



## UYGHURS IN THE EYES OF EUROPEAN TOURISTS

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### ABSTRACT

*The article examines the fact that the Central Asian region was the only place for different peoples and nations, the reasons for the appearance of information about the Uyghurs in Europe since the 13th century, the ethnic origin of the ancient Uyghurs, the location and their place in ethnocultural processes in the Middle Ages and European studies.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Central Asia, Uyghurs, Kyrgyz, Mahmud Kashgari, Turgun Olmas, I.Ya. Bichurin, Abulgazi Bahodirkhan, Uyghur Khanate, Plano Carpini, Guillem de Rubruk, Marco Polo, D.M. Pozdneev*

### INTRODUCTION

The Central Asian region is a region that has served as a single home for different peoples, nations and peoples. Uyghurs have also lived in the region since ancient times. If we look at the state of study of Uyghur history, we see that many historians have addressed this issue. The ethnic origin of the Uyghurs, the history of statehood in the Uyghurs, has attracted the attention of many scholars. In this field N.Ya.Bichurin, D.Pozdneev, V.V.Bartold, N.A.Aristov, L.N.Gumilev, L.V.Oshanin, D.I.Tikhonov, S.G.Klyashtorny, K. The researches of Shoniyofov and other historians can be especially noted. [6,17,4,5,3,8,9,17,19,12,21,22]

The Uyghurs are one of the ancient peoples who have gone through long historical processes and preserved the Uyghur name. The Uyghurs were named differently in different periods. The naming sequence of the Uyghur people was as follows: chidinlin-gaogyuy-teyle-hueyhe-uyghur [19, p.22]. During the reign of the Sui dynasty (581-618) in China, the 4 tribes of gaogyu: yuanhe, pugu, tunlo, baego seeds formed an alliance under the leadership of the strongest yuanhe seed among them and began to call themselves huihe.

According to Mahmud Kashgari, the Uyghurs, known from the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, resisted Alexander the Great. As Dhū l-Qarnayn approached the Uyghur province, the Turkish Hakan sent four thousand men to it. The high cap feathers on their heads were like falcon wings. They fired from behind as skillfully as they fired from the front. Dhū l-Qarnayn was amazed at this, and believe me, they are the ones who find it, the ones who do not

need others, that is, the hunt from which they cannot escape; they can shoot and eat whenever they want,"he said. After that the province was called Khudhur. [12, p.57; 14, p. 431].

### THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

According to the Uyghur historian Turgun Olmas, "Uyghurs have lived since ancient times in the Tarim Valley, bordered by the Karakorum and Tangritog ridges, in Hungary, bordered by Tangritog and Altai, in the Ili River Valley, in the valleys of Southern Siberia, Selenga, Orkhon, Tola and Kerulen." [20, p.6].

At the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th century, the Turkic peoples of Central Asia were known as tele. The strongest of them at this time was the Weich tribe. During the Tan dynasty (618-907), the people were called "yunxe" and during the Sui dynasty (581-618) they were called "veyhe". This means that a nation was known by different names at different times. The Yuanhe Union consists of nine tribes. The most notable of these was the iologe yaglakar tribe.

In 809 AD, the Chinese khan Yuanxi sent an envoy to the Uyghur people and called the nation "Uyghur" meaning "flying like a falcon" [16, p.4]. Abdulgozi Bahodirkhan in his work "Shajarai turk" Oguzkhan called them "Uyghurs". "Uyghur" is a Turkic word, which means "to stick together" [1, p. 20]. N.A. Aristov says that the word "Uyghur" in Turkish means follower, ally [3, p.6].

Abulgazi Bahodirkhan There are two mountains in the Mongol land, one is Togratubuzluk and the other is Uskunluk. There is Mount Qut at



sunset in Mongolia. Between these mountains there are ten streams in one place and nine streams in another. In ancient times, the Uyghur people reported that they were located between these rivers. The Uyghurs in ten streams are called ten Uyghurs, and those in nine streams are called nine Uyghurs. It is described as having many cities, villages and crops [1, p.32].

During the Turkish Khanate, several Turkic tribes living in Eurasia united to form large tribal alliances. In later periods, they founded their own states. In particular, the Uyghurs united the Qarluq and Basmil tribes under Moyunchur (Peylo in Chinese sources) in 740, successfully fought against the Eastern Turkic Khanate and founded the Uyghur Khanate (VIII-IX centuries) [6, p.398-413; 9, p.519-604] The Uyghur tribes united 9 tribes during the reign of Peylo Hakan (742-756).

Mahmud Kashgari admits that the largest city of the Uyghurs is Beshbalik, meaning "fish" city. Beshbalik means "five cities". The Uyghurs call their other city Yangibalik (new city). "[1, p. 152]

In 840, the Uyghur Khanate was crushed by the Enisei Kyrgyz. The Uyghurs then retreated to East Turkestan. Some of them founded the state of Ganjau in 847 in Gansu Province. The rest of the population of the Uyghur Khanate (847-850) came to the Turfan oasis and founded the Turfan state. Some groups of Uyghurs settled in Dunhuang, Guajou, Sichuan, Karashar, Beshbalik, Kucha, and East Turkestan.

Thus, the Uyghur khanate collapsed in the middle of the ninth century, and the territories inhabited by their descendants came under the rule of the Kyrgyz. The north-eastern provinces of East Turkestan have been under Uyghur rule since 840.

Mahmud Kashgari, in his *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*, said, "The languages of the Uyghurs are Turkish, but there are other languages in which they speak each other. Those who support the 24-letter Turkish script shown at the beginning of the book will write their letters in this script. Both the Uyghurs and the Sinliks have another record. They keep their books and office work with that letter. "Only Sinhalese and non-Muslims can read that letter." [15, B. 25].

Mahmud Kashgari acknowledged that the Turks consisted of twenty tribes, one of which was the Uyghurs [15, p. 24]. The author writes that from the East I have shown the settlements of each tribe in order, one after the other. The first tribe close to Rome continued from biscuits to kipchak, oguz, yamak, bashgirt, basmil, kai, yabaku, tatar, kyrgyz, chigil, tuxsi, yagmo, igraaq, charuk, chimil, uygur, tangut, china, tavgach [15, B .24]. It is noteworthy in the list that the Uyghurs lived between the Chimil and Tangut tribes.

Abulgazihan admits that there were many literate Uyghurs and that he was well versed in court administration and devon calculations. In particular, he noted that palace secretaries were Uighurs in the Mongols, Uyghurs were used in public affairs in China, and even during the reign of Genghis Khan's grandsons in Transoxiana, Khorasan and Iraq all devons and clerks were Uighurs [1, p. 33].

The first information about the Uyghurs began to appear in Europe in the XIII century. This information was provided by ambassadors who visited the Eastern countries, in particular Mongolia, with an embassy mission. These were: Giovanni del Plano Carpini (ca. 1182-1252), Wilhelm Guillem de Rubruck (1220-1293), Marco Polo (1254-1324). For example, in 1245-1247, the Italian traveler and monk Giovanni del Plano Carpini (ca. 1182-1252) headed the ambassadors sent to Mongolia by Pope Innocent IV. They set out from Lyon and came to Kara-Kurum, the khan's horde, through southern Russia, Khorezm, Ettisuv, and Tarbagatai. In his work, he reflected the events he witnessed. Before Plano Carpini, there was no information about Uyghurs in Europe. News of the Uyghurs in Europe is exactly what Plano Carpini said in the first chapter of his *History of the Mongols*, which we call the *Tatars*, about the land of the Tatars, the Uyghurs and their geographical location. According to him, the Uyghurs are located at the junction of East and West. In the play, it is acknowledged that "guirs" lived in the south-west of the Tatars [10, p. 239]. Here the Uyghurs were used in the form of "guirs". Plano Carpini also gave information about Guyur (Uyghur) along with the lands subordinated to the Mongols - China, Naiman, Solangi, Black Chinese and others [10, p. 286]. The Uyghurs lived in East Turkestan in the early 13th century. They had cities like Beshbalig and Karakhoja. Thus, the recognition of the name of the Uyghurs as the owners of the territory indicates that the Uyghurs have a certain position in the political process.

Plano Carpini lists the territories occupied by the Mongol Tatars in the following order: China, Naiman, Solangi. Karakhitay, Komans, Tumat, Voyrat [11, p.56], Karaniti, Guyur (Huyur) [11, p.30] and more than forty other countries. At this point our attention was drawn to the lands of Guyur (Huyur). See that the mention of the name of the Uyghurs at that time also indicates that the position of the Uyghurs was in a sense recognized.

The traveler and monk Wilhelm Guillaume de Roubrique (1220-1293) in 1253-1255 led the ambassadors sent to Mongolia by King Louis IX of France. He left France and went to Mongolia through Palestine, Constantinople, Crimea, the Don steppes, Central Asia. In his *Journey to the East*, the Uyghurs believe in one God. Karakurum is located on their



land. The lands of the Mongol king are located around his lands. Their pastures are in the north and the Uyghurs are in the mountains to the south. Hence, the Moals (Mongols-R.A.) assimilated their writings, the Uyghurs were their secretaries, and all Christians know their writings. To the east of them lived the Tanguts, followed by the Tibetans. Above, Mahmud Kashgari also reported that the Uyghurs were inhabited by Tanguts in the east [15, p.24]. The author describes the image of the runners as follows: “the Uyghurs are of medium height like our compatriots” [7, p.37]. He pointed out that the Uyghurs spoke a Turkish dialect. Writing about Karakurum, there is a 20-day journey from Karakurum to China to the south-east, a 10-day journey to Ononkerelun to the east, and there are no cities [7, S. 56], he says.” Writing about the city of Karakurum, he noted that the city consisted of two districts, one of which was Saratsin, where there was a market, the merchants were here because the palace was here, and many ambassadors came. During this period, Muslim nations were called “saratsin”. So, a part of Karakurum can be called a Muslim district. The second area was called the Chinese, and they were all artisans. In addition to these neighborhoods, there were large palaces. There are churches of twelve different peoples, two of which are mosques, one is a Christian church on the outskirts of the city [7, p. 347].

This means that in the 13th century, different peoples lived in the areas inhabited by the Uyghurs, and each of them must have believed in their own religion. The city is surrounded by a wall and has four gates. On the east side, millet and other grains are sold, but they are rarely exported. Sheep and goats are sold on the west side; bulls and carts for sale on the south side; reports that horses are sold on the north side [7, p. 348].

Guillaume de Rubruck draws attention to their writings as he writes about the inhabitants of the Mangukhan region. For example, the Tanguts, like the Arabs, write from right to left, while the Uyghurs write from top to bottom [7, p.346].

In 1271-1275, the Italian traveler and writer Marco Polo (1254-1324) came with Venetian merchants to the southeastern shores of the Asia Minor, from there to Baghdad, Basra, Tabriz, and Kerman, then to Balkh, Kashgar, Hotan, Kampuchea, and the Gobi. crossed the desert and reached Karakurum. Traveler Marco Polo knew Basip-Mongol, Arabic, Uyghur, and Assyrian scripts. Basip is a Mongol letter invented during the reign of Kublai Khan. Marco Polo admits that the Uyghur alphabet originated from the Assyrian script, and that Genghis Khan's laws were written in the Uyghur alphabet. [13, pp. 110,111]

Russian orientalist D.M. Pozdneev (1865-1937) conducted research on the history of the Uyghurs, mainly on the basis of Chinese and other sources. His work, entitled “History of the Uyghurs”, consists of two parts, focusing on previous research on the history of the Uyghurs, as well as issues related to the history and religion of the Uyghurs. The author answers the question of why many scholars have studied the history of the Uyghurs, and why there were tribes like the Uyghurs who founded their own state, and why there is little research on them. The reason for this is that when European missionary-tourists traveled to the capital of Genghis Khan's state, Karakurum, they heard the name of Uyghurs in the western part of Central Asia, collected information about them and brought them to Europe [18, p.VI].

D. Pozdneev wrote that “the information of these two travelers Giovanni del Plano Carpini and Guillaume de Rubruck about the Uyghurs was characteristic of the Uyghurs in European literature” [18, p.VI]. It is no exaggeration to say that these tourists introduced the Uyghurs to Europe. Otherwise the Europeans would not have known the Uyghurs for a long time.

According to Pozdneev, Catholic monks saw the Uyghurs in the area north of the Tien Shan, near East Turkestan. Here Herbelot cites the following information from the Library of Orientalism: “*Igur or Aygur* is the name of one of the western Turkic tribes, and Oguzkhan came to help his enemies when he fought with his father and uncles for religion. As a result, Oguzkhan won the fight. In honor of this victory he named them *Igur or Aygur*. It means protection, patronage, alliance. Oguzkhan formed a special army from them. It intensified and occupied the part of East Turkestan bordering China. The Uyghur tribes have their own language and use Chinese calendars, which they later converted to Christianity. However, they did not preserve this religion. Now they are pagans or Muslims” [18, p.VII].

D. Pozdneev, studying the research of Western scholars, recognizes the Uyghurs as Turkic tribes. He admits that the publication in 1812 of a treatise on the language and writing of the Uyghurs by Klaprot (1743-1817) provided new information about the Uyghurs. It is estimated that Klaprot's article was the first scientific research experiment on the Uyghurs [18, S.XII]. The sources of the article are many works in Far Eastern languages and the works of European scholars known so far. The publication of the Uyghur-Chinese dictionary kept in the Royal Library in Paris has been recognized as valuable [18, p. XIII]. Klaprot agrees with his predecessors in his views on the Uyghur homeland. The scholar admits



that the Mongols mastered the Uyghur script [18, p.XIII].

In his work, Plano Carpini lists the territories occupied by the Tatars in the following order: China, Naiman, Solangi, Karakhitay, Komans, Tumat, Voyrat [10, p.56], Karaniti, Guyur (Huyur) [11, p.30] and more than forty other countries. At this point our attention was drawn to the lands of Guyur (Huyur). See that the mention of the name of the Uyghurs at that time also indicates that the position of the Uyghurs was in a sense recognized.

## CONCLUSION

In short, it can be said that the Uyghurs are a people who have gone through a long historical process, and information about them is widely covered in Chinese sources. Researchers have tried to shed light on Uyghur history based on information left by Chinese sources and European tourists. The more information about them, the more the Uyghurs lived in ancient times, especially the realities witnessed by European tourists.

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