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The Oguzs of the Central Asia and The Guzs of the Aral Region

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Some traces of the origin of the Oguz tribal confederation in the Aral region can be found in the historical works of the Islamic writers of the 10th and 11th centuries. Those of Ibn al-Fakih and Gardizi should be distinguished.¹⁾ The authors present the facts in the shape of genealogical legends which connected both the victory of the Oguz-Yabgu dynasty in the Aral region and their successful struggle for the "Rain Stone"-a sacred Oguzian symbol of supreme power.

Three rulers, those of the Tokuz-Guz(the islamic writers used this term to define the Uighurs of the Central Asia as well as their subordinate subjects - the tribes of the Tokuz-Oguz), the Karluks, and the Guzs of the Aral region had been struggled for a long time. According to the words of Balkik(a son of a Guzian ruler) transmitted by Ibn al-Fakih, it was Balkik's grandfather who managed to get the "Rain Stone". Afterwards he broke his relations with his father, the ruler of the Oguzs, taking away a part of Oguz people.

Later versions of the genealogical legend ascribed the deeds of Balkik's grandfather to the eponyme hero Oguz Han, removing the place of the origin of Oguz Han's state to the western part of Djetisu as well as to Sir Darya basin.²⁾

The latter was the reason for some scholars to suppose that the native territory of the Oguzs could be the region of Djetisu, especially the lands adjacent to the Lake Issikkul where they began their expansion from.³⁾ However none of the original sources dating back to the period into consideration, that is the 8-9th centuries, mentioned the Oguz(Guz) among the numerous Turkic tribes inhabited Djetisu. In my opinion, the very list of the tribes fighting for the "Rain Stone" makes it possible to

associate their struggle with the historical circumstances under which the formation of the Uighur Kaganate in Mongolia(745–840) took place.

After the collapse of the Second Turkic Kaganate followed by the short-lived supremacy of the Basmls the power of Kagan was taken by the Uighur dynasty of the Yaglakar. They pushed their former allies, the Karluks, into the region of Djetisu where only few towns were still under the control of the Turgesh khans.

Hardly had the Karluks gone(747) the Uighur dynasty faced the revolt of eight other tribes belonging to the Tokuz-Oguz confederation. The first stage of the revolt ended in 750 with the defeat of Tay Bilgetutuk, the ruler of Sekiz Oguz(according to the Selenga inscription), who was supported by the Tokuz Tatars. Tay Bilgetutk claimed for the throne of Kagan but was killed fighting with the forces of Eletmish Bilge Kagan of the Uighurs. The new uprising took place in 752–753. However, the head of the rebels Ahuz Yabgu failed due to the hostile attitude of the Karluks. During the third stage of the internal struggle(757–759) the Oguz had managed to get also the so-called "Three Banner Turkic people"(i.e. the Second Turkic Kaganate's tribes subjugated by the Uighurs) as their allies but they were routed again.⁴⁾

Afterwards a considerable part of Oguzian, Turkic, and Tatar tribes had to leave their native lands in Mongolia. The Tatars left for the Upper Irtysh Where they were to make an important contribution to the origin of the Kimak-Kipchak confederation.⁵⁾ The Oguzs and the Turks fighting with the Karluks of Djetisu and Altay established themselves in the lands adjacent to the Aral Sea as well as to the Lower Sir-Darya. They had been struggling with the Karluks for possession of Farab(Otrar oasis) and western Djetisu for a hundred years. According to al-Tabari, the Karluks had kept this region under their control until 812 at least⁶⁾. According to Ibn al-Asir, for the first time the Guzs(Oguzs) appeared on the borders of Maverannahr in the '70s-'80s of the 8th century.⁷⁾

One of the Runic inscription discovered by myself(the Terhin inscription mentions a rebellious tribe called Igder(Igdir) which "was divided" in the middle of the 8th century.⁸⁾ In my opinion, this is a direct evidence in favour of the existence of kindred relations between the Tokuz Oguzs of Mongolia, The Guzs of the Aral region, and modern Turkmens. Mahmud Kashgari(the 11th century) mentions among the

other Oguz(Seldjuk) tribes the Igders which left for the western direction. Later the Igders was a part of the Turkmen tribe of Tchavdar.⁹⁾

In the old Russian chronicles, the nomads coming into Eastern Europe were known as the Turks. At the same time, the Byzantine writers called them Uzs(Oguzs). This fact confirms a two-part structure of the confederation of the Aral nomads and reflects the Central Asian past of both the founders of the Oguz-Yabgu state and those of the Great Seldjuk Sultanate, i.e. the Oguzs and the Orkhon Turks.

Сокращения

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