

**CENTRALIZATION AND OPPOSITION  
IN MONGOL AND OTTOMAN STATE FORMATIONS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **CENTRALIZATION AND OPPOSITION IN MONGOL AND OTTOMAN STATE FORMATIONS**

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The Mongol and the Ottoman leadership structures emerged in milieus where identities were changeable, mobility was high and the alliances were shifting. Chinggis Khan arose to degree of Khanate of entire Mongolia from an extremely marginal position in tribal politics and his experiences in this process provided him an anti-tribal political vision. He at the very beginning of his career formed the nucleus of his political power by his relationships and entourages. Later, he reorganized the clans and tribes, which submitted their loyalty to him around those principal participants in his army of conquest. Osman *Bey* made successful conquests thanks to the advantageous geographical position of his principality, became famous in a short time and managed to attract various elements of complex social structure of the Byzantine frontiers to him. He did not

involve in a harsh struggle for leadership. Instead of monopolization of power, he favored sharing of it with his companions in arms.

Mongols, after monopolizing power in the steppes devoted their energies to frontier conquests. However, during Chinggis Khan's reign, the Mongols saw the centre of the authority there. Their relation with the societies outside the Mongolia was indirect. Ottomans on the other hand, built up their administrative apparatus in the conquered territories.

The Ottomans created a new bureaucratic group which did not have a power base besides the posts in Ottoman state and placed them to the centre of administration. Those posts did not have any hereditary dimension. The Mongols, contrary to the Ottomans, turned the state offices to hereditary posts and in time they began to distribute peoples, armies, lands and resources throughout the empire as appanages to state officers. Therefore, the Chinggisids created a new aristocracy who had the power in their hands to shake the centralist order of Chinggis Khan.

Keywords: State formation, leadership, tribal politics, centralization, frontier conquests

## ÖZ

### MOĞOL VE OSMANLI DEVLET OLUŞUMLARINDA MERKEZİLEŞME VE GELİŞEN MUHALEFET

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Moğol ve Osmanlı liderlik yapıları, kimliklerin oldukça değişken, insan hareketliliğinin yüksek ve ittifakların geçici olduğu sürekli çatışmalı ortamlarda filizlenmişlerdir. Çinggis Han kabile siyaseti içinde oldukça marjinal bir noktadan tüm Moğolistan'ın Han'ı noktasına yükselmiş, bu süreçte edindiği deneyim ona kabile dışı bir siyasi vizyon kazandırmıştır. Henüz yolun başındayken kurduğu ilişkiler ve çevresine topladığı yandaşları ile iktidar çekirdeğini oluşturmuş ve daha sonra ordusunun bünyesine kattığı klan ve kabileleri bu ilk katılımcılar etrafında yeniden örgütlemiştir. Osman Bey, beyliğinin avantajlı coğrafi konumu sayesinde başarılı fetihlerde bulunmuş, kısa zamanda üne kavuşmuş ve Bizans sınır bölgesinin karmaşık yapısının değişik unsurlarını kendisine çekmeyi başarmıştır. Osman Bey liderlik için büyük bir mücadelenin içine girmemiştir.

Çinggis Han gibi etrafında topladığı yandaşlarıyla farkında olmadan da olsa, mevcut kabileci sosyo-politik örgütlenmeye bir alternatif geliştirmiş, ancak iktidarı tekelleştirmek yerine bunu yandaşlarıyla paylaşma yoluna gitmiştir.

Moğollar bozkırda iktidarı tekleştirdikten sonra uç fetihlerine yöneldiler. Çinggis Han döneminde Moğolların iktidarın merkezini bozkır olarak görmeye devam ettiler. Moğolistan dışındaki bölgelerle doğrudan olmayan bir ilişki kurdular. Buralarda çeşitli yönetsel yöntemler uyguladılar ve görevliler atadılar da, temel konsantrasyonları vergi almak üzerineydi. Diğer yandan Osmanlılar yönetsel aygıtlarını fethedilen topraklarda inşa ettiler.

Osmanlılar Osmanlı devletindeki makamları dışında bir iktidar zemini olmayan yeni bir bürokrat grubu yarattılar. Bu makamların kalıtsal bir boyutunun olmaması aristokratikleşmeye karşı bir önlemdi. Moğollar eski kabile aristokrasisini büyük oranda elimine etseler de, Osmanlılardan farklı olarak devlet bürolarını kalıtsal makamlara dönüştürdüler ve zaman içinde halkları, orduları, toprakları ve kaynakları devlet görevlilerine mülk olarak dağıttılar. Sonuçta, Çinggisliler Çinggis Han'ın merkeziyetçi düzenini sarsacak güce sahip bir aristokrasi yarattılar.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Devlet oluşumu, liderlik, kabile siyaseti, merkezileşme, uç fetihleri

*To My Mom and Dad, Zeynep and Rahim Kk,  
who have made it all possible*



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## CHAPTER I:

### INTRODUCTION

Great empire building processes in Eurasia resulted in a close interaction in many aspects between different societies during the Middle Ages. Mongols and their successors that continued their expansion in Asia throughout the first half of the thirteenth century and continued their political existence roughly until sixteenth century, exchanged certain sociopolitical and cultural features with the societies they subjugated. In addition, they became the bearer of these features and mediated between different societies of Eurasia. Issues related to political traditions and political practices such as state building practices, sources of legitimacy of political power and succession practices are not exceptions in this respect. Turco-Mongol traditions based on the dynastic and structural heritage of Inner Asian state formation experiences were spread along the Western Eurasian lands among the tribal nomadic societies of the region, and were resurrected thanks to Mongol domination. They carried on their existences in spite of the great Byzantine influence. These traditions continued to determine to an extent the “principal sense of identification and source of political unity”.<sup>1</sup> The Ottoman principality which emerged in the frontiers of the Byzantine state at the beginning of the fourteenth century also bore the characteristics of those Turco-Mongol traditions.

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<sup>1</sup> Peter B. Golden, “Imperial Ideology and the Sources of the Political Unity Amongst the Pre-Cinggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia”, *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi*, no. 2 (1982), pp. 37-76.

Therefore, Mongol and Ottoman empires had inherently common features, which were essentially influential and could be clearly observed in their formation processes. A comparison between these processes is possible on the one hand due to these common features and on the other hand due to the parallel solutions of people facing similar problems of military and political organization in a period of state formation during the Middle Ages in Eurasia.<sup>2</sup>

There are also particular common characteristics of Mongol and Ottoman cases. First of all, both states rose upon tribal social formations. Mongols were a part of a nomadic society in the vast steppes of Inner Asia. There is not much suspicion that the principal founders of Ottoman principality were nomads or semi-nomads. Secondly, frontier conquests occupy a very central role in the formation processes of the states in question. Those conquests brought an intermingling with sedentary societies and both states chose their own distinct way of integrating those societies to their polities. Admittedly, they passed through a qualitative transformation due to those integration practices. Lastly, the leadership structures which on the one hand bore the characteristics of a tribal chiefdom, and on the other hand carried an aspect of change to a dynastic leadership in its very essence.

In this study, the main axis which intersects the common aspects mentioned above is centralization of political power. Actually, both formations denote wide centralization processes in their regions. The methods of coping with centrifugal tendencies and dynamics, political, military and administrative measures against those tendencies were of great importance in the centralization process. The time of their emergence can be identified as a transition process from a polity that depended on plurality of power to monopolization of power; from a tribal political

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<sup>2</sup> Lawrance Krader, "Feudalism and the Tatar Polity of the Middle Ages", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 1, no. 9 (1958) pp. 76-99

organization to a dynastic state, from family law to dynastic law, from reciprocal/contractual relations to loyalty of subject populations to a certain ruler. The transformation of tribal background, interrelations with sedentary societies and the role of leadership in the particular historical settings of thirteenth century Mongolia and fourteenth century Asia Minor created peculiar experiences. These experiences have both converging and diverging points, exposition of which will give the clues about the different fates of state formations in question.

Comparative studies in the field of Eurasian states of the Middle Ages are limited. Because of that limitation, this study will be predominantly descriptive though an attempt will be made to develop an analytical approach and a framework for the comparison. There are several comparative studies from which the author of this dissertation was inspired. Most important of them is the İsenbike Togan's article entitled "Ottoman History by Inner Asian Norms".<sup>3</sup> In this article, Togan uses tribal backgrounds of the subject population, frontier policy, the role of trade routes in the formation process and different treatments to different regions of the empires as analytical tools in her comparison. Halil İnalçık's article is also important in which he discusses the succession method and consideration of hegemony in the Ottomans in accordance with the Turco-Mongol traditions.<sup>4</sup> Joseph Fletcher's article, "Turco-Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire", is another stimulating work on looking at Ottomans 'by inner Asian norms'.

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<sup>3</sup> İsenbike Togan, "Ottoman History by Inner Asian Norms", in *The Journal Of Peasant Studies*, no. 18 (1991), pp. 185-210

<sup>4</sup> Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlılar'da Saltanat Veraseti Usulü ve Türk Hakimiyet Telakkisiyle İlgisi", *SBF Dergisi*, vol. 14 (1959), pp. 68-94

In this study, primary sources will also be utilized. For the Mongol side, *The Secret History of the Mongols*<sup>5</sup> will be the main source not only because it reflects Mongol history in a realistic fashion which strengthens its reliability, but also for its substantiality that opens new horizons in every reading. Histories of Juvaini<sup>6</sup> and *Jami`u`-t-Tawarikh* of Rashid al-din<sup>7</sup> are also consulted. For the Ottoman part, besides the chronicle of Aşıkpaşazade<sup>8</sup>, *Tacüt Tevarih*<sup>9</sup> and Neşri History<sup>10</sup> are used. What is interesting about these sources for the main axis of this study is that while the first two reflects the feelings and considerations of centrifugal tendencies, Neşri appears as the representative of the court and reflects the views of the centre.

In the next chapter, some basic problems of Inner Asian history in general and Mongolian history in particular will be analyzed through examining different theoretical standings. Whether the Ottoman state formation can be evaluated in the framework of these problems will be questioned. These basic problems will be discussed under three main titles. Firstly, the social structure of nomads and different approaches to this structure will be focused on. Secondly, millenary interaction of nomads with sedentary societies and the effect of this interaction on

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<sup>5</sup> Francis Woodman Cleaves, *The Secret History of the Mongols*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982)

<sup>6</sup> Ala al-Din Ata Malik Juvaini, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conquerer*, translated by J. A. Boyle, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997)

<sup>7</sup> Rashid al-Din Tabib, *Jami`u`-t-Tawarikh*, (Dar an Nahdah, 1983).

<sup>8</sup> Aşıkpaşaoğlu, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, ed. Nihal Atsız, (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1985)

<sup>9</sup> Hoca Sa`de`d-din Efendi, *Tacü`-t Tevarih*, ed. İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992).

<sup>10</sup> Neşri, Mehmed, *Kitab-ı Cihan-Nüma Neşri Tarihi*, ed. F. R. Unat, M. A. Köymen, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1995)

the sociopolitical organization of nomads will be focused on. Then, characteristics of leadership in tribal politics of Inner Asia and the role of this leadership in state formation will be summarized. In light of these aspects of Inner Asian history, a brief account on the dynamics of state formation will be given. In the last part of this chapter, these problems will be projected to the Ottoman case and elucidated since the framework of these problems makes Ottoman state formation process more comprehensible.

In the third and fourth chapters, in light of basic problems and features of state formation in a given society that has a nomadic background which were discussed in the previous chapter, historical analyses of Mongol and Ottoman state formations will be made. The third chapter will be devoted to Mongol history. Mongolia before the rise of Chinggis Khan, his monopolization of power through eliminating his rivals in the steppe and the frontier conquests and administration problems in the huge territories of the empire, incorporating nomadic and sedentary peoples will be discussed. In the fourth chapter, Asia Minor before the rise of Ottomans, the success of Ottoman principality in distinguishing itself from the rest of its counterparts in Asia Minor, the internal dynamics of the principality and the transformation of those dynamics during incorporation of conquered sedentary lands will be described.

Lastly, in the conclusion chapter, a comparison will be made in light of the theoretical framework of the second chapter and upon the differences and commonalities of certain features transpired in the third and fourth chapters.

## **CHAPTER II:**

### **ON THE DYNAMICS OF STATE FORMATION IN NOMADIC SOCIETIES**

The assumption on the comparability of Mongol and Ottoman state formations depends on three basic commonalities:

- Their tribal backgrounds
- As representatives of a nomadic world and their emergence at the edge of great sedentary civilizations.
- The importance of leadership in the formation process

Therefore, a discussion on the nature of tribe as the basic unit of social structure of nomadic societies can give the clues of features inherent in those societies that give way to state formation. An analysis on the sedentary-nomadic dichotomy can give insights for the discussion on the role of internal and external dynamics behind state formations. An analytical view to the leadership structure of pastoral nomads will help to elucidate the fundamental role of leadership in state formation. After giving brief accounts on those issues, different approaches on the dynamics behind state formations among nomads can be more easily understood. Lastly, these discussions, which were the result of abstraction of a range of Inner Asian state experiences, including Chinggis Khan's state will be projected to the Ottoman case.



## **2.1 On the Nature of Tribe**

In the background of both Ottoman and Mongol states laid tribal structures. While the first step of Chinggis Khan after he accumulated certain power was to gather the dispersed clans of his tribe, Osman Beg expanded his small tribe through attracting different sectors of the population in Bithynia. Both of the tribes were to pass a qualitative transformation in the process of state formation, which will be analyzed in the next chapters. The question on socio-political organization of pastoral nomads, whether the essence is kinship ties and genealogies or a common feeling of unity and common interests, should be highlighted to elucidate the transformation process. In addition to this, the extent of social stratification of nomads is another important issue for an analysis of state formation.

As a general accord among historians, tribe appears as the basic political unit of nomadic society during the Middle Ages of the Eurasian steppes. In the history of Inner Asia, although the tribal political structures tended to unite under state-like confederations or gave way to state formations under certain circumstances, the common mode was existence under separate tribes in a decentralized political composition.

One of the most outstanding Russian historians, Radloff for the first time offered a comprehensive framework of nomadic pastoral societies. According to him, contrary to egalitarian hunters, nomadic pastoralists also had social differentiations based on wealth like farmers.

The core organization of pastoral society, namely the tribe, was an extended family with common property. These extended families with the attachment of isolated poor families to them as hangers-on, formed the *aul*, the

nomadic kin-village (*Ayil* in Mongols). A family with great wealth in herds forms its own *aul*, with wide circles of agnatic kin and poor herdsmen without herds entering its service as *clientes*. The leader of the ordinary *aul* is the senior male who has the greatest amount of wealth or the greatest number of kin-supporters; ordinary *auls* were dominated by the *aul* of the very wealthy.<sup>11</sup>

There were also significant attempts to integrate this framework of Inner Asian steppe society to the general framework of historical evolution in Marxist literature. Vladimirtsov as the forerunner of those attempts developed the concept of “nomadic feudalism”. He, in a sense reexamined the traits of inequalities inherent in the nomadic steppe society referred by Radloff’s school within the general concept of feudalism.

For Vladimirtsov, the class structure of nomads was based on private ownership of herds, though in pastures collective ownership was dominant, and the existence of a group of dependent nomads which he resembled to the serfs of feudal Europe.<sup>12</sup> Mongol tribe of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was formed by several classes. While the ruling line and richest clans were part of the upper class, tribes and clans that became dependent as a result of failures in wars were part of the lower class. For Vladimirtsov, in nomadic feudalism of Mongols, ‘the lines of domination go out between groups, not between individuals’.<sup>13</sup>

In short, in Vladimirtsov’s conceptualization, relations of domination between the upper and lower classes of Mongol tribe and making of the steppe

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<sup>11</sup> Lawrence Krader, “Feudalism and the Tatar Polity of the Middle Ages”, in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 1, 1958, p. 89

<sup>12</sup> B. Y Vladimirtsov, *Moğolların İçtimai Teşkilatı*, (Ankara : Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1944) p. 92

<sup>13</sup> Lawrence Krader, op. cit., p. 82

aristocracy had reached to a certain extent and maturity just before the formation of the Mongol state.<sup>14</sup> However, he does not ignore the relatively easy shifts across class lines in nomadic society in comparison to European feudal societies. Because of the simplicity of nomadic morality and in the absence of lines of cultural demarcations between lords and subjects, there were close social relations between members of different classes; even marriages were possible.<sup>15</sup>

On the track of Vladimirtsov, sh. Bira states that the traditional social system of nomads, which was based on consciousness of common descent, started to degenerate by the thirteenth century and was replaced by consciousness of common socio-economic interests. This was the reason of frequent ‘splitting of clans into subgroups and their reassembling into larger tribes’. So while kinship was in decay, the society became more and more stratified. Social status became directly related to private ownership of cattle. Therefore, sh. Bira on the track of Vladimirtsov, believes in the emergence of social classes within the pastoral society of Mongolia in the thirteenth century<sup>16</sup>.

Rudi Lindner opposes the view that kinship ties and genealogies which had been determinant of the organization of pastoral nomads went into a transformation and these notions were replaced by class relations; for he in general, devalues the role of kinship in the organization of tribe. In addition, he bases his approach on common interests of tribesmen instead of inequalities and different interests. According to him, the character of tribal formation of Middle

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<sup>14</sup> B. Y Vladimirtsov, op. cit., p.129

<sup>15</sup> B. Y Vladimirtsov, op. cit., p.109

<sup>16</sup> Sh. Bira “The Mongols and Their State in Twelfth to the Thirteenth Century”, *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Eds. M. S. Asimov, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1999, p.244

Ages in the Eurasian steppes cannot be fully understood through ethnographic studies on tribes of contemporary times. Those tribes in no way reflect the fluidity of movement and allegiance of historical tribes. As a social organization embedded to a modern state formation, today's tribes are rather static in nature and kinship as the basic tool of unity and continuity can decisively function.<sup>17</sup> Political and military functions of tribe in history inevitably diminish the role of kinship and open a zone for tactical reasoning and pragmatic alliances and loyalties. 'Shared political or military purpose', 'simple survival amidst hostile elements, the search for water and pasture, and a common interest in predation could supply reason to compose a cohesive tribe'.<sup>18</sup> For this very reason, tribes have inclusive character. Kinship and clan lineages functioned as ideological tools to legitimize "the swift alteration of political choices and the sudden putting into effect of newly chosen loyalties".<sup>19</sup>

Lindholm, contrary to the argument of Lindner, argues that kinship was an active mechanism in the organization of nomadic society. Marriage between two particular lineages was a common practice 'especially common when an elite man took his first wife, who would be the mother of his heirs' in the tribal formations of Inner and Central Asia. Secret History narrates the journey of Temucin and his father to take a bride from Dorben people. It seems that aristocratic Borjigin clan regularly took wives from Dorben people and gave brides to the Bayaut.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> R. Paul Lindner, "What was a Nomadic Tribe?" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Oct., 1982), pp. 689-711

<sup>18</sup> R. Paul Lindner, op. cit., p.698

<sup>19</sup> R. Paul Lindner, op. cit., p. 700

<sup>20</sup> Charles Lindholm, "Kinship Structure and Political Authority: The Middle East and Central Asia", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 28, No. 2. (Apr., 1986) pp. 334-355, and p. 339

According to Lindholm, in nomadic steppe society, every individual has a place “in a system of collaterally ranked lines of descent from a common ancestor”. Political and legal claims took place due to the superiority and inferiority of lineages coming from birth.<sup>21</sup> Enlargement of the tribe through such pattern of marriage leads to the increase of hierarchy and diminution of clanship. Though the system assumes the equality of all the groups marrying within the circle, hierarchy emerges ‘as one group seeks to accumulate more women or more surpluses to compete in the payment of bridewealth.’<sup>22</sup>

He concludes that the lineage structure of Central Asia, contrary to that of Middle East, was particularly inclined to the development of hierarchy and social stratification. In this system, generational distance, and birth order, namely seniority plays a crucial role besides the genealogical distance. Therefore, while genealogical ties determine the pattern of alliance and antagonism, generational distance and birth order determine the rank and internal differentiation.<sup>23</sup>

It is a fact that genealogy was and is a common currency of pastoral nomadic societies. In stead of citing it and therefore kinship ties as fictitious and constructed notions whose sole function was legitimization of existing relations, or in stead of envisaging them in absolute and stable terms, it is more accurate to consider them as complex and flexible mechanisms:

Genealogies can be consciously or unconsciously manipulated, they are capable of broadening and narrowing and of splitting up and merging in accordance with the practical necessities and a specific historical situation. In such cases nomadic social organization as a whole and its various levels acquire the ideological flexibility they need

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 341

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 342

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 341

and the ability to re-organize to suit new conditions, without losing the structuring principle.<sup>24</sup>

From this perspective, enlargement of the Ottoman tribe through incorporation of people of different origins, or the situation in Mongolia before the rise of Chinggis Khan is more comprehensible.

Nomadic economy was unstable. The climatic changes as well as conflicts and wars amongst the tribes could threaten most basic living conditions of the nomads. Therefore, though there were inequalities amongst nomads because of the private ownership of livestock, and control and regulation of the pastures brought certain privileges to the ruling strata of nomads, those inequalities and privileges did not reach to an extent that society was divided into distinct hereditary classes.<sup>25</sup> In addition, nomadic economy was not sufficiently differentiated. Masters or dominant families and clans engaged in the same economic activity with their dependents.<sup>26</sup> And those dependents could shift to superior positions.

## **2.2 On the Sedentary-Nomadic Dichotomy**

In his study on Inner Asian Frontiers of China, Owen Lattimore, one of the most prominent American scholars specialized in Chinese and Inner Asian history, explains that the contrast between sedentary people of North China and nomads of Inner Asia, which is usually perceived as a given fact, is indeed a matter of historical development. In appearance, the general line of the Great Wall that separates two social formations since the third century B.C. marks one of the most

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<sup>24</sup> Anatoly M. Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), p. 142

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159

absolute frontiers in the world.<sup>27</sup> However, differentiation in terms of economy and way of life lasted for centuries. Line of cleavage between environments did not gain a meaning in terms of this differentiation until a social emphasis was added to it.<sup>28</sup>

Near the edge of the steppe, it was only in the second half of the first millennium B.C. that it became rapid enough to force a sharp increase in the social importance of geographical and climatic differences between regions.<sup>29</sup>

While at the beginning, the difference was just more agriculture at one side and more herding at the other side as well as an unequal development of technology, which later turned out to identify the type of society. In the fourth and third centuries BC, 'Chinese and barbarian ways of life became alternative to each other and mutually exclusive. Difference was no longer in the stage of development but in the kind of society.'<sup>30</sup>

Differentiation and interaction developed in a dialectical relation. While two societies defined themselves as the opposite of one another, they borrowed many things from each other in this definition process. Yet, the least typical, marginal territories of China and the steppe overlapped along the line of the Great Wall, which means that commonalities between two societies were mostly in the frontier zones.<sup>31</sup> In spite of mighty and successive efforts at Great Wall building, the zones divided by the wall never became totally separated in economic, political, and

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<sup>27</sup> Owen Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1940, p. 21

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.,p. 25

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.,p. 55

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.,p. 61

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 70

cultural terms. Neither society was permanently uniform.<sup>32</sup> In fact, beyond the interaction, formations of two societies were marked by mutual influence. Nevertheless, pastoral nomads were more self-sufficient than their agriculturalist neighbours. The indispensable items of external trade was luxury goods as a way of distinguishing rulers and ruled.<sup>33</sup>

Lattimore revised some of his ideas later and admitted that the steppe nomads needed Chinese products.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, he was still far from the “needy theory”, which is derived from the assertion that ‘pastoral nomads do not normally exist in isolation from farming communities and that pastoral nomadic economy cannot provide all basic necessities’.<sup>35</sup>

This non-autarkic character of steppe economies which was the result of their one dimensional economy, gave more importance to commercial activities than their agriculturalist neighbours. Nomads clashed with the agriculturalist when they couldn’t get what they needed by peaceful means.<sup>36</sup> Actually, trade and plunder were the most common modes of interaction of the two societies.

In both sides of the frontier, the belief in the superiority of their existing social and economic system was strong. Though there have been always a tendency of sedentarization amongst nomads, there had ideological obstacles since a

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 68

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 72

<sup>34</sup> Owen Lattimore “Herdsmen, Farmers, Urban Culture”, in *Pastoral Production and Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp.485-486, p. 487

<sup>35</sup> Nichola Di Cosmo, “Ancient Inner Asian Nomads: Their Economic Basis and Its Significance in Chinese History”, in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 4, no. 53 (1994), pp. 1092-1126, p.1092

<sup>36</sup> Anatoly M. Khazanov, “Characteristic Features of Nomadic Communities in the Eurasian Steppes”, in *The Nomadic Alternative*, ed. Wolfgang Weissleder, (Paris: Mouton Publishers, 1978), pp. 119-126, p.124



sedentary life has been considered as something humiliating. Nevertheless, as Fredrik Barth observed during his study on the Basseri Tribe of South Persia, near the edge of sedentary societies, especially at a certain level of interaction, either for better protection of wealth or because of impoverishment nomads may choose a sedentary life:

Since wealth in land is more secure than wealth in herds, few men have very large herds, but tend to transfer their excess wealth to land and become sedentary. Chiefs are also aware of the threat to their authority which the really big herd owners represent; they may exert pressure to remove them, or the big herd owners fear that the chief on some pretext will seize their flocks, and are thereby induced to make the change. The absence of such large herds, on the other hand, forces the impoverished nomad also to become sedentary, since few positions as servants and shepherds can be found.<sup>37</sup>

According to Khazanov, however, mass sedentarization was possible when migrations to new ecological zones available for agriculture occurred.<sup>38</sup> In these new zones, nomads generally faced with a new socio-political and cultural milieu of sedentary societies and their interrelation with this milieu resulted in sedentarization.

Nomads in history subjugated sedentary societies and were subjugated by them. In the former situation, they acted in a range of ways in a large spectrum ranging from direct plunder, tribute, direct taxation, 'the creation of agricultural and handicraft sectors of economy within nomadic society itself to the seizure of

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<sup>37</sup> Fredrik Barth, *The Nomads of South Persia*, (Boston: Little Brown Company, 1961)

<sup>38</sup> Anatoly M. Khazanov *Nomads And The Outside World*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), p. 200

landed property and receipt from it of dues in the form of rents, direct exploitation of peasants who are turned into tenants, *metayers* etc.’<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, contrary to the self-sufficiency theory of Lattimore, nomads intermingled with their sedentary neighbours for centuries in a mutually dependent relation. The modes of their interaction varied from trade relations to unexpected plunders and from sedentarization to subjugating sedentary societies or being subjugated by them.

### **2.3 On the Problem of Leadership**

Joseph Fletcher in his analysis on the influence of ecology on steppe nomadism, points out that nomadic life in the steppe was hard and uncertain. He concludes that ‘the livestock of a camping group, most of the animal wealth of a tribe, even most of the herds of an entire confederation, could be lost virtually overnight to disease or starvation.’<sup>40</sup> High level of instability that took root from ecological factors like droughts, severe frosts, disappearance of water resources, or increase in the animal and human population, may severely damage the fragile steppe economy.<sup>41</sup>

Leadership in nomadic steppe societies of Inner Asia was important in two respects. First one is due to the conditions of nomadic life in the steppes. Continuous migrations and search for new pastures, something which is particular to nomadism, necessitated readiness to encounter unforeseeable dangers and being ready to fight. Only those who had the intelligence and ability to direct their people

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 226

<sup>40</sup> Joseph Fletcher, *The Mongols: “Ecological and Social Perspectives”*, in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 46, no. 1 (1986), pp. 11-50., p. 13

<sup>41</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo, *op. cit.*, p. 1117

along the migration routes, which at the same time meant to drive the herds, the armies and war captives with their animals, could be tribal leaders.<sup>42</sup> This fact finds its reflections in the very character of tribal leadership and succession practices.

Secondly, the power and influence of the nomadic leadership and the level of the centralization of politics within the tribe was dependent on relations with the outside world. The commercial deals and diplomatic relations with the outside world required a central authority for the conduct of relations. The centralization level changed due to the depth of the relations.<sup>43</sup>

Tribal politics of Inner Asia had always a dynamic character in which centrifugal tendencies usually prevailed against centripetal tendencies. More centralized structures as tribal confederations, arising upon tribal politics were rather ephemeral; and extensive centralization processes throughout Inner Asian history like in the Mongolian case were exceptional.

Contenders of political power at the tribal level should promise the nomads the best protection from external threats and guarantee of the ingredients of economic reproduction. One who intended to form a supratribal political organization, which united different tribes under its umbrella, should promise certain benefits, which cannot be reached without a supratribal polity:

The grand khan could not subject his tribes to discipline without offering them a benefit great enough to win their voluntary compliance. Essentially, this benefit boiled down to booty, the spoils of war-war, which the tribes could not wage on a worthwhile scale without a supra-tribal leader. Social organization above the tribal level therefore came to be predicated on warfare.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Joseph Fletcher, op. cit., p.14

<sup>43</sup> Fredrik Barth, op. cit., p. 130

<sup>44</sup> Joseph Fletcher, "Turco-Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire" in *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, vol. 4, no. 3 (1979-1980), pp. 236-251, p.237

So, in most general sense of the term, it was very important for a personal leadership in tribal politics to have the capacity of leading and uniting people. Since the capacity of the leader is of vital importance, succession generally could not be fixed to certain rules. Though there are convincing evidences for the application of both lateral and patrilineal succession rules, it should be said that political power was usually open to competition. That is why tribal politics experienced radical changes with the death of the leader to such an extreme extent that a tribal confederation may cease to exist with the death of its khan.

According to Fletcher, this type of succession practice can be called tanistry:

Succession was, in a manner of speaking, electoral, being governed by the principle of tanistry, a central element in the dynamics of Turkish, Mongolian, and Manchurian politics that historians of Asia have too often overlooked. Put briefly, the principle of tanistry held that the tribe should be led by the best-qualified member of the chiefly house. At the chief's death, in other words, the succession did not pass automatically, in accordance with any principle of seniority such as primogeniture, but rather was supposed to go to the most competent of the eligible heirs.<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, though succession was in general open to competition, the notion of kinship remained the common currency for the legitimacy of leadership within the ruling elite since election of leader from a single dynastic lineage was an old cultural tradition among nomads of Inner Asia.<sup>46</sup>

Tribal councils named khuriltai that were convoked when necessary decisions were to be taken also functioned in selecting the next ruler of the tribe or tribal confederation. The meetings in Mongols for instance, sometimes witnessed harsh struggles for leadership and generally ended with an acclamation ceremony,

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<sup>45</sup> Joseph Fletcher, 1986, op. cit, p. 13, p.17

<sup>46</sup> Thomas Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, (Cambridge: Mass., B. Blackwell, 1989), p. 27

at which notables and/or all the representatives of tribes acknowledged the victor of the struggle as great khan.<sup>47</sup>

The Mongol tradition was so influential in Inner and Central Asian politics that in Sultanov's *Lifting up on White Koshma* we find evidence about the maintenance of this tradition among the Kazaks and Uzbeks in the nineteenth century. According to the information he gives, a particular place and date is determined. The place of the meeting that is open to people and the place of the "private meeting" are determined before the date. When the date of election comes, the meeting starts when it is considered that sufficient number of people gathered. Onto the carpet and thick felt, notables line up. Ordinary people take place behind the notables. Then, an ardent debate starts, which lasts sometimes more than two days. At the end, when the candidate to the throne gained support of the majority of the notables, he was informed and was invited to sit on the white *koshma*. The crowd lifts up the *koshma* three times and cries "Khan! Khan! Khan!". This ceremony of lifting up of the Khan to the throne was followed by celebrations, which lasted for days.<sup>48</sup> This ceremony designates the political culture which is deeply inherent: the leadership must depend on a large coalition of notables and will of tribesmen in general.

Chinggis Khan was also lifted up to the leadership of the union of Mongolian tribes by means of a similar ceremony, which will be portrayed in the next chapter. Nevertheless, his formation of the Mongol Empire was a unique one in comparison to the previous experiences in Inner Asian history.

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<sup>47</sup> Joseph Fletcher, (1979-1980), op. cit., p.239

<sup>48</sup> T. I.Sultanov, *Lifted Up on the White Khoshma: Ghengis Khan's Descendants*, (Almaty: Daik Press, 2001), p.71

The importance of leadership in nomadic societies can be considered within the framework that Marshall Sahlins presents in *Islands of History*:

For societies of certain types, stories of kings and battles are with good reason privileged historiographically. The reason is a structure that generalizes the action of the king as the form and destiny of the society.<sup>49</sup>

This framework does not offer us a reading of history through the acts of great leaders. Rather, it points out that due to structural characteristics of some type of societies, leadership can be an essential factor to understand the relations and dynamics embedded in those societies.

#### **2.4 Different Approaches on the Dynamics of Nomadic State Formations**

All the theories and approaches on the emergence of nomadic state, irrespective whether they emphasize the role of external factors or internal factors, provide us the major issues, which should be examined for the analysis of emergence of nomadic state. These issues can be gathered under three basic lines of analysis:

- Socio-political organization of nomads and its change on the eve of state formation
- The role of their millenary interaction with their sedentary neighbors in the state formation
- Role of leadership in state formation

Formation of steppe empires is usually explained with external pressure on steppe politics. It is a common view that an imperial ideology and a bureaucratic

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<sup>49</sup> Thomas Barfield, op. cit., p. xi

apparatus were the necessary tools for a state transmitted to the nomads from sedentary states.<sup>50</sup> It is said that a supra-tribal structure is unnecessary for nomads unless they had to extort wealth from an agrarian society.<sup>51</sup> According to Fletcher, from an ecological point of view, no social organization above the tribe was needed by pastoral nomads:

Unlike agrarian societies, which could amass wealth and store it, steppe society rested on animal wealth, which had to be pastured extensively and could not be concentrated in a governmental center of power. Nor, for the same reason, could a supratribal ruler maintain a standing army at his beck and call.<sup>52</sup>

Barfield goes one step further and marks the simultaneous or consequent development of neighbouring sedentary and nomadic empires. Emergence of the state among pastoral nomads was not a response to internal needs; rather it was a response to the development of a more highly organized neighbour sedentary state.

The nomads did not borrow the state; rather, they were forced to develop their own peculiar form of state organization in order to deal with their larger and more highly organized sedentary neighbours. These relations required a far higher level of organization than was necessary to handle livestock problems and political disputes within a nomadic society.<sup>53</sup>

Khazanov also emphasizes the external factors as determining. Among the three sources of political power within nomads, namely, internal administrative needs, need of interrelations with other nomads and need of interrelation with sedentary societies, the last one is most important. The interaction with outside

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<sup>50</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History", in *Journal of World History*, vol 10, no. 1 (1999), pp. 1-41, p. 9

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Fletcher, 1986, op. cit., p. 15

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p.14

<sup>53</sup> Thomas Barfield, op. cit., p. 7

world inevitably necessitated a privileged ruling stratum and accelerated social stratification among nomads. It meant a more differentiated economy and a more complex division of labour in social organization.<sup>54</sup> However, he does not associate the rise of a nomadic state as a response to emergence of a powerful sedentary empire in its frontiers.

At the opposite side of this methodology, internal factors are stressed as determining in the emergence of nomadic states. Two main approaches, which concentrate on the role of internal dynamics, can be drawn. The first approach is derived from the theories of social stratification among nomads, whether social stratification and hierarchy were embedded in the essence of kin system of Inner and Central Asian nomads as Lindholm puts it or whether it was a result of certain changes that took place during twelfth century' Mongolia, as noted by Sh Bira.

The state is formed by and out of the relations of classes in society to one another and to the social whole. It is the result of division and polarization of society.<sup>55</sup> According to Krader, the commercial exchange mechanism with sedentary societies and the role of aristocrats in this mechanism contributed to the development of class differentiation and consequently the state in nomadic society. Krader, therefore, while rejecting Vladimirtsov's definition of nomadic feudalism, insists that state formation within Inner Asian nomads was a result of internal social dynamism, which was closely related to the interaction between nomads and sedentary neighbors.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Khazanov, op. cit., 230

<sup>55</sup> Krader, op. cit., p. 94

<sup>56</sup> Krader, "Feudalism and the Tatar Polity of the Middle Ages", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 1, 1958



Besides this class-based approach, some historians emphasized overconcentration of power in the hands of a charismatic leader as the determining factor of state formation. For Radloff, when a contender of power who has the ability 'to manipulate wealth and power within an elaborate tribal network' managed to usurp political power, the way for the formation of state was opened. Barthold, from the same point of view, adds that not only coercion but also consent of people plays its role in the rise of a charismatic leader. Since these formations were highly depended on the personal rule of a charismatic leader, they generally perished with the death the leader. So, both Radloff and Barthold emphasized the ephemerality of these formations.<sup>57</sup>

Both approaches have certain limitations. The an analytical limitation of those who emphasize internal factors is in their assumption that nomads and their sedentary neighbors together form two relatively decisive and solid blocs and they interact in the framework of a continent wide exchange system. Lattimore showed us that multiple forms of economic production and patterns of life could be found in both societies. Those who stress the role of external factors incline to neglect the existence of the internal dynamics of pastoral nomadic societies which lead to state formations.

According to Di Cosmo, state formations in the steppe generally coincide with crises, which mean 'an abrupt worsening of economic, political, and social conditions, carrying with it a sense of impending change'. Whatever the preliminary reason of the crisis is, it is usually accompanied by social disturbance and political conflict, which can almost result in the collapse of the whole polity of existing society:

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<sup>57</sup> Barfield, op. cit., p. 5

...the breakdown of tribal bonds allowed for a greater degree of social mobility. Ability in leadership counted more than birth or lineage, and effective leaders could prove themselves and emerge at these times, thus becoming catalysts for new forms of political organization.<sup>58</sup>

Therefore, state formation in the Inner Asian steppes is a complex issue, which should be considered through a multi-dimensional approach. In light of theoretical contributions on the structure of steppe society and its relations with alternative social formations, state formation process of nomadic societies in general and Mongol state of the thirteenth century in particular can be understood within a framework of emergence of a leadership that seeks political power in a context of economic, social and political crisis by the contribution of dynamic interaction with sedentary neighbours.

## **2.5 Projecting Inner Asian Problematic to Ottoman History**

This study depends on the assumption that some features of Inner Asian social and political traditions were inherited by the Ottoman state. At the very beginning, in the early phases of state formation, these features were more dominant. These early phases of state formation will be approached through the problematics of Inner Asia that have been touched upon in the previous part of this chapter. By this way, it is expected to catch some basic lines of comparison between Mongol and Ottoman state formations.

The characteristics of the tribal background of Ottomans, the role of leadership in the frontier principalities of Asia Minor and Ottoman principality in particular in the thirteenth century and the interaction of Turcoman nomads and

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<sup>58</sup> Di Cosmo, 1999: 15

semi-nomads with their sedentary Christian neighbors will be discussed. By doing so, basic points of comparison will be revealed. Since the formation of Ottoman state is not a concluded debate, fundamental approaches to the issue will be inevitably touched upon.

In this debate, since the time of Herbert A. Gibbons who has been acknowledged as the first historian who seriously dealt with the issue, a serious distance has been covered. The common axis of historians and social scientists' arguments on the issue has been the pursuit of a key that explain the secret of Ottoman formation and development.

Gibbons based his theory on a newly emerged 'Ottoman' society, a synthesis of Turkish element that had got free of its identity, religion, and culture on the one hand and a Greek element on the other. Köprülü rejected to name the society as 'Ottoman' since it implied that the society was a synthesis of elements from different origins.<sup>59</sup> He, on the contrary, emphasized tribal background and the Seljuqid heritage in the formation of Ottoman social and political institutions. Wittek, who categorized the Ottomans as a *gazi* frontier principality, explained successful wars and rapid spread of Ottomans with *gaza* ideology and dynamism of *gazi* warriors.<sup>60</sup>

According to Wittek, the origins of Ottoman state can not be found in a tribal political structure. In his view, the nomadic tribal unions that had existed in history breaks out like a hurricane into the neighboring civilized countries and could gain the opportunity to transform into ephemeral empires. Though there were raids

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<sup>59</sup> For Köprülü, Ottoman was a political term, rather than an ethnic one. Old historians always use the word Ottoman as the state servant class. (Fuat Köprülü, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Kuruluşu*, Ankara: Başnur Matbaası, 1972, p.39)

<sup>60</sup> Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1965)

towards Byzantium and conflicts between different Turkish principalities, the raids were not that rapid and harsh as those of the Mongols or the fights and conflicts were not that fierce like those of the Inner Asian Turco-Mongol tribes.<sup>61</sup> While he refutes the possibility of the existence of a tribal structure as the basis of Ottoman state formation, he claims that the Ottoman state arose upon a *gazi* organization whose members came together around a leader for raids and conquests towards Byzantine territory.<sup>62</sup>

For İnalçık, the main deficiency of these theories was their ignorance of social structure and ignorance of internal transformation of that structure in the period of state formation. They did not analyze how the society gravitated to a new polity and how Osman, as a military and political leader established a new state and a dynasty.<sup>63</sup>

Neither Wittek's approach, which emphasizes the role of *gaza* and *gazi* organization in the formation process of the Ottoman state, nor Köprülü's approach, which insists on the fact that Ottomans had a tribal background, explains the socio-political structure and internal dynamics of Ottomans.

In general, the primary resources like *Aşıkpaşazade* and *Neşri* histories indicate that it was a tribe composed of 400 families that constituted the basis of Ottomans.<sup>64</sup> It is commonly accepted that Ottomans were one of the Turcoman groups who migrated from the East as a result of Ilkhanid pressure. Those nomadic

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 6

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p.13

<sup>63</sup> Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Doğu Meselesi" *Söğüt'ten İstanbul'a Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu Üzerine Tartışmalar*, ed. Oktay Özel, Mehmet Öz, (Ankara: İmge Yayınevi, 2000) p.226

<sup>64</sup> Friedrich Giese, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Kuruluşu Meselesi" *Söğüt'ten İstanbul'a Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu Üzerine Tartışmalar*, ed. Oktay Özel, Mehmet Öz, (Ankara: İmge Yayınevi, 2000), p.150

Turcoman groups, which were partially carrying the social and cultural characteristics of Inner and Central Asian structures and generally organized along kinship ties, formed dynamic and unstable frontier societies with the attachment of various elements to their structures in time.

To clarify, not only ambitious warriors, seeking wealth and fame but also religious leaders, *ahi* groups, sections of different Turcoman nomads who were escaping from Mongol yoke for finding a secure base, Greek villagers and townspeople who were discontent of decadent Byzantine administration offered their loyalty. Therefore, while nomadic and semi-nomadic tribal structures as the most common type of social and political organization were in decline, new societies with different principles of organization emerged and gave way to state-like structures.<sup>65</sup>

Lindner, in his book *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia* once again argues that tribe as a social and political category is not based upon kinship structure. The kinship is there as a rhetoric for legitimizing the existence of tribe and leadership mechanisms. When new members attached to a certain tribe, kinship ties for them were invented. Tribe, in reality was formed on the basis of common interests. Therefore, different elements of the same social milieu could be easily adapted to the Turcoman nomadic tribes of the thirteenth century Anatolia thanks to their inclusive structure.

In Lindner's approach to the formation of the Ottoman state, there is no emphasis on the internal dynamics of Ottoman tribal society. He explains the emergence of state as a natural evolution and as a result of enlargement. Inclusion

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<sup>65</sup> Halil Bertay, "İktisat Tarihi: Osmanlı'nın Yükselişine Kadar Türklerin İktisadi ve Toplumsal Tarihi", *Türkiye Tarihi*, ed. Sina Akşin, (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1997) p. 44

of sedentary domains entailed a different administration as Lattimore noted for Inner Asian conquests towards north China:

As the Chinese pithily expressed long ago, an empire could be conquered on horseback; civil servants more sophisticated than barbarian warriors were needed to extract a regular flow of taxes and tribute from the civilized part of the empire, they could be recruited only among the upper classes of the conquered civilized people, and they and their families had to be protected and allowed to perpetuate themselves.<sup>66</sup>

The interests of the Ottomans were no longer simple and wholly nomadic. Ottoman conquests of Yenişehir and later Bursa complicated the role of the first two leaders of the Ottomans as nomadic chiefs since the necessities of urban administration and settled agricultural economies had emerged.<sup>67</sup>

Though these views provide insights on the effects of the encounter of a conqueror nomadic tribe with a sedentary civilization and points out to the possibility to compare various examples in history, it fails to illuminate internal transformation of social structure and emergence of state.

However, a clear understanding on the social structure and transformation of frontier societies will help to associate different aspects and sources of Ottoman state formation in a coherent framework.

For an attempt to understand the social conditions upon which Ottoman state had emerged, two factors are especially important:

- Dynamism of frontiers

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<sup>66</sup> R. Paul Lindner, *Ortaçağ Anadolu'sunda Göçebeler ve Osmanlılar*, translated by M. Günay, (Ankara: İmge Yayınevi, 2000) p. 32

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35

- Character and successful strategies of Ottoman political leadership in attracting people to its front

These two factors give a peculiar character to the transformation process of the Ottomans from a small frontier principality to a state.

As İnalcık puts it, frontier dynamism was caused by continuous Turcoman migration towards the West. Population pressure because of the migrations, firstly led to seasonal movements of nomads to the lowlands on the seaside of Byzantium. Then, organization of small raider groups under command of a *gazi* leader either for plundering activity or as mercenaries came.<sup>68</sup> This process coincides with dissolution of kinship structure<sup>69</sup> that was still common among Turcoman tribes. While nomads were leaving their regions, they were at the same time leaving their tribal loyalties aside and subordinated themselves to new *bey*s who promised a better life and security.

The success of Ottoman leadership was in its inclusiveness and sufficient flexibility to integrate new elements to their society as well as in military and political organization. The atmosphere of frontiers provided suitable conditions for this inclusiveness and flexibility; but it was not suitable for establishing solid structures based on homogeneous ethnic, cultural, or religious identities for both social and economic reasons:

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<sup>68</sup> İnalcık, op. cit., p.232

<sup>69</sup> This statement is made with a consciousness of the discussion on kinship. Kinship as a real factor might determine the organization of the society at that time, or it might be a mystification. Anyway, it was an important tool for the identification of individuals and for the unity of tribal structures.

1. There was already a commonality within Turcoman elements of the frontiers in terms of religious, cultural, and ethnic identity. Moreover, they shared the same fate.
2. In Bithynia where the borders were unclear and changed from one day to another, Turkish and Muslim elements and Christians had been accustomed to live side by side. Economic and cultural exchanges were not much negatively affected by political conflicts.
3. An active commercial life and economic production was rising upon a division of labour within nomads, villagers, and city-dwellers of different ethnic and religious origins. There are analyses of an active network of economic relations between nomadic Turcoman and agriculturalist Greeks of northwestern Anatolia at the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century.

According to Lindner, there is convincing ground for the idea that Ottoman begs were chosen through election at the end of the thirteenth century. There was not a certain rule whether the eldest child or the youngest one would be the new leader. The most powerful candidate attracted supporters. If nobody from the close relatives of the leader was capable of protecting the tribe and satisfy the needs of its members, a leader could be selected from outside the ruling family. The nomads could also choose to adhere to another tribe.<sup>70</sup> This approach seems to be compatible with İnalçık's arguments on the succession system of Turks and Mongols.

İnalçık states that in the Turco-Mongol political traditions, though some rules were attempted to be established, succession was open to predestination.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Lindner, *op. cit.*, p. 57

<sup>71</sup> Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlılar'da Saltanat Veraseti Usulü ve Türk Hakimiyet Telakkisiyle İlgisi",



Actually, there were always multiplicity of power circles within the political system and one aspect of the struggle within them was who would be the leader. This fact can be interpreted as the maintenance of tribal political traditions though scale of political entity broadens and even turns into empire.

Osman was elected because he was thought to undertake some standard responsibilities of a tribal leader successfully. Actually, he successfully organized and directed six-monthly migrations of his tribe. He was the chief in hunting and plundering campaigns of nomads.<sup>72</sup>

Ottoman leadership from its birth was very similar to other Turcoman leaderships in the western frontier zone of the Sultanate of Rum. Ancestors of these leaderships were involved in the movement from the East to Western Anatolia in different moments of medieval history. The groups that settled to mountainous parts of Western Anatolia and besides animal husbandry and commercial activities to an extent, made their living through plundering Byzantine villages and towns. Their leaderships maintained their patriarchal character and based their legitimacy on kinship. However, not all the groups could keep their integrity. Frontier region continuously welcomed people from different regions who had broken off their tribal bonds. Leaders of the tribes usually were leaders of *gazi* bands. Therefore, their power depended on two basic factors:

1. Their privileged positions in the kinship structure since they came from the ruling family of their respective tribes

2. Loyalty of warriors who got ahead of their tribal bonds and joined the *gazi* organization of these leaders.

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*SBF Dergisi*, vol. 14 (1959), pp. 68-94, p.72

<sup>72</sup> Lindner, *op.cit.*, p.76

Detachments from tribal bonds had dual meaning. It reinforced *gazi* organizations and enhanced the circle of *bey*'s loyal warriors. In addition, it caused kinship and tribal structures lose weight and importance in social and political relations. For a period, Ottoman leadership conducted a twofold command: One for its tribal population and second for the *gazi* warriors who were once alien to Ottomans, including people of non-Muslim origins, and who started to be integrated into Ottoman society now. The *gazi* organizations around the leader became the primary source of power and nucleus of a newly emerging state in time, as the kinship in tribal structures lost its real basis.

To sum up, the character of socio-political organization, namely nomadic tribe, upon which the state flourishes, crashes upon and interacts with sedentary societies as well as including some elements from those societies, role of leadership in the transformation of socio-political structure, all of which are issues of Inner Asian history, which, together, can provide us a common ground for a comparison between the Mongolian and Ottoman cases.

### **CHAPTER III:**

#### **MONGOL STATE FORMATION**

The Mongol experience is marked by the role of its mighty leader, Chinggis Khan more than any other state formation. The tendency to explain historical facts through the actions of “Great Man” becomes something inevitable when the Mongol case is concerned.

In this chapter, the process of Mongol state formation is taken as a whole with its background and its aftermath. The aim is to show that no matter how talented Chinggis Khan was in organization and leading, in the nonexistence of the conditions on the eve of his rise, he could not turn his polity to a world empire. The integration of the empire is also examined through a historical analysis with a special emphasis on the dynamics of centralization and decentralization, as well as traits of Mongol administration abroad.

In the first part, a brief historical account of Inner Asian nomads will be given. The narrated period is marked with domination of plurality of political power and predatory relations of nomadic tribes and confederacies with each other and with sedentary societies as well.

In the second part, the rise of Mongol state is discussed in which the narration of Chinggis Khan’s personal history is embedded. The focus point is the steps that brought monopolization of power in the hands of Chinggis Khan and his family.

Lastly, outside conquests and integration of sedentary societies to the empire will be narrated. A discussion on the character of Mongol state and the vision and intentions of its leadership will be made.

It is expected that the points from Mongol history underlined here will provide handle for comparison with the Ottoman case that will take place in the conclusion part of this study.

### **3.1 Political Geography of Inner Asia before the Rise of Chinggis Khan**

The last big empire which had united the Inner Asian people under its political power was the Uighur State. After its abolishment by the Kyrgyz in 840, small states and tribes dominated Inner Asian politics for a long time. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, a large group of small states and tribes coexisted in Inner Asian steppes some of which were Turkish speaking and some others who lived in the eastern part were Mongolian speaking. There were also bilingual populations. Some of the tribes spoke both of these languages and some of them ceased to speak one in favor of the other in time. In general, it is not easy to distinguish the Turkic tribes from the Mongols.<sup>73</sup> As the mastery of the steppe changed, linguistic and ethnic demarcation lines became increasingly blurred.<sup>74</sup> Nevertheless, according to İsenbike Togan, two different tribal political traditions can be observed before the emergence of Chinggis's state. One of those traditions, which was more common among Mongolian speaking groups allowed a political structure based on multiplicity of leaders and 'provided a more participatory system'. The other was

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<sup>73</sup> A. Zeki Velidî Togan , *Umumi Türk Tarihine Giriş*, (İstanbul: Enderun Yayınları, 1981) p.67

<sup>74</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, *Genghis Khan His Life and Legacy*, (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1997) p.1

common among Turkish speaking groups and depended on ‘hereditary structuring and ruling houses’.<sup>75</sup>

The Naimans, for instance, seemed to be one of the most powerful representatives of the second pattern. They claimed to unite Inner Asian tribes under their own supra-tribal umbrella. The ruling family and elites of the Naimans were of Turkic origin. They had a more or less sophisticated administrative structure and diplomatic relations with their neighbors. After the collapse of the Uighur hegemony, the Naimans, in the West in the Altai Mountains attached themselves to the Kyrgyz. When they amassed to certain strength, they pushed the Kyrgyz to the River Yenesei in the tenth century. They also drove the Keraites from their hereditary lands on the Irtysh and in the Altai towards the east and in the face of these attacks the Khitans moved to northern China, where they founded the Liao dynasty.<sup>76</sup> For a period of time, until 1124, in North China, the Liao dynasty held political power after the collapse of the Tang dynasty. The Chin dynasty was the next holder of power, which would be ultimately eliminated by the Mongols in 1234.<sup>77</sup>

East of the Naimans, from the Orkhan in the west to the Onon and Kerulen rivers, was the extensive realm of the Keraites. They were also said to be of Turkic origin. Yet, there were great resemblances between the culture, dialects, customs and manners of the Mongols and the Keraites.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> İsenbike Togan, “Çinggis Han ve Moğollar,” *Türkler*, ed. Hasan Celal Güzel, Kemal Çiçek, Salim Koca, vol.VIII, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), pp. 235-255, p. 243

<sup>76</sup> Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p. 1

<sup>77</sup> Sebahattin Ağaladağ, “Moğol Devleti”, *Türkler*, ed. Hasan Celal Güzel, Kemal Çiçek, Salim Koca, vol. VIII, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), pp. 265-277, p. 266

<sup>78</sup> Rashid al-Din Tabib, *Jami`u't-Tawarikh*, Dar an Nahdah, 1983., p.174

The Naimans and the Keraits were under the influence of the Uighur Turks thanks to their neighborhood with them. Especially the Naimans acquired many cultural elements with the inscription from the Uygur state.<sup>79</sup> They, with the Keraits represented a higher cultural level than the Mongols.

In eastern Mongolia, like the Mongols, the Tatars were living. In older times, they were the most powerful tribe of eastern Mongolia. In the twelfth century, they served and paid tribute to the Chin emperors. They were in a constant rivalry and state of war with Keraits and Naimans. The struggles for leadership and pasture between themselves were also harsh.<sup>80</sup>

Another important tribe of Inner Asia after the fall of the Uygur domination was the Merkids who lived on the lower Selenga. Like the Kerait and the Naiman, the Merkids had a more centralized political organization than the Mongols. By the late twelfth - early thirteenth century, they also had formed a powerful tribal union headed by a Khan.<sup>81</sup>

The nucleus of the Mongol people took shape by the mid-twelfth century along the Onon, Upper Tola and Kerulen rivers and in the Transbaikial.<sup>82</sup> Kabul Khan was the man who achieved the unity of the Mongol clans in the first half of the twelfth century. Until his time, there was no unity among the Mongols. Meanwhile, the Chin dynasty overthrew the Liao dynasty in Northern China in 1124. Soon, they found a northern neighbor, which became so powerful, unacceptable. Kabul and his successor, Ambaqai, came into conflict with the Chin.

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<sup>79</sup> Ahmet Temir, "Moğol (veya Türk-Moğol) Hanlığı", *Türkler*, eds. Hasan Celal Güzel, Kemal Çiçek, Salim Koca, vol. VIII, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), pp. 256-264, p. 257

<sup>80</sup> Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p.5

<sup>81</sup> Peter B. Golden, *Türk Halkları Tarihine Giriş*, translated by Osman Karatay, (Ankara: KaraM Yayıncılık, 1992) p. 284

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. p. 284

Chin tried to capture and kill him, but failed. He died a natural death.<sup>83</sup> To eliminate the problem, Chin resorted to the traditional method of turning tribe against tribe and they made use of the Tatars for this purpose. Ambaqai was captured by them and delivered to a nasty death at the hands of the Jürchen. Ambaqai's successor, Qutula Khan was the last effective Mongol ruler of the Pre-Chinggisid era, waging frequent war against the Tatars, but unable to take the revenge that the dying Ambaqai had requested. A Tatar victory in 1161 may have given "further impetus to Mongol internecine strife, always lurking beneath the surface, which cut short further political growth."<sup>84</sup>

The period between the Tatar victory in 1161 to the unification of Mongol tribes under Chinggis Khan's rule was defined as following in Ata-Malik Juvaini's words:

Before the appearance of Chingiz-Khan, they had no chief or ruler. Each tribe or two tribes lived separately; they were not united with one another and there was constant fighting and hostility between them. Some of them regarded robbery and violence, immorality and debauchery (*fisq va fujur*) as deeds of manliness and excellence. The Khan of Khitai used to demand and seize goods from them.<sup>85</sup>

As referred by Juvaini, Inner Asian people led a life full of conflict and violence where the tribal structures repeatedly split up and then united in different variations due to their socio-economic contradictions and political conflicts and

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<sup>83</sup> Rashid al-Din Tabib, *op. cit.*, p. 128

<sup>84</sup> Peter B. Golden, *op. cit.*, p.285

<sup>85</sup> Ala al-Din Ata-Malik Juvaini, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conquerer*, translated by J. A. Boyle, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997) p.21

where there was an intensive flow of population within and between the tribes.<sup>86</sup> Nomads were accustomed to the fragility of large political structures. Statelessness was a normal situation for them.<sup>87</sup> The vulnerability and poverty of nomadic economy, low-level violence, chronic instability which all denote to the notion of crisis seemed to create the conditions for a massive change towards centralization and stability.

As David Morgan states, such a social atmosphere is favorable for a young nomad to join a group of entourages around himself once he took a step to the political arena.<sup>88</sup> This might be one of the important parallelisms between Chinggis Khan and Osman since both arose in a social atmosphere where people were seeking political stability.

### **3.2 Emergence of a New Political Power**

Most important primary source of Mongol history is '*The Secret History of the Mongols*'. Mythical elements and legends do not occupy a wide space in the narrative. Most important of the few legendary stories in the work is on the origins of Chinggis Khan, who is considered to be from the auspicious line of Bodancar. This man is one of the four sons of Alan Qo'a who was made pregnant by a blue light coming from the vent of her tent. According to Rashid al-Din, many clans and tribes descended from Alan Qo'a. Though they are very big and crowded tribes and clans, each of them has a clear family tree; because "it is a custom to preserve

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<sup>86</sup> David Morgan, *The Mongols*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) p.59

<sup>87</sup> Peter B. Golden, "'I will give the people unto thee': The Cinggisid Conquests and Their Aftermath in the Turkic World", in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 10, no. 1 (2000), pp. 21-41, p. 22

<sup>88</sup> David Morgan, op. cit., p.59



one's fathers and forefathers, and every child born is taught and inculcated with his genealogy."<sup>89</sup> The tribes of the offsprings of Alan Qo'a's 'fatherless' three sons are called Niru'un, a name that refers to Alan Qo'a's 'pure womb', and those tribes always had a privileged position among others.<sup>90</sup> Kabul Khan, as it was mentioned above, the great grandfather of Chinggis Khan had come from this line and ruled the entire Mongol tribe.<sup>91</sup> After his death, power, according to his will, passed to another family, Tayichi'ut, and the central administration of the tribe which carried on its existence until that time, lost its influence. Though Chinggis Khan's father had the title of *bahadur*, it is difficult to say that he had authority over all the Mongol population.<sup>92</sup> One of the most dramatic scenes of the *Secret History* is the abandonment of Temüjin and his family just after the death of his father by the subordinate clans under the leadership of Tayichi'uts. This event was a clear example of the fluidity of the tribal people. Tribal structure as the basic unit of the society gave them opportunity to act freely as to meet the social, economic and political interests of its members. In this case, the adhered clans which lost a strong leader for rich plunder and military fame tended to be a part of a new integration which would provide them opportunities. Tribal men could not be superimposed by a power of sanction; they were free to leave their tribes. Tribes and clans could shift their alliances due to conjuncture and due to their changing interests before the rise of Chinggis Khan. The freedom to leave would be strictly forbidden by Chinggis later.

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<sup>89</sup> Rashid al-Din, op. cit., p.116

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p.117

<sup>91</sup> Francis Woodman Cleaves, *The Secret History of the Mongols*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982) p.15

<sup>92</sup> David Morgan, op. cit., p. 57

It is indicated in the *Secret history* that Temüjin's mother attempted to make their kinsmen turn back but she failed<sup>93</sup>, Temüjin and his mother, together with his sisters and brothers were left completely unprotected without being a part of any social organization. They had no property except eight or nine horses. Children grew up thanks to the superhuman efforts of their mother. When they lost their herds and were completely devoid of social protection, they started to live like forest people. Forest people had to depend on their personal abilities rather than the protection of a powerful leadership and collective action. These children growing up as noble individuals in harsh conditions under their mother's watchful eye is described in the *Secret History* as follows:

The qa'uluqa sons  
Which were nourished on wild shallot and shallot  
By the beautiful Üjin  
Became qoyira'ud noblemen.  
[After] becoming male noblemen,  
They became bold and courageous.  
Saying unto one another, "Let us nourish our mother,"  
Sitting on the bank of Mother Onan,  
Preparing for one another fishhooks,  
Angling and hooking  
Maimed and misshapen fishes,  
Bending hooks out of needles,  
Hooking jebüge [fishes] and qadara [fishes],  
Tying nets,  
Catching little fishes,  
Moreover, they nourished the benefit of their mother.<sup>94</sup>

Temüjin would come to power from an extremely marginal position without any firm base in tribal politics.<sup>95</sup> He had to depend solely on himself. The first

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<sup>93</sup>*The Secret History*, op. cit., p. 23

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20

<sup>95</sup> Thomas Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, Cambridge: Mass., B. Blackwell, 1989, p.188

phase of his life was spent over struggle for survival. He had to resist against the hard conditions of natural life, the enmity of his kin clans which were determined to prevent his leadership as well as external threats.

His childhood and youth might have left marks on his personality and influenced his later anti-tribal vision; because he suffered the cruelty of those to whom he was bound with tribal ties while he gained the support and friendship of those to whom he was personally related.<sup>96</sup>

Because of the untrustworthiness of his kinsmen, he built his political strategy on his subordinates (*nökers*), his equals (*andas*) and more powerful allies.

Notions of *anda* and *nöker* became key concepts of Temüjin's building process of power. He gave a very central role in his power nucleus to those who attached themselves to him as *anda* and *nöker*. Bo'orçu was one of those who at a very early date became a close friend and a servant of Temüjin. According to the story, their friendship began when he presented his help generously to Temüjin, as his horses were snatched by a group of plunderers, by saying that 'troubles of men are all same.'<sup>97</sup> After this event, Bo'orçu became Temüjin's *nöker* which lasted for his life time and performed important tasks in the army of conquest until his death. It was a common relationship pattern in nomadic life which purported a group of warrior companions which represented an articulation of sentiments of equal partnership and loyalty to a leader together.<sup>98</sup> Because of the continuing state of war, steppe economy was in decline and plundering was very common. This

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<sup>96</sup> Later, while great officers and commanders emerged among some of his closest relatives, those relatives who cooperated with his enemies, though they were very close in blood, were inferior in rank. (Rashid al-Din, op. cit., p.117)

<sup>97</sup> *The Secret History* op. cit., p. 29

<sup>98</sup> İsenbike Togan., *Flexibility and Limitation in Steppe Formations: The Kerait Khanate and Chinggis Khan*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998) p.133

situation motivated young men to leave their clans and to join around an ambitious leader as his *nökers* for opportunities of booty as well as for political and military prestige.<sup>99</sup>

It is interesting to see in the story that when Bo'orçu came to offer his services to Temüjin, he had only a hunch horse with him, though his father was a rich man. This can be accepted as an example of unconditioned submission of the *nöker* to his lord; yet the relation involves in the treatment of the *nöker* by his lord not as a simple servant but as a friend. A very similar pattern of relation existed between Osman and his men. Aşıkpaşazade call them either *nöker* or comrades in his history.<sup>100</sup>

Temüjin and Jamugha, on the other hand, who were politically at more equal positions, were *andas* to each other. *Anda* is similar to sworn brotherhood and is established through a verbal contract between equals; and 'it allowed the creation of alliances beyond the bounds of kinship'.<sup>101</sup> It was developed as a response to the need for specific horizontal relations that served to establish a bond between two persons from the same or separate clans or tribes but did not entail any duties that would involve other generations.<sup>102</sup> According to *Secret History*, Temüjin was eleven years old when these two consorted. Their friendship was mutually accepted in a simple ceremony where they gave each other knuckle-bones as gifts. In their second encounter after years, where they allied for rescuing Temüjin's wife Börte,

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<sup>99</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p.13

<sup>100</sup> Aşıkpaşaoğlu, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, ed. Nihal Atsız, (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1985).

<sup>101</sup> Thomas Barfield, op. cit., p.192

<sup>102</sup> İsenbike Togan, op. cit., p.79

who was kidnapped by *Merkids* for revenge,<sup>103</sup> their friendship was renewed through exchange of new gifts by saying: “Hearing the words of the former elders, saying, ‘[As for] persons [which are] *anda*, [their] lives [are] one. Not forsaking one another, they are [the one for the other] a protection for [their] lives,’ [one seeth that] such [is] the manner whereby [the *anda*] love each other. Now renewing again [the oath of] *anda*, we shall love each other”.<sup>104</sup>

Young Temüjin also had several allies who were strikingly more powerful; because he was in need of protection by a more powerful ally. He submitted his loyalty to the Khan of the Kerait confederation, To’oril who was *anda* of his father Yesügei Bahadur. Temüjin submitted him the coat of black sables which was the dowry of Börte. To’oril exercised supremacy over a significant part of Mongolia and as a reliable vassal he enjoyed the support of Chin dynasty which sought the stability of relations with the steppe. According to *Secret History*, To’oril Khan seemed to be ready to help him:

In return for the coat of black sables  
I shall collect for thee  
Thy people which have separated themselves.  
In return for the coat of sables  
I shall gather for thee  
Thy people which have dispersed themselves.<sup>105</sup>

To’oril offered his help to Temüjin for the unification of Mongol clans which had dispersed after Temüjin’s father’s death. This alliance brought Temüjin protection and prestige.

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<sup>103</sup> Temüjin’s father Yisugei bahadur kidnapped Hö’elun khatun from Merkids.

<sup>104</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p. 40

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid*, p.33

Besides To'oril Khan's Keraits, the Naiman Khanate was also a great tribal confederation of the time. The Keraits and the Naimans 'surpassed other tribes in strength and prestige and were stronger in gear and equipment and the number of his men.'<sup>106</sup> In comparison to them, Mongols were dispersed, headless and weak in power.

This desire for monopoly of power as well as disdain towards the Mongols was defined by Tayang-khan of the Naimans when he heard that Chinggis was preparing to attack them:

It is said that there are very few Mongol [in] this east. Those people by their quivers made the aged, Great Ong Khan of old to be afraid, made [him] to revolt, and made [him] to die. Now are those, the same, [not] saying, '[We] shall be *Khan*?' saying 'Let there be on the Heaven luminous luminaries, both the sun and the moon.' [We acknowledge it. It is true that] there are both the sun and the moon. [But] on the earth how can there be two *qad*? Let us go and bring those Mongol.<sup>107</sup>

However, both Khanate's vision was limited to tribal politics. For them, the monopoly of power should be on a tribal base which meant confederational structure. In this structure, tribal chieftains delegated some of their rights and duties to the great Khan until their interests conflicted with that of the great Khan's. As in many phases of Inner Asian history, this structure was short-lived because of the internal strifes. Chinggis Khan would try something different.

In the *Secret History*, besides the Keraits and the Naimans which seek to monopolize power, Temüjin's *anda*, Jamugha appears as a prominent character, whose intention can not be understood clearly by the reader. His attitude towards his *anda*, Chinggis Khan, is rather contradictory. While he seems to be the most

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<sup>106</sup> Juvaini, op. cit., p. 36

<sup>107</sup> The Secret History, op. cit., p.117

important rival of Chinggis, he forbears to annihilate and even harm him. He, on the one hand was provoking Chinggis's enemies against him, and on the other hand informing him of the plan of those he had provoked. For example, he provoked To'oril Khan, Khan of Keraits against Chinggis by telling him that Chinggis had collaborated with the Naimans; then told Chinggis To'oril's war plans<sup>108</sup>. He collaborated with the enemies of Chinggis Khan, but he also told those enemies, stories in order them to lose their courage against Chinggisid army.<sup>109</sup>

According to *Secret History*, after rescuing together Temüjin's wife Börte from the Merkids, Temujin and Jamugha stayed together for one and a half years. One day when they decided to leave the camp for another one, Jamugha said:

*Anda, Anda* Temüjin,  
Let us pitch next [unto] the mountain.  
Let our herdmen  
Attain unto a tent.

Let us pitch next unto the stream.  
Let our shepherds and keepers of lambs  
Attain unto [food for] the gullet.

Against his words, Börte advised Temüjin to leave Jamugha:

Anda Jamugha is said [to be] one who easily becometh weary. Now the time is come when he becometh weary of us. The words which Anda Jamugha hath said a little while ago are words which, then cover a plot against us. Let us not pitch. While we continue in this movement, let us, separating ourselves well, move, then travelling at night.<sup>110</sup>

Börte described him as 'one who easily become weary'. This can be evaluated in two ways. In the first possible scenario, Jamugha is a person who had greed for

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<sup>108</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p. 95

<sup>109</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p.125

<sup>110</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p. 51

power as much as Temüjin and saw Temüjin as his rival knowing that he had to annihilate him. However, he could not do that because of their common past and *anda* relation. That was basically the reason of his paradoxical behaviour. In the second scenario, Jamugha can be seen as the representative of the old system, which Temüjin embarked to change. He advocated a multiple political power structure in the steppe. In the order which he wanted to preserve, nobody could gain complete supremacy over the other and when the balance of power was spoilt, it was again achieved through wars. According to Togan, Jamugha implied with his words above: “Let’s stay alone, let’s not attempt to rule others”.<sup>111</sup> Therefore, he was not seeking political supremacy in the steppe; on the contrary, he acted against Temüjin, so that he couldn’t gain excessive power. So, it is not a contradiction that he helped and saved him from troubles at every instance.

Rashid ad-Din described the leadership structure which was represented by Jamugha as such:

We have to know that all the Turkish tribes and different categories of Mongols about whom we are writing did not have one specific ruler who was so overpowering and tyrannical so that he would lead all of the tribes. Instead each people, each tribe had their own rulers and commanders who would be engaged in disputes and fights with each other.<sup>112</sup>

Jamugha found adherents to himself among those who opposed the new system of Temüjin which monopolized political power while distributing economic wealth to the people.<sup>113</sup> Jamugha as the representative of status quo (which was plural power structure at the moment) had strong tribal bases and support of tribal

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<sup>111</sup> Isenbike Togan, op. cit., p.128

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p.127

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 91



aristocracy. Temüjin on the other hand, though he had an aristocratic background, his kinsmen left him after his father's death and he had to consolidate without any tribal support. He lured those who suffered from the existing strifes, poverty and unfairness of tribal society and who excluded him from the ruling strata of tribal politics, 'who challenged the legitimacy of the tribal hierarchy'.<sup>114</sup>

His separation from Jamugha was a turning point. Moreover, at that moment, he gained prestige and wealth when he defeated the Merkids. After that event, people started to come individually or in groups, leaving their tribal loyalties behind and submitting their loyalty to Temüjin.<sup>115</sup> As noted above, neither splitting up of clans or sub-clans from their tribes and their integration to other units, nor individual shifts like those of *nökers* were alien notions in steppe society. Moreover, it should be noted that Temüjin did not rise to power as a completely extraordinary tribal leader. On the contrary, he rose as a tribal leader in accordance with traditions and depending on the legitimacy of his lineage. The characteristics of his polity which matured in time was its dialectic relation with tribal political traditions in the sense that it was based on those traditions, but carry in itself the dynamic to change them. An evidence to this statement was his offering of the title of Khan to Sacha-beki and Taichu from Jurkin tribe which was related to Borjigid, Kuchar-beki, the son of Temüjin's uncle and Altan-otchigin from Kutula because they all were senior to Temüjin in the family hierarchy.<sup>116</sup> When they rejected his offer and declared him Khan, his claim to power gained a legitimate base though he was still too minor to cope with great powers. After that, he organized the principal

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<sup>114</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p. 39

<sup>115</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p. 51-52

<sup>116</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p.42

participants through a division of work. The nucleus of his military and administrative apparatus began to take a form in this way.<sup>117</sup> However, this organization was not due to the tribal hierarchy and lineage; it was rather due to the loyalty to Temüjin and the abilities of the principal participants. Therefore, though his leadership gained legitimacy due to tribal norms, he began to form his state apparatus due to anti-tribal norms. Bo'orcu and Jelme for instance, as the first who came to serve Temüjin were assigned to chief positions by him:

Ye twain,  
At the moment, when I had no companion other than  
My shadow,  
Being my shadow,  
Did settle my mind, ye!  
Let this be in my thoughts.  
At the moment when I had no whip other than a  
Horse tail,  
Did settle my heart, ye!  
Let this be within my bosom.  
Forasmuch as ye twain beforetime stood at my side, shall  
ye not be chiefs of all these?<sup>118</sup>

During the time between around 1196, when he was elected as Khan and received the title Chinggis Khan, and 1206, when he was lifted to power as Great Khan in the khuriltai near Onan river and the organization of the entire Mongol *ulus* in the Army of Conquest, Temüjin struggled for the unification of tribes and forced those tribes and clans which resisted him to obedience.

Two most important allies, To'oril and Jamugha gave different reactions to the election of Temüjin as the Khan of Mongols. To'oril, still considering Temüjin as his vassal and thinking that Temujin lacked the power to threaten Kerait supremacy, met the news with content. Jamugha on the other hand found a pretext

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<sup>117</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p.55-58

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p.58

to attack Temüjin just after he heard the news.<sup>119</sup> A coalition formed around him, mostly composed of noble relatives of Temüjin who were discontented that lesser people enjoyed greater prestige just because they followed Temüjin. This created a suspicion on the tribal hierarchy.<sup>120</sup> Clash with Jamugha's forces resulted in a temporary set-back of Temüjin. *The Secret History* does not give place to the consequences of this set-back against Jamugha. What is recorded is that Jamugha's subjects continued to join Temüjin which was met with pleasure of Temüjin since he gained new subjects without war.<sup>121</sup> A confrontation is seen between the conservative elements who were adherents of plurality of power and tribal norms of politics and those who were adherents of a change in the political order.

The next important step for Temüjin was his participation in the expedition of Chinese against the Tatars. The Tatars were the traditional allies of Chinese in the steppe which guaranteed that none of the tribes became sufficiently powerful to threaten their sedentary neighbours. But, now, around 1196, their interests contradicted and Chin emperor Altan Khan (as he was called by the nomads) decided to conduct an expedition against them. To'oril Khan and Temüjin helped Chin; they jointly attacked and killed the Tatar leader. According to the *Secret History* they were rewarded by the titles *ong* and *ja'ud quri*, respectively.<sup>122</sup> The victory over the Tatars created important consequences in the short term, as well as in the long term. First of all, supremacy was achieved over an important historical enemy. Secondly, with the title, given by the Chin provided Temüjin further prestige in the steppe. He had now more equal relation with 'Ong Khan'. He was

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p.60

<sup>120</sup> Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p.45

<sup>121</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p.64

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p.63

no more his vassal, but his partner.<sup>123</sup> Lastly, in the long run, allying with a sedentary power had implications on his centralizing vision.<sup>124</sup>

A large coalition against him was established under the leadership of Jamugha who was elected as Gurkhan (Khan of the all tribes) by the same coalition. Actually, Temüjin's annihilation of Jurkin princes, leaders of a relative clan which descended from Kabul Khan led to the emergence of a new reaction among tribal princes. Those who did not want to lose their independence like the Jurkins, joined their forces against Temüjin. Naimans, Merkits, Oirats and Tayichi'uts were among them.<sup>125</sup>

Due to the order of the nomads before the emergence of the Mongol Empire, there was continuous strife among them. This strife did not result in annihilation of one another. Rather, it helped the preservation of existing power balances and prevented monopolization of power.<sup>126</sup> Now, as clearly seen by the tribal princes, Temüjin embarked to change the balance of powers.

The clash with the coalition resulted in the victory of Temüjin and Ong Khan who once again allied with Temüjin. In the end, Tayichi'uts were exterminated, so that Temüjin took his revenge for the days of humiliation in their camp.<sup>127</sup>

When Temüjin prevailed over the coalition, he thought that he gathered sufficient strength to exterminate the Tatars. He needed a more disciplined army whose major motive in not booty but subjugation. He forbade his men to extract

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<sup>123</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p.53

<sup>124</sup> İsenbike Togan, op. cit., p.86

<sup>125</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p.68

<sup>126</sup> İsenbike Togan, op. cit., p.86

<sup>127</sup> Rashid al-Din, op. cit., p.144

booty on their own until victory was ensured and Temüjin divided the booty among the soldiers: “If we overcome the enemy, let us not tarry for spoil. When we shall have made an end of overcoming, that spoil shall be ours. We shall part [it] with one another.”<sup>128</sup>

This order shows that more complicated and difficult tasks required new rules. Tatars as one of the most powerful tribes of the steppe forced Mongols to change their mind which mainly focused on extracting wealth in battles. Temüjin offered a new pattern for the redistribution of wealth that gave the will and power to Temüjin’s hands.

After the Tatars were defeated, Temüjin with his top commanders decided to kill all the Tatar males ‘comparing [their height] unto [that of] a linchpin’ in the ‘Grand Counsel’ convoked in a solitary tent.<sup>129</sup>

For some time, Temüjin was not counting himself as the vassal of Ong Khan. Rather, he was *de facto* an equal partner. With the victory over Tatars, Temüjin moved up to seize Kerait throne. In the Secret History, it is recorded that Ong Khan with his sons attacked Merkits and subjugated entire Merkit people while Temüjin was dealing with the Tatars. He did not offer anything from the booty to Temüjin.<sup>130</sup> Previously, in a corporate attack towards Naimans, Ong Khan changed his mind with the provocation of Jamugha and left Temüjin alone in the battle field. According to Gümilev, Temüjin forgave him; rescued him and his family from a

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<sup>128</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p.81

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p.82

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p.85

difficult situation because Ong Khan must have promised to leave the throne to him.<sup>131</sup>

When Tatars were defeated, Temüjin offered a marriage alliance. Temüjin's eldest son Jöchi would marry Ong Khan's granddaughter and in return Temüjin would give one of his daughters to the son of Ong Khan, Senggum. When he received a humiliating rejection from Senggum, a clash became inevitable. A new coalition was formed around Senggum by the opponent tribal leaders. The war was a hard one and the defeat was prevented only when Temüjin's reinforced his army with the troops of a coalition including non-Mongol tribes. He propagated for newcomers that their shift to Temüjin's forces would bring them wealth and justice. The alliance with non-Mongol tribes was sealed with an oath known as "Baljuna Covenant" which was well-known but not reported in the Secret History or in later Mongol chronicles. Temüjin promised: "When I have completed this great task I will share the bitter and sweet fruits with you. If I break my word, may I become as the waters of the Baljuna".<sup>132</sup> When the battle was over in favor of Temüjin's army, the Kerayit's wealth was plundered and its people were dispatched to different spheres. He rewarded those who provide vital assistance during the war, especially two men, Badai and Kishlik, who informed him of the Kerait plans to attack him. Their reward was a status called Darkhan which provided its bearer exemption from taxes, exemption from punishment and share from every plundering they participated. These privileges were extended to the descendants of the bearer of the status Darkhan.<sup>133</sup> The privileges coming with the

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<sup>131</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit.

<sup>132</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p. 72

<sup>133</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p.114

status Darkhan would be expand in time. These privileges can be accepted as the first signals of the formation of a new Mongol aristocracy. Though the previous tribal statuses to an extent made influence on the new social positions and statuses, contributions to military achievements and loyalty to Temüjin played the basic role in the formation of new Mongol aristocracy.

The last great rival of Temüjin, after the defeat of which he became the incontestable leader of the steppe was the Naimans. Now, they were, after the subjugation of the Keraits, the last hope of the opposition. After the Ong Khan's defeat, Jamugha and some others fled to join Naiman ruler. They were also counting on still resisting Mongol leaders as well as Merkits and Oirats.<sup>134</sup> Before the last big offense in the steppe which was against the Naimans, Temüjin brought new measures in the organization of the army. The army was divided to units of thousands, hundreds and tens. He also set a body guard composed of eighty night guards and seventy day guards. He "enrolled the sons and younger brothers of the captains of thousands and hundreds and the sons and the younger brothers of only simple people", he chose and enrolled those which had ability and whose body and appearance [were] good"<sup>135</sup> to this bodyguard. Besides, a personal guard of Temüjin, composed of a unit of thousand was formed. Its duty was to protect Temüjin in war and peace time.

The defeat of the Naimans prepared the end of Jamugha. When he was captured by the men of Temüjin, he was killed according to his will since he was the *anda* of Temüjin.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p. 83

<sup>135</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p.119

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p.138

As can be seen in this account, Chinggis Khan cleared up the opposition against his polity in the steppe and then oriented towards sedentary territories. He called upon especially the Mongol tribes who didn't still submitted to him. Al Umari reports that he sent messages 'to the individual tribes and subtribes, informing them of his views, his justice, laws and generosity, stressing also that they would be held in great respect if they joined him and that their rights as rulers would be confirmed if they supported him.'<sup>137</sup> The tribes that resisted against Chinggis Khan were completely dismantled and distributed to different troops. Tribes that submitted voluntarily maintained their unity under unit of thousand army troops. It was a beneficence of Chinggis Khan to permit the submitted groups together in the army as in the following example. Chinggis Khan wanted to reward cook Önggür and asked him his wish. Önggür:

If Chinggis Qahan suffer me to choose a favour, it is this: my Baya'ud brethren are scattered and dispersed in each of the divers tribes. If Chinggis Qahan favour me, I would collect my Baya'ud brethren," Chinggis Qahan made a decree, saying, "Yea! So collecting thy Baya'ud brethren, command thou a thousand!"<sup>138</sup>

A serious penetration to tribal politics required a radical change in its customs. Temüjin embarked to change unreliable nature of tribal politics which was the result of the freedom of shifting loyalties. Therefore he regarded disloyalty of a tribesman towards his chief as a serious crime and often punished with death penalty, even if the chief was among his enemies. Thus, for example, the followers who surrendered Jamugha to Temüjin were executed; the groom who abandoned

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<sup>137</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p.82

<sup>138</sup> *The Secret History*, op. cit., p. 154



Senggum in his time of need was beheaded; but Kadak-bagatur of the Jirgen was pardoned and praised for his stubborn resistance which made it possible for his leader, Ong Khan to flee.”<sup>139</sup>

As stated above, he witnessed to the desertion of adhered clans after the death of his father. His mother’s attempts to make them return were only partially successful. But Borchigins didn’t have a power of sanction upon subordinated tribes and clans. In the new system, not the lineages but the households were related themselves with central authority and power of sanction can be superimposed on them. State interacted not with clanic units but individual households. While in the old system lineages had a power of sanction, in the new system of army of conquest, that power of sanction was owned by the top officers of the army.<sup>140</sup> He ‘succeeded in reducing the corporate structures to individuals loyal to himself’.<sup>141</sup> Foreign elements were brought to Chinggisid court to become part of a non-tribal core serving the dynasty.<sup>142</sup>

In this transition, his charismatic authority played its parts by directing the sentiment of loyalty of a society of shifting alliances to himself at a time when his political structure was still rudimentary and he didn’t have an institutional apparatus. He managed to dissolve tribal loyalties into an army of conquest by making use of traditional features some of which were mentioned above. Besides open advancement and inclusiveness in the ranks of his army of conquest as well as much more egalitarian redistribution of wealth (relative to old systems), tribesmen

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<sup>139</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, op. cit.

<sup>140</sup> İsenbike Togan, “Çinggis Han ve Moğollar,” *Türkler*, eds. Hasan Celal Güzel, Kemal Çiçek, Salim Koca, vol. 8, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002, pp. 235-255., p. 249

<sup>141</sup> İsenbike Togan, *Flexibility and Limitation in Steppe Formations: The Kerait Khanate and Chinggis Khan*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998., p.106

<sup>142</sup> Peter Golden, op. cit., p 25

was lured by Chingiz Khan ingenuity to establish a hierarchy and equality by underlining notion of seniority and relationships of anda and nöker.<sup>143</sup>

In preceding society, before Mongol rule, distribution of power was much more vital than distribution of wealth. In fact those other than members of ruling lineages could usually enjoy neither of them; preventing monopolization of power was a stronger sentiment since wealth was seen temporary while power was permanent.<sup>144</sup> Chinggissids, on the contrary, tried to monopolize power so that they could eliminate all possible threats to central authority while they enhance the ground of redistribution. Different from the old system, not only top commanders but also ordinary soldiers could enjoy the benefits of incursions and conquests. However, less and less people could have an influence on state policies. The lower the rank the greater was the separation; the higher the rank the higher was the interaction between two spheres. And at the top, it was the privilege only of the ruling dynasty to own economic wealth and political power.<sup>145</sup>

### **3.3 Frontiers Conquests and Interaction with Sedentary Societies**

The term frontier generally denotes the border region of a polity or a group of similar polities. This border, since it demarcates two different socio-political and cultural zones, is either an arena of conflict or exchange. For the expansionist states like Mongol Empire this term can be used in a more extensive way: the more the Mongol army seized new zones, the more shifted the frontier zone. However,

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<sup>143</sup> Isenbike Togan, op. cit., p. 137

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p.147

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p.144

though the empire integrates new regions, and a new polity emerges in these regions, footprints of old frontiers survive for centuries.

For the Inner Asian history, the term ‘frontier’ was classically denote North China. Nomadic vs. sedentary life was the basic dilemma that separates the two sides of the frontier. This dilemma had first emerged as the result of environmental, climatic differences and reinforced by political interventions. Construction of the Great Wall meant a political stress to already established social cleavage. Both sides had full commitment to the superiority of their way of life. Nomads considered sedentary territories as the supplier of the agricultural and manufactured goods which could not be obtained in the nomadic economy. These goods were provided either by commercial means or through plunders towards North China.

It is commonly accepted that Chinggis Khan’s conquests was not a result of a preliminary grand project. Every Mongol conquest outside Mongolia had its own reasons. For the Northern China, while Chinggis Khan seemed to repeat the tradition of his predecessors (to invade and then retreat), ‘because Chinese emperors were not inclined to surrender without a prolonged struggle Mongol army had to destroy Chin dynasty completely.’<sup>146</sup>

For Barfield, Chinggis’s horizon was limited to the steppe. He did not aim to govern all those large territories outside the steppe. This attitude continued until the time of Chinggis’s grandsons.<sup>147</sup> Chinggis Khan stayed alien to different cultures until the end of his life. He only spoke Mongolian. He has a point of view of a nomadic conqueror on the state organization and the domination of sedentary territories.<sup>148</sup> Expeditions to the outside of Mongolia were results of particular

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<sup>146</sup> David Morgan, op. cit., p.66

<sup>147</sup> Thomas Barfield, op. cit., p.200

events. Of course, there was more than that. Those expeditions were utilized for directing the energies of warriors who had involved in Chinggis army of conquest. In addition, frontier conquests were utilized as a new power base for the consolidation of Chinggis Khan's position and his anti-tribal policy in the steppe.

According to Russian anthropologist and historian Anatoly Khazanov, Mongol State was entirely depended on successful external expansion. Without the latter, the Mongol state would have been fated to disintegrate quickly. This is why, as soon as Temüjin was proclaimed Khan, he conducted his first campaigns against the Tangut.<sup>149</sup> Actually, unification of Mongolia and conquests in frontiers went side by side. When Chinggis Khan believed that the tribal opposition was eliminated to a great extent, he oriented his army towards countries in the neighborhood without forgetting to leave troops at home as a precaution against a possible rebellion of subjugated tribes.

Tangut empire which was the southwestern neighbor of the Mongols was one of the important powers of the region. They had a big army and fortified towns. Their population composed of Tanguts, Tibetans, Yellow Uigurs and Chinese engaged in agriculture, trade and cattle breeding.<sup>150</sup> After the great Khuriltai of 1206, where basic principles of the new order, which later would enlarge and become Chinggis Khan's *yasa*, was established, Chinggis Khan decided to expedite towards Tangut territory. This expedition would be wider and aim at total defeat, contrary to previous ones. The expedition resulted in a partial success in 1209.

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<sup>148</sup> V. V. Barthold, *Moğol İstilasına Kadar Türkistan*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1990) p. 486

<sup>149</sup> Anatoly M. Khazanov, *Nomads And The Outside World*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994) p.236

<sup>150</sup> Paul Ratchnevsky, *op. cit.*, p.103

Tangut ruler obliged to give rich tribute but refused to provide auxiliary troops. Chinggis Khan would turn to deal with this unfinished work after the western conquests.<sup>151</sup>

Three predecessor expeditions to China in the years 1211, 1212 and 1213 were realized before the total destruction of the Jürchen Chin dynasty. These expeditions did not result in a replacement of the administration of North China. On the contrary, Mongols returned home with reach booty, but not with any territorial gain.<sup>152</sup> As noted above, Mongol frontier conquests did not aim to establish Mongol administration in those territories, at least at the beginning. In each case, either because the ruling dynasty broke the treaty obligations or it refused to meet the demands of the Mongols, it was punished. Mongols decided to launch another campaign when they suspected of the move of the capital by Chin dynasty to the south of China as expressed by Chinggis Khan in the following words: “The Chin Emperor made a peace agreement with me, but now he has moved his capital to the south; evidently he mistrusts my word and has used the peace to deceive me!”<sup>153</sup>

Mongol attack which was met with a strong resistance resulted in a total destruction of Chin hegemony and ‘first real incorporation of Chinese territory under Mongol rule’.<sup>154</sup> Yet, Chinggis Khan left only a small part of his troops in China under the command of Mukhali in 1217. Leaving troops from units of thousands and hundreds in the conquered region to reside and provide the security

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p.105

<sup>152</sup> Thomas Barfield, op. cit., p.200

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p.201

for a specific period of time would become a Mongol tradition as Mongol army further advanced in the frontiers. These special troops were called *tamma* and their commanders were ethnically divergent.<sup>155</sup> Mongols tried to rule North China through a group of bureaucrats some of which were expatriate and not necessarily familiar to Chinese culture. The tax farming policy which was carried out by Muslim merchants called *ortak*<sup>156</sup> and unsystematic distribution of lands among members of the dynasty and Mongol notables as appanages resulted in further destruction of Chinese agricultural economy. Devastation of agricultural fields and their transformation to pasture lands in favor of pastoral nomads was not an exceptional practice.<sup>157</sup> Mongol's steppe-centered vision was preserved until the grandsons of Chinggis Khan and until the reign of Khubilai they stayed ignorant to the organization of Chinese state and economy.

The beginning of Chinggisid campaign to the west and fall of a part of Turkestan to the Mongol hands occurred in a similar pattern as in the case of Chinese conquests. It was a result of the will to take revenge from Naiman prince Kuchlug and eliminate the threat towards the Mongol domination in the steppe created by him. Mongols established their first administration in Almalik, a city of Kara-Khitai in east Turkestan which had been seized by Kuchlug. In 1221, there was a *darughachi* in the city besides the local administrators, as the personal representative of Chinggis Khan.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Donald Ostrowski, The "tamma" and the Dual-Administrative Structure of the Mongol Empire, in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, Vol. 61, No. 2.(1998), pp. 262-277, p.264

<sup>156</sup> For the position of *ortaks* within Mongol state: İsenbike Togan,, "Moğollar Devrinde Çin'de Ticaret ve 'Ortak' Tüccarları", *Toplum ve Bilim* 25/26 (Bahar-Yaz 1984), pp. 71-90

<sup>157</sup> V. V. Barthold, op. cit., p.497

<sup>158</sup> Barthold, op. cit., p.426

Though there are different opinions among historians on the reason of waging a war to the sultan of Khwarazm, it is almost certain that it was not a part of a clandestine agenda of world conquest. When Sultan Muhammad sent an envoy to Chinggis Khan to learn if he really defeated Jürchen Chin and conquered North China, Chinggis Khan welcomed his envoy and told him that he was considering Sultan Muhammad as the Khan of the west while he himself was the Khan of the east.<sup>159</sup> His demand from sultan of Khwarazm was facilitation of commercial flow within his territories. A Mongol diplomatic delegation arrived at Khwarazm court in the spring of 1218 to ensure a peace agreement which was approved by the Sultan.<sup>160</sup> However, just a few months later, a Mongol caravan was despoiled in Utrar with the order of the governor of the city, probably in accordance with the tacit permission of the Sultan. For the Mongol's side, a war was inevitable against Khwarazm since betrayal to an agreement in effect was the biggest of all crimes and required revenge. A campaign was launched by the Mongols in 1219 through Transoxiana and continued between 1220 and 1221 which included long lasting city sieges. At the end, Khwarazmshahs were overwhelmed and cities of West Turkestan and Khurasan fell one by one to the hands of the Mongols.<sup>161</sup>

In Transoxiana, Mongols followed a similar pattern with the administrative practices in the cities of East Turkestan bereaved from Kuchlug. While a *darughachi* was provided with a wide jurisdiction and held imperial seal, local officials called *basqaq* and other non-Mongol officials were lower in the

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<sup>159</sup> Rashid al-Din, op. cit.

<sup>160</sup> Barfield, op. cit., p. 201

<sup>161</sup> Thomas Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p.17

administrative hierarchy and dealt with routine work of administration.<sup>162</sup> A clear division of work between military and civil administrators was absent. State center was concentrated on the income coming from those cities to the court treasury. Actually, most of the time, governors independently determined the tax rate. One among those governors who sent the great amount to the court treasury was considered as most reputable. The center was unconcerned with the burden imposed on the local populations.<sup>163</sup> As in the case of North China, the administration of the Mongols in the cities they subjugated did not depend on a profound knowledge of characteristics of local administration, economy and society. Nor did they have a central legislation to regulate the administrative operations in different places. In other words, indirect governance was adopted in which 'the exploitation of conquered sedentary domains, sometimes predatory, did not touch the social and economic foundations of its society, nor did it entail the emergence of a single socioeconomic system in addition to political system.'<sup>164</sup>

The indirect governance and lack of a unitary administrative system imposed from the centre contributed the emergence of aristocratic elite in the frontiers which intermingled with local elites of the regions. This was the result of opportunity of relatively independent action of Mongol officials in those regions and allotments of lands and right of taxation as appanages by the centre to these privileged officials<sup>165</sup>. These appanages would become hereditary in time.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Ratchnevsky, op. cit., p.139

<sup>163</sup> Barthold, op. cit., p.497

<sup>164</sup> Khazanov, op. cit., p.231

<sup>165</sup> - They were exempted from taxes.

- They were taking their share from war booty

- They could enter to the court without permission.

- They were not punished until they comited a ninth crime.



Great shares were owned by imperial princes and their families. According to customary family law of Inner Asian nomads, the wealth was considered as the property of the family. Chinggisids did not abandon this law; on the contrary included in their dynastic law. According to family law, while eldest son establishes his own household in an early age and moves to a distant place, youngest son is seen as the heir who will carry on his father's household. Family law created advantageous positions for eldest and youngest sons of a ruling family in succession.

According to Persian historian of thirteenth century Ata Malik Juvaini, when the matter of Ong Khan was cleared up and the tribes of the Mongols were reduced to his command either by their will or by compulsion, Chinggis Khan divided the tribes and peoples of Mongols as well as all the armies between his four sons from his principle wife Börte. These sons were legitimate heirs of throne. 'And to each of his other younger sons and to his brothers and kinsmen he allotted their share of the armies.'<sup>167</sup> During the reign of Chinggis Khan, he was the uncontested authority of the empire. He did not allow any attempt to alter his power. However, the system established by him bore the characteristics of old Mongol customs. All the children, grandchildren and uncles have their own shares of power and property. Distribution of property among members of dynasty continued as the domain of the empire enlarged and included the vast territories of Asia. Juvaini gives an account of this distribution:

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- They had a special place during the ceremonies. (Sultanov, T. I., *Lifted Up on the White Khoshma: Ghengis Khan's Descendants* Almaty: Daik Press, 2001)

<sup>166</sup> Khazanov, op. cit., p.246

<sup>167</sup> Juvaini, op. cit., p.41

Thus to Otegin Noyan, his brother, and to some of his grandchildren he apportioned territory in the regions of Khitai. To his eldest son, Tushi, he gave the territory stretching from the regions off Qayaligh and Khorazm to the remotest parts of Saqsin and Bulghar and as far in that direction as the hoof of Tatar horse had penetrated. Chaghatai received the territory extending from the land of the Uighur to Samarqand and Bokhara, and his place of residence was in Quyas in the neighbourhood of Almaligh. The capital of Ögetei, the heir-apparent, during his father's reign was his yurt in the region of the Emil and the Qobaq; but when he ascended the throne of the Khanate he removed it to their original homeland, between Khitai and the land of the Uighur, and gave that other fief to his own son Güyük: an account of his various dwelling places has been recorded separately. Toli's territory, likewise, lay adjacent thereto, and indeed this spot is the middle of their empire like the centre of a circle.<sup>168</sup>

The distribution that was given by Juvaini in detail did not directly result in decentralization of the empire. When Mongke Khan attempted to redistribute the appanages among the grandsons of Chinggis Khan to the disadvantage of prince lines of Chaghatai and Ögedei<sup>169</sup>, he opened the way for a civil war within Chinggisids, more extensive and harsher than the previous ones.<sup>170</sup> After long and bloody clashes, the dissolution institutionalized when the centre in the steppe lost completely its superiority over the khanates in the conquered regions.

After the distinctions between polities of Chinggis Khan's grandsons became transparent in 1260's, we see more clearly the variations in the patterns of Mongol domination in sedentary domains. While in Chagatay state and in Golden Horde, the administrative system was more loyal to nomadic traditions and external to the

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid., p.42

<sup>169</sup> Peter Jackson, "From Ulus to Khanate: The Making of the Mongol States c. 1220-c. 1290", in *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, Reuven Amitai-Preiss, David O. Morgan (eds.), Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000, pp.12-38, p.13

<sup>170</sup> Thomas Allsen, op. cit., p.53

dynamics of sedentary life, we see an amalgam of sedentary and nomadic traditions in administration of Yuan dynasty of China and of Ilkhanids.

As far as the wealth enormously increased with the new conquests and the Mongolian state developed with its newly emerged aristocracy and continuously expanding dynastic family, it became difficult to govern the country from the steppe. Division of work envisioned by Chinggis Khan for his sons, in time turned into an irreversible process of disunion. Therefore, a number of important centers emerged, all of which were far away from the steppes.

Yuan dynasty based itself on the rich agricultural resources of South China. While ‘the Chaghadai khanate depended on the resources of Transoxiana, the Il-Khanate on the economy of Iran, and the Golden Horde on the towns and taxes of the Slavs in Russia. Ögedei’s descendants, whose *ulus* had no such base, disappeared as an independent khanate.’<sup>171</sup>

Temüjin devoted most of his energies to monopolize power in the steppe. To eliminate his rivals, he had to change tribal political structure radically. Therefore, he built up his war machine and state together with those who left their tribal loyalties behind and submitted their service to him. While tribal statuses were trivialized to an extent, merit and loyalty became prominent values. All the subjugated tribal population was included in the Army of conquest. Though old tribal privileges were left behind, a new aristocracy emerged within the ranks of the army since the positions rendered hereditary. Subjugated tribes were broken into military units. There were also composite units composed of the ex-members of those tribes which resisted to Chinggis Khan. These military units were distributed

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<sup>171</sup> Thomas Barfield, op. cit., p.218

to initially state but increasingly personal armies;<sup>172</sup> because at the beginning the distribution of those units among Chinggis Khan family members, kinsmen and noyans was organized in a division of labour under the coordination of Chinggis Khan. As noted by Peter Jackson, sharing was realized due to the principle of 'indivisibility of the empire'. Dynastic family members had their share in the pastures, villages and they had their own representatives in the armies of conquests with their own contingents. A territorial distinction was outside the agenda.<sup>173</sup> However, as the centre weakened, distributed troops became personal armies that acted independently.

Frontier conquests had two important functions: Chinggisids improved their power base in the steppe by the help of a base outside the tribal context. Frontier conquest meant an intimidation to possible rebels among old tribal aristocracy. Secondly, these conquests provided fresh reserves for the centre that consolidated its power with promise and realization of a fair distribution of wealth. For Khazanov, conquests could appease and solve the internal problems among nomads which emerges as result of growing social differences, because it was able to carry these problems outside and solve them at the expense of the subjugates or conquered society.<sup>174</sup>

Yet, Mongol empire stayed steppe centered until victory of Khubilai Khan over Arigh Böke after the demise of Möngke Khan in 1259. Further expansion of the Empire, integration of new sedentary zones that are radically different from the steppe in many terms and excessive increase in wealth made difficult to govern the

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<sup>172</sup> Peter Golden, op. cit., p.24

<sup>173</sup> Peter Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire", *Central Asiatic Journal*, no. 22 1978, pp. 186-244., p.192

<sup>174</sup> Khazanov, op. cit., p.230

Empire from the steppe. Mongols preferred an indirect rule through governors who were appointed from the court. In time, these governors regarded the provinces allotted to them as personal property. Newly conquered zones were shared by Chinggisid princes and were also allotted to Mongol officials in the frontiers who in time regarded these allotments as their personal property. The new administrative system bore the footprints of traditional Mongol practice in patrimonial inheritance. The family practice was extended into imperial context as in the previous nomadic empires. This characteristic of the system created difficulties in maintaining the power in the centre.<sup>175</sup> Components of Mongol Empire in those areas created their own peculiar polity on a varying scale in terms of preservation of nomadic traditions and articulation of sedentary features.

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<sup>175</sup> Lawrence Krader, *Formation of the State*, (Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliff, 1968) p. 93

## **CHAPTER IV:**

### **OTTOMAN STATE FORMATION**

In this chapter, the rise of Ottomans and their state formation will be analyzed within the general framework of socio-political conditions of Asia Minor and its western frontiers in the first half of thirteenth century. The reasons behind the Ottoman rise and their coming to the fore from within a number of very similar polities can not be truly understood without a panoramic view of the social dynamics, political struggles and alliances of the time.

In the first section, the process starting from the first incursions to Anatolia during the times of Great Selçuk State is narrated. In the second section, the emergence and rapid advancement in frontier conquests of Ottomans as well as their agile moves in establishment of alliances and in making use of internal problems of the polities in their milieu, is handled. Before an overview in the conclusion section, the centralization attempts and the opposition urged by those attempts are analyzed.

#### **4.1. Asia Minor before the Rise of Ottomans**

First Turkish incursions from Central Asia to Anatolia can be traced back to the first half of eleventh century. These incursions were the result of conscious state policy of *Selçuks* and were developed for the solution of the Turcoman

problem. Generally, in the struggles for throne within the *Selçuk* state, Turcoman *beys* supported the contenders of the throne who were outside the legitimate line of succession of *Selçuk* family. The attempts of *Selçuks* to strengthen the central power through developing the *gulam* system in military organization resulted in Turcomans' sharpening of the opposition and their support to the princes who opposed the throne<sup>176</sup>. The solution of the state was to send the Turcoman *beys* to Anatolia, to the Western frontiers for military conquests. Incursions between 1040 and 1071 were especially important in breaking the Byzantine resistance and preparing the conditions for Turkish settlement. Yet, it should be noted that even the battle of Manzikert was not the result of an intention to subjugate Asia Minor.<sup>177</sup> Many eastern and central Anatolian cities were conquered in this period. But the general attitude was returning to their bases, to Azerbaijan after the conquests; they did not intent to establish themselves in the west.<sup>178</sup> In 1071, when Byzantine resistance was broken, Turcomans began to settle in Anatolia. Nevertheless, settlement of Turks in great masses in Anatolia took some centuries more. Second wave of migration would come when Mongols started an offensive towards the west<sup>179</sup>. In this process, *Selçuks* banished the centrifugal elements from the centre of the state; however they gave a new zone of power for these elements in the frontiers. When emperor Michael VII seized power from Romanus Diogenes, the agreement between Alparslan and Romanus after Manzikert lost its validity.

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<sup>176</sup> Mehmet Altay Köymen, *Selçuklu Devri Türk Tarihi*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2004) p.162

<sup>177</sup> Claude Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey The Seljukid Sultanate of Rûm, Eleventh to Fourteenth Century*, (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd., 2001) p 8

<sup>178</sup> Cahen, Claude, *The Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, translated by J. Jones-Williams, (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1968) p.67

<sup>179</sup> Osman Turan, "Anatolia in the Period of the Selçuks and the *Beyliks*", *The Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 1A, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970, p.233

However the new emperor reopened negotiation with Malik-Shah. Therefore, though the Turcomans were occasionally supported by the *Selçuks*, the Sultan could not give them complete freedom; and conquests and settlements took place under the initiative and leadership of Turcoman *beys*.<sup>180</sup> Entrance of Süleyman, son of Kutalmış who was a chief of a *Selçuk*'s branch and was usually in revolt against his cousins Great Seljuqids<sup>181</sup>, to Anatolia, and his take over of Konya and then İznik (Nicaea) in 1075 resulted in his recognition by the Turcoman beys in the region as the leader of Anatolian Turks against the centre of Selçuks. To the end of 1070's, Byzantine texts began to designate Süleyman as 'Sultan'. This designation discloses the recognition of Süleyman as the chief by a number of Turcoman groups; because the title could be given neither by Melikşah who considered himself as the sole 'Sultan' nor by the caliph. Byzantium seemed to welcome the rise of Süleyman as a leader to keep control over Turcomans and prevent independent plundering activities.<sup>182</sup>

The migration of 1080 and establishment of The Selçuk state of Rum was closely linked.<sup>183</sup> The first wave of migration from the east and peopling of Asia Minor continued until the beginning of twelfth century. These migrations would change social fabric of Anatolia to a great extent. Majority of the immigrants stayed semi-nomadic pastoralists<sup>184</sup>, though there were peasants, merchants and

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<sup>180</sup> Claude Cahen, *op. cit.*, p. 73

<sup>181</sup> Claude Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey The Seljukid Sultanate of Rûm, Eleventh to Fourteenth Century*, (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd., 2001) p. 9

<sup>182</sup> Claude Cahen, *The Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, translated by J. Jones-Williams, (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1968) p.76-77

<sup>183</sup> Osman Turan, *op. cit.*, p.232

<sup>184</sup> Claude Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey The Seljukid Sultanate of Rûm, Eleventh to Fourteenth Century*, (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd., 2001) p.14



religious leaders among them. During the process of conquests and settlements, the western frontiers of Selçuks were in a state of continuous shift and dynamism. Turcomans were lured by the booty opportunities in the frontiers.

The domination of Sultanate of Rum over Turcoman principalities in Anatolia was discontinuous and unstable. Decline in Selçuk's authority over the territory generally went with an increase in power and scope of action of Turcoman principalities. The pressure of Great Selçuks and the succession crisis within the dynastic family were the main destabilizing factors. Clashes with Byzantine and the crusades also contributed to the crisis of hegemony in Anatolia. For a time, around 1120s, when Danishmendid ruler Emir Gazi helped son of Kılıç Arslan, Mesud, in taking over the throne in Konya and repulsed the attacks of Byzantines, although the sultanate was in the hands of the Anatolian *Selçuks*, the real rulers of Anatolia became the Danishmendids that were previously a vassal of the Seljuquids.<sup>185</sup>

The outlook of Anatolia, until opening of a period of stability with Mesud's victory over Byzantine and Second Crusade army in Konya in 1147 was similar to the situation during the second *beyliks'* period. Small polities were dominating the politics. After this time, the absorption process of the territories of Turcoman principalities by Anatolian *Selçuks* accelerated. In the matrix of the alliances and strives among them, were also included the Byzantine state. Turcoman *bey*s from time to time allied themselves to the Byzantine emperor against each other. Nevertheless, they all had the common agenda of *gaza* conquests in the frontiers of Byzantine state. After the victory over Byzantium at Myriokephalon in 1176 under the rule of Kılıçarslan II, Turcomans began expanding towards western coasts,

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., p.240

‘gaining access to the trade routes of the surrounding seas.’<sup>186</sup> Yet, towards the beginning of thirteenth century, a stable neighborhood relation was established between Anatolian *Selçuks* and Byzantium which would be spoilt with the Mongol invasion.

The Ottoman principality was born to the conjuncture of Mongol invasion and as a result of a second Turcoman migration toward eastern frontiers of Byzantium. Because of the defeat of the *Selçuks* by the Mongols, there was a power vacuum in the region. There were binding hegemonies whose influence on the smaller power centers were in decrease. They were Ilkhanid State, which controlled Asia Minor but was frequently jeopardized by the insurrections of its governors; the Sultanate of Rum, whose sovereignty became merely symbolic under the Mongol yoke; and the Byzantine State, which was shocked in Rumelia and in the Balkans when Constantinople was seized by Latins in the IVth Crusade and retreated to İznik; and which concentrated on the Balkans and neglected the domains in Asia Minor after recapturing Constantinople (1261)<sup>187</sup>. Besides, the Memluk State in Egypt and the Nogay Khanate in the north as the powers endeavored to influence politics of Asia Minor are also worth noting. Seljuqid authority was induced to ‘a referent to provide some credibility to one’s claim.’<sup>188</sup>

Towards the middle of thirteenth century, *Selçuk* hegemony was seriously appalled by Mongol attacks. Series of events, recognition of Mongol supremacy in 1235, invasion of Central Anatolia by Baycu’s army in 1243 and foundation of a

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<sup>186</sup> Caroline Finkel, *Osman’s Dream The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1923*, (London: John Murray Publishers, 2005) p.4

<sup>187</sup> Colin Imber, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu 1300-1650*, translated by Şiar Yalçın, (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2006) p. 9

<sup>188</sup> Cemal Kafadar, Cemal, *Between Two Worlds The Construction of the Ottoman Empire*, (California: University of California Press Ltd., 1996) p.125

Mongol administration in 1277, stimulated a massive population movement from East and Central Anatolia to the West.<sup>189</sup> A new generation of principalities in Western Anatolia in the frontiers of Byzantine Empire, which was founded by the leaders of immigrant Turcomans, remained loyal to Mongol administration for a time. In the south around Antalya was the principality of Teke, in southern west was the Menteşe, in its north was the Aydın, the Hamid principality was centred in Isparta, the Saruhan was centred in Manisa and to the northern west towards the Dardanelles lay the Karesi. The Germiyan settled around Kütahya and in north-central Anatolia there was the house of İsfendiyar. The Karaman settled in central Anatolia and seized the former capital of *Selçuks*, Konya. In the southern east borders of Byzantium based Osman's house.<sup>190</sup> These frontier principalities were always more independent from Mongolian administration than the principalities of inner parts of Anatolia. With the struggles for throne and civil war in the Ilkhanid Empire, Mongol hegemony faded and all the Turcoman principalities became more independent during the first quarter of fourteenth century.

These small political structures were in a constant political and military fight with each other. This time, different from the first *beyliks'* period, Byzantine hegemony over Anatolia was about to collapse.

Turcoman warriors conducted frequent attacks and plundering activities towards Byzantine domains. Actually, the Byzantine *tekfurs* were the elements of the same socio-political climate where small and unstable political entities were dominant rather than a central and stable power.

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<sup>189</sup> İnalçık Halil, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Doğuşu Meselesi" *Söğüt'ten İstanbul'a Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu Üzerine Tartışmalar*, ed. Oktay Özel, Mehmet Öz, (Ankara: İmge Yayınevi, 2000) p.227

<sup>190</sup> Donald Edgar Pitcher, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Tarihsel Coğrafyası*, translated by Bahar Tırnakçı, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999) p.53

Though fragmentation and conflicts marked political atmosphere of frontiers in that period, both Sultanate of Rum and Byzantium under Laskaris administration left a legacy of economic welfare from their relatively stable times.<sup>191</sup> In spite of the political fragmentations, commercial relations across the territory with the junctions in various cities were developing. Size of agricultural activities and animal husbandry was also in increase.<sup>192</sup>

Turcomans because of the pressure of continuously increasing population started to engage in various economic activities like carpentry and rug business in addition to animal husbandry, which was their traditional business. Another factor was that new lands were more available for agriculture than the emigrated parts of Anatolia and it is easier to feed the tribal populations through agricultural products.<sup>193</sup> They also had a part in the slave trade of Anatolia, Iran and Arabian countries. Infidel captives of *gazi* warriors were profitable items in slave trade.<sup>194</sup>

In addition to economic and commercial vivacity, Western frontiers of Anatolia maintained its social and cultural integrity, which surmounted political fragmentations.<sup>195</sup> These two facts were related to each other. Immigration, military expeditions, constant mobility of nomadic population accelerated social, cultural and economic interaction while it solved solid structures and social fragmentation

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<sup>191</sup> R. Paul Lindner, "What was a Nomadic Tribe?", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 24, no. 4 (Oct., 1982), pp. 689-711, p.34; Jacques Lefort, "13. Yüzyılda Bitinya", *Osmanlı Beyliği 1300-1389*, ed E. Zachariadou, translated by G. Ç. Güven, İ. Yerguz, T. Altınova, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1997) p.112

<sup>192</sup> Kunt, Metin, "Siyasal Tarih (1300-1600)", *Türkiye Tarihi*, ed. Sina Aksin, (Istanbul: Cem Yayınevi), 1988, p.29

<sup>193</sup> R. Paul Lindner, op. cit., p.73

<sup>194</sup> Halil İnalcık; op. cit., p.233

<sup>195</sup> Feridun Emecen, *İlk Osmanlılar ve Batı Anadolu Beylikler Dünyası*, (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2005) p.18

related to kinship, ethnic identity and religion. Therefore, political fragmentation was there not because of the dissimilarities within frontier societies, but because ruling families were in a power struggle.

In the frontiers of old imperial polities ‘the advanced civilization of hinterland, with its religious orthodoxy, scholastic theology, palace literature composed in an artificial literary language, and *şeriat* law, gave way in the frontier lands to a popular culture, characterized by heretical, religious orders, mysticism, epic literature and customary law.’<sup>196</sup> Sufi orders as *Mevlevilik* and *Bektaşilik* that corresponded to social organizations functioned as a cement sticking frontier societies. Additionally, they played a crucial role in social and cultural integration of newly conquered territories. Similarly, *Ahi* organizations with their social network and solidarity closed the gap to an extent in the nonexistence of some functions of a central state. *Futuwwa* tradition and solidarity within artisans together constituted two important notions of these organizations.<sup>197</sup>

At the end of Byzantine rule, remaining Byzantine towns in Bythinia were in the hands of independent *tekfurs*. First chronicles of the Ottoman principality are full of stories of confrontation and reconciliation of *tekfurs* and *beys* of frontier principalities. Boundaries of principalities and *tekfurs*’ domains were far from being certain and always open to revision. In some parts, Turcomans owned plateaus while Christian owned lowlands or Byzantine commanders owned Muslim

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<sup>196</sup> Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973) p.7

<sup>197</sup> G. G. Arnakis, “Futuwwa Traditions in the Ottoman Empire Akhis, Bektashi Dervishes, and Craftsmen”, in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4. (Oct., 1953), pp.232-247

villages and towns. Sometimes subjects of different political entities used same markets.<sup>198</sup>

Integrity of frontiers created by social exchange and economic division of labor was shadowed by continuous strives among large and small principalities and plunders of Turcoman fighters. The chaos and uncertainty created by these dynamics especially affected Byzantine villagers who had been already suffering from heavy tax burden of Byzantine state. Turcomans who migrated to western frontiers as a result of Mongol military and demographic pressure in the Inner parts of Anatolia faced the problem of finding yurt and making their living. Nomadic Turcoman groups were not the sole elements that migrated to the west with the impact of Mongol invasion. Religious figures and their disciples, energetic and ambitious warriors and merchants were also ready to attach themselves to the umbrella of an inclusive and stable political power.

#### **4.2 Emergence of the Ottoman Principality and Frontier Conquests**

Ottoman appears as a small political structure in the frontier region between Turks and Byzantium, called Bithynia, in the second half of thirteenth century. Aşıkpaşazade reports that there was no war during the times of Ertuğrul, father of Osman. ‘They spent the summers in summer pastures and the winters in winter quarters.’<sup>199</sup>

Actually, the reason of the designation of the small principality as ‘Ottoman’ not as something else, shows that the political activities, which provided certain

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<sup>198</sup> Kunt, op. cit., p.31

<sup>199</sup> Aşıkpaşaoğlu, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, ed. Nihal Atsız, (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1985) p.15

eminence, started under the leadership of Osman. According to the sources, replacement of Ertuğrul by Osman occurred in accordance with the will of notables of the tribe. As far as tribal nomadic background of Ottomans is concerned, realization of election for leadership becomes lucid. In tribal nomadic structures, as noted in the second part of this study, though ruling was the privilege of a certain lineage, the contenders of leadership must have had the capacity to find pastures, to determine the migration route and to secure the tribe from external threats.<sup>200</sup>

Contrary to Chinggis Khan who imposed his leadership not only to his tribe but also entire steppes of Inner Asia despite the opposition of his tribesmen, Osman started his political career as an uncontested leader with the lifting up by the notables of his tribe. The election practice in succession times was repeated during Orhan's rise to power. The appearance of Ottoman principality was still a coalition which was formed through the incorporation of variety of groups and individuals around a tribal nucleus; because during the times of Osman, many Turcomans crowded into the principality, Turcoman or Greek aristocratic families was integrated. Moreover, there was an increase in the incorporation of local religious leaders, *ahi şeyhs* and *bektaşî babas*. Osman was more likely to be a participative leader of this population than an absolutist monarch.<sup>201</sup> Aşıkpaşazade reports that Orhan and his brother Aleaddin met with 'the saints of the time'. Aleaddin suggested the leadership of his brother asserting the intention of their father. The saints accepted.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Joseph Fletcher, The Mongols: "Ecological and Social Perspectives", in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 46, no. 1 (1986), pp. 11-50, p.14

<sup>201</sup> Yusuf Oğuzoğlu, "Osman Gazi'yi Tarih Sahnesine Çıkartan Siyasal ve Sosyal Şartlar" *Osmangazi ve Dönemi*, Sempozyum Sonuç Bildirileri, (Bursa: Bursa Kültür Sanat ve Turizm Vakfı Yayınları, 1996) s., 127-146, p.143

<sup>202</sup> Aşıkpaşaoğlu, op. cit., p.42

After his rise to power, Osman managed to orient the wind which had been already blowing in Byzantine frontiers, in his favor. Turcomans who were fleeing from the jam emerged after coming of Mongol groups in waves and Mongol yoke in the east, became fresh reserve of human resource for small polities of the west that were dealing with frontier conquests. In addition to Turcoman refugees, discontented local population, tired of heavy tax burden of Byzantium and threat of war as well as Christian frontier warriors called *akritia* also among those who were lured by Ottoman polity.

*Akritia* was culturally akin to *gazi* warriors. First of all, both of the groups were bearing the characteristics of frontier people. The people, living in the both sides of the frontier, far away from the imperial courts and their power of sanction as well as religious orthodoxy and cultural homogeneity were closer to each other than their hinterlands<sup>203</sup> and showed similar cultural patterns which were strengthened by the exchange in many aspects of life.<sup>204</sup> In addition to this similarity, internal structure of *gazi* and *akritia* organizations can be evaluated within the context of a certain pattern of relationship. The samples of this pattern can be observed in various parts of Eurasia in the Middle Ages.<sup>205</sup> This pattern has counterparts also in Inner Asian history. ‘*Anda*’ and ‘*nöker*’ which have been briefly discussed in the previous part of this study were similar denoting a pattern of relationship depending on the principles of equality and reciprocity. In the *gazi* groups or *akritia*, instead of impersonal, institutionalized relations in a certain

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<sup>203</sup> Paul Wittek,, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1965) p.18

<sup>204</sup> Halil İnalcık, op. cit., p.7

<sup>205</sup> Halil İnalcık, “Comments on “Sultanism”: Max Weber’s Typification of the Ottoman Polity”, in *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies*, eds. Issawi and B. Lewis, no. 1 (1992), pp. 49-72, p.55



hierarchical order, warriors were equal partners in decision making as well as in sharing of war booty. The relation of each warrior to the leader of the group reflected same characteristics. The leader to whom the warriors submitted their loyalty was only *premus inter pares*.

In addition to these parallelities, contrary to widely accepted view that the essence of Ottoman advancement in the Byzantine frontiers was the pursuit of 'holy war', primary goal of gazi warriors seemed to be booty and fame rather than enhancing *dar'ül islam*.<sup>206</sup> For the gazi warriors, islam was a part of their identity which comprised a series of believes, rituals and a code of honor. Some of those believes and rituals as well as the code of honor was shared by akritia warriors. Therefore they could be incorporated to gazi groups through oral contracts of honour or through marriages.<sup>207</sup>

To lure the man of their opponents, it is probable that Ottomans did every possible propaganda like Chinggis Khan did towards the people of his foes; they needed new human resources as they advanced in their march in Rumelia. The essence of the propaganda was the equal sharing of booty. Chinggis Khan was also promising a fair distribution. Osman whose fame was spread especially after the siege of İznik managed to attract the Greek warriors besides the people and military class of other beylik.<sup>208</sup> Those warriors were fascinated by the equal sharing of booty among *gazis* as well as by the prestige and honor obtained through the victories against Byzantium.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Finkel, op. cit., p.10

<sup>207</sup> Kafadar, op. cit., p.48

<sup>208</sup> Emecen, op. cit., p.23

<sup>209</sup> Kafadar, op. cit., p.85

Osman's principality was geographically in the northernmost and it was closest to Byzantium and the Balkan Peninsula. So, he could come into contact with the governors of Byzantine towns. Osman got involved in the matrix of alliances within those governors and competed with them for political influence as well as for pasture.<sup>210</sup>

In 1243, when the Ilkhanids defeated the Selçuk Sultanate in Köseadağ, Byzantium was not affected from this development immediately. Its effects were to be realized soon, when large Turcoman groups started to migrate towards the frontiers of this state and concentrated in the mountainous regions of western Anatolia.<sup>211</sup> Byzantine emperor, Mihael Palaiologos VIII recaptured Constantinople in 1261 and concentrated on the reunification of the Balkans. Their military attempt for this objective resulted in the neglect of Asiatic frontiers' security and this neglect further motivated Turcoman migration towards the West. This movement to the disadvantage of Byzantium was like a recurrence of the events happened in Eastern and Central Anatolia in eleventh century.<sup>212</sup>

For the years 1298-1301 Ottomans generated strength through both consolidation of their front with the newcomers from the east and with establishment of alliances in the region. This period coincides with the revolt of Sülemiş, commander of Mongol troops in Anatolia against Ilkhanid court in Iran. Because of the disturbance caused by the revolt, Mongols lost their control over the Turcoman *beys* in the west. Thanks to this new situation, Turcoman groups who felt themselves free of Mongol threat, along a line from lower Sakarya valley to

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<sup>210</sup> Finkel, op. cit., p.7

<sup>211</sup> İnalçık, op. cit., p.5

<sup>212</sup> Imber, op. cit., p. 9

Efes embarked an extensive offence towards the inlands of Byzantium which resulted in dissolution of Byzantine society:

Continuous invasion of Western Anatolia by Turks was a very new development at that time. It was not a year after the events we have told here that Efes surrendered (October 1304); conquest of inner regions was definitely not before the expeditions of Alelsios Filantropenos (1293-5). It was a fact that ex-Byzantium subjects in the newly conquered Turkish regions cooperated with Turks in the new expeditions against Byzantium. It meant that an ideology against Konstantinopolis, amalgamated with a desire for plundering and prompted the participation of Christians in oversea expeditions, was dominant in Asia Minor and favored Turkish invasions.<sup>213</sup>

Osman benefited from this situation.<sup>214</sup> War in Bafeus and then İznik siege occurred in this context.

For the years 1298-1301, Ottoman chronicles report that Osman had not been the leader of the *beys* of the region yet. He depended on the alliance with Turcoman and Greek *beys*. Their collaboration with Ottomans was aiming to resist against the pressure coming from Byzantine court.<sup>215</sup> At that time, Christian *beys* like Köse Mihal and Akçakoca who would later turn into Osman's entourages were his equal partners at that time.<sup>216</sup>

The date of the Bafeus war is still ambiguous. It is even uncertain if it happened before or after the siege of İznik. What is certain is that Ottomans

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<sup>213</sup> Nikolas Oikonomidis, "Avrupa'da Türkler (1305-1313) ve Küçük Asya'da Sırplar (1913)", *Osmanlı Beyliği 1300-1389*, ed E. Zachariadou, translated by G. Ç. Güven, İ. Yerguz, T. Altınova, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1997) p.174

<sup>214</sup> Halil İnalçık, "Osman Gazi'nin İznik Kuşatması ve Bafeus Muharebesi", *Osmanlı Beyliği 1300-1389*, ed E. Zachariadou, translated by G. Ç. Güven, İ. Yerguz, T. Altınova, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1997) p.83

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., p.82

<sup>216</sup> Kafadar, op. cit., p.127

defeated Byzantium thanks to their troops composed of united Turcoman forces.<sup>217</sup> In about 1302, Osman laid a siege to İznik which was the capital city of Byzantium after the fourth crusade, until 1261. Though the city could not be captured, it meant a military success for the small Ottoman principality. Osman attained a unique popularity within Turcomans and their leaders after this event. Neşri and other historians of around 1500 start the Ottoman principality or their independent existence with this event. Pahimeres, Byzantine historian of the era, portrayed Osman as one of most energetic Turcoman *beys* who threaten Byzantium.<sup>218</sup>

Ottomans, capturing some fortified places of Byzantium in the Sakarya valley continued their invasion towards the West. They plundered villages on their way. Byzantine subjects receded to cities where they were still in security thanks to the lack of military technology of Ottomans in siege of cities. In fact, this was the reason behind the failure of Ottomans in the siege of İznik. Actually, improvements in military technology and adoption of new war tactics due to the requirements of the time especially in siege of fortresses went hand in hand with sedentarization of Ottomans. Now, Ottomans did not need so many cavalry men like in the steppe wars. Rather they need siege technology and equipment. They increased the number of infantry men.<sup>219</sup>

Ottomans under the leadership of Orhan accomplished tasks that were more difficult and seized big cities like İznik, İzmit and Bursa besides villages and small towns. In 1326, Ottomans captured Bursa by using the tactic of starving city-

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<sup>217</sup> Emecen, op. cit., p.20

<sup>218</sup> İnalçık, op. cit., p.100

<sup>219</sup> Lindner, op. cit., p.81

dwellers by cutting the flow of food through the city walls.<sup>220</sup> It is followed by İznik in 1331 and İzmit in 1337. Byzantine domination in Asian continent now limited to a territory not further from several kilometers from İstanbul.<sup>221</sup> In the 1350's, the Ottomans was still no more than one of many frontier principalities, 'but events after 1352 so firmly established its superiority over the others that within thirty years they became Ottoman vassals.'<sup>222</sup>

Ottomans needed a corridor for further advance towards the European lands of Byzantium. The opportunity for Ottomans to gain a foothold in the Balkans came when Karesi fell into a struggle for throne. This principality was on the eastern side of the Dardanelles and the road on its lands was the only way to jump to Thrace since the rest of the Dardanelles were in the hands of Byzantium. On the night of 1-2 March 1354, an earthquake destroyed the walls of Gallipoli and fortresses in the area; Orhan Bey's eldest son Süleyman attacked from the damaged points.<sup>223</sup>

After the capturing of Çimpe, settlement policy of Ottomans was accelerated and many Turcomans were settled in Thrace. They established villages beside the Christian towns and villages. The administration of these new settlements was given to leaders of frontier warriors. This movement, starting in the last years of 1350s was different from the previous invasions of both Ottomans and other frontier principalities. It was not a *temporary invasion* but a *real settlement*.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Imber, op. cit., p.13

<sup>221</sup> Imber, op. cit., p.14

<sup>222</sup> Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973) p.9

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Fuat Köprülü, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Kuruluşu*, (Ankara: Başnur Matbaası, 1972) p.175

It was after rendering Gallipoli the base of further conquests, Ottomans advanced to the west towards İpsala, to the east towards Tekirdağ and to the north towards Lüleburgaz. Therefore, frontier incursionism that was calmed down since 1330s rose once again when the new opportunities appeared in Rumelia and onwards.<sup>225</sup>

For a short period, after the death of Süleyman and when Orhan's youngest son, Halil was captured by Byzantines, the achievements of Ottomans warriors in Rumelia jeopardized. In 1366, when Byzantine Empire attempted to take Gallipoli back, it was almost the end of the adventure of Ottomans in Rumelia. Luckily, during a civil war in the Empire, Byzantine emperor could not refuse the offer of Ottomans in the absence of expected military aid from Europeans.<sup>226</sup> This exchange, taking Gallipoli back to in return of an aid in favor of the dynastic family of Byzantine was not the sole example of utilization of political crisis in Rumelia and Balkans by the Ottomans. Previous fragmentations and constant deterioration of Byzantine hegemony enabled Ottomans to find themselves allies when they offered their political and military support for the resolution of local disputes. Nevertheless, permanency of the existence of Turks in Rumelia became definite when in 1369 Adrianople (Edirne), the capital of Thrace was conquered by Ottomans under Murat *Bey*'s command.

### **4.3 Centralization and Opposition**

Ottoman leadership which was establishing itself essentially in the countries captivated from Byzantium tended to settle and leave their nomadic habits and

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<sup>225</sup> Kunt, op. cit., p.45

<sup>226</sup> Imber, op. cit., p.16

traditions. Nomadic elements within the society would be marginalized in time. The tendency to settle emerged for more than one reason. In terms of economy, geographical structure of Bythinia was more favorable for agriculture than it is for herding. Agriculture was a secure way of making living. Militarily speaking, as noted above, they now needed a military organization, war tactics and equipment peculiar to sedentary societies for successful sieges. Politically, to show an existence, moreover to establish an administration, nomads had to adopt themselves to the conditions of Bythinia. Contrary to Mongols, they prefer a direct administration in sedentary soil. Therefore, they had to create their own bureaucratic apparatus.<sup>227</sup> The tendency towards sedentarization can be observed in the increase of the amount of their goods:

There was an infidel in İnegöl, called Aya Nikola. He disturbed Osman's goods while he was going summer camp and winter quarters. Osman Gazi complained Bilecik tekfir about that: "Our request from you is that we leave our goods with you when we migrate to our summer camp." And he accepted. Whenever Osman went to summer camp, they loaded their goods to oxes. They sent them with a few women. They left them to the fortress.<sup>228</sup>

Their conquests in Rumelia always went together with a policy of settlement. The Turcoman population that came in waves because of the disturbance in central and eastern Anatolia rendered the ample reserve for settlement to the towns and villages captured from Byzantine *tekfurs*.<sup>229</sup> Especially after the transition to Rumelia, a type of division of labor appears between Osman and Orhan Gazi's forces and powerful gazi commanders of the frontiers:

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<sup>227</sup> Lindner, op. cit., p.81

<sup>228</sup> Aşıkpaşaoğlu, op. cit., p.16

<sup>229</sup> A. Zeki Velidî Togan, *Umumi Türk Tarihine Giriş*, (İstanbul: Enderun Yayınları, 1981) p.337

Evrenos bey's forces carried the leading role of Turkish advancement at the "left wing" of Rumelia army. Evrenos who mostly acted quiet independently from Osman bey's army captured İpsala, Gümülcine, Zihna ve Seres as a real "malikü'l-guzat ve'l-mücahidin". The domains captured by Gazis were handed over to Ottoman army immediately after the invasion and irregular forces of the frontier *beys* like Gazi Evrenos or Turahan, Mihaloğlu and Malkaçoğlu embarked new invasions in the new frontier regions.<sup>230</sup>

While Ottomans kept invasive movements in a certain rhythm, they carried on the exercise of settling people from inner regions and gave importance to this issue as much as the capturing of new lands. They guaranteed their hegemony by forming necessary institutions while they were settling their Turkish subjects to new territories of Rumelia. At the center, stood waqf system. Public works, education, cultural services, and religious exercises were realized through this system. Besides, dervish lodges that were connected to waqf system, religious orders like *Bektaşis* and *Mevlevis* played a crucial role in islamization and turkification of the region.<sup>231</sup>

According to Zeki Velidi Togan, the Ottomans represented much lesser cultural level than the principalities like of the Kastamonu and Geremiyan *beys*. Though they were muslims, they were far from islamist fanaticism. Thanks to the flexibility of their understanding, which was due to the absence of settled traditions of administration, they could easily compromise with every kind of Turk and Mongol and Christian converts, who, though they were not perfect Muslims,

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<sup>230</sup> Vasilis Dimitriadis, "Devşirmenin Kökeni Üzerine Düşünceler", *Osmanlı Beyliği 1300-1389*, ed E. Zachariadou, translated by G. Ç. Güven, İ. Yerguz, T. Altınova, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1997) p.27

<sup>231</sup> Kunt, op. cit., p.50



acknowledged Turkish dervishes and *Abdals* as their spiritual guard and *Pir*, and integrate them to their system.<sup>232</sup>

They were especially influenced by the Germiyan *beys* among the Anatolian principalities. Germiyans represented a permanent culture and old Turco-Mongol state traditions.<sup>233</sup> The record in Aşıkpaşazade on the *bac* issue shows on the one hand that the Germiyans were bearers of old traditions and on the other hand Ottomans learnt from the Germiyan even most basic issues of state administration. The Germiyans were one of the most important polities of the time. Some of the principalities were dependent to them<sup>234</sup>; and even Byzantium paid tribute to them for a period of time.<sup>235</sup> They turned into an interior state because the commanders attached to it formed their own states in the countries they conquered.<sup>236</sup>

Their position is reminiscent of those of Naimans in Mongolian history. Naimans were also very powerful and advanced in civilization. They represented a higher cultural level in comparison to Mongols; and Mongols learnt many important aspects of state administration from them. Nevertheless, Uygurs who served Naimans were imported by Mongols for assistance in many tasks of administration.<sup>237</sup>

Consolidation of power in the hands of Osman Bey and his sons stimulated a process of transformation. Their allies to whom they were related as equal partners

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<sup>232</sup> A. Z. V. Togan, op. cit., p.336

<sup>233</sup> İsenbike Togan, "Beylikler Devri Anadolu Tarihinde Yöntem Sorunları: Germiyan'dan Örnekler", *Şinasi Tekin'in Anısına "Uygurlardan Osmanlıya"*, (İstanbul: Simurg Yayınları, 2005) pp. 704-720, p.716

<sup>234</sup> Köprülü, op. cit., p.80

<sup>235</sup> A. Z. V. Togan, op. cit., p.331

<sup>236</sup> Köprülü, op. cit., p.83

<sup>237</sup> İsenbike Togan, op. cit., p.716

turned into their vassals in time. Independent *gazi* commanders who had equal right to speak and equal share in booty induced to state officials. Steps towards a decisive policy of centralization and building up of a hierarchical political apparatus were taken partly in Orhan's period, but especially under the rule of Murat I. The difference in the emphasises of two expressions in the same chronicle is sufficiently clear:

When Osman Gazi came to Yenişehir, the infidels of the milieu disturbed him. Osman *gazi* subjugated the countries of all of them. He ruled those countries with welfare and justice. *Gazis* prospered. He allotted villages to each of them. He allotted lands. He treated every one according to his virtues. The *gazis* with Osman Gazi gathered strength. They always wanted to make *gaza*.<sup>238</sup>

After he captured Bergama from Karesi he had the following declaration read: "Hey People! Be aware that this province belongs to Orhan Gazi in security from now on." The people of the country submitted. The old families of the country came. Their lands were left to them.<sup>239</sup>

*Gazis* were main actors who were affluently paid in response to their raiding activities and they had the right on the conquered countries. In Orhan's time the perception on the principality's lands began to change. As seen in the above expression, the ownership of the new country by the Ottoman *bey* is stressed. Orhan is known with his measures for centralization of wealth and power in the hands of his family. First he redistributed the lands and towns among his sons which were previously allotted to his comrades in arms, after their death.<sup>240</sup> His minting of coinage in his name as a designator of his political sovereignty was

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<sup>238</sup> Aşıkpaşaoğlu, op. cit., p.31

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., p.49

<sup>240</sup> A. Z. V. Togan, op. cit., p.342

accompanied by some steps for a regular/professional army. Troops were formed composed of infantry and *müsellem*. Ottomans needed those troops whose sole engagement was battle for both a better challenge to Byzantium and marginalization the role of other *beys*. The infantry and *müsellem* were not absolutely professionals. In peace times, they were making their living through working in the fields assigned to them.<sup>241</sup>

The tendency towards centralization of power and wealth was met with opposition. The elements incorporated to Ottoman principality were not directly put to a centralist and hierarchial order. Therefore, *gazi* commanders and their families dealing with frontier conquests were disturbed with centralization policies. In addition, Ottoman state which was being established in the frontiers upon the remnants of a sedentary civilization marginalized nomadic culture in a short time. Turcoman nomads who resisted to the pressures of the state for settlement became one of the oppositional dynamics.

The opposition of *gazi* commanders in the frontiers started especially when *pençik* system and *devşirme* system was imposed. Both of the systems were the results of Ottoman's centralization policies. With *pençik* system, irrespective of the participation of the Sultan to the campaigns, he would take one fifth of all the booty. It was actually a tax taken from *gazis* and 'possibly a punishment for their independent actions in Rumelia when the Gelibolu link was severed'.<sup>242</sup> It was imposed by central bureaucracy which was started to be controlled by scholars coming from the east and bearing the mentality of administration of House of İslam. *Devşirme* on the other hand was the creation of court army directly linked to

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<sup>241</sup> Kunt, op. cit., p.38

<sup>242</sup> Kafadar, op. cit., p.113

the Sultan. It was an alternative to the old system composed of independent warriors who came together and fought for Ottomans for they saw their temporary political and economic interests there. It was also an attempt to eliminate the tendency towards aristocratization and plurality of power centres within the Ottoman state.<sup>243</sup> Ottoman *kul* system depended on merit which provided *devşirmes* open advancement due to their talent instead of hereditary seats within the state. The only hereditary position was of Sultan and it was the privilege of Ottoman dynasty.

Gazi commanders who were kept apart from the newly emerging centralist state would also lose their significance in the frontier conquests; because Ottomans simultaneously reached natural boundaries which could only be surmounted by regular armies. Moreover, these commanders were dependent on the support coming from Anatolia. For the maintenance of domains and advancement in Rumelia and Balkans, they depended on the support of inner regions. Gazi warriors who advanced in Balkan Peninsula did not manage to create an inner region in this territory, which served for human resource and other needs. Gazi commanders, whose interests were harmed by the Murat I.'s new execution about the distribution of war booty, could not however dare to break their ties with Ottoman principality. During the interregnum after 1402, one of the sons of Beyazıt I., struggling for political power with his brothers, Musa Çelebi gathered strength in Rumelia. However, Gazi commanders who had joined around him believed the necessity to unite with Anatolia once again.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> İsenbike Togan, op. cit., p.709

<sup>244</sup> Kunt, op. cit., p.60

The reaction of Aşıkpaşazade who personally suffered from the policies of Ottoman dynasty, which imposed to diminish the power of elites reflects the reaction of the suffered and can be read within the lines of his records:

Once, a smart aleck called Rüstem came from Karaman. He came for *kazasker* Çandarlı Halil. He said: “*Efendi!* Why do you waste the wealth of the khanate?”. *Kadı*: “Which wealth are you talking about?”. Rüstem: “Here are those slaves. One fifth belongs to the khan. Why don’t you take them?”. *Kazasker* reported this to the khan. Khan: “Act due to the orders of the God”. He himself settled to Gelibolu. He took 25 *akça* from each slave. This new practice is the measure of two smart alecks. One is Çandarlı Halil and the other is Karamanlı Kara Rüstem.

They also ordered Gazi Evrenuz: they said that take one fifth of the slaves gained in your incursion. Upon this measure, Evrenüz appointed a *kadı*. Many boys were gathered. They were taken to the Khan. Halil said: “Let’s leave them to Turks. Teach them Turkish. Let’s make those *çeri*.” They were made so. They increased in number day by day. Turks utilized them in service for many years until they became true Muslims. Then they were taken to the court. They wore white caps (*ak börk*). They were called *Yeniçeri* while they had been called *çeri* until that time. *Yeniçeri* emerged in his time.<sup>245</sup>

Starting from the Orhan Bey, statemen like Çandarlı Halil who is negatively referred by Aşıkpaşazade, started to be recruited. Ottomans needed professional assistance when they started to rule Byzantine towns and welcomed certain statemen coming from the east to establish a bureaucratic apparatus.<sup>246</sup> This group of statemen, called *ulema*, who simultaneously dominated state administration represented an understanding of administration peculiar to centralist, sedentary state depending on the orthodox islamist ideology. Ottomans took steps for growing up their professionals for administrative affairs instead of calling upon the help of foreign advisors. A large number of *ulema* coming from the east were accepted for

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<sup>245</sup> Aşıkpaşaoğlu, op. cit., p.58

<sup>246</sup> Lindner, op. cit., p.27

education. They would soon mark the administrative system of Ottoman State. This process signifies a transformation which occurred by ‘replacement of the personal *nökers* by an impersonal body of servants whose ranks were determined by a set of rules (*kanun*) and whose loyalty to the ruler was the exclusive criterion for being entrusted with authority.’<sup>247</sup>

In the records of Aşıkpaşazade, we don’t see any punishment practice for those who betrayed their *beys* in the period of struggles of Ottomans against many political structures similar in scale. In the case of Mongols, Chinggis Khan brutally punished the betrayers as a part of his decisive penetration to the unreliable nature of steppe politics; for he had to establish stable loyalties in stead of shifting alliances and loyalties. Osman did not seem to be in such a hurry. During Osman’s reign, he acted similar to other Anatolian *beys*. He didn’t intent to penetrate the existing balances of power among Anatolian *beys*, contrary to what Chinggis Khan did in Mongolia. What Osman did was to make better use of the alliances with region’s notables and of advantages of his principality’s position, to be adjacent to Byzantium and on the trade routes. He basically concentrated on frontier conquests.

Therefore, before a significant success in the Balkans, Ottomans did not show a real existence in Anatolia.<sup>248</sup> Even after they became sufficiently powerful to intervene in internal affairs of principalities and gave a start to enlargement policy in Anatolia, they were quite deliberate. Ottomans were careful enough not to fight with two fronts at the same time. They advanced in both parts gradually. The achievements in one side reinforced their existence in the other side.

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<sup>247</sup> Halil İnalçık, “Comments on “Sultanism”: Max Weber’s Typification of the Ottoman Polity”, *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies*, eds. Issawi and B. Lewis, no. 1 (1992), pp. 49-72., p.56

<sup>248</sup> Köprülü, op. cit., p.36

Until expedite and harsh penetrations of Beyazıt I.<sup>249</sup>, Ottomans followed a deliberate policy towards the Turcoman principalities. The first political penetrations towards other Western Turcoman principalities started in Orhan's time. Before, the relations were within the frame of usual conflicts among the principalities rather than a systematic state policy. For instance, Aşıkpaşazade records that Osman was in a contention from the beginning with the Germiyan..<sup>250</sup> The role of Orhan in the internal strives of Karesi and its consequent division to two branches is unknown. Nevertheless, it is clear that besides making use of these conflicts within Karesi for transition to Rumelia, Ottomans incentivized the discontent military groups and ordinary people of Karesi to shift their loyalty.<sup>251</sup> When they completely seized Karesi, their attitude towards the notables of this principality was moderate:

On the direction of the Khan, bellmen: "the country of Karesi has been annexed to Sultan Orhan's countries. Those in charge in the country have been left in charge. However, the fate of those who abides Aclanoğlu is to be bait for arrows and swords."<sup>252</sup>

The notables stayed in their assigned positions. The people carried on dealing with their own affairs. He assigned Gazi Süleyman Paşa for the administration of this country and sent Hacı İlbeği, Gazi Fazıl, Ece Beğ and Evrenos Beğ for assistance. He left the *sipahis* of the country as they were in their old *timars*.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Klaus Kreiser, Christoph K Neumann.(eds), *Küçük Türkiye Tarihi*, çev. Yunus Emre Gürbüz, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2008) p.51.

<sup>250</sup> Aşıkpaşaoğlu, op. cit., p.16

<sup>251</sup> Emecen, op. cit., p.21

<sup>252</sup> Hoca Sa'de'd-din Efendi, *Tacü't Tevarih*, ed. İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992, p.82

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 83-4

When Ottomans became a centre of attraction thanks to their brilliant victories over Byzantium, integration of other principalities' peoples and their adaptation to newly emerging Ottoman identity was smooth because as noted above the peoples of those principalities shared a common culture and way of life.<sup>254</sup>

Murat I (1362-1389) was the one who was most insistent in this policy. According to the agreement with Germiyan, their daughter came with her dowry, which was a part of Germiyan lands. Besides, Ottomans bought a piece of land from Hamid. In 1387, Murat had to attack Karaman Bey as a response to his aggression while Murat was on expedition to Macedonia and Serbia.<sup>255</sup> When the lands of the principalities annexed, they were loosely related to the centre. Greatest part of the lands was still in the hands of *bey* families; those lands stayed as their estates and inherited by their descents. Ottomans maintained this policy until the reign of Mehmet II with the exception of Beyazıt I. period. So, these families had a place within the Ottoman system.<sup>256</sup> While Ottomans respected the family law of some *bey* families and allowed them preserve their estates, they also followed the policy to dissolve the legacy of some *bey* families gradually within the frame of *timar* system.<sup>257</sup>

Some developments of 1389 propelled Murat once again to Serbia against Prens Lazar. The war would result with serious losses of Ottomans and annihilation of Murat I.<sup>258</sup> The power vacuum after Murat's death for a short period of time,

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<sup>254</sup> Emecen, op. cit., p.21

<sup>255</sup> Imber, op. cit., p.15-6

<sup>256</sup> Emecen, op. cit., p.95

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., p.99

<sup>258</sup> Imber, op. cit., p.18



encouraged Anatolian *beys* to regain their lands. New sultan of Ottomans gave a harsh response to the attempts especially of Karaman and Germiyan. He consolidated the domination of Ottomans in Asian part of the state until a coalition composed of Anatolian *beys* provoked Temur against Ottomans.

Ottoman state emerged in a context when the influence of big powers declined in politics in favor of small principalities of western Anatolian frontiers. Already existing common social ground consolidated with extensive interaction in the flexible and dynamic structure of frontiers. Continuous conflicts and strives were result of political fragmentations which was urged by the rivalry between *bey* families. Yet, Turcoman groups mainly dealt with *gaza* activities; and the successful incursions and infiltrations to Byzantium territory was a fact strengthening the hands of *beys* against each other. In this framework, Ottomans with the advantage of their geographical position and subtle moves in the matrix of alliances realized important achievements in *gaza* activities. These achievements and their promise of a fair distribution lured many warrior groups both within Turks and Greeks. In addition, Ottoman principality increasingly became a shelter for religious and political figures of the eastern Anatolia.

The process in the formation of Ottoman state flew towards monopolization of power. In the first phases, Ottoman principality is in the appearance of a togetherness of different groups around a common interest. Tribal identities eroded in favor of a more inclusive social structure though still defined in tribal terms. Osman joint a number of men in a short time. The common characteristic of those men, who are called sometimes as '*nöker*' and sometimes '*yoldaş*' in Aşıkpaşazade

chronicles, was their common goal and loyalty to Osman. Their relation was like a precursor of a system depending on absolute sovereignty of a sultan; because they reflected a vision transcending tribal social and political relationship patterns. Besides, the beys and notables of the region who could be included by the Ottomans were at the beginning equal partners of the Ottoman *bey*. In time, particularly starting with Orhan, those among them who stayed within the Ottoman system turned out to be state officers and lost their power base. Ottomans took simultaneously the necessary measures against aristocratization. Yet, their centralist system bore a flexibility which enabled the notables, namely *bey* families of old Anatolian principalities and families of *gazi* commanders who engaged in frontier conquest on behalf of Ottomans, a certain zone of action; but they were kept away from the centre of power.

The dynastic family, like in the Chinggisids was the sole element which had the right to bear political power. At the beginning the consideration of common ownership of the country by the dynastic family was maintained. Later, this would change and the power would be accumulated solely in the hands of the Sultan. They kept their territories intact in each succession under full control of a single heir,<sup>259</sup> contrary to the practices in most of the Turco-Mongol states in history.

Ottomans established their system in a completely new environment. As they advanced more, they found themselves in a more unconstrained situation. Therefore, Ottomans managed to detach from the structural framework of Anatolian tribal society and create a new polity in a new social, cultural, and political zone.

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<sup>259</sup> Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds The Construction of the Ottoman Empire*, (California: University of California Press Ltd., 1996) p.121

## CHAPTER V:

### CONCLUSION

At the centre of two state formations stood actors who had tribal backgrounds. The direction of transformation, embarked by these actors however was towards centralization, which is evident in their anti-tribal policies. These formations emerged in the context of turmoil. Fragmentation was dominant in politics. Instability and constant conflicts and battles marked the political atmosphere. In both sides, low level violence among the identical polities was like a security belt of the existing situation depending basically on decentralism of political power. The wars did not use to end with total annihilation. Nor did they allow excessive strengthening of a certain polity. Contractual relations depending on mutual promises and obligations served for adjustment of unstable nature of tribal politics. On the Mongol side, the geography where the Mongol state was formed was not organized under an imperial power since distant times. On the eve of the formation of the Mongol state, nomadic tribes were increasingly fluid, which were divided into subgroups and united in different compositions. In Anatolia on the other hand, on the eve of Ottoman state formation, in the Western frontiers of Anatolia, influence of imperial powers was on the decrease which gradually brought Turcoman principalities and *gazi* bands opportunity of more independent action particularly in their incursionism towards Byzantine territories. Flow of people and

military groups within the principalities was very common. Migration waves from the east reinforced Western frontiers and contributed to the dynamism of the region.

For both sides, the nucleus of the formation emerged as a group of warriors submitting their loyalties to the leader and leaving their tribal ties aside. Chronicles mention the *nökers* of Temucin and Osman. Their existence had a symbolic meaning because their loyalty to the leader reflected the first signals of an alternative system to tribal loyalties. The embodiment of these groups contributed to the dissolution of tribal loyalties, which had been in decline on the eve of concerned state formations.

Leadership of both formations offered an alternative to the existing system and toiled to attract people to their array. Temujin was a member of a dispersed tribe and; united and organized its different segments in a new configuration. He and his followers also addressed people from different origins and from different strata of the society. The common denominator of the newcomers was their suffering from socio-political conditions which was the result of the existing order and search for stability, respect and welfare. The new Mongol leadership explicitly offered a more fair redistribution. Moreover, Mongol state formation had enough flexibility to include statesmen, artisans, artists and merchants of sedentary societies to the new system. Though Mongol identity was important, there wasn't a particular obstacle in front of a person of alien origin to attain this identity. On the Ottoman side, they managed to lure first of all the warriors of the milieu, both Muslims and non-Muslims, with successful incursions and with promise of a fair distribution of booty from the time they appeared in the stage of history. They also lured people of the region, Turcoman refugees, statesmen and religious figures of

old imperial polities by their stability-seeking vision. Most importantly, both of the formations established a merit system which brought open advancement to individuals who proved to have enough ambition, energy, capability and respect to the leadership. Therefore, old tribal basis of social statuses was redefined, if not completely eliminated, in a new context.

The socio-political structure of both geographies of the time during the respective state formations showed flexible and inclusive character. One of the additional reasons of the inclusiveness of the Mongol system was their relatively low level of experience in state administration and settled political traditions in comparison to Naiman and Kereyit tribal confederations of the time. These deficiencies made them more open to external contribution. The same statement can be made for the Ottomans. They were also relatively newcomers in terms of state traditions in comparison to the principalities like the Germiyan.

Another feature which makes two experiences comparable with each other is the role of sedentary-nomad dichotomy on these experiences. Inner Asian frontiers of north China was a stage of clashes between pastoral nomads and sedentary agriculturalists. Nomads attained what they needed through plundering when the possibility of peaceful exchange disappeared. Their attacks generally occurred suddenly and they immediately retreated when they finished their plunder. With some exceptions in their history, Inner Asian nomads did not have the vision to capture the cities, towns and villages of North China. Ottomans were also a part of the tradition of incursionist movements towards the territories of sedentary civilization. The first Turkish incursions towards Anatolia typically reflected the methods of incursions of Inner Asian nomads towards Chinese lands. First settlements came only after the Great Seljuks's stimulation by 1071 but the typical

mode of incursionism continued among the Turcomans and was not transformed into a policy of total subjugation and planned settlement.

Chinggis Khan did not give the start to the frontier conquests as part of a preliminary project. Rather each attack to the sedentary countries of Asia had a particular stimulus in itself. However the results of these attacks were different from the previous attacks of nomads on sedentary countries. Rulers of those countries, particularly the Chin dynasty in northern China and Khwarazmshah of Turkestan did not incline towards compliance with the conditions of the Mongols without tenacious resistance. The result was annihilation and a compulsory taking over the government of those countries. In the Ottoman case on the other hand, perhaps the only way of the small Ottoman principality to secure its political existence was to advance into Byzantine territory. At the edge of Byzantium, they had powerful Turcoman rivals behind and vast domains of Rumelia in their front. They concentrated on frontier conquests as well as the building of administration in conquered regions.

Chinggis Khan's Mongol state remained a steppe empire until the existence of four different khanates was institutionalized. Mongols tried an indirect administration via Mongol bureaucrats or officials of different origins. They did not establish a unitary system of rules, which determined the jurisdiction of local rulers in conquered territories. Different practices emerged in different regions. The centre in the steppe was mainly concerned with income from the periphery. For the Ottoman side, the situation was different in the first centuries of the state. They left their nomadic past behind quickly. In addition, they shifted their centre towards the Balkans as they advanced in conquests. They established their polity mainly there. They preferred a direct administration in the core region of the conquests. They

imposed the *tımar* system and integrated the people of the conquered regions to the state administration with the *devşirme* system. They welcomed administrators from outside but gave importance to educate their own administrators. Though they reinforced themselves with especially human resources of Anatolia, their power base was built in Rumelia. This base rendered them powerful in their existence in politics of Anatolia. In the Mongol case, at least during the reign of Chinggis Khan, frontier conquests were utilized for the consolidation of power base in Mongolia. These conquests provided continually new targets for the Army of Conquest, and income from the conquered regions which served for the welfare of the Mongols.

Both leaderships of the aforementioned formations attempted to generate power in the hands of the dynastic family and ever solely in the hands of the ruler. These attempts denoted a transition from a tribal structure to a dynastic state. These attempts started to be seen in the Ottoman case basically with the reign of Orhan. Temüjin and Osman seemed to be typical leaders of tribal politics at the beginning of their political career. In tribal politics, leadership was important because of the unpredictable aspects of nomadic life, the need of a central authority for commercial and diplomatic relations of the tribe with other nomadic groups and sedentary societies. In most of the cases, a general consensus of the tribal notables on the leadership of a certain person was necessary though there was a certain ruling family who held political power. When the first years of Ottoman principality under the leadership of Osman is examined, it is difficult to see any signal of differentiation from the patterns of rule and action of the Turcoman principalities in the neighborhood. Later, a centralization policy was gradually promulgated inward, Anatolia was preferred to be left intact, or at least the Ottoman principality abstained from harsh penetrations to Anatolian politics. It was

only after gathering a certain strength in Rumelia that we can talk about a coherent policy towards Anatolian principalities. Chinggis Khan on the other hand, from the beginning of his political career, had to be at war with a wide range of foes in Mongolia. To show any existence in the field of tribal politics, he had to impose his power; and to sustain and consolidate his power he tended towards the monopolization of power in his hands. The reason behind this tendency was his lack of a secure base in tribal politics. He was excluded from the political arena by his kinsmen when his father died. He was not an accepted figure of tribal politics. Osman, on the other hand, came to power with the approval of the notables of his tribe. He had a moderate place in the politics of Western Anatolian frontiers. Osman did not built his strategy on upsetting the existing power balances among Turcoman principalities. His enmity with those principalities did not bring about more than customary clashes. As noted above, he devoted most of his energies to frontier conquests.

The Ottomans tried to replace the ruling strata of the principality of Turcoman origin who were equal partners of the Ottoman family, with a new ruling elite derived from the human resources of newly conquered regions through the *devşirme* system. The establishment of *kapıkulu* army was like the manifestation of the independency of the Ottoman ruler from Turcoman ruling elite and warrior groups. This army can be compared to the *kesik* army of Chinggis Khan. The main difference was that both in civil and military bureaucracy Ottomans preferred to marginalize the old elements of the system while Chinggisids transformed the old tribal elements through taking away their power base and developing a new system of promotion.



Nevertheless, both systems had certain flexibility towards centrifugal elements. Instead of a total alienation of *beys*, the Ottomans left the domains of some of them intact, but kept them far from the centre of administration. Though there were always different power centers within the system and sometimes they caused serious political crisis, the Ottomans managed to place the bureaucrats without a power base besides their posts in Ottoman state to the centre of administration. Those posts did not have any hereditary dimension which was precaution against aristocratization. It was one of the strengths of the Ottoman system. Chinggis Khan on the other hand treated the clans which resisted subjugation wildly, generally dispersed the members of those clans who survived the slaughter, in his Army of Conquest. He, therefore, eliminated their tribal identity and transformed them to individual subjects whose identity was redefined through their positions in the Army of Conquest. However, this execution was not imposed to entire Mongolia. Those who willingly submitted their loyalty to Chinggis Khan maintained their coherence in the units of thousands within the army. The Mongols, contrary to the Ottomans, turned state offices to hereditary posts and in time they began to distribute peoples, armies, lands and resources throughout the empire as appanages to state officers. Those officers usually considered those appanages as well as their posts as their private property. Therefore, the Chinggisids created a new aristocracy who had the power in their hands to shake the centralist order of Chinggis Khan.

The Ottomans as the bearers of old Inner Asian political traditions considered the country as the property of the ruling family.<sup>260</sup> This family was bound with

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<sup>260</sup> Halil İnalcık, "Comments on "Sultanism": Max Weber's Typification of the Ottoman Polity", in *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies*, eds. Issawi and B. Lewis, no. 1 (1992), pp. 49-72, p.51

customary family law like other families in tribal organization of which lateral structure results in natural succession of eldest of the family to position of Khan. It is known that both Chinggis Khan and Osman Gazi divided country between sons during their lifetime. We see the footprints of customary family law in both of the cases: while the eldest son establishes his own household in an early age and (in our cases) moves to frontiers, the youngest son is seen as the heir who will carry on his father's household. In two of the examples, except creating advantageous positions for eldest and youngest sons, this division does not necessarily determine the succession to throne.

Chinggis Khan in his election of Ögedei as his successor instead of his eldest son Jöchi, and his youngest son Tolui who were stronger candidates for their position according to family law, attempted to reduce the role of customary family law therefore old Turco-Mongol traditions<sup>261</sup> which threatened the centralist character of the state. However, they continued to divide the country within the family, each member also attained the political authority in their shares.

The Ottomans, on the other hand, starting with the reign of Murat I. by setting first *de facto* and then *de jure* application of fratricide managed to establish a patrimonial authority which operated through the rule of succession of the fittest. When Osman Beg consolidated his power after a war with Byzantium, he divided his lands among his sons according to Neşri History.<sup>262</sup> In compliance with Turko-Mongol traditions, the youngest son Aleaddin stayed at home, while eldest, Orhan was sent to Eastern frontier. He then moved to Western Frontier. This tradition was

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<sup>261</sup> İsenbike Togan, "Çinggis Han ve Moğollar," *Türkler*, ed. Hasan Celal Güzel, Kemal Çiçek, Salim Koca, vol. 8 (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002) pp. 235-255

<sup>262</sup> Mehmet Neşri, *Kitab-ı Cihan-Nüma Neşri Tarihi*, eds. F. R. Unat, M. A. Köymen, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1995).

preserved by several generations after Osman Beg. However, the Ottomans from an early age managed to make a distinction between family law of Central Asian steppe traditions and succession to throne. Without being bound with certain rules, they never abandoned the principle of one ruler to one country.

Furthermore, they eliminated the principle that the state is the personal property of sultan rather than of the dynastic family. Yet, the Ottoman princes until late sixteenth century kept the privilege to have a certain domain of political influence but it never reached to the extent observed in Eastern examples.<sup>263</sup>

The time of emergence of Mongol and Ottoman states can be identified as a transition process in Inner Asia and Asia Minor from a polity depended on plurality of power to monopolization of power. Both formation processes were marked with tensions between and transformations from nomadism to sedentarization; from a tribal political organization to a patrimonial state, from family law to dynastic law, from reciprocal/contractual relations to loyalty of subject population to a certain ruler. The criterion of their success related to these tensions was their ability to assimilate old political traditions in their new order and their ability to manipulate centrifugal tendencies and dynamics within the state.

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<sup>263</sup> Cemal Kafadar, *op. cit.* , p.138

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