

changes in the pattern of trade and the movements of commercial communities associated with them.

The last four contributions to this volume tackle problems connected with artistic influences and developments, particularly in the field of architecture and architectural decoration, and attempt to deal with such questions as, to what extent is there anything specifically Turkish in the art and architecture of this age, and is it proper to speak of a "Saljūq" style. These and like questions are of a baffling complexity, and we are frequently warned that there is inadequate published material and hence that all conclusions are provisional. Let us simply take note of a phrase used in Madame Sourdel-Thomine's judiciously balanced paper on Saljūq-period architecture, because of its possible wider implications for the subject of the Colloquium. While recognizing new forms, fresh influences felt and absorbed, she reminds us of "la perennité dans l'art islamique de formules élaborées à l'époque classique."

D.S.R.

BARBARIAN INCURSIONS: THE COMING OF THE TURKS INTO THE ISLAMIC WORLD

by

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In considering the rôle of the Turks in this transitional period of Islamic history—one which merits as much study by orientalists as, for instance, the so-called "crisis of the 17th century" is now getting from European historians—we have to consider two main phases, the watershed between which may roughly be placed in the opening decades of the 11th century.

The first phase begins with the gradual infiltration of Turkish ethnic elements within the northeastern borders of the Islamic world, the Gurgān-Dihistān region to the southeast of the Caspian Sea, Khwārazm, Transoxania, and possibly also eastern Afghanistan. The process was a lengthy one, probably at times hardly perceptible; and in all its stages, it is very poorly documented. We need to bear in mind that to the classical Greeks and their epigoni of the Hellenistic and Seleucid periods, the Eurasian steppes were peopled by nations like the Scythians, the Sarmatians, the Massagetae, the Issedones and the Arimaspi, who seem to have been in large part of Indo-European stock; whereas by the beginning of the Muslim era, the lands beyond the settlements of the Goths on the northern Black Sea coast, and the lands beyond Iranian Khwārazm, Transoxania and Farghāna, were given over, so far as we can tell, to Turkish nomadic peoples. The memory of an earlier state of affairs is preserved in the Iranian national epic, the *Shāh-nāma*. It was pointed out by one of the few scholars to have looked at the *Shāh-nāma* with a critical historical eye, Tadeusz Kowalski, that the Tūrān of heroic times can hardly be equated with the Turks, as seemed a natural enough conclusion in Firdawsī's own time, for the ancient Persians can have had little or no contact with the Turks. Firdawsī's Tūrān are, of course, really the Indo-European nomads of the Eurasian steppes, from the Massagetae down to the Hephthalites or Chionites, the latter group being still a power in the 1st century of Islam, giving aid to the Soghdian princes of Transoxania and acting as the spearhead of resistance to the Arabs in northern and eastern Afghanistan. Hence as Kowalski

pointed out, a Turcologist seeking for information in the *Shāh-nāma* on the primitive culture of the Turks would be definitely disappointed.¹

In the first three centuries of Islam, however, it is clear that there was some settlement of Turks on the borders of the Iranian lands in Transoxania and Khwārazm, if only as part of the symbiosis prevailing along these frontiers of the sedentary agricultural economy and the nomadic pastoralist one. The extent of this peaceful penetration has been a matter of some dispute. Some Turkish historians have seen Turks lurking everywhere in that part of the world. Attempts have been made to make Abū Muslim a Turk, projecting back his later great rôle as a Turkish folk-hero, the one so well delineated for us by Mme. Irène Mèlikoff²; similarly, such great figures as al-Fārābī, al-Bīrūnī and Ibn Sinā have been attached by over-enthusiastic Turkish scholars to their race.³ A more moderate and balanced view is that of R. N. Frye and Aydın Sayılı, who in 1944 expressed their thesis as follows:

“Our studies have led us to believe that the supposed conditions of exclusively nomadic life and small population did not exist, but that: (a) Turks were already in the regions of Khurasan and Transoxania at the time of the Arab conquest, and remained there after the Arab domination. The Turkicization of these districts had, therefore, begun long before the Saljuqs. (b) Turks were town and village dwellers except in regions where natural conditions imposed a nomadic life on them. (c) They probably had a relatively large population in Central Asia and infiltrated in fairly large numbers into the Near East.”⁴

Part of this may be conceded. Soviet archaeology has shown that in favoured parts of Semirechye, Turks were villagers and agriculturists, and had settlements on the lower Syr Darya; it is, moreover, probable that some Turks lived as fishermen on such lakes as the Aral Sea and the Isik Kōl. But the assertion of Frye and Sayılı that the Turks who took a prominent part in Transoxanian resistance to the Arabs in the 7th and early 8th centuries were not nomads from the outer steppes, but Turks who had become part of the indigenous population of Transoxania, is more dubious and is hard to prove. According to their theory, these Turks

¹ “Les Turcs dans le Šāh-nāme”, *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* (Cracow, 1939-49), vol. XV, pp. 84-99.

² See in her *Abū Muslim, le «Porte-hache» du Khorassan dans la tradition épique turco-iranienne* (Paris, 1962).

³ See, for instance, the arguments of A. Z. V. Togan regarding the putative Turkishness of al-Bīrūnī, in his *Umumî türk tarihine giriş* (Istanbul, 1946), pp. 88-9.

⁴ R. N. Frye and Aydın Sayılı, “Turks in the Middle East before the Saljuqs”, *JAOS* (New Haven, 1943), vol. LXIII, p. 195.

should be distinguished from the Turkish divisions of the Tiu-kiu Qaghan and later of the Türgesh, who did intervene, often with success, against the Arabs in Transoxania, and whose penetration as far as the Soghdian “Iron Gate”, the Buzgala defile between Kish and Tirmidh, seems to be mentioned in the Orkhon inscriptions.⁵ But it is safer, in the absence of decisive information to the contrary, to regard these Turks who are mentioned as being in the service of the Iranian princes of Soghdia, as being largely mercenary soldiers from the steppes, hired by the local rulers; in this respect, we would have an anticipation of the rôle which Turkish slaves and mercenaries were to play so conspicuously under the ‘Abbāsīd Caliphate. Pre-Sāmānid Transoxania was a land of political fragmentation, of city-states and petty principalities, which often engaged in internecine warfare at a time when there was a pressing need for solidarity against the Arabs. Consequently, there was rarely a shortage of employment for Turkish soldiers of fortune.

The proponents of an early Turkish penetration of the northeastern Iranian world⁶ have adduced as evidence for this process certain sections of Jāhīz’s epistle on the excellences of the Turks, the *Risāla fī manāqib al-atrāk wa-‘āmmat jund al-khilāfa*, which he wrote for the Turkish general of al-Mutawakkil, al-Faṭḥ b. Khāqān (d. 247/861). The Turkish slave guards of the Caliphs had already by the middle years of this century achieved an unenviable reputation for violence, reflected, for instance, in popular Arabic poetry circulating in ‘Irāq at the time. Jāhīz hoped to soften this harsh contemporary image of the Turks and to assign them a recognized place in Islamic society, perhaps even, as F. Gabrieli has surmised, of making them a “third force” in the Caliphate between the Arab and the Persian elements; Jāhīz describes his aim as *ta’līf al-qulūb* and *ittifāq al-asbāb*. In his epistle, Jāhīz at one place asserts that the Turks and Khurāsānīs are essentially one race, with similar natures and inhabiting contiguous lands. He further lays down the dictum that settlers easily become indistinguishable from the aboriginal inhabitants of a region, and he emphasizes the assimilative effect of *walā’*, clientship, which had blurred the distinction between Turks and eastern Iranians.⁷ Nevertheless,

⁵ W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol invasion* (London, 1928), pp. 186-7.

⁶ See Frye and Sayılı, op. cit., p. 206, and M. Şemseddin Günaltay, “Abbas oğulları imparatorluğunun kuruluş ve yükselisinde Türklerin rolü”, *Bellelen* (Ankara, 1942), vol. VI, pp. 178-9.

⁷ Arabic text, ed. G. van Vloten in *Tria opuscula auctore al-Djahiz* (Leiden, 1903), pp. 4-8, 17-21, 38-9, English translation by C. T. Harley-Walker, “Jāhīz of Basra to al-Faṭḥ b. Khāqān on the ‘Exploits of the Turks and the army of the Khalifate in general’, *JRAS* (London, 1915), pp. 636-41, 654, 658, 679; see also the discussion of F. Gabrieli in his “La Risāla di al-Gāhīz sui Turchi”, *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* (Rome, 1957), vol. XXXII, pp. 477-83.

these rather vague and general remarks should not be taken as implying a profound Turcization of Khurāsān. The term is obviously used, as it frequently was in early Islam, with a very loose and large geographical application, and when Jāhīz speaks of Turkish settlement in "Khurāsān", he could well mean the far eastern fringes of Transoxania, such as al-Fath b. Khāqān's native province of Farghāna. Moreover, contemporary Islamic historical sources carefully distinguish the men of Farghāna, Shāsh, Ushrūsana, etc. in the Caliphal armies from the Turks brought in from the deep steppe, and it is very likely that the so-called "men of Farghāna", *Farāghina*, etc., included a good proportion of Iranians as well as Turks.⁸

The Turks as a race had been known to the Arabs from the late Jāhiliya and the early Islamic periods, if we can regard as authentic that poetry in which the "lands of the Turks" appears as a kind of *Ultima Thule*; Persia must have been the channel of communication here.⁹ The oft-quoted tradition of the Prophet, "Leave the Turks alone as long as they leave you alone" is, of course, apocryphal; it does not appear earlier than in the collection of Abū Dā'ūd (mid-9th cent.).¹⁰ By this century, some authentic knowledge of the Turks was emerging, now that the Sāmānids were establishing a firm frontier along the Syr Darya against the Turks of the outer steppes, and now that considerable numbers of the Turks were entering the Caliphate as military slaves. Specific tribes begin to be mentioned, so that towards the middle of the 9th century, Ibn Khurdādhbih can name such groups as the Türgesh, Kimek, Qarluq, Toghuz-Oghuz, Oghuz, Qirghiz, Qipchaq and Khazars.

The Umayyad penetration of Transoxania brought a trickle of Turkish domestic slaves into the households of the Arab and Persian upper classes, and by early 'Abbāsīd times, the governors of Khurāsān and the east regularly included contingents of Turkish slaves in their tribute and presents to Baghdad. Some of the slave mothers of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphs were clearly Turkish; thus the mother of al-Muktafi (b. 264/877-8) is named as Jijak (i.e. *chichek*, "flower").¹¹ But the slave trade reached a peak of organization under the Sāmānids of Transoxania and Khurāsān. The geographer

⁸ Osman S. A. Ismail, "Mu'taşim and the Turks", *BSOAS* (London, 1966), vol. XXIX, pp. 14-15.

⁹ Kowalski, "Die ältesten Erwähnungen der Türken in der arabischen Literatur", *Körösi Csoma Archivum* (Budapest, 1926-32), vol. II, pp. 38-41.

¹⁰ See Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien* (Halle, 1888-90), vol. I, pp. 270-1, excursus VI "Traditionen über Türken", English translation by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern, *Muslim Studies* (London, 1967), pp. 245-6.

¹¹ al-Tha'ālibī, *Laṭā'if al-ma'ārif*, translated by C. E. Bosworth, *The book of curious and entertaining information* (Edinburgh, 1968), p. 102.

al-Maqdisi (wrote *circa* 375/985) quotes what he calls "a certain book", that the stipulated revenue of Khurāsān included a levy of 12,000 slaves a year. He further mentions that the Sāmānīd government controlled the export of slaves, levying a toll at the Oxus crossing of from 70 to 100 *dirhams* for each Turkish slave and requiring in addition to this a licence (*jawāz*) for the transit of each slave boy.¹² Most of the slaves thus handled by the Sāmānīds were brought in the first place to such towns just behind the frontier as Shāsh and Isfijāb, where there existed permanent markets, frequented by slave dealers. Some slaves were brought in as prisoners-of-war from Sāmānīd raids into the steppe, such as that of Ismā'il b. Aḥmad in 280/893, which penetrated as far as the encampment of the Khān of the Qarluq at Talas, where an enormous booty of men and beasts was taken.¹³ But raids on this scale were exceptional, and most slaves must have been brought in by other Turks, probably after being captured in tribal warfare. This was the case with Maḥmūd of Ghazna's father Sabuktigin, who according to his own testament or *Pand-nāma*, was captured by the Tukhsi tribe and sold into slavery at Shāsh.¹⁴

Transoxania and Central Asia were not, of course, the only channels by which Turkish slaves came into the Caliphate. The Islamic and Turkish worlds also marched side-by-side in the Dihistān steppes to the southeast of the Caspian, where defensive walls existed from at least Sāsānīd times. In the 'Umayyad period there is mentioned a local ruler of Dihistān called Šül or Šültigin, ethnically Turkish (Barthold connected the name Šül with the Orkhon Turkish title of *chur*),¹⁵ but culturally Iranized. His descendants achieved prominence in the cultural life of the 'Abbāsīd period, producing, amongst others, the famous Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Šūlī, companion of the Caliphs, author and chess-player. Very important as an early and continuing source for Turkish slaves were the Khazar lands to the north of the Caucasus. During the whole of the Umayyad and early 'Abbāsīd periods, the lands between the Caucasus and the lower Don and Volga were a battle ground, in which such Arab heroes as Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malik and Marwān b. Muḥammad, the future Caliph, won fame. These raids and campaigns are poorly-documented, but the securing of slaves, Turkish and possibly Slav and Ugrian, was undoubtedly a prominent motive here. There was a diaspora of Khazar soldiers in both the Caliphal

¹² *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī ma'rifaṭ al-aqālīm*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1906), p. 340.

¹³ Barthold, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

¹⁴ M. Nazim, "The Pand-nāmah of Subuktigin", *JRAS* (1933), text, pp. 611-4, tr., pp. 622-3; Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids, their empire in Afghanistan and eastern Iran* (Edinburgh, 1963), pp. 39-41.

¹⁵ *History of the Turkmen people*, in *Four studies on the history of Central Asia* (Leiden, 1962), vol. III, tr. V. and T. Minorsky, pp. 87-8.

and the Byzantine armies. In his *De ceremoniis aulae byzantinae*, Constantine Porphyrogenitus mentions Khazars in the élite imperial guard at Constantinople. Turkish *ghulāms* with the *nisba* of "al-Khazarī" are quite frequent in the Caliphal armies of the 9th and 10th centuries, and al-Sam'ānī lists several traditionists with this name, doubtless the descendants of Turkish slave guards who had integrated themselves into the Arab-Islamic religious and intellectual institution.¹⁶

Most of the Turkish slaves (*ghilmān*, *mamālīk*) brought into the Islamic world were trained as soldiers, although some were used for domestic duties; Aytākh al-Khazarī, commander of the palace guard at Sāmarrā under al-Mu'taṣim and al-Wāthiq, started off as a cook's boy, and according to Barhebraeus, when the Saljūq Tughril Beg entered Baghdād in 447/1055, he found there Turkish families of long standing working at such lowly tasks as stokers of baths, bakers and vegetable sellers.¹⁷ The factors behind this great demand in the 9th century for Turkish slaves were military, political and economic. Militarily, the old *levée en masse* of the Arab *muqātila* was becoming obsolescent by the later Umayyad period, and the early 'Abbāsids depended on their Khurasanian guards, the *Abnā' al-Dawla*, still the backbone of al-Ma'mūn's forces in his struggle with his brother al-Amīn for the Caliphate. But even these Persian troops had begun to acquire sectional interests and stakes in society. What was now needed was a body of troops brought in from outside the Islamic lands, unfettered by local ties and able to give a single-minded loyalty to their master. The Caliph al-Mu'taṣim believed that he had found such a body of faithful servants in his Turkish *ghulāms*. At the political and economic level, the growth of a Turkish slave army reflects the flourishing material condition of the Caliphate, which provided the Caliphs and provincial rulers with liquid funds for the purchase and payment of professional, standing armies. These troops, it was hoped, could be used to promote a policy of state centralization and as part of this process, to raise the ruler high above the level of the *ra'īya* or civilian population.¹⁸

Islamic writers in the *adab* works, manuals of war and "Mirrors for Princes", praise the Turks as the military people *par excellence*, brave, loyal and inured to hardship through their upbringing in the harsh steppes.

¹⁶ See Barthold, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (1st ed.), Art. "Khazars", and D. M. Dunlop, *The history of the Jewish Khazars* (Princeton, 1954), pp. 46-87, 171-94.

¹⁷ *Chronography*, tr. Sir E. Wallis Budge (London, 1932), p. 208.

¹⁸ See on these general changes in Islamic military organization, R. Levy, *The social structure of Islam* (Cambridge, 1957), pp. 407 ff., and D. Sourdel and C. E. Bosworth, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd ed.), Art. "Ghulām. 1. The Caliphate. 2. Persia". For the Caliph al-Mu'taṣim's rôle in this process, see Ismail, "Mu'taṣim and the Turks", pp. 12-24.

Jāhiz credited the Turks with some of the attributes of the noble savage, such as their freedom from hypocrisy and intrigue and their imperviousness to flattery, although he had to admit that they had an insatiable love of plunder and violence.¹⁹ In the middle years of the 11th century, the former Ghaznavid official Ibn Ḥassūl wrote a propaganda tract for his new master in Rayy, the Saljūq Tughril Beg, attacking the Daylamīs and their political structure. In his epistle, he vaunts the Turks' lion-like qualities and pride, their freedom from unnatural vice, their rejection of menial household duties and their single-minded desire to achieve military command.²⁰ The great Persian "Mirrors for Princes" of the 11th century, such as those of Kay Kā'ūs and Niẓām al-Mulk, especially emphasize the value of the Turkish soldiers and guards as buttresses for the would-be despotic ruler's power.²¹ They also reflect the atmosphere of the Sunnī reaction against the previous Daylamī and Arab Shī'ī régimes by their contrasting of the Turks' religious orthodoxy with the Shī'ism of the Daylamīs and western Persians.

The sources for the 9th and 10th centuries amply illustrate the leading rôle of the Caliphs' Turkish guards in the making and unmaking of Caliphs, and in the general increase of political violence and instability in 'Irāq at this time. The Arabic historians unanimously regard the Turks as a maleficent influence in the state and as a major contributory factor to the decadence and impotence into which the Caliphate had fallen.²² One is tempted to wonder whether this is not the beginning of the Arab-Turkish racial antipathy, antedating the period of Ottoman domination in the Arab lands, to which the Arabs, in their *sancta simplicitas*, still attribute so many of their woes and shortcomings, but there does not seem to be any evidence for this; rather the reverse, as I shall mention later. Even so, a thoroughgoing study of the image of the Turks in Arabic literature from, say, the 9th century onwards, on the lines of the works of Dana C. Rouillard, S. M. Chew and R. Schwoebel for the picture of the Ottomans in Christian Europe, might well be revealing of the genesis of these attitudes.

At Sāmarrā, seat of the Caliphate during the middle decades of the 9th century, adjacent blocks of land were allotted as fiefs (*qaṭā'i'*) (for the

¹⁹ Jāhiz, op. cit., text, pp. 39-41, tr., pp. 678-82.

²⁰ Edited by 'Abbās al-'Azzāwī, with a Turkish translation by Şerefeddin Yalçınkaya, in *Bellesten* (1940), vol. IV, pp. 235-66 + pp. 1-51 Arabic text.

²¹ See Bosworth, "Ghaznevid military organisation", *Der Islam* (Berlin, 1960), vol. XXXVI, pp. 40-1, 51-2, 56.

²² The historian al-Mas'ūdi in his *Murūj al-dhahab* quotes numerous examples of Arabic poetry circulating in 'Irāq and expressing popular detestation of the Turks; see *ibid.*, ed. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille (Paris, 1861-77), vol. VII, pp. 324-5.

various national groups, Turks, Khurāsānīs and Maghribīs.²³ The acquisition of such estates by professional soldiers undoubtedly gave an impetus to the spread of the *iqṭā'* system in the central lands of Islam, even though the roots of the system, particularly in 'Irāq, can be traced back to the first Arab conquests. In regard to these *iqṭā'*s, Cl. Cahen has noted that the need to provide land grants for the new professional slave armies brought about a change in the nature of the *iqṭā'*. Whereas earlier grants had often been for limited periods only and had not included the right of the *muqṭa'* or grantee to collect the *kharāj* himself, we now have the growth of virtually hereditary usufructuary concessions, usually carrying full immunity from the entry of the state's agents and paying a fixed sum only to the central administration. This type became the norm during the 10th century in the central lands of the Caliphate, and a further consequence of the growing power of the class of *muqṭa'*s was the rise of *talji'a* and *himāya*, practices involving the extension of protection over weaker parties and corresponding to the mediaeval European *commendatio*. From their nucleus around Sāmarrā and the Sawād of 'Irāq, the *iqṭā'*s of the Turks spread all over 'Irāq and into western Persia, so that by the 11th century, although much *milk* or private land remained, the land alienated from the central government certainly formed an increasing proportion of the cultivated land in these provinces.²⁴ The existence of a network of these *iqṭā'*s injected at times an element of instability into political affairs, in that despite the trend towards hereditary possession, re-distributions did nevertheless take place at times of political change and crisis, though not with the regularity that such redistribution of fiefs was made under the early Mamlūk Sultans. Even so, one of the reasons given for al-Mutawakkil's murder is said to have been his intention of confiscating the fiefs in Jibāl and at Iṣfahān of the Turkish general Waṣīf and giving them to his favourite, al-Faṭḥ b. Khāqān.²⁵

The Turkish takeover of military, and increasingly, political, power, continued as the authority of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate diminished and became confined to central 'Irāq. Autonomous provincial dynasties, whether Arab or Iranian, followed the trends of the period in military organization, and built their armies round a nucleus of Turkish slave guards.

²³ Cf. Ismail, "The founding of a new capital: Sāmarrā", *BSOAS* (1968), vol. XXXI, pp. 8-9.

²⁴ See Cahen, "L'évolution de l'Iqta' du IX^e au XIII^e siècle. Contribution à une histoire comparée des sociétés médiévales", *Annales: Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* (Paris, 1953), vol. VIII, pp. 25-52, and idem, "Notes pour l'histoire de la *himāya*", *Mélanges Louis Massignon* (Damascus, 1956-7), vol. I, pp. 287-303.

²⁵ al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḥ*, ed. Leiden (1879-1901), vol. III, p. 1452, *sub anno* AH 247.

Thus as early as the reign of the Sāmānīd Amīr Ismā'il b. Aḥmad (279-95/892-907), the Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish army was a Turkish slave.²⁶ In the west, the Turkish soldiers Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn and then Muḥammad b. Ṭughj made themselves virtually independent in Egypt and Syria, paving the way for the triumph of the Fāṭimīds shortly afterwards, who in their own multi-national armies employed many Turks. Although the Daylamī and Kurdish groups of the "Iranian interlude" of the 10th and early 11th centuries caused a resurgence of older Iranian elements in the eastern Islamic world, they themselves soon found that they could not do without Turkish cavalymen in their armies.²⁷ The culmination of the process of a Turkish infiltration of the Islamic lands from within comes with the establishment at the end of the 10th century of the Ghaznavīd Sultanate in Afghanistan, eastern Persia and northern India, the most powerful empire known in the east since the break-up of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate. The career of Sabuktigin epitomizes how a Turkish commander, born in paganism, could by resolute action rise to the very top of the ladder of political and military power. The early Ghaznavīds showed a remarkable faculty for assimilation to the Perso-Islamic governmental ethos in the lands which they took over. The full apparatus of despotic government was taken over and worked to its utmost by Sultans like Maḥmūd and his son Mas'ūd, using as their instruments the class of financial officials and secretaries whose views had been moulded by the authoritarian 'Abbāsīd Caliphate or even by earlier Persian models.²⁸

In this fashion, we have the first major breakthrough of Turkish power in the Islamic world, for such dynasties as the Ṭūlūnīds had never endured for more than two generations or so. Although the achievement of Maḥmūd of Ghazna in assembling such a vast empire was transient, and his immediate successors had to relinquish the western conquests, the Ghaznavīds did much to prepare the way for the coming of the Saljūqs; they weakened or destroyed several local Iranian powers and reduced the influence of the Iranian landed and military classes, the dihqāns, through the imposition of a centralized bureaucracy directed from Ghazna. With their militaristic outlook, their relentless policies of financial exploitation, and their separation of the ruling institution, civil and military, from the masses of population, the Ghaznavīds established a pattern for most of the

²⁶ See Bosworth, "An alleged embassy from the Emperor of China to the Amīr Naṣr b. Aḥmad: a contribution to Sāmānīd military history", *Yād-nāma-yi Minorsky* (Tehran, 1969), pp. 25-7.

²⁷ See idem, "Military organisation under the Būyīds of Persia and Iraq", *Oriens* (Leiden, 1967), vol. XVIII-XIX, pp. 153-7.

²⁸ See idem, *The Ghaznavīds, their empire in Afghanistan and eastern Iran, passim*.

Turkish-directed régimes which were to be set up all over the central and eastern parts of the Islamic world.

To sum up here, we have in the period up to the early 11th century an infiltration from within of the military and governmental institutions in almost all the Islamic lands east of Egypt. The Turks themselves had not yet acquired the education and sophistication to run the administrative machine themselves, but their control of the ultimate sanction for authority, military force, enabled their will to be generally put into practice. Numerically, this infiltration was not large; indeed, the historical significance of the process was out of all proportion to its immediate influence on human society in the Middle East.

In the 11th century, we have the beginnings of comparatively large-scale ethnic and tribal movements of Turks into the Middle East, resulting in the establishment of such dynasties as the Qarakhānids in Transoxania, and above all, the Saljūqs in the Perso-Anatolian region and the Arab lands of the Fertile Crescent east of Egypt. The subsequent rise of the Khwārazm-Shāhs in eastern Irān and of the network of Atabeg dynasties in western Irān and the Arab lands, must be regarded as a continuation of this process. The Qarluq Khāns and Saljūq Begs achieved power with surprising ease, when one considers the superiority in manpower, weapons and equipment which the conventional professional armies of the Sāmānids, Būyids and Ghaznavids must have possessed. But here, the incomers were aided by the built-in advantages of extreme mobility, elusiveness and lack of impedimenta which all invaders from the steppes have enjoyed over settled peoples right down to recent times, when the introduction of firearms has finally tipped the balance against the nomads. The Qarakhānid takeover in Transoxania was possible largely because of the internal disintegration of the Sāmānid Amirate in the last decade or so of the 10th century, but there seems to have been a general loss of resilience and absorptive power in the northeastern corner of the Iranian world, which had for so long been the bastion of civilization there against the barbarians outside. These new Turkish incursions have just been characterized as "comparatively large-scale", but this term is perhaps only accurate when one views the process as one spread over a long period of time. Pastoralism is an extensive, as opposed to intensive, manner of existence, and the population of the steppes can never have been all that large. The Turkoman incursions of the 11th century included large tribal groups, such as the 16,000 Ghuzz (= Oghuz) warriors present at the battle of Dandānqān in 431/1040, which gave the Saljūqs control of Khurāsān and opened up for them much of northern Persia (on the other hand, the figures given by Ibn al-Athīr, amounting to several tens of thousands, for the so-called "Irāqī" Turcomans, who

swept westwards into eastern Anatolia and northern 'Irāq at this time, are probably much exaggerated).²⁹ But on the whole, it must have been the cumulative effect over two centuries and more of smaller groups of Turks coming in as pastoralists or as mercenary soldiers which gradually changed the ethnic complexion of much of the northern tier of the Middle East.

The fact that so many of these Turks came in as tribal groups, with a strong consciousness of their patriarchal organization and of their barbarian culture and religious attitudes, meant that the Qarakhānid Khāns and the Saljūq Sultans faced problems which the Ghaznavid Sultans, for instance, had been largely spared. The newly-arrived Turkish rulers gradually became aware of the old-established Perso-Islamic traditions of exalted monarchic power and its correlative, submissiveness of the subject masses of population, and realized that it could be used to raise them from their circumscribed positions as tribal leaders to a more commanding rôle. The pursuit of a such a policy of self-magnification was eagerly advocated by the Turkish rulers' Persian officials and advisers. For someone like Niẓām al-Mulk, the transition could not be made fast enough. Although he conceded that the Turkoman tribesmen had originally been the mainstay of the régime and that they accordingly deserved some continued recognition, he lamented that his Saljūq masters would not go as far or as quickly as he would have liked in their self-identification with the despotic practices of such of his heroes as 'Aḡud al-Dawla and Maḥmūd of Ghazna. Thus, he complained, institutions which served to buttress the fabric of an authoritarian state, such as the *barīd* or state postal service, had been allowed to fall into desuetude, and the *amīr ḥaras* or commander of the guard at court had declined in status.³⁰

Yet in taking a middle way between the anarchic tendencies and preferences of the Turkoman tribesmen, and the centralizing policies of their Persian viziers, the Saljūq Sultans were more wise and far-sighted than their officials probably thought. Rulers like Tuḡhril and Alp Arslān could obviously feel some sympathy for the rank-and-file Turkomans, who saw the old tribal customs quietly set aside and replaced by the Islamic *Shari'a* and a Persian governmental ethos which enjoined political quietism and unquestioning obedience to the ruler as the *summa bona*. The frequent Turkoman revolts, in which appeal was made to the old tribal principle of succession by seniorate rather than by the designation of a *walī al-'ahd*, often a son, during the Sultan's lifetime, kept the Sultans uncomfortably aware of this undercurrent of conservative feeling. In the 12th century,

²⁹ See Bosworth, "Ghaznavid military organisation", pp. 75-7.

³⁰ See idem, in *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. V, *The Saljuq and Mongol periods*, ed. J. A. Boyle (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 76 ff.

the intensity of this tribal feeling showed no diminution, for there were always freshly-arriving Turkoman groups from the steppes who kept alive a consciousness of the old ways, and by no means all of these groups passed on to the Byzantine frontiers. Hence Sultan Sanjar, whose long reign in eastern Persia was to end in a sharp explosion of this tribal feeling, was nevertheless careful to observe Turkish customs, especially as he for long had his capital at Marv in Khurāsān, a region where the Turkomans were numerically very strong. According to a Turkish *Muntakhab-i tawārikh-i saljūqīya*, Sanjar assigned positions in his army to the tribal elements, giving the right wing to the Qayī and Bayat and the left wing to the Bayundur and Pecheneg.³¹

The need to pay regard to conservative tribal feeling thus acted as a brake on the rulers' progress towards absolutism, but there is, indeed, nothing to make us think that the Qarakhānid Khāns or the Great Saljūq Sultans ever wanted to cut themselves off totally from their fellow-nationals. Thus whereas the Ghaznavid Sultans, from Maḥmūd onwards, adopted Islamic and Persian regnal titles and personal names almost exclusively, the Saljūqs on the whole favoured traditional Turkish personal names, right down to the time of the last Great Saljūq Sultan, Ṭughril b. Arslān, and the exceedingly complex system of Islamic regnal titles and personal names, combined with Turkish personal names and totemistic *onghun* titles, remained in force amongst the Qarakhānids down to the Mongol invasion.

The balance kept, with varying success, between Perso-Islamic authoritarianism and Turkish tribalism, did not prevent severe tensions arising within both the Saljūq and Qarakhānid states. In the eastern Iranian world, there was undoubtedly an initial decentralization of power consequent on the collapse of the Sāmānids and Ghaznavids. Transoxania, in particular, reverted to a pattern resembling the pre-Arab network of feudal principalities and city states, under the light rule of the Qarakhānid Khāns. Thus the Dihqān of Īlāq on the middle Syr Darya began in the early 11th century to mint his own coins for the first time.³² With the centralizing policies of the Sāmānids now swept away, the general complexity and expense of administration decreased; a continuator of Narshakhī, the historian of Bukhārā, says that the *kharaḥ* of the region was everywhere lightened, as irrigation works were neglected and land fell out of production.³³ A similar inability to cope with the complexities of the organized state was displayed by the Ghuzz in Khurāsān during the three

³¹ Ismail Hakki Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devleti teşkilâtına medhal* (Istanbul, 1941), p. 22.

³² Cf. Barthold, *Turkistan down to the Mongol invasion*, p. 307.

³³ *The history of Bukhara*, tr. R. N. Frye (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), p. 33.

years in which they held Sanjar captive; they made no attempt to administer the territories under their control, and their diplomatic activity was confined to a few tentative approaches to the Ghūrīds and to the Bāwandīds of the Caspian region.

The effects of the Turkish invasions on land utilization in the Middle East were obviously significant. Many of the Turkomans who swept across northern Irān from the 1020s onwards passed on to Anatolia and the Caucasus, where they fought as *ghāzīs* or *aqīnjīs* against the Christian Armenian and Georgian principalities and against the Byzantine empire. Others moved with their herds into al-Jazīra and Syria, mingling with the indigenous Arab camel nomads and sheep herders and clashing with them over the occupation of pasture grounds, or else finding employment as auxiliary soldiers in the service of the local Arab and Kurdish Amīrs, before the general tide of Saljūq conquest overwhelmed these last.³⁴ Still others, however, remained in Persia in the regions that were adapted for sheep-rearing. Thus the present-day Turkish elements in provinces like Ādhar-bayjān, Kurdistān, Fārs and Gurgān almost certainly date from Saljūq times, although their numbers (especially, perhaps, those in Fārs) may have been swelled in post-Mongol times.³⁵ A region like Gurgān was geographically merely an extension of the Dihistān steppes, and hence very vulnerable to Turkoman occupation and pastoralization; the frontier here remained open to Turkoman raiding until the second half of the 19th century, with deleterious effects on agriculture in the Caspian coastlands.

The organization by the Great Saljūq Sultans of a multi-national, professional standing army, in addition to the tribal levies of the Turkomans, posed problems of payment. In such a geographically extensive empire, where there were, as we have noted above, many forces making for decentralization, a system of cash payments for the troops, *vazaqāt*, such as had prevailed under the Tāhirīds, Sāmānīds and Ghaznavīds, and still to a fair extent under the Būyīds, was difficult to maintain. Hence the trends of the Būyīd period in 'Irāq and western Persia towards the extension of the *iqṭā'* system were intensified under the Saljūqs. The elucidation of the various types of *iqṭā'*, a task made all the more difficult by a confused and often overlapping terminology, has been the particular task of such authorities as Cl. Cahen and A. K. S. Lambton. According to these scholars, there are certain trends to be discerned in the evolution of the

³⁴ The process whereby Turkomans coming into northern Syria and al-Jazīra in the second half of the 5th/11th century overthrew the indigenous Arab dynasty of the Kilābī Mirdāsīds is described in detail by Suheil Zakkār in his unpublished London Ph.D. thesis (SOAS, 1969), "The emirate of Aleppo 392/1002-487/1094", chapter 4.

³⁵ Cf. A. K. S. Lambton, *Landlord and peasant in Persia* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 57-9, 77.

iqṭā' in the Saljūq period, such as the assimilation of *iqṭā'*s formerly granted as leases for administrative purposes, the *iqṭā' al-tamlīk*, to those granted for military purposes, the descendant of the *iqṭā' al-istiḡhlāl*, for the support of amīrs and other soldiers. In the 12th century, as the Saljūq Sultans' grip on affairs weakened, the incipient hereditary tendency in these military *iqṭā'*s increased, giving the Turkish amīrs firm territorial and financial bases of power and thereby favouring the trend towards the rise of dynasties of provincial Atabegs.³⁶

Geographically, the *iqṭā'* system now began to spread eastwards from western Persia into Khurāsān and possibly beyond, as part of the general militarization of the administrative system which had begun under the Būyids and continued under the Saljūqs. Sanjar seems to have been able to keep a closer control on the *iqṭā'* system of Khurāsān than could his weaker brethren in the west in their territories; the areas granted out in the east were supposed, at least in theory, to yield definite sums of money for the *muḡṭā'*, in return for which he furnished Sanjar with troop contingents.³⁷ To the east of Saljūq Khurāsān, and acknowledging Sanjar's suzerainty, lay the truncated Ghaznavid empire, now essentially oriented towards northern India. The *iqṭā'* system had never been entirely unknown to the Ghaznavids, for the Turkish slave soldiers who accompanied Alptigin to Ghazna in the middle years of the 10th century are said to have established *iqṭā'*s in the district around Ghazna where they settled.³⁸ But if such land grants continued under the first Ghaznavid Sultans, there must have been strict control of them, the grants being for limited periods or being attached to definite offices only (i.e. they were *ḡu'mas* rather than *iqṭā'*s).³⁹ Yet in the later Ghaznavid period, i.e. the 12th century, there are signs that the *iqṭā'* system was spreading generally within the Ghaznavid dominions, so that the Ghaznavids became the channel whereby the *iqṭā'* system passed to the Ghūrīds and was firmly implanted in northern India under the Delhi Sultans and their successors; unfortunately, the materials for a study of this process are extremely sparse. Fuad Kōprülü suggested that the adoption of an *iqṭā'* system on Saljūq lines received a particular impetus during the long reign of Bahrām Shāh (512-47/1118-52), when Saljūq

³⁶ See the works of Cahen and Lambton cited above, p. 8, n. 24 and p. 13, n. 35, and also Lambton, "The evolution of the *iqṭā'* in mediaeval Iran", *Iran, Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* (London, 1967), vol. V, pp. 41-50.

³⁷ Cf. idem, in *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. V, pp. 236-7, 246-7.

³⁸ Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids, their empire in Afghanistan and eastern Iran*, pp. 41-2, 124-5.

³⁹ Concerning the terminology of the land grant system, see idem, "Abū 'Abdallāh al-Khwārazmī on the technical terms of the secretary's art: a contribution to the administrative history of mediaeval Islam", *JESHO* (Leiden 1969), vol. XII, pp. 116-17, 133-4.

political and cultural influences were strong and when the exigencies of warfare with the Saljūqs, and later with the Ghūrīds, may have compelled a widespread adoption of the *iqṭā'* system. There exist some lines of the 12th-century Ghaznavid poet Sanā'ī in which the author complains that the Turks have taken people's land unlawfully, possibly implying that the state had been forced into confiscatory policies in order to find land to grant out as *iqṭā'*s.⁴⁰

Finally, we may consider briefly the wider questions of the rôle of the incoming Turks in the general Islamic culture of this period, and the alleged responsibility of the Turkish conquests for the intellectual stagnation of later mediaeval Islam. The Turks became on the whole enthusiastic converts to Islam, and the heritage of the shamanistic past seems to have been largely channelled into an attachment to certain favoured Ṣūfī orders.⁴¹ They became vigorous upholders of the Sunna and its Ḥanafī *madhhab* or legal system. This attachment to Sunnī orthodoxy was sharpened by the political parts which the Turks were able to play soon after their entry into the Islamic world—the liberation of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphs from the tutelage of the Shī'ī Būyids; a confrontation in Syria, Palestine and the Holy Cities with the Ismā'īlī Fāṭimīds, the brilliance of whose culture had far overshadowed the moribund 'Abbāsīds; and an attack on the Ismā'īlīs or Assassins within their own Syrian and Persian territories, for the Sunnī majority firmly believed that these sectaries were bent on the subversion of Islam from within. The more bellicose and uncontrollable elements within the Saljūqs' Turkoman following could earn further kudos for their race by their frontier warfare with the Georgians, Armenians and Byzantines.

Hence it is not surprising that Sunnī writers sought an ideological and theological justification for the near-universal domination of the Turks in the Middle East. The Persian historian of the Saljūqs, Rāwandī, dedicated his *Rāḡhat al-sudūr* to one of the Saljūq Sultans of Rūm, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kay Khusraw, and speaks of a *hātīf*, a hidden, supernatural voice, which spoke from the Ka'ba in Mecca to the Imām Abū Ḥanīfa and promised him that as long as the sword remained in the hands of the Turks, his faith (sc. that of the Ḥanafī *madhhab*) would not perish. Rāwandī himself adds the pious doxology, "Praise be to God, He is exalted, that the defenders of Islam are mighty and that the followers of the Ḥanafī rite are happy and

⁴⁰ "Kay kabilesi hakkında yeni notlar", *Bellelen* (1944), vol. VIII, pp. 449-52.

⁴¹ Non-Islamic influences discernible in the Yasawīya order, for instance, were discussed by Kōprülüzāde Mehmet Fuad in his *Türk edebiyatında ilk mutasavvıflar* (Istanbul, 1919) and in his *L'influence du chamanisme turco-mongole sur les ordres mystiques musulmanes* (Istanbul, 1929).

joyful! In the lands of the Arabs, Persians, Byzantines and Russians, the words is in the hand of the Turks, and fear of their sword is firmly implanted in all hearts!"⁴² Bernard Lewis has recently cited a significant passage in Ibn Khaldūn's *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, in which the great historian brings up to date the concept of the Turk as noble savage which we detected in the writings of Jāhīz. He reviews the almost universal political domination of the Turks in his day, and notes how when the Muslims' luxury and sloth, their lack of vitality and courage in battle, had brought down upon their heads the invasions of the Tatars or Mongols, God had made Egypt a defensive bastion against the infidels, and raised up there a body of valiant defenders in the shape of the Mamlūks, brought from the strong and numerous tribes of the Turks. Moreover, he goes on, God in his providence has provided that wave after wave, and generation after generation, of fresh Turks should come into the Islamic world to prevent the old habits of lassitude and luxury from re-asserting themselves amongst the Muslims.⁴³ Such a passage as this seems to show that the Arab-Turkish antipathy, characteristic of the last decades or so, cannot be traced back to an ancient ethnic feeling, but is a product of the movement towards the setting-up of nation states which contributed to the disintegration of the Ottoman empire.

⁴² *Rāḥat al-ṣudūr*, ed. M. Iqbāl (London, 1921), pp. 13 ff., 17 ff., cf. O. Turan, "The ideal of world domination among the mediaeval Turks", *SI* (Paris, 1955), vol. IV, pp. 84-5.

⁴³ *Kitāb al-'Ibar* (Cairo, 1867), vol. V, p. 371, quoted in Lewis, "The Mongols, the Turks and the Muslim polity", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (London, 1968), 5th Series, vol. XVIII, p. 64.

CHANGES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (950-1150)
AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE DOCUMENTS
OF THE CAIRO GENIZA

by

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I feel a little bit odd and almost embarrassed to open this series of lectures on a most dramatic epoch of Islamic history with a paper on a society which might be regarded as living outside the main stream of the revolutionary developments forming the subject of this colloquium. The documents of the Cairo Geniza naturally have been found in Egypt; but Egypt was not the main theatre of the crucial happenings between 950 and 1150. True, the country of the Nile was the hub of the great maritime East-West trade developing during these centuries. Consequently, the Geniza has preserved priceless documents and letters which originated all along the trade route between Spain and India. But the crucial developments of lasting impact took place in this period in Īrān, 'Irāq, northern Mesopotamia and Asia Minor, as well as Syria, but not in Egypt.

Moreover, the Geniza papers originated mostly, although not exclusively, within the Jewish community, a minority group, and only in certain layers and sections of this group. The rich and influential Jews lived in Cairo, the seat of the government, and had no opportunity to dispose of their discarded writings in the Geniza chamber found in the synagogue of the Palestinians in Fuṣṭāṭ. In Fuṣṭāṭ itself the upper crust of the Jewish society was largely formed by Karaites and Iraqians, who also had synagogues of their own and deposited their papers in the lumber room of the Palestinian synagogue only in very exceptional cases. On the other hand, since Egypt had once formed a part of the Byzantine empire, the Palestinian synagogue, that means, the one which paid allegiance to the Jewish High Council, or *yeshiva*, of Palestine, which, of course, also had been Byzantine, always retained the communal leadership. It was the main synagogue for the whole area of the Egyptian capital, New Cairo included; there, the courts had their seat, and therefore, the Geniza is