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Intellectual Contact between Anatolia and Transoxiana in the early Ottoman Period

by Fujio MITSUHASHI

In spite of dissolution of the Islamic Empire toward the end of Middle Ages, the Eastern Islamic world still retained its position superior to the Western world. At least, one cannot perceive a great difference or a deep gulf between the two worlds after the Renaissance.

Ottoman Turks who followed Osman established themselves firmly in Asia Minor and built up a large dominion there at the expense of Seljuk Turks before pushing into Eastern Europe. Thus, Ottoman Turks were profoundly influenced by pre-Ottoman civilized peoples. Their administrative regime and other systems were more or less under the influence of Byzantine Empire.

But it would be possible to imagine that Ottoman Turks claimed themselves with pride as inheritor of the Islamic culture. Especially, Islamic cosmography with element of 'Adjāib, which had been composed by Arabs or Iranians, were more accessible or available easily as sources of all knowledge for educated people.

Nevertheless, Transoxiana played a leading rôle for practical activity and technical achievements in secular science.

Concerning the contact between Anatolia under the rule of the Ottoman dynasty and Transoxiana under the rule of the Timurid dynasty, hitherto many of orientalists treated this problem from the view point of political and military negotiations.

The present paper explains, first, the affinity between "old osmanli language" and "Chaghatai literary language as lingua franca in the Central and the Western Asia" with aboriginal sources; second, the practical activity and technical achievements transplanted by the most representative and outstanding scholars, for example, Fenari Shemsettin Mehmet, Kazi Zade Rumi, 'Ali Kushdju, and Mirim Chelebi who served as guide for later generations.

This paper consists of three main parts: 1 Intellectual tradition of Ottoman Turks; 2 School of Transoxiana; 3 Devotion of Scholars connected with both areas.