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CENTRAL ASIAN – OTTOMAN RELATIONS IN THE 19TH CENTURY IN MODERN TURKISH HISTORIOGRAPHY

The article provides a historiographical analysis of how the relations between the Central Asian Khanates and the Ottoman Empire have been interpreted in modern Turkish historiography. It examines the scholarly approaches of Turkish researchers, their theoretical frameworks, source base, and the principal trends in the development of research on this subject.

The study is based on the principles of historicism and objectivity and employs historiographical and source-critical methods. The research draws upon monographs, scholarly articles, doctoral dissertations published in Türkiye, as well as contemporary academic publications devoted to Turkish historiography.

The findings demonstrate that modern Turkish historiography extensively examines the relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Bukhara, Khiva, and Kokand Khanates within the context of diplomatic relations, trade networks, and cultural exchange. The study also reveals a significant increase in recent years in research based on documents preserved in the Ottoman Archives, which has contributed to the emergence of new conceptual approaches to the study of this topic.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the fact that, for the first time, scholarly works in modern Turkish historiography devoted to the relations between the Central Asian Khanates and the Ottoman Empire have been systematically classified through a historiographical analysis. A comparative assessment is provided of the theoretical and methodological approaches adopted by Turkish scholars, the characteristics of their use of historical sources, and the evolution of their scholarly interpretations. The findings contribute to the evaluation of contemporary foreign historiography on the history of relations between the Central Asian Khanates and the Ottoman Empire, identify existing research gaps, and provide a scholarly foundation for further comparative and interdisciplinary studies.

Keywords: Turkish historiography, Ottoman studies, Central Asian Khanates, Ottoman Empire, diplomatic relations, archival documents, source studies, historiography.

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XIX ғасырдағы Орталық Азия–Осман қатынастары: қазіргі түрік тарихнамасының талдауы

Мақалада қазіргі түрік тарихнамасында Осман империясы мен Орталық Азия хандықтары арасындағы қарым-қатынастардың зерттелуі тарихнамалық тұрғыдан талданады, сондай-ақ түрік зерттеушілерінің ғылыми ұстанымдары, теориялық тұжырымдамалары, деректік негіздері және осы мәселеге қатысты зерттеулердің негізгі даму үрдістері қарастырылады.

Зерттеу тарихилық пен объективтілік қағидаттарына, сондай-ақ тарихнамалық және деректанулық талдау әдістеріне негізделген. Зерттеу барысында Түркияда жарияланған монографиялар, ғылыми мақалалар, докторлық диссертациялар, сондай-ақ түрік тарихнамасына арналған заманауи ғылыми басылымдар зерделенді.

Зерттеу нәтижелері қазіргі түрік тарихнамасында Осман империясының Бұхара, Хиуа және Қоқан хандықтарымен қарым-қатынастары дипломатиялық байланыстар, сауда жолдары және мәдени алмасу тұрғысынан кеңінен қарастырылатынын көрсетті. Сонымен қатар соңғы жылдары Осман мұрағаттарының материалдарына негізделген зерттеулер санының айтарлықтай артқаны, бұл өз кезегінде аталған мәселені зерттеудің жаңа тұжырымдамалық тәсілдерінің қалыптасуына ықпал еткені анықталды.

Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы қазіргі түрік тарихнамасында Осман империясы мен Орталық Азия хандықтарының өзара қарым-қатынастарына арналған ғылыми еңбектердің алғаш рет тарихнамалық талдау негізінде жүйеленуінде болып табылады. Түрік зерттеушілерінің теориялық-әдіснамалық ұстанымдарына, тарихи дереккөздерді пайдалану ерекшеліктеріне және ғылыми көзқарастарының эволюциясына салыстырмалы баға берілді. Алынған нәтижелер Осман импе-

риясы мен Орталық Азия хандықтарының өзара қарым-қатынастары тарихына арналған қазіргі шетелдік тарихнаманы бағалауға, осы саладағы ғылыми олқылықтарды анықтауға, сондай-ақ са-лыстырмалы және пәнаралық зерттеулерді одан әрі дамытуға ғылыми негіз бола алады.

Түйін сөздер: түрік тарихнамасы, османтану, Орталық Азия хандықтары, Осман империясы, дипломатиялық қатынастар, мұрағат құжаттары, деректану, тарихнама.

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Среднеазиатско-османские отношения XIX века в современной турецкой историографии

В статье представлен историографический анализ того, как отношения между среднеазиатскими ханствами и Османской империей интерпретируются в современной турецкой историографии. Рассматриваются научные подходы турецких исследователей, их теоретические основы, источниковая база, а также ключевые тенденции развития исследований по данной проблематике.

Исследование базируется на принципах историзма и объективности с применением историографического и источниковедческого (критического) методов. В качестве основы использованы монографии, научные статьи и докторские диссертации, опубликованные в Турции, а также современные академические труды, посвященные турецкой историографии.

Результаты демонстрируют, что современная турецкая историография всесторонне изучает связи Османской империи с Бухарским, Хивинским и Кокандским ханствами в контексте дипломатических отношений, торговых связей и культурного обмена. Исследование также выявляет заметный рост за последние годы числа научных работ, основанных на документах Османского архива, что способствовало формированию новых концептуальных подходов к изучению данной темы.

Научная новизна исследования заключается в том, что в нем впервые посредством историографического анализа систематизированы труды современной турецкой историографии, посвященные отношениям между среднеазиатскими ханствами и Османской империей. Дана сравнительная оценка теоретико-методологических подходов турецких исследователей, особенностей использования ими исторических источников и эволюции научных интерпретаций. Полученные выводы вносят вклад в оценку современной зарубежной историографии по истории связей ханств Центральной Азии и Османской империи, позволяют выявить имеющиеся исследовательские пробелы и формируют научную базу для дальнейших сравнительных и междисциплинарных изысканий.

Ключевые слова: турецкая историография, османистика, среднеазиатские ханства, Османская империя, дипломатические отношения, архивные документы, источниковедение, историография.

Introduction

One of the fundamental objectives of historiography is to critically examine both domestic and international scholarship on the history of a particular country, identify the methodological approaches underlying existing studies, assess scholarly interpretations and conceptual frameworks objectively, synthesize the principal conclusions advanced by historians, and provide a critical evaluation of the existing body of historical research. Such an approach not only makes it possible to identify the major trends in the development of historical scholarship but also contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the evolution of scholarly perspectives and interpretations.

Historical sources constitute one of the principal foundations of historical knowledge, providing indispensable evidence for reconstructing the political, economic, social, and cultural processes of the past, as well as the patterns of everyday life, forms of social organization, and intellectual and ideological outlooks of societies that existed in different historical periods. The systematic identification, classification, critical analysis, and interpretation of historical sources therefore represent essential components of scholarly historical inquiry.

Among the diverse categories of historical sources, written sources occupy a particularly important position. They comprise a broad range of documentary materials that preserve evidence concerning historical developments, political institu-

tions and relations, diplomatic contacts, administrative practices, and various dimensions of social life. Owing to their evidentiary value and informational richness, written sources constitute an indispensable foundation for the reconstruction and interpretation of historical processes. Their critical examination enables researchers not only to establish factual information about the past but also to explore the political, social, and intellectual contexts in which historical events and processes unfolded.

Letters, diplomatic correspondence, sultanic decrees and missives, and archival documents play a particularly important role in the study of interstate relations, serving as primary source materials for reconstructing historical realities. In twenty-first-century Turkish historiography, there has been a sustained tendency among scholars to make extensive use of official archival records, particularly written archival sources. This tendency has contributed to strengthening the source base of historical research and has significantly expanded the possibilities for reinterpreting and analyzing historical events through the systematic examination of archival materials.

Materials and methods

The present study undertakes a historiographical analysis of the treatment of political and diplomatic relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman Empire in twenty-first-century Turkish historiography. The methodological framework of the study is grounded in the principles of historicism, objectivity, and systematicity. The research employs a combination of historiographical analysis, the comparative-historical method, source-critical analysis, content analysis, systemic analysis, and the chronological method.

First and foremost, historiographical analysis was employed to examine the works of Turkish, Russian, and Western scholars devoted to the relations between the states of Central Asia and the Ottoman Empire. Particular attention was paid to identifying their methodological approaches, scholarly concepts, source bases, and the principal trends in the development of research on this subject. Furthermore, this method made it possible to identify similarities and differences in scholarly interpretations, assess the extent to which archival documents have been utilized, examine researchers' approaches to epistolary sources, and characterize the principal

directions that have emerged in contemporary Turkish historiography.

The application of these methodological approaches made it possible to determine the degree to which the subject has been studied in twenty-first-century Turkish historiography, trace the evolution of scholarly approaches and interpretations, and identify promising directions for further research. Particular emphasis was placed on the role of archival and epistolary sources in the reconstruction of political and diplomatic relations, as well as on the ways in which their use has influenced the development of contemporary historiographical interpretations.

The comparative-historical method was employed to juxtapose scholarly assessments of the relations between the Central Asian states and the Ottoman Empire as presented in Turkish, Russian, and Western historiography. Particular attention was devoted to identifying both common and distinctive features in scholarly interpretations of Safavid–Ottoman–Shaybanid relations, diplomatic contacts, and the activities of diplomatic missions.

In addition, content analysis was used to systematize the key concepts, major research directions, range of sources utilized, and conceptual approaches reflected in the works of twenty-first-century Turkish historians, particularly Abdulkadir Mecid, Mehmet Alpargu, Ahmet Kuka, Halil Ülker, Nurten Kılıç, Remziye Çelik, Galip Çağ, and other scholars. The application of this method made it possible to identify the principal thematic priorities of contemporary Turkish historiography, examine the specific features of scholarly interpretations of political and diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Central Asian khanates, and trace the evolution of research approaches to this field of study.

Through systemic analysis, the stages in the development of scholarly research on relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman Empire, as reflected in Turkish historiography, were examined comprehensively, with particular attention to the principal research directions and the specific features of the formation of their source base. The application of this method made it possible to consider these components in their interrelationship, identify patterns in the development of scholarly approaches, and determine the key trends in the evolution of Turkish historiography on this subject.

The chronological method was also employed in the course of the study. Within this framework,

the scholarly literature on the subject was examined dynamically, tracing its development from the late nineteenth century through the twenty-first century. This approach made it possible to trace the successive development of studies focusing on the use of archival documents, the examination of diplomatic correspondence, and the introduction of epistolary sources into scholarly circulation within Turkish historiography. It also enabled the identification of the principal stages in the formation and evolution of contemporary scholarly approaches to the study of this subject.

The empirical basis of the study comprises major monographs, doctoral and candidate dissertations, articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals, encyclopedic publications, as well as archival documents published in Turkish, Russian, and English.

Results and discussion

In international historiography, Ottoman studies emerged initially as an independent field of scholarly inquiry in Europe and subsequently developed further in the United States. In European historiography, the works of Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, Johann Wilhelm Zinkeisen, and Nicolae Iorga (*J. Hammer-Purgstall, 2011; J. Hammer-Purgstall, 1837; J. Zinkeisen, 1840; N. Iorga, 1934*), devoted to the history of the Ottoman Empire, are regarded among the earliest comprehensive studies that laid the foundations for Ottoman studies as an academic discipline. S. F. Oreshkova characterizes Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, Johann Wilhelm Zinkeisen, and Nicolae Iorga as the “three pillars” of European Ottoman studies, emphasizing their decisive contribution to the formation and development of this field of scholarship (*Oreshkova, 2010*).

A particularly significant place in the development of European Ottoman studies is occupied by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall’s ten-volume work *History of the Ottoman Empire (Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches)*, published between 1827 and 1835 (*Hammer-Purgstall, 1885*). This study was among the earliest comprehensive works to draw extensively on Ottoman written sources, European archival materials, and Oriental chronicles. It exerted a substantial influence on the subsequent development of scholarship on the history of the Ottoman Empire, both in Europe and beyond.

In the twentieth century, the development of Ottoman studies outside Turkey was constrained to

some extent by a number of factors. One of the principal obstacles was the limited proficiency in Turkish among many foreign researchers, which significantly restricted their access to and use of scholarly literature published in Turkey. Consequently, a considerable number of foreign scholars were compelled to rely primarily on the works of Turkish historians that had been translated into other languages, particularly those of Mehmet Fuad Köprülü, Halil İnalcık, İlber Ortaylı, Ekrem Akurgal, and Kemal Karpat.

At the same time, a number of foreign scholars who possessed a strong command of Ottoman Turkish were able to work directly with documents preserved in the Ottoman Archives. This enabled them to conduct research on the basis of a rich body of primary sources, substantially broaden the source base of their studies, and offer more nuanced and evidence-based interpretations of the political, diplomatic, and socio-economic history of the Ottoman Empire.

Nineteenth-century studies were based predominantly on travel accounts, diplomatic reports, and the existing body of scholarly literature, while primary archival sources were utilized only to a limited extent. From the 1970s onward, however, Ottoman studies in Europe increasingly came to rely on the direct examination of archival documents. In the United States, by contrast, a source-critical approach grounded in the extensive use of Ottoman archival materials had already begun to take shape in the 1950s, as evidenced by the works of M. Dickson (*Dickson, 1958*).

This process contributed to the emergence of new methodological approaches within Ottoman studies, oriented toward the analysis of the social, economic, political, legal, and cultural history of the Ottoman Empire on the basis of primary sources. As a result, the evidentiary foundation of scholarly research was significantly strengthened, the degree of scholarly objectivity was enhanced, and the conditions were established for the further development of Ottoman studies as an independent field within the discipline of history.

The formation and development of Ottoman studies in Russia has a history spanning several centuries. While the earliest information about the Ottoman state was initially gathered through merchants, pilgrims, and diplomats, the first Russian-language works devoted to the subject began to appear as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By the mid-nineteenth century, Ottoman

studies had emerged as an independent field within Oriental studies, largely as a result of the introduction of Turkish-language instruction at Kazan and St. Petersburg universities and the establishment of specialized training for philologists. During this period, the scholarly activities of Russian Orientalists developed in close association with the field of Turkology.

According to İlber Ortaylı, in 1852, the Ottoman Empire was requested to send a specialist with proficiency in the Turkish language to St. Petersburg, in response to which Vehbi Bey was sent to Russia as a Turkish-language instructor (İ. Ortaylı, 2010). This suggests that by the mid-nineteenth century, interest in Turkology and Ottoman studies was increasing in Russia, accompanied by the gradual institutionalization of these scholarly fields. During this period, within the framework of Russian Oriental studies, Turkology and Ottoman studies began to develop as distinct areas of academic inquiry. Among the early scholars who made significant contributions to these fields were Aleksandr Kazembek, Osip Senkovsky, Ilya Berezin, Vasily Smirnov, and Vladimir Gordlevsky. Their scholarly investigations established a solid academic foundation not only for the study of the history, languages, and cultures of Turkic peoples in Russia, but also for research into the history of the Ottoman state and its documentary and textual sources.

As V. V. Bartold noted, “Aleksandr Kazembek and Osip Senkovsky laid the foundations of the Russian school of Oriental studies, and nearly all representatives of the subsequent generation of Russian Orientalists were either direct students of these two scholars or researchers trained within their scholarly tradition.” In particular, through his scholarly and pedagogical activities, Aleksandr Kazembek trained such a prominent Turkologist as Ilya Nikolaevich Berezin.

Consequently, by the second half of the nineteenth century, a well-established scholarly tradition in Turkology and Ottoman studies had emerged in Russia, providing a solid theoretical and methodological foundation for research in the subsequent period.

Subsequently, during the Soviet period, scholars such as Nikolai Smirnov, Aleksandr Miller, Aleksandr Novichev, Anna Tveritinova, Aleksandr Zhelytyakov, and Yuri Petrosyan (*N. Smirnov, 1946; A. Miller, 1948; A. Novichev, 1963; A. Novichev, 1973; A. Novichev, 1978; A. Tveritinova, 1946;*

A. Zhelytyakov, 1972; Yu. Petrosyan, 1971) continued these scholarly traditions and contributed to the further development of such areas of Ottoman studies as source studies, socio-economic relations, and the history of diplomacy.

By the mid-twentieth century, Ottoman studies had developed primarily as a distinct subfield of historical scholarship, whereas Turkology had become established as a branch of linguistics and literary studies within which independent lines of scholarly research were pursued. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that significant areas of intersection between Ottoman studies and Turkology, as well as shared research questions, have remained relevant in the study of a number of historical issues to the present day.

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, particular attention has been devoted in Russia to the study of relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman Empire within the broader field of Ottoman studies. In this regard, the dissertation research of A. Vasiliev (*Vasiliev, 2014*) and R. Zalyaev (*Zalyaev, 2007*) deserves particular mention. Among these studies, the work of A. Vasiliev can be regarded as one of the most substantial academic contributions to the subject under consideration. In his dissertation, A. Vasiliev provides a detailed examination and analysis of the correspondence exchanged between Central Asian rulers and Ottoman sultans preserved in the Ottoman archives, archival documents held in Russian archives, as well as scholarly studies conducted in Turkey and Russia.

By the twenty-first century, the situation had changed considerably. A new generation of historians had acquired proficiency in modern Turkish and Ottoman Turkish, while their research opportunities expanded significantly owing to the greater accessibility of scholarly literature published in Turkey and the increasing availability of digitized archival materials. This enabled researchers to move beyond reliance on works translated into English and to engage directly with major scholarly publications, primary sources, and archival documents published and made accessible in Turkey. Furthermore, researchers gained greater opportunities to undertake comparative analyses of existing scholarly concepts and interpretations. This, in turn, contributed to enhancing the evidentiary basis, scholarly rigor, and objectivity of research on the history of political and diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Central Asian khanates.

In Turkish historiography, the intensification of scholarly interest in the study of the history of the Ottoman state can be traced primarily to the period after the 1950s. During the first decades following the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, scholarly priorities, shaped largely by the concept of national statehood, focused on the ancient history of the Turkic peoples and issues associated with Central Asia. From the 1950s onward, however, the history of the Ottoman Empire came to be reconsidered as an integral component of the national historical narrative. As a result, scholarly research increasingly focused on the political, socio-economic, and cultural development of the Ottoman state, drawing extensively on archival materials. Consequently, Ottoman studies emerged as one of the most important fields within Turkish historiography.

In Russia, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed a gradual transition from military and diplomatic activities toward the institutionalization of professional historical scholarship. In Turkey, however, this process followed a somewhat different trajectory. According to İlber Ortaylı, at the beginning of the twentieth century, “Turkologists in Turkey were not formed within the academic environment, but rather under the influence of the literary and political milieu, and therefore were, to a certain extent, products of that milieu” (*İ. Ortaylı, 2010*).

In Turkish historiography, it was only from the 1960s onward that the social, political, and cultural relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman state began to be examined as an independent subject of scholarly inquiry. At the initial stage, these studies primarily took the form of master’s theses undertaken at major universities. Subsequently, as scholarly research on the subject deepened and expanded, these studies were further developed into substantial scholarly works and comprehensive research projects (*B. Kütükoğlu, 1960; O. Mert, 1976; M. Saray, 1994*).

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, various aspects of relations between the Central Asian states and the Ottoman Empire have increasingly been examined in Turkish historiography through comprehensive and multidimensional approaches. In particular, political and diplomatic relations, trade and economic ties, cultural and educational cooperation, as well as the position and role of the states of the region within the system of international relations and their mutual influences have

emerged as important areas of scholarly inquiry.

At the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Turkish historiography witnessed a growing body of scholarly research devoted to the political, military, administrative, economic, and social structures of the Central Asian khanates. In particular, the works of A. Gündoğdu (A. Gündoğdu, 1995), M. Alpargu (M. Alpargu, 1996, 2002), M. Çelik (M. Çelik, 2004), A. Macit (A. Macit, 2016), S. Ükten (S. Ükten, 2016), N. Hatunoğlu (N. Hatunoğlu, 2017), and H. Karahan (H. Karahan, 2020) provided comprehensive analyses of these structures.

The diplomatic relations between the Khanate of Bukhara and the Ottoman state have been examined extensively in the studies of A. Sarıyar (A. Sarıyar, 1965), M. Budak (M. Budak, 1987), S. Samur (S. Samur, 1993), A. Gündoğdu (A. Gündoğdu, 1999), R. Kılıç (R. Kılıç, 2001), G. Çınar (G. Çınar, 2011), M. Saray (M. Saray, 2013), U. Türk (U. Türk, 2017), U. Kırca (U. Kırca, 2019), H. Ülker (H. Ülker, 2019), and M. Erdoğan (M. Erdoğan, 2018). Drawing on historical sources, these studies have addressed in detail the emergence of diplomatic contacts between the two sides, the activities of diplomatic missions, diplomatic correspondence, mutual negotiations, and the impact of these relations on regional political processes.

In particular, the studies of A. Macit (A. Macit, 2024), N. Kılıç (N. Kılıç, 2002), and R. Çalık (R. Çalık, 2021) draw extensively on a rich body of archival sources relevant to the subject under consideration. In the works of these scholars, the use of official archival records, diplomatic correspondence, materials related to the activities of diplomatic missions, and foreign sources has significantly strengthened the evidentiary foundation of the research and enabled a more in-depth historiographical analysis of the subject.

The works of A. Macit examine the relations between the Khanates of Bukhara and Kokand and the Ottoman state. In the course of his research, the author drew not only on archival documents but also incorporated the scholarly works of foreign researchers into his analysis. This approach contributed to a broader examination of the subject from both source-critical and historiographical perspectives. The use of international scholarly literature enabled the author to assess the diplomatic relations between the Shaybanids and the Ottoman state from the perspective of different scholarly approaches, undertake a comparative analysis of existing inter-

pretations and conceptual frameworks, and identify the documentary and source base underlying them.

Mehmet Akif Erdoğan (A. Erdoğan, 2018, p. 398), drawing extensively on archival documentation, likewise examines the diplomatic relations between the Shaybanids and the Ottoman state. On the basis of archival evidence, he notes that Sultan Süleyman I (Süleyman the Magnificent, r. 1520–1566) dispatched the envoy Ahmed Çavuş to the Shaybanid court, while Navruz Ahmad sent his own emissary, Kutlug Fuladi, to Istanbul. Erdoğan further provides archival evidence indicating that, in 1560, a contingent of 300 Janissaries and an artillery unit were dispatched to the court of Pir Muhammad (A. Erdoğan, 2018, p. 399).

Particular attention is devoted by the author to the question of the date marking the beginning of diplomatic relations and its historical interpretation, which continues to be a subject of scholarly debate in contemporary Turkish historiography. According to the author, the letter sent by Sultan Selim I (Yavuz Selim) to the Bukharan ruler Ubaydullah Khan in 1514 may be regarded as the first official diplomatic contact between the Ottoman state and the Central Asian khanates (A. Erdoğan, 2018, p. 398).

Galip Çağ (Galip Çağ, 2008, pp. 127–138) concurs with the view that the first diplomatic relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman Empire were established in 1516 between Sultan Selim I (Yavuz Selim, 1470–1520) and the ruler of Samarkand, Jalal al-Din Ubayd Khan (Galip Çağ, 2008, p. 128). At the same time, he notes that some Turkish historians, most notably İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, have expressed reservations regarding the accuracy of the dating of this diplomatic contact. However, Çağ does not provide a direct quotation from Uzunçarşılı's relevant study, but merely refers to it (İ. Uzunçarşılı, 1998, pp. 252–253).

Like İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, Mehmet Akif Erdoğan does not articulate an independent scholarly position on the contentious issue concerning the dating of this letter. Referring to Feridun Bey's collection *Munşeâtü's-Selâtin* (Feridun Bey, 1875), Mehmet Saray states that in 1516 Sultan Selim I dispatched a letter to Ubaydullah Khan through an envoy named Mehmed Bey; however, he notes that the letter was, in fact, addressed to Kuchkunji Khan (M. Saray, 1993, p. 5). In contrast, Mustafa Budak argues that the letter sent by Sultan Selim I through Mehmed Bey to Kuchkunji Khan in August 1514, that is, prior to the Battle of Chaldiran (23 August

1514), marked the beginning of diplomatic relations between the two sides (M. Budak, 1995, p. 79).

At the same time, Halil Ülker argues that Selim I sent his first letter to Ubaydullah Khan in 1514 and a second letter to Kuchkunji Khan in 1516 (H. Ülker, 2019, pp. 3977–4000). In our assessment, Ülker's interpretation appears to be the most substantiated, as the author draws upon a comparative analysis of archival documents and collections of diplomatic correspondence (*munşeât*), thereby providing a convincing evidentiary basis for the reliability of the information presented.

In this regard, Galip Çağ appears not to have sufficiently taken into account the political developments that unfolded in Central Asia during the sixteenth century. In 1516, Kuchkunji Khan was the ruler of Samarkand, whereas by the name “Jalal al-Din Ubayd Khan,” the author apparently refers to Ubaydullah Khan, who ruled Bukhara from 1504 to 1533 and subsequently became the ruler of the entire state, governing from 1533 to 1540 (A. Zamonov, 2023, p. 408).

Thus, based on an analysis of the available evidence, it may be concluded that the earliest diplomatic contacts between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman Empire were established in 1514 between Sultan Selim I and Ubaydullah Khan. In response to this correspondence, Ubaydullah Khan dispatched his envoy, Nizam al-Din Muhammad Beg, in August 1514. These findings indicate that relations between the Shaybanids and the Ottoman state were not confined to formal diplomatic correspondence but also extended to the sphere of military and political cooperation.

Çınar Karadağ (Ç. Karadağ, 2011, p. 348) examined the influence of the Ottoman Empire on relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Safavid state. Particular attention is devoted to the argument that, from 1514 onward, the Ottoman Empire emerged as a significant external political factor in Central Asian–Safavid relations. The study notes that, within the framework of their eastern policy, the Ottoman sultans on certain occasions provided political and military support to the Khanate of Bukhara, while the Bukharan rulers, for their part, sought to maintain close and mutually supportive relations with the Ottoman state. On this basis, the author conceptualizes the Ottoman Empire as one of the key external political actors within the broader system of Central Asian–Safavid relations, thereby highlighting its significance in shaping the regional

balance of power and the dynamics of interstate interaction.

Furthermore, the author notes that during the period from 1500 to 1740, relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Safavid state were characterized predominantly by political rivalry and military confrontation. In particular, the period from 1507 to 1524 is regarded as a formative stage in the emergence and intensification of political contradictions between the two sides. At the same time, the reign of Shah Tahmasp is presented as an important stage in the stabilization of Central Asian–Safavid relations, as well as in the intensification of military and political cooperation between the Ottoman Empire and the Central Asian khanates.

According to the author, the period from 1524 to 1629 represented the phase of greatest intensity in military confrontation, both in Central Asian–Safavid relations and in Ottoman–Safavid relations. During this period, the Ottoman Empire initially pursued a highly confrontational policy toward the Safavid state; however, following the conclusion of the Peace of Amasya, it subsequently recognized the Safavid state through a formal diplomatic settlement. At the same time, the author emphasizes that relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Central Asian khanates remained relatively stable throughout this period (Ç. Karadağ, 2011, pp. 7–8).

In the twenty-first century, the study of relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman Empire in Turkey has extended beyond the domain of historical scholarship and has also occupied an important place in the works of linguists, literary scholars, and source-study specialists (A. Kök, 2019; S. Tolkun, 2015, pp. 135–157; Y. Karasoy, 1989). This development demonstrates the inherently interdisciplinary nature of the subject and reflects a growing tendency toward its comprehensive examination through the combined application of historical, philological, and source-critical approaches. In particular, Ali Kök (A. Kök, 2025, pp. 5–40) examines, from both source-critical and philological perspectives, a condolence letter (*ta'ziye-nâme*) sent by Abdullah Khan (1583–1598), who effectively administered the Khanate during the reign of his father, Iskandar Khan, to Ottoman Sultan Selim II (1524–1574) following the death of Sultan Süleyman I (Süleyman the Magnificent, 1494–1566). Kök's study addresses not only the linguistic and stylistic features of the document and the conven-

tions of diplomatic correspondence, but also introduces into scholarly circulation important evidence concerning the circumstances surrounding the document's composition, the political and diplomatic relations between the Khanate of Bukhara and the Ottoman Empire, and the historical events of the period under consideration.

Conclusion

The historiographical analysis undertaken in this study demonstrates that, in the twenty-first century, Turkish historiography has substantially expanded the scholarly field devoted to relations between the states of Central Asia and the Ottoman Empire. In contrast to studies conducted during the second half of the twentieth century, contemporary Turkish scholars approach this subject not solely within the framework of political history, but also through the perspectives of diplomacy, source studies, philology, the history of international relations, and intercultural contacts. This development reflects a significant shift from narrowly focused studies toward a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to the study of Central Asian–Ottoman relations.

A distinctive feature of contemporary Turkish historiography is the extensive use of primary sources, particularly documents preserved in the Ottoman Archives, diplomatic correspondence, collections of *munşeât*, chronicles, and manuscript materials. The introduction of previously underutilized archival documents into scholarly circulation has made it possible to refine the chronology of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Khanate of Bukhara and the Ottoman Empire, uncover new evidence concerning the activities of diplomatic missions, and critically reassess a number of established interpretations within the existing historiography.

The historiographical analysis further demonstrates that, to date, no consensus has been reached among Turkish scholars regarding the chronology of the earliest diplomatic contacts between the Shaybanids and the Ottoman Empire. A comparative examination of the studies by M. Saray, M. Budak, M. Akif Erdoğan, G. Çağ, and H. Ülker reveals divergent interpretations of the same body of primary sources. At the same time, a comparative analysis of archival documents and collections of diplomatic correspondence provides grounds for considering H. Ülker's position to be the most substantiated.

According to Ülker, the first letter of Sultan Selim I was addressed to Ubaydullah Khan in 1514, while a second letter was subsequently sent to Kuchkunji Khan in 1516.

An important characteristic of contemporary Turkish historiography is the active interaction among historians, philologists, Turkologists, and source-study specialists. As a result, diplomatic correspondence is examined not merely as a historical source, but also as an object of linguistic, textual, and source-critical analysis. Such an interdisciplinary approach makes it possible to reconstruct the political and diplomatic relations between the Central

Asian khanates and the Ottoman Empire in a more comprehensive and nuanced manner.

Overall, it may be concluded that contemporary Turkish historiography occupies a leading position in the study of the history of relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman Empire. The extensive use of a rich archival source base, combined with the interdisciplinary character of contemporary scholarship, has substantially broadened the evidentiary foundation of research on this subject and opened up new prospects for further comparative-historical and historiographical inquiry.

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