Islam cultural encounter: Anatolia

By: Nayeli Sorto
Origin

Anatolia was subjected to turkmen raids for almost 30 years. Then in 1071 the Seljuk Turks were able to finally defeat the Byzantines (who at the time were under the rule of emperor Romanus IV Diogenes) at the battle of manzikert.

- These invaders created chaos and destruction throughout the land as the Byzantine authority began crumbling down
Turkish encounter with The Abbasid Empire

The Turks’ conversion to Islam occurred when the Muslim Abbasid dynasty (750-1258) started a trading relationship with them. The Turks at time mainly roamed in Anatolia and plains of Central Asia. After the establishment of this relation, the Turks became Sunni Muslims and who supported the Abbasid Caliph. The Islamization of Anatolia occurred within Turkish text. So Turkish language dominated, not Arabic. The religious state of Anatolia was not uniformed, seeing as they had recently converted to islam. The Turks kept many of their old traditions when they adapted Islam and kept their earlier shamanistic beliefs.
How did The Turkish invasion affect Anatolia politically?

This Turkish invasion had a great influence on Anatolia’s administrative techniques as well as its government structure.

- Around the 13th century, Anatolia’s government was completely different from the one they had under byzantine control. Under the Turks, they created a government structure inspired by Iranian concepts of centralized authority and was largely staff by Iranian bureaucrats. They welcomed converts, and granted them rewards and a place in high office.
Another impact Islam had on Anatolia was the abolishing of their old military system and the creation of a new one.

- Their previous system were called themes
- Turkish tribesmen formed a great portion of the military, and tribe dwellings in the Byzantine borderland were led by local chieftain who were loyal to their Seljuk overlords.
Impact on Society

- When the Turks invaded Anatolia, they adopted their customs. Such as their tradition of giving women a more gender equal life, which was common among pastoral people. And unlike many civilizations in which Islam was practiced, women held a more dignified position than men, and they did not have to veil themselves.
● Under the Byzantine empire, Anatolian society was divided, due to many pagan cults. Which often attacked Roman Emperor worship and orthodox Christianity, causing a lot of tension among people.

● However when the Seljuk came into control. Muslim artisans and craftsmen were often linked through membership in ethical and chivalric organizations known as futūma.
Effects on Anatolian economy

With the crusades having caused a great demand of eastern goods in Europe. It gave way for more commerce in Anatolia, which was an important component of the Anatolian Seljuk economy.

- Under turkish rule, Anatolia’s system of commerce and communication was changed and trade was re-established. They secured political control of major east-west and north-south routes crossing their territories and built up the infrastructure of commerce.
- Between 1201-1243, around 30 rest houses were created along Anatolian high roads for the protection of traveling merchants. They also built bridges and harbors, which provided a lot of wealth.
● Under the Byzantine empire, Anatolia’s economic activity was increasingly rural. All cities depended on their agricultural hinterland for economic survival.
● In the coastal plains, there were many sites of ancient centers, while others were centers situated on or near important trading routes or strategically located centers of communication.
● The commercial system completely fell when the Turks destroyed the last of the colonial cities. Which were dependent for supplies on roads and aqueducts.
● The Turks contributed the practice of seasonal migrations with flocks and search of fresh pastures to Anatolian village economy.
Effects on the environment

- When The Turks first invaded, it lead to massacres, enslavement, and famine which ultimately led to a great decrease in population.
- The land on the plateau was mainly pastoral, while in the coastal regions, cultivations of cereal, vegetables, vines, and olives dominated the fertile lands. When the Seljuk took control however, it led to the recession of cultivation of Anatolia, albeit temporarily.
New technological advancements: Such as the building of well kept garrison highways, which allowed for more rapid travel, running directly between municipalities.

Earliest settlements

- The Manguqids, who had control over Tephrike, Erzincan, and Keman until 1252.
- The saltuqids, who ruled Erzurum until 1201.
- Also the Danishmends, centered in Sivas, Kayseri, and Amasya until 1177.
Islamic presence in Anatolian Culture

Anatolia was a region of diversity, with a large Christian and Greek speaking population, governed by the Byzantine empire.

- When the Sunni Muslim Turks arrived however, monasteries were destroyed or abandoned. The priest and bishops weren't able to serve their congregations. As for the christians, they were forced to convert and suffered many discriminations. They had to wear special clothing, pay special taxes, and couldn't ride saddled horses or carry swords.
It didn't take much for Anatolia to adapt however, as there was a rapid establishment of Islam and Turkish language, and by the 1500s, Anatolia's population was made up of 90% Muslims, with most speaking Turkish.

By the 13th century the population was extremely heterogeneous, with most engaged in agriculture.

For Anatolia, the cultural barriers were less severe, seeing as their previous religion (Christianity) and Islam had similar characteristics.

As these similarities were acknowledged by Anatolians, it also led to the support of the belief that both religions were but different versions of the same faith, a belief made by some Sufi teachers.
The sufis established schools, mills, orchards, hospices, and rest places from travelers.

The first school institutions (Muslim medreses) were established during the time of the Kilic Arslan (1153-1192), in Konya and another in Aksaray.

Other schools were also established in Karatay (1251), Ince Minareli (1251-1253), Atabekkiye (1251-1268), Sivas (1271), Buruciye (1271-1272), Cifte Mineralli (1271), and Kirsehir (1272).
Seljuks also implemented the importance of medical science. And most cities came to have hospitals. The main treatment centers were that of Geuhernesible in Kayseri (1205), Izzeddin keykavus in sivas (1217), Torumtay in Amasya (1266), Muinuddin pervane in Tokat (1275), and pervaneoglu Ali in Kastamonu (1272). These installments started to slowly replaced the destroyed and dying Christianity in Anatolia. Which led to the religious transformation of Anatolia and laid foundation for the Ottoman Empire.
Works Cited


M.A, W.C Brice. The Turkish Colonization of Anatolia. www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:1m1904&datastreamId=POST-PE
ER-REVIEW-PUBLISHERS-DOCUMENT.PDF+


https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Turkey#/media/File%3ATu-map.png
https://qph.ec.quoracdn.net/main-qimg-de83f49b7666db3b3633d9a857c54eac-c
https://i.pinimg.com/736x/8a/45/1f/8a451f7c56e46ff974a3d83b73b8650--indian-architecture-islamic-art.jpg
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c0/Konya.Turkish.building.jpg