structure during the different phases of Turkish control of the Indian subcontinent was exceptionally good, especially for a large empire. During this period, the administrative structure did not change significantly. The most important difference between the early and later administration was the degree of centralization, which decreased over time.

The empire was divided into many provinces ruled by a governor and council of ministers. In addition, local officials and certain departments decided certain important matters of administration. A standing army was controlled by designated committees. An important aspect of the administrative structure which helped Turkish leaders and sultans build a strong system of government was the judicial system, although historians in general have made only casual references while describing the character of a king or an emperor. A few writers have attempted to touch upon the judicial system in the course of describing the Royal courts, but their accounts are so incomplete that it is difficult to form any clear picture of the judiciary and the tribunals in the pre-British period. These meager accounts are also so interspersed with such taunts and ridicule based on racial prejudices and stereotypes that they leave an impression that God founded the Creation of justice (Husain, 1934, p. 22).

Tughlaq set himself up as "the Supreme Court of Appeal", overturned changed the decisions of Qjizis, and questioned their judgment in the interest of justice (Husain, 1934, P. 22) .The same author says:

The Sultan used to keep four Muftis to whom he allotted quarters in the precincts of his own palace ...so that when anyone was arrested, upon any charge, Muhammad Tughlaq might in the first place argue with the Muftis about his due punishment. He used to say, "Be careful that you do not fail and that you speak inaccurately about that which you consider right, because if anyone should be put to death wrongfully the blood of that man will be upon your head." Muhammad Tughlaq appointed distinguished officers of the State as judges irrespective whether they were Ulamd or not. (Husain, 1934, p. 22).

Ibn Batuta (1964, Ch. 7). speaks very highly of Muhammad Tughlaq. 7 In order to strengthen his hold on India, the sultan needed more judges, scholars, and administrators and even writers, poets, and entertainers to praise and entertain the new leadership. He turned to foreigners to fill these positions. The sultan distrusted the Hindus, whom he feared would rebel, so he recruited foreigners and rewarded them with rich gifts and high salaries. Persians, Turks, and other Muslims flocked to the new empire looking for rewards. Persian became the language of the ruling elite, which virtually isolated itself in the capital city. It was from Sultan Muhammad Tughluq that Ibn Battuta hoped to gain employment (Ibn Battuta, 1964, Ch. 7).

Some Turkish kings and rulers adopted creative techniques and methods to overcome the problems of governing such a large area such as the Indian subcontinent. Consolidation was one of the best administrative strategies to control the huge subcontinent. For example, Sultan Balban tried to unite the empire, instead of merely extending its boundaries. It was also important to construct a strong, well-equipped army in order to protect the kingdom from internal rebellion and external invasion. Therefore, Balban and other Turkish monarchs and emperors employed royal agents, couriers, and spies to report to the king about various developments in his kingdom (K.Ali, 1977, p. 59). Fully aware of the military's importance in ensuring that the kingdom was secure and properly administered, these rulers also paid attention to the military system (Munshi, 1969, p. 194). For example, Ala-ud-din was the first Delhi sultan to maintain a well-equipped, standing Army. He paid his soldiers in cash from the royal treasury, introduced the system of branding of horses (*dagh*), and maintained a list of soldiers (*chehra*). Ala-du-din also introduced many reforms to make his empire strong and powerful, including establishing an efficient system of government and making many economic reforms, such as fixing the price of every commodity by himself. He also strove to balance demand and supply. He kept prices low so that all the people in his empire could live comfortably. Farmers were not allowed not to hoard grain or sell it privately (Abud Alra Auf, 2005, p. 338–345).

The Turkish rulers realized the power of the Turkish nobility to support them or cause dissension throughout the empire and, therefore, tried to establish a good relationship with the nobility or limit their authority. For example, Jalal-ud-din Khilji, the first Lhilji ruler, allowed the Turkish nobles to keep their offices, and the Mamluk Sultan Balban created a new theory of kingship and reformed the relations between the Sultan and the nobility. Feroz Shah made the Iqtadari system hereditary in order to satisfy the elite nobility (Munshi, 1969, p. 194).

⁷Ibn Batuta was appointed Judge and Ambassador to China by Muhammad Tughlaq. Ibn Batuta portrays him as a great benefactor " his gate is never free from beggars whom he's revived" (Ibn Battuta, 1964, Ch. 7).

Some Turkish rulers worked to win the hearts of their people to avoid rebellion and uprisings. Feroz Shah, for example, made many social and economic reforms and developed royal factories called *karkhanas* which employed thousands of slaves. Approximately 300 new towns were built during his reign. He also established Deewanikhairat and Deewanibundagan to support the poor and the disabled. Some rulers administered justice for local populations. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, who was famous for his sense of fairness, liberalized some of Allauddin's harsh measures. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq was also known for the construction of the famous Tughlaqabad fort in Delhi. He rooted out corruption; looked after the welfare of the peasants; increased land under cultivation; improved means of communication, transport, and the postal system; constructed bridges and canals; increased civil servants' wages; and restored the privileges of revenue officers. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq was a devout Muslim but never persecuted Hindus. Consequently, he was loved by his people and praised for his piety (Lane-Poole, 1906, p. 162).

CONCLUSION

Based on all the evidence presented, it can be concluded that the Turks contributed significantly to Indian culture. Research highlights their influence in the Indian subcontinent. Although the Turks arrived in India after the Arabs, the Turks remained for hundreds of years in the face of many adversities. Their achievements in India clearly demonstrate how they relentlessly tried to expand Islam in this part of the world through the use of their armies and any possible means.

The Turks adopted an administrative system which helped them to control such a vast area as the Indian subcontinent. The Turks in India also contributed to the promotion of Indian and Islamic civilization as a whole and in many particulars.

Brief biography:

Dr- Haila holds a Ph.D. degree in Islamic history from Princess Nora University's Department of History. She obtained an M.A. degree from College of Arts in King Saud University\History Department. She received a B.A. degree from the Department of History. She has been a faculty member of the Department of History since 2007. She is a member of the Saudi Historical Association. She wrote number of history research papers; "Prophet Muhammad Attitude towards woman before prophecy and its effect after prophecy" refereed research in Arabic offered to women at the Al-syrah conference. "Jewish women during crusade between east and west" Arabic refereed research published in a series of refereed historical and cultural researches followed by the Saudi Historical society.

REFERENCES

- Abud Alra Auf, A. (2005). India in the Islamic period. Cairo: Dareffikrelarabi.
- Abul Fazl, Akbar-nama, (1877) .Agha Ahmad Ali and Abdur Rahim. Calcutta: Asiatic Society.
- Al-Masudi, Ali. (1841). *Meadows of gold and mines of gems*. (A. Sprenger trans., Vol. I). London: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland.
- Arnold, T. W. (1924).*The caliphate*. London: University of London School of Oriental Studies.
- Babur, Zaher al-Din Muhammad. (1970).Babur-nama. (A. S. Beveridge trans.) Delhi: Oriental books corpn.
- Bolar, Varija R. , Turks and their Contributiion in Different Period of Karnatka, International Journal of Social science and Humanity Studies (Vol 4, No 1), Dept. of History and Archaeology, Dharwad, Karnataka State: Karnatak University, Dharwad, Karnataka State.
- Cavilli-Sforza, L. L. (2000). *Genes, peoples and languages*. California: Berkeley U Press.
- Choudhury, M.L. Roy (1951). The State and Religion in Mughal India. Calcutta:Indian Publicity Society.
- Elliot, H. M.(2008). *The Mohammedan period as described by its own historians*. A.V. Williams Jackson (Ed.).

New York: Cosmio book.

Findley, Carter Vaughn. (2005). *The Turks in world history*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Firishta, M. Qasim Hindu Shah. A.(1794) .Firishta's History of Dekkan.(J. Scott trans. Vol. 1).) London: John Stocksdale.

H.G. Rawlinson, (2001): Ancient and Medieval History of India.New Delhi :Bharatiya Kala Prakashan.

Hoiberg, D. (2000). "Students and Britannica India." In: *Selected essays, Encyclopedia Britannica*. (Vol.1-5) India: C&C Offsct Printing. Co. ltd.

Husain, W. (1934). *Administration of justice during Muslim rule in India*. Hyderabad: Osmania University

Ibn Battua, Muḥammad ibn Abd al-Lāh. (1964) *Rihla Ibn Battuta*, Beirut: Dar Sader.

_____. (1964) *Rihla Ibn Battuta (2 Vols)*. Cairo: Dar alsharqelarabi.

Ibn Khaldun. (1986). *The muqaddimah: An introduction to history*. (Franz Rosenthal, trans., Vols. 1–3). London: Routledge.

Islam, R. (1979). *A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian Relations, 1500-0-1750* Karachi:, I, pp. 117-20.

Jackson, Williams .V (Ed.). (1906). *History of India (Vols. 1–9)*. Ithaca: Cornell University Library.

Jadunath, S.(1924). *History of Aurangzeb: Condition of the people in Aurangzeb reign. (Vol. 5)*. Calcutta: Publisher.

Jensen, D. (2006). "End game." In: *The problem of civilization (Vol. 1, pp. 1-929)*. New York: Seven Stories Press.

K, Ali, (1977). *A New History of Indo-Pakistan, Since 1526*. Lahore: Aziz Publishers.

Lane-Poole, S. (1906). *History of India*. A. V. Williams Jackson (Ed.). Dublin: Trinity College.

Law, N. N1916. *Promotion of Learning in India During Muhammadan Rule by Muhammadans*, London.

Mahajan. V. D. (1970). *Muslim rule in India*. Delhi: S. Chand.

Marx, I. (1998). *The Xiongnu culture—third century BCE*. Silk Road Center.

Mulla Qati' Heravi. (1979) *Tazkira Majma'-ush-Shu'ard-i Jahangfr Shahf*, ed. Saleem Akhtar .Karachi: , pp. 35 -203.

Munshi, K. M.(1969). *The Struggle for Empire*. Bombay .

Nayeem, M.A (1974), External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom, Hyderabad: Bright Publishers.

_____. (2008), *The Heritage of the Adil Shahis of Bijapur, Hyderabad:Hyderabad Publishers.*

Pitman, P. (1987). *The rise of the Turks and the Ottoman Empire, excerpted from Turkey: A country study*. Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress.

Ray, Kalyan. " Origin of Indian languages traced to Turkey" 2012, Aug 24, New Delhi, India. Retrieved May 3, 2013, <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/274020/origin-indian-languages-traced-turkey.html>.

Reis, S. A. (1975). *The travels and adventures of Turkish Sidi Ali Reis* (A. Vambéry trans.). Lahore: Al-Biruni.

Saray, M. (1999). *Yeni Türk Cumhuriyetleri Tarihi*. Ankara: Türkçe, Ciltli ve Şömiöl.

Singh, K. G. (1963). *A history of the Sikhs*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

_____. "Contribution of Turkic Language in the Evaluation and Development of Hindustani Language". (2003,11May) New Delhi, India. Retrieved May 3, 2013, <http://www.boloji.com>.

Sturrock, J. (1894–1895). *South Kanara and Madras District manual* (Vols. 1–2). Madras : Government Press.
Wade, N. (2006). *Before the dawn*. New York: Penguin Press.

Yazdani, G (1947), *Bidar Its History and Monuments*, Hyderabad: Published under the Special Authority of His Exalted Highness The Nizam.

Ziauddin, M. (2005). *Role of Persian at the Mughal court: A historical study during 1526 A.D. to1707 A.D.* queitta, Pakistan: University of Baluchistan.

Zieme, P. (2005/2006). "The old Turkish empires in Mongolia." In: Genghis Khan and his heirs. The empire of the Mongols. Special tape for Exhibition. Retrieved May 3, 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkic>.