

## **Turks in India: Their presence and contribution to Islam and civilisation: an historical and analytical study.**

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### **ABSTRACT :**

The study aims to provide an historical analysis of the presence of the Turks in India throughout the middle ages until the collapse of the Mughal empire. The main argument presented in this paper is that, although India was subject to various raids by foreign peoples throughout history, the Turks were the only people who constituted the ruling elite and who settled in India for such a long time. The beginning of the first millennium saw the rapid rise to international power of the Turks—the universal name for the peoples descended from the nomadic warrior tribes of the steppes of Central Asia. The Turks are ethnically and culturally related to each other, hence it is reasonably accurate to use the same designation for all of them.

It is well established that Turks of all tribes accepted Islam willingly, and held the faith much more simply and fiercely than the actively intellectual Persians. Thus, they became part of Muhammad's nation and integrated into Islamic society. It is difficult to deny their great achievement in spreading Islam, or overlook their contribution to its civilisation. In fact, they played a unique role in the course of Islamic history.

Due to the important role of the Turks throughout the history of Islam and its civilisation, especially, after they became active members of Muslim society, this paper aims to trace the Turkish presence in India from medieval times up to the commencement of the modern era. The paper also intends to show the contribution the Turks have made to the Indian civilisation and their efforts to spread Islam throughout the country. There are some claims that the Turks come from central Asia to India with the armies of Mohammad Ghoris. So, the study raises 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 affect the Turks? How did the Turks succeed in controlling such an enormous area such as the Indian subcontinent and remain there for hundreds of years? What were their efforts to spread Islam in India? What were the differences in their system of government? How did they contribute to the elevation of Indian civilisation? Why did the Turkish language not prevail in India, or at least become the language of art and the ruling elite? etc.

**key words:** Turks, Indians, civilisation, Persians, Mughal, Ghaznavid, Ghoris.

### **Introduction:**

Contact between the Turks and Muslims commenced in the beginning of the 8th Century and numerous Turks chose to follow Islam whole-heartedly. Many Muslim Turks took office in the Abbasside government, and because of this, great interest in the Islamic world spread among the Turks beyond the River Ceyhan. The interest became even more pronounced when, in 835, the Caliph of the time, Muatasim, established an elite army formed only of Turks. Muslim Turkish tribes established various families and formed many Islamic states which worked variously to protect Islam and extend its boundaries. Their expeditions took different directions and reached remote places and regions, in both the east and the west and including the Indian subcontinent. The Turks arrived in India after the Arabs, and dedicated to Islam.

The Turkish tribes played a major role among the Muslim conquerors and rulers who came and made India their home. The Turkic attacks began in the first half of the 11th century starting with Sabuktgin. The process of the establishment of their kingdoms in the North and West of Hindustan started from late 12th century. Although Sindh was occupied by the Arabs, since the establishment of the Abbasside Caliphate in the 8th Century AD, the Arabs played only a marginal role in influencing the culture and civilisation of Hindustan. The Turkish presence started in the Indian subcontinent in first half of the 11th century and lasted over 700 years. The Ghaznavid sovereignty was followed by the rule of Ghoris. After this, the Slave dynasty was founded by the Turkish slave Qutb al-Din Aibak, a favourite slave of the sultan Muhammad of Ghor and his most trusted officers. Later another Turkish tribe, the Khilji dynasty ruled India from 1292 A.D. to 1320 A.D. The Khiljis were replaced by the Tughluqs. The Tughluqs ruled

from 1320 A.D. to 1414 A.D., from Delhi. Eventually, Mughals seized power over the whole of the Indian subcontinent until British colonisation<sup>1</sup>.

### Origins and immigration

Al masudi uses the expressions "Turks sexes" or "Turks nations" to refer to the Turk tribes and their different clans. He pictured them as nomadic warrior tribes from the steppes of Central Asia. He has stressed this fact in many parts of his book. For instance, "The khakan of khakans is one of their hoard, all Turkish nations obey him, and all other Turkish kings are their vassals"<sup>2</sup>, "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"<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, he drew our attention to physical characteristics when he talked about Chizians tribe "These are the bravest of all Turks, and have the smallest eyes, and most diminutive stature"<sup>4</sup>. He also said in another part of his book: "beyond this ribat live various un believing nations, as the turks, ..."<sup>5</sup>. He also described them as strong in their physique, expert in warfare, and very brave warriors<sup>6</sup>. He also attributed them to the sixth climate in the eighth chapter when he discussed the seven inhabited climates and regions<sup>1</sup>.

In fact, 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, hence it is reasonably accurate to use the same designation for all of them. Al-Masudi states that the Turks were descendants from Japheth or Yapheth Ben Noah, who was one of the four sons of Noah. They are listed in the order "Shem, Ham, and Japheth"<sup>7</sup>. Japheth is often regarded as the youngest son, though some traditions regard him as the eldest. but treated in the reverse order in chapter 10", which means that he considered them to be of Indo-European origins. "The historians do not agree respecting the Chinese and their origin, many of them say what the children of Abur ben Batwil Ben Yafeth Ben Noh"<sup>8</sup>. So, According to Al-Masudi, Turks are Arians who emigrated to India in the course of their migration which took different routes, including to India: "One descendent (PERHAPS), Abur reached the frontiers of India". In fact, Al-Masudi's opinion corresponds with recent Studies which state that the Turks were attributed to the white race and were classified among the three human races which existed on the surface of the earth. These were: (Alayurobed) and (Altoranid) and (Almgoolad)<sup>9</sup>. Actually, Al-Masudi is considered to have been an observer. He offered eyewitness accounts of events taken from the period which he chronicled. This became one of the most important pieces of evidence the historian has. Because the material came from the same time, culture and political climate as the events he recorded, we get a much more accurate view of how those events were viewed, and get a clearer picture of the Turkish presence in India. Al Masudi met those Indians who are originally Turks during his visit to India in the 4th century Hijri\ 10th AD and recorded the way 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"<sup>10</sup>.

When discussing observable human physical characteristics the most common factor is skin colour, or degree of melanin present in a person's skin. This exterior transformation would, obviously, not have happened overnight. It must have taken place throughout many generations and resulted from marriage between Turkish immigrants and

<sup>1</sup> For more information see: V. Williams Jackson(1906), editor: History of India, in nine volumes, et seq.Pp.34-35.

<sup>2</sup> Al masudi, Meadows of gold, 2 12.

<sup>3</sup> Al masudi, Op. Cit., 2 39.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p.2 39.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.242.

<sup>6</sup> Ioc, p.2 00

<sup>7</sup> Genesis 5:32 and 9:18.

<sup>8</sup> Al Masudi, Meadows of gold, p.2 09

<sup>9</sup> Sarai, Muhammad, The history of Modern Turkish republic, The introduction.

<sup>10</sup> Al masudi, Meadows of gold p.2 13.

local people, alongside climate change –perhaps in the second, or third generation. As we are aware, there are several factors which influence human diversity and observable inherited variations in physical appearance. Observable physical traits are passed on through generations by genetic exchange through reproduction. Physical adaptability to climate shifts and changes in human population following migrations to different climates is the primary reason for the variations. There were many different paths taken by our early ancestors from out of Africa and into Asia, Europe, the South Pacific and the Americas. Effects on resident indigenous populations are further complicated by the recent form of migration called colonialism<sup>11</sup>.

Ibn Khaldun discussed the influence of climate upon human characteristics in his book. ‘The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History’ and after having discussed many patterns of characteristics concerning inhabitants of different areas, Ibn Khaldun says "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."<sup>12</sup>. Al Masudi’s account supports the theory of white huns’ raids in the 4th century AD, when the Huns set out from the Altai Mountains in central Asia on their great westward migration. Around AD 375 some of the later Attila Huns 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 ranges of the Hindu Kush into the regions of Gandhara, Uddiyana (Swat Valley), the Punjab (in what is now Pakistan) and north-western India. It is an established fact that there are differences between Arians and Dravidian people . Along with the difference in language there is a difference in skin colour from the north to the south of India, with the southerners being darker in skin colour (though northerners are hardly light in colour by Western standards, with the exception of some people of the far northwest). Though a less pronounced difference than that of language, it has been lumped together with it under the assumption that race and language must be the same. He did not discuss the causes of their exodus but it is generally agreed that the first Turkic people lived in a region extending from Central Asia to Siberia with the majority of them historically living in China. Historically they were established after the 6th century BCE<sup>13</sup>. The earliest separate Turkic peoples appeared on the peripheries of the late Xiongnu confederation (contemporaneous with the Chinese Han Dynasty)<sup>14</sup>.

The first historical references to the Turks appear in Chinese records of about 200 B.C. These records refer to tribes called the Hsiung-nu, an early form of the Western term Hun, who lived in an area bounded by the Altai Mountains, Lake Baikal, and the northern edge of the Gobi Desert and who were believed to have been the ancestors of the Turks. Specific references in Chinese sources in the sixth century A.D. state that<sup>15</sup>. the Hun tribes, or as the Chinese called them the Xiongnu or Xiongnu, stemmed basically from the Siberian branch of the Mongolian race. During the third and second centuries BCE they rose to great power and became a tribal confederation. During Emperor Mo-tun reign (208-175 BCE), 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 BCE their political influence reached as far as the lower Volga and the –Ural foothills. This expansion westwards significantly increased the trade with the western world.<sup>16</sup> During the newly established Chinese Han dynasty (AD 206-220), China expanded its borders and the Xiongnu empire lost ground. Weakened by the loss of men and animals because of their constant battles, and by splits caused by internal dissension, the tribes of the confederation began one by one to accept a position of vassalage under China. The northern Xiongnu moved from Outer Mongolia into what was

<sup>11</sup> About this matter see: Genes, Peoples and Languages” Luigi Luca Cavilli-Sforza, 2000, Berkeley UC Press; “Before the Dawn” Nicholas Wade 2006 Penguin Press NY, Jensen, Derrick “End Game”, Volume 1 The Problem of Civilization, Seven Stories Press, 2006 ,NY.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn Khaldun (1986), ‘The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History’, translated from the Arabic by Franz Rosenthal, 3 volumes, London Routledge and Kegan Paul. I, p. 157 A; p. 175.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Zieme (2005/2006): The Old Turkish Empires in Mongolia. In: Genghis Khan and his heirs. The Empire of the Mongols. Special tape for Exhibition, p.64

<sup>14</sup> Findley (2005), p. 29.

<sup>15</sup> Paul M. Pitman III,(1987):The Rise of the Turks and the Ottoman Empire, Excerpted from Turkey: A Country Study., ed. Washington, DC: Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress,

<sup>16</sup> Marx, Irma.(1998). The Xiongnu Culture - Third Century BCE, silkroad center.

then Dzaungaria, where they conquered a new, but short lived, empire. With the beheading of their leader by a Chinese army the group disappeared from history 17. This fact explains why Al Masudi join Turks and chicness in the same chapter18.

#### **Their Contribution to Islam and civilisation**

Islamic influence first came to be felt in the Indian subcontinent during the early 7th century with the arrival of Arab traders. Arab merchants used to visit the Malabar region, which was a link between them and the ports of South East Asia, to trade even before Islam had appeared in Arabia. According to Historians Elliot and Dowson in their book "The History of India", as told by its own historians, the first ship bearing Muslim travellers was seen on the Indian coast as early as 630 AD. The first Indian mosque is thought to have been built in 629 AD, purportedly at the behest of an unknown Chera dynasty ruler, during the lifetime of Muhammad(PBUH) (c. 571–632). This was situated in Kodungallur, in the district of Thrissur, Kerala by Malik Bin Deenar. In Malabar, Muslims are called Mappila19. After this, Islam extended more and more throughout India through Muslim invasion . first by Arabs, then by Muslim Turkish armies. In fact, the major reason for Muslim conquest was the spread of Islam. Muslims conquered Kabul, the Punjab, and Sind, before rushing into India. The wealth in India was an allure for some Muslim rulers. Further the inter-rivalry between the kingdoms in India paved the way for their entry in to India20.

Based on the above discussion, it was the Arabs who first brought Islam to the Indian subcontinent, then the Turks completed the mission. Stanley Poole's viewpoint is that : "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, they overcame most human obstacles"21. But I think it's unfair to repudiate the role of Arabs who opened the door for Turks to invade the Indian subcontinent22. Though a prominent Indian historian and journalist, Dr. Khuswant Singh, in his 'A History of the Sikhs', has discussed the early days of Islam in India. He clearly states that Islam was spread in India not by the Muslim rulers but by the Muslim spiritual masters and missionaries although we cannot deny that some Muslim rulers contributed to this mission whether by military invasion or by other ways23.

To be objective we have to admit that some Turkish kings and emperors in India did not care much about the expansion of Islam. They cared more about wealth and the treasures of the subcontinent but used religion for political purposes and worldly advantage. But to be objective we have to recognise those who were truly sincere in their services to Islam. As a matter of fact, the conquest of the Turkish warlord Mahmud Ghaznafi, who was devoted to Islam, opened the way for future Muslim expeditions to India and the expansion of Islam into the Indian subcontinent. In fact, Mahmud Ghaznafi and his successors and their armies worked relentlessly for the expansion of Islam in this part of the world. The sultans in Delhi, who were originally Turks, did their best to extend Islam as far as they could in the Indian subcontinent by every possible means. For example, Firoz Shah, one of the greatest sultans of Delhi, exempted everyone who converted to Islam from tax (jizya) as he declared: "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"24.

<sup>17</sup> Marx, Op.Cit.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Stanley Lane-Poole.1906 .History of India, Trinity College, Dublin, in History of India, Edited by A. V. Williams Jackson, , 3\1: 3

<sup>20</sup> Sturrock, J. 1894-1895. South Kanara and Madras District Manual 2 vols., Madras, H.G.

<sup>21</sup> 13 :1\ -Poole.1906 .History of India,

<sup>22</sup> 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. H.G. Rawlinson,; Ancient and Medieval History of India..

<sup>23</sup> Khushwant Sing . 1963. A History of the Sikhs, 1N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1:20-28.

<sup>24</sup> Poole, History of India, chapter,8:170.

Turkish rulers adopted the open door approach to welcome Hindus and other unbelievers who wanted to embrace Islam. Indian people who wished to convert to Islam had to simply enter the sultan's palace and make the two testimonies and the sultan would bestow upon them and give them a golden necklace. It is obvious that the Turkish rulers pursued this procedure to encourage Hindus to accept Islam<sup>25</sup>. Some of them, like Firoz Shah and his cousin Muhammad Tughlaq, tried to correct heresies, wrong deeds and superstitions that had been introduced among Muslims in the Indian subcontinent by ignorant people and by Hindus and worked to try to spread the true knowledge transmitted by the Ahl as- Sunna that they had heard from the prophet's companions. Moreover, Muhammad Tughlaq had strong friendships with the students of the great and prominent Muslim Imam and scholar Ibn Tamimiya's which indicates his keenness to acquire Islamic knowledge. Furthermore, he welcomed scholars who came to his court in Delhi openly and benefited from their knowledge. Muhammad Tughlaq was very strict about religious matters, especially prayers, as Ibn Bututa the Arabic traveller, who visited India during his reign, depicted him. Sultan Firoz Shah acted as an eye-opener for Muslims in India, in his own history - which he wrote himself - he identified heresies, wrong deeds, superstitions and unorthodox doctrine that arose in the Indian subcontinent at that time. He paid respect to the Qur'an and Hadith and encouraged people to follow them<sup>26</sup>. The emperor Aurangzib followed their lead, he was a great worshipper of God by natural propensity, and was remarkable for his rigid attachment to religion. He put Islam and Muslims on the top of his agenda and he built many beautiful Masjids, which stand till this date. Northern India is dotted with these beautiful Masjids.. He almost exterminated the invented religious doctrines in Islam and other such heresies. He also appointed a virtuous man called (muhtasib) as censor of morals to prevent drinking and to make Muslim changes to Quranic Laws. He never compromised on Islam. He showed the strength of Islam to the whole world<sup>27</sup>. In general, Aurangzeb ruled as an orthodox Sunni Muslim and tried to remain within the framework of Islamic law. It is thanks to the sincere efforts of those Turkish rulers that Islam is still in existence in the Indian subcontinent.

The Turkish rulers also welcomed Muslim scholars and sufis who escaped to India after the Mughal invasion. They played an important role in the spread of Islam in India. They were very successful in spreading Islam, as many aspects of Sufi belief systems and practices had their parallels in Indian philosophical literature. The Sufis' orthodox approach towards Islam made it easier for Hindus to practice. For example, Ahmed Rida Khan contributed much in defending traditional and orthodox Islam in India through his work *Fatawa Razvia*<sup>28</sup>. Muhammad Tughlaq had been on the throne for upwards of eighteen years when he began to be troubled with doubts as to the legitimacy of his rule, inasmuch as it had not received the confirmation of the Abbasid Caliph. So he made inquiries from a great many travellers and discovered there was a Caliph named Mustakfi, in Egypt. He entered into correspondence with him, 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<sup>29</sup>. His pious successor, Firuz Shah (1351-1388) made a similar submission to the Caliph in Cairo.<sup>30</sup> The spread of Islam increased in the Mughal era thanks to the policy of equality and tolerance. Hindus became more familiar with the teachings and morals of Islam. Especially in the Aurangzeb period when some powerful rajas, such as Kashmir Raja, Punjab and other northern provinces of India, and their subjects were extremely enthusiastic in

<sup>25</sup> Abud Alra auf, Aisam.2005. India in Islamic period,.276.

<sup>26</sup> Elliot, Henry Miers.1907. The Mohammedan Period as Described by its Own Historians in History of India Edited by A. V. Williams Jackson, 332.

<sup>27</sup> He always occupies a great part of his time in worship and says the usual prayers, first in the mosque and then at home For more Information see: Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, Condition of the people in Aurangzeb Reign, Volume 5 (Calcutta)

<sup>28</sup> ZIAUDDIN ,MUHAMMAD..2005. Role of Persian at the Mughal Court : A Historical Study, During 1526 A.D. to1707 A.D, University of Baluchistan, Nqueitta, Pakistan, 140-146..,

<sup>29</sup> Thomas W. Arnold, The Caliphate, University of London School of Oriental Studies , 104. Arnold described Muhammad Tughlaq as a pious man. He was strict in his piety, abstaining from wine, and scrupulous in the observance of the precepts of his faith.

<sup>30</sup> The caliphate,. 104.

spreading Islam<sup>31</sup>. Though some writers accused Aurangzeb of being intolerant towards Hindus, in fact this is a false accusation because if we read historical resources carefully we realise that he showed forbearance and tolerance towards them. According to histories, Aurangzeb brought about administrative changes. Some senior Hindu officers in the finance ministry were retained and even promoted, whilst in Banaras and some other places Brahmans were harassed, and Hindu temples were also demolished by mobs. Aurangzeb stopped this violation<sup>32</sup>.

The Turks in the Indian subcontinent also contributed significantly to Indian civilisation and Islamic civilisation as a whole. Their contributions are visible in many areas. . In fact, the Turks enhanced the process of decorating books. Artists painted portraits of the monarchs and sultans and occasionally they demonstrated the events depicted in the books with their paintings. I believe that such art was introduced to India by the Turkish rulers themselves because they brought with them books illustrating the beautiful Persian miniatures. Miniature paintings were used to illustrate books.

The impact and embedding of Turkish culture into Hindustan took place during the Turco-Afghan period of India's history from the end of the 12th century to the early 16th century and continued during the Mughal period.<sup>33</sup> When Turkish rulers entered India, they introduced their own customs while accepting Indian customs, such as the class system.<sup>34</sup> The art and architecture of the Delhi Sultanate epoch was dissimilar from the Indian style. The Indo Islamic style of architecture developed as a mishmash of the Indian and Turkish styles. The Turks also brought with them Arabian and Persian traditions of architecture. Indian decorations and methods were used in Islamic buildings, with the domes and arches of their own design. Among the legendary buildings of this time are the Qutubminar, the Quwat- ul – Islam mosque, the Alai Darwaza, the tomb of Ghiasuddin Tughlaq, Ferozshahkotla, the citadel at Tuglaqabad and other outstanding constructions. Sultan Ahmad I (1422 A.D.-1435 A.D.) carried out the building of the fort at Bidar. According to Ferishta it took nine years to complete the defenses of the fort. The fortifications were entirely rebuilt under the supervision of Turkish engineers towards the end of the 15th century or the beginning of the 16th century A.D. The fortifications, having been built by Turkish mercenaries, possess a certain resemblance to medieval European forts in terms of their barbicans, covered passages and bastions<sup>35</sup>. 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 who had assembled at the court of King Ahmad I. It is recorded that Ahmad I formed a group of three thousand archers in his army. The archeries came from Khorassan, Turkey and Arabia<sup>36</sup>. The manuscript entitled *Ajaibul Makhluqat* of Al Qazwini, written in 1560 A.D. belongs to King Ali I's reign. It was inspired by the Ottoman Turkish paintings and does not exhibit any local Deccani influence<sup>37</sup>. An elegant portrait decorated by Muhammad Adil Shah is considered to be one of the greatest structural triumphs of Indo-Perso-Ottoman architecture of Adil Shahi period<sup>38</sup>. Furthermore, they introduced the Unani system of medicine, the art of papier-mâché and enameling skills, and painting and carving in wood which were developed under the Vijaynagar rulers. They also enhanced Indian architecture and added their distinguished touches. Hence, new magnificent buildings emerged in India during this era which now count as some of the wonders of the world.

In short, the architecture in the Indian subcontinent flourished under Turkish domination. Forts were simple but sturdy. They built arches above the doorways and windows instead of the beams which were used by Indians before the arrival of the Muslims. They also used tall and well-made towers or minarets in their buildings, although pillars

<sup>31</sup> Abud Alrauf, Aisam. *India in Islamic period*, 277.

<sup>32</sup> Sarkar, Jadunath. 2008. "History of Aurangzeb based on original sources, University of Toronto.

<sup>33</sup> Bolar, Varija R. ,TURKS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION IN DIFFERENT PERIODS OF KARNATAKA, International Journal OF Social science and Humanity Studies Vol 4, No 1, Dept. of History and Archaeology, Karnatak University, Dharwad-580003 Karnataka State,

<sup>34</sup> .1 Making of the Modern World 13, Lecture 3, Lecture 4 at UC San Diego of April, 2012, University of California, San Diego.

<sup>35</sup> Yazdani, 1947:23

<sup>36</sup> Bolar, ,TURKS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION

<sup>37</sup> Nayeem, 2008:254.

<sup>38</sup> Nayeem, 1974:25.

were also used for their support. Their architecture became delicate, beautiful and elegant. The outer surface of their domes were covered with rich colourful designs in tiles. The sultans also founded towns such as Agra, Fatehabad, HissarFiroza (UP), and Jaunpur and besides bathes<sup>39</sup>.

**Between Persian and Turkish language:**

A new study has suggested that the origins of some Indian languages can be traced back to “Anatolia” (largely in Turkey). These languages include Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Kashmiri, Oriya, Marwari, Bhojpuri and Urdu. All of these languages, along with English, belong to a family called “Indo-European languages”. Interestingly, the south Indian languages were not taken into consideration as they had a Dravidian origin<sup>40</sup>. In my viewpoint this hypothesis holds some truth for some historical reasons. The first and most important reason is that the Turkish language was the language of the ruling elite, the royal household, nobles, and the language of administration and literature in the reigns of Turkish rulers before the emergence of the Mughal emperor. The Turkish language bore 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 Indian regional languages. We have evidence indicating that Turkish was used in the Indian subcontinent in the 10th and 11th century for various purposes. There are documents discovered in the 10th & 11th century from the Turfan region, which can be seen in Berlin, which cover subjects like medicine and calendar based on Indian sources. Of course, the Turkish in these documents is quite different from the present day Turkic languages (Uighur and Cagtai group) spoken in Eastern Turkistan i.e Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and the Sinkiang region of China. As many philosophical, spiritual and religious terms of Buddhism, and even Hinduism, did not exist, they were introduced from Pali and Sanskrit into Turkish. Thus the Turkish language acquired many words of Pali and Sanskrit origin, some of which were incorporated into other languages; Ratan becoming Ardhani is an example. An example of how words change is illustrated by the Buddhist word Dhyana (meditation), which became Jhan in Chinese and Zen in Japanese<sup>41</sup>.

Although the influence of the Turkic languages on Indian languages began in all seriousness from the 11th century AD onwards, to which we will refer to later, various Turkic tribes began their interaction with Hindustan much earlier than that. After the collapse of the Mauryan Empire in the 3rd century BC, a number of Central Asian Turkic tribes, known as Sakas in India and Scythians in the West, came to Hindustan and settled down there. Sakas were actually forced towards Hindustan by Central Asian tribes, Yueh-chih, who also later entered Hindustan<sup>42</sup>. But it seems that Persian and Arabic was used widely in Islamic Indian schools (madrasas) which were established during the beginning of Muslim rule in Delhi more than Turkish was. We can infer this fact from the words of both Barani and Mutahar, a well-known poet and a historian, who praised the comprehensive knowledge of Jala-ud-din Rumi, the head of the institution. Rumi's works were written 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. It became the official language of the Delhi Sultanate together with Turkish and many reasons can be proposed for this. One reason was that many of the Sultans and nobility in the Sultanate period were Persianised Turks from Central Asia who spoke Turkic languages as their mother tongue<sup>43</sup>. Another reason was the migration of Persian literary men towards the Delhi Sultanate after the Mongol invasion<sup>44</sup>.

According to the accounts of historians, when the Mongols devastated the cultural centres of Central and Western Asia, and the 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) of Ala-ud-din Khalji the general opulence engendered by his conquests enabled the nobles, and not just the Sultan, to become literary patrons. This probably explains why Barani could devote fourteen pages to an account

<sup>39</sup> Jan, Maha, Muslim rule in india,280-290.

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/274020/origin-indian-languages-traced-turkey.html>

<sup>41</sup> Singh, K. Gajendra. Contribution of Turkic Language in the Evaluation and Development of Hindustani Language.

<sup>42</sup> Singh, Contribution of Turkic Language

<sup>43</sup> Singh, Contribution of Turkic Language

<sup>44</sup> Singh, Op. Cit.

of the scholars, poets, preachers, philosophers, physicians, astronomers, and historians who flocked to Delhi in the days of Ala-ud-din Khalji.<sup>45</sup> It would appear that the Turkish rulers were much more statesmen-like and liberal in interaction with those whom they ruled. They did not insist on their language being imposed on the new subjects, notwithstanding the fact that the languages of some of those whom they ruled were much more developed than the Turkish language was.<sup>46</sup> Besides, the early invaders like Mohammad Bin Qasim, Mehmood Ghaznavi, Mohammad Ghauri, and their subjects started mixing with locals; they walked through markets of Lahore, Delhi and Punjab mixed with the locals and tried to speak with them in Turkish which led later to introduce many Turkish words into the Punjabi language; which was a new language which was evolving as a result of the amalgamation of local dialects and the languages of the invaders. This language was to become Urdu. Moreover, Mahmud Ghaznafi adopted the Persian language when he occupied India because he was brought up in the Samani court. The Samani were originally Persians. It is true that whilst Turkish did not spread among locals, it paved the way for a new language to be formed. Despite this fact, the Urdu vocabulary contains approximately 70% Farsi. the rest being a mix of Arabic and Turkish <sup>47</sup>. However, Turkish rulers outside of Iran and India, such as the Ottomans in Turkey and the Uzbeks in central Asia, were not enthusiastic about the Persian language. Indeed, in India also, it did not appear to hold such eminence in the courts of the early Mughals. It's well known that Turkish was the first language of Babur and his sons, Humayun (d.1556) and Kamran who wrote poetry in Turkish.<sup>48</sup> Babur, who had tried all his life to raise the status of Turki, and his son Humayun, conversely, neglected it from deference to the feelings of the Persians at his Court, as well as his own liking for Persian. Humayun was deeply versed in Persian literature<sup>49</sup>. At an early stage in Humayun's reign, Turkish poetry enjoyed an appreciable audience at his court even after his return from Persia, from where he came with Persian reinforcements to reconquer Hindustan. <sup>50</sup> Additionally, Bairam Khan, a most notable early Mughal noble who had prominence) during the early years of Akbar's time (d.1556-1605), also made his mark as a Turkish poet<sup>51</sup>.

As reflected above it would have been natural for the Turkish language to become the dominant language in the whole Mughal empire, but in fact the reality was otherwise. The Persian language became the official and the first language of the entire empire. There are several explanations for this. Throughout the course of history it can be seen that the Indian Mughals, particularly Humayun initially, made efforts to promote the Persian language and 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 few people he talked in Turkish, otherwise he spoke in Persian. Jauhar entered Humayun's personal service at a very young age, and attended him faithfully during his retreat and flight from Hindustan<sup>52</sup>. Historically speaking, 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 needed their help further and encouraged them to join the imperial service 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 following the destruction

<sup>45</sup> N. N. Law, *Promotion of Learning in India during Muhammadan Rule* (London, 1916),. 181, n. 1.

<sup>46</sup> Singh, *Contribution of Turkic Language*

<sup>47</sup> Dale, Hoiberg. 2000. *students and Britannica India.. selected essays, Encyclopedia Britannica*,.175. Singh, K. Gajendra . *Contribution of Turkic Language in the Ev*

<sup>48</sup> Sidi Ali Reis, *The Travels and Adventures of Turkish Sidi Ali Reis*, translated from the Turkish with notes by A. Vambéry, reprint (Lahore, 1975), - 47, 49-51 and 52-3. 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 of his time .

<sup>49</sup> Roy M.L Chowdhury, 1951. *The State and Religion in Mughal India*, Calcutta: Indian Publicity Society.,.186.

<sup>50</sup> Sidi Ali Reis, *The Travels and Adventures of Turkish Sidi Ali Reis*, translated from the Turkish with notes by A. Vambéry, reprint (Lahore, 1975), PP- 47, 49-51 and 52-3.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Bairam Khan, *Dfwan*, edited by S. Husamuddin Rashidi and MuhammadSabir with Introduction by Mahmudul Hasan Siddiqi, Karachi, Institute of Central and West Asian Studies, 1971.

<sup>52</sup> ZIAUDDIN , *Role of Persian at the Mughal Court*,. 163.

of the Timurid power in Herat.<sup>9</sup> All this contributed to the expansion of the frontiers of the Persian empire in Mughal India. Akbar's unusual interest in promoting social, cultural and intellectual contacts with Iran is to be noted in particular.<sup>53</sup> The rapidly dwindling influence of the Turki dialect at the Mughal Court is more clearly noticeable during Akbar's rule rather than in the reign of Humayun. No Turki work is included in the inventory of books given by Abul Fazl, nor has any recorded instance of his composition of any verse in Turki, or even reciting one from the works of others, been found. Furthermore, there is no recorded conversation of Akbar in the Turki language reported in any of the available histories of his reign. This was chiefly due to the richer Persian language taking precedence over Turki.<sup>54</sup> The proportion of Turkish chieftains in the ruling elite had reduced to a quarter. Akbar took some strategic steps to reinforce his relationship with the Persians and increase friendly contact with them. Initially, he sent an embassy to the Iranian court. Following this, in 994 AH/1585-86 Hakim Humam, a brother of the famous Hakim Abul Fath Gilani, was sent to Turan and Iran with a mission to persuade the people there to increase friendly contact with the empire. The purpose of this mission was to identify the intellectuals and convince them to come and settle in India. Later the Emperor commissioned the famous poet Faizi (about 999/ 1591) to submit a report on the literati in Iran. After making enquiries from travellers and traders arriving from Iran, Faizi prepared a report which he submitted to Akbar.<sup>55</sup> Evidently, it was as a consequence of this report that Akbar sent an invitation to Chalapi Beg and issued orders to an Iranian trader to make arrangements for the scholar's journey to India. "On his arrival, Chalapi Beg was made the principal teacher at a royal madrasat Agra 56. Upon his invitation a great number of Persian writers and poets and others flooded into the Mughal empire. Persian people who migrated to India were simply very large in number as compared to those who left for Central Asia or the Ottoman lands. As a consequence of their continuous migration towards the Indian Sub-continent they played a key role in the politics, literature, language and administration.<sup>57</sup>

In fact the Persian intellectuals and staff affected the Mughal court deeply. Even after political change, Persian remained the official language. These Iranian clerks remained in noticeable control of the accounts and carried out their jobs with unmatched efficiency and integrity throughout the heyday 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 Humayun 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. However, as they insisted on being treated with great honour, it was very difficult to get on well with them. It seems that Akbar was not keen to pass the Turkish language on even to his descendants and instead he brought his children up to speak Persian. As we know 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 an elegant prose. He was also a good critic of Persian poetry and composed several verses and ghazals.<sup>25</sup> It was for him that Jayasi's *Padmavat* was translated into Persian, but the work was recognized only as an Indian fable (*afsanah-i-Hind*) and not as a book on Islamic mysticism in Hindi.<sup>26</sup> Still later, with volumes of letters and edicts, Aurangzeb (1656-1707) established himself as a fine prose writer of his time.

Akbar himself discarded his mother tongue. The contemporary historical resources confirm that his library contained hundreds of prose books and poetical works in Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Greek and Kashmiri but not in Turkish and the books which he heard repeatedly were all in Persian. He could also compose verses in Persian and

<sup>53</sup> Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babur. 1970. *Babur-nama*, translated by A. S. Beveridge, reprint, Delhi, 459-60.

<sup>54</sup> ZIAUDDIN, *Role of Persian at the Mughal Court*, 166.

<sup>55</sup> 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." . AbulFazl, *Akbar-name*, .Agha Ahmad Ali and AbdurRahim, III (Calcutta, 1886),. 747; Mulla Heravi, *Majma'-ush-Shu'ard-i* ed. Qati' Tazkira Jahangir Shahf, Saleem Akhtar (Karachi, 1979),. 35 and 203- 13 R. Islam, *Calendar*, pp.106-7.

<sup>56</sup> R. Islam, *Calendar*,.106-7.

<sup>57</sup> The causes of migration of Persian emigrants towards Mughal India were various. Some of them found it a worthy chance to seek better condition and the others seized the opportunity to escape the religious or political oppressions of the Safavid regime. See: ZIAUDDIN, *Role of Persian at the Mughal Court*,. 153-190

Hindi; but Mughal sources record generally only his Persian couplets, and we have to scroll through them to find just a few Hindi verses ascribed to him. Moreover, only Persian poets had the privilege of enjoying royal patronage at Akbar's court<sup>58</sup>. He was the first among the Indo-Islamic kings of northern India formally to declare Persian to be the language of administration at all levels<sup>59</sup>. Consequently, many of the Mughal kings and princes became patrons of Persian poets and poetry, they themselves composed poetry in Persian. Their example of generous patronage of Persian poets was followed by their ministers and other members of the nobility. Another factor which contributed towards the prominence of the Persian language in literary circles was due to the fact that the Persian wives of the Mughal emperors spoke the Persian language and helped it to spread throughout the empire. . They became patrons of Persian poetry and they themselves composed poetry and recited them in plethora. From Babur onwards there was a tradition among kings' wives and daughters in composing Persian poetry. The most famous of them was Babur's daughter Gulbadan Begum, Salima Sultana Begum the niece of Humayum, Nur Jahan the wife of Jahangir, and the Jahan Ara begum the daughter of Aurangzeb<sup>60</sup>.

#### **The Turkish administration and system of government in the Indian subcontinent:**

The Turks governed the Indian subcontinent, which was a vast area, for about 800 years. The question which poses itself is how they managed to last such a long time. It is worth mentioning that members of the Turkish dynasty in India had personal abilities that made them good rulers.. Most of them were good and efficient administrators. These qualities helped them to maintain their presence in India for hundreds of years. Actually, the administrative structure during the different phases of Turkish control of the Indian subcontinent was exceptionally good in spite of the fact that it was a large empire. During this period the administration did not change significantly. The most important difference between the early administration and the latter was the centralisation and decentralisation of administration.

The empire was divided into many provinces and each one of these provinces was governed by a governor and a council of ministers. In the provinces there were local officials. There were certain departments which decided certain important matters of administration. There was a standing army which was controlled by specific committees . An important aspect of the administration which helped Turkish leaders and sultans to build a strong system of government was the judicial system although historians in general have made casual references to it when they describe the character of a king or an emperor. A few writers have attempted to touch upon the judicial system, in the course of their description of the Royal courts; but their accounts are so meager and incomplete that it is difficult to form any clear picture of the judiciary and the tribunals that existed in the pre-British period. Moreover, their meager accounts are interspersed with such taunts and ridicule based on racial prejudices and pre-conceived notions that they leave an impression in the mind that God founded the Creation of justice<sup>61</sup>.

Tughlaq set himself up as as "the Supreme Court of Appeal," and changed the decisions of Qjizis and questioned their judgment in the interest of justice'.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." Ibn Batuta speaks very highly of him<sup>62</sup>. In order to strengthen his hold on India, the Sultan needed more judges, scholars, and administrators. He even needed writers, poets, and entertainers to praise and entertain the new leadership. And he turned to foreigners to

<sup>58</sup> Abul Fazal, Akbar Nama, I:271. Alam, Muzafar. 1998. The Pursuit of Persain: Language in Mughal Politics, Modern Asian Study , Camridge University, United Kingdom, . 323.

<sup>59</sup> Alam,. The Pursuit of Persian: Language,323 .

<sup>60</sup> ,. ZIAUDDIN. Role of Persian,. 27-246.

<sup>61</sup> Washed, Hussain. Administration of Justice during the Muslim Rule of India, 22.

<sup>62</sup> the Sultdn ; in his opinion " of all men this king is the "MuDtakbab-i-Tawarikh," p. 311 translated by G. 8.

Ranking . Al-Badyuni " translated by Banking, p. 317. Husain, , Wahed, Administration Of Justice During The Muslim Rule In India, Osmania University, (1934), p. 22.

fill these positions. He was mistrustful of the Hindus whom he feared would rebel against him. So he recruited foreigners and rewarded them with fabulous gifts and high salaries. Persians and Turks and other Muslims flocked to the new empire looking for rewards. Persian became the language of the ruling elite which almost isolated itself in the capital city. And it was from Sultan Muhammad Tughluq that Ibn Battuta hoped to gain employment<sup>63</sup>.

Some Turkish kings and rulers followed creative techniques and methods to overcome problems associated with governing such a large area such as the Indian subcontinent. Consolidation was one of the best administrative strategies to control a huge subcontinent like India. Sultan Balban realised this fact and tried to unite the empire instead of just extending its boundaries. It was also important to construct a strong and well-equipped army to protect the kingdom or empire from internal rebellions and external invasions. So, Balban and other Turkish monarchs and emperors paid proper attention to the military system<sup>64</sup>. They also employed royal agents, couriers and spies to contact the king at any time and they reported to the king about various developments in his kingdom<sup>65</sup>. They also became fully aware of the importance of the military in ensuring that the kingdom was secure and properly administered. For instance, Sultan 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. He introduced the system of branding of horses (dagh) and also maintained a list of soldiers (chehra). Ala-ud-din also introduced many reforms to make his empire strong and powerful. He set up an efficient system of government. He made many economic reforms, such as fixing the price of every commodity by himself. He also made sure that there was a balance between demand and supply. Prices were kept low so that all the people in his empire lived comfortably. Farmers could not hoard grain or sell it privately<sup>66</sup>.

The Turkish rulers realised the power of the Turkish nobility to support them or to cause dissension throughout the empire. So, they tried to establish a good relationship with them or limit their authority. For example, Jalal – ud – din Khilji, the first khilji 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 to satisfy elite nobility<sup>67</sup>. Some of them worked on gaining the hearts of their people to avoid revolution and uprising. For instance, Feroz Shah made many social and economic reforms. He developed royal factories called karkhanas in which thousands of slaves were employed. About 300 new towns were built during his reign. He also established Deewanikhairat and Deewanibundagan to support poor and disabled people. Some rulers spread justice between local populations such as Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq who was famous for his sense of fairness. He liberalized some of Allauddin's harsh measures. He 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 the wages of civil servants and restored the privileges of his revenue officers. He was a devout Muslim but he never persecuted the Hindus. Consequently, he was loved by his people, and rejoiced in his own piety<sup>68</sup>.

**Conclusion** : It can be concluded that the Turks contributed extensively to Indian culture. Research highlights the influence of the Turks in the Indian subcontinent. It is true that the Turks came to India after the Arabs but they remained there for hundreds of years in the face of many adversities. It is obvious from their achievements in India, how they relentlessly worked for the expansion of Islam in this part of the world through the use of their armies and through every possible means.

They 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 civilisation and Islamic civilisation as a whole. We can trace their contribution in many areas.

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<sup>63</sup> Ibn Battuta's Trip: Chapter 7.

<sup>64</sup> Mushi. The struggle for Empire.,194.

<sup>65</sup> K.Ali: Anew Hist. of Indo-Pakistan.,59

<sup>66</sup> Abud Alrauf., India in Islamic period.,338-345.

<sup>67</sup> Mushi. The struggle for Empire.,194.

<sup>68</sup> Pool. The history of India, 8.162.

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