



ACCOUNTS OF THE EUROPEANS ON THE CULTURE, CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE TURKS OF TURKISTAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Abstract

Foreign interest toward Turkistan was intensive in the nineteenth century. In this, Russian expansion and Anglo-Russian rivalry played important role. Number of the foreign observers and travelers to the region sustained great rise. Despite different goals, these observers inked large works. These works have presented important information about social, political and cultural aspects of the region.

As the foreign sources reflected, the Turks of Turkistan had perfectly adopted to their environment, developed good enough economical and cultural wealth to go on living. However, because of shallow knowledge that the foreign observers had about the region, sources failed to present the whole picture. Despite all weaknesses, foreign sources had inspired historians and others to write about the region.

Key Words: The Turks, Turkistan, Russia, Culture, Turkmen, Central Asia.

ON DOKUZUNCU ASIR TÜRKİSTAN TÜRKLERİNİN KÜLTÜRLERİ, KARAKTERLERİ VE GÖRÜNTÜLERİ HAKKINDA AVRUPALILARIN GÖRÜŞLERİ

Özet

On dokuzuncu yüzyılda Türkistana yönelik yabancı ilgisi oldukça yoğundu. Bunun en önemli nedeni Rus yayılmacılığı ile İngiliz-Rus rekabeti idi. Bölgeye yönelik yabancı gözlemci ve gezginlerinin sayısında büyük artış sağlanmıştı. Amaçları farklı olsa da bu gözlemciler bölge üzerinde geniş bilgiler kaleme aldılar. Bunların ortaya koydukları bilgiler bölgenin sosyal, siyasi ve kültürel yapısı hakkında önemli bilgiler sunmuştur.

Yabancıların açıklamalarında bölgede yaşayan Türklerin kendi çevrelerine mükemmel uyum sağladığı, kendi kendilerine yeten bir seviyede kültürel ve ekonomik zenginlik gösterdiği görülmüştür. Ancak, yetersiz bilgilere ve tecrübeye sahip olan birçok gözlemcinin ortaya koyduğu bilgiler bölgenin gerçek yapısını açıklamada kısır kalmıştır. Bununla birlikte, yabancıların Türkistan hakkındaki gözlemleri, tarihçiler ve diğer araştırmacılar için önemli esin ve bilgi kaynağı olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkler, Türkistan, Kültür, Rusya, Türkmenler, Orta Asya.

The Turks have been known as one of the largest and most civilized peoples of the world. According to an eleventh century Arab thinker, Kaadi Ahmed el Andalusî, the Turks were one of ten civilized peoples, namely the Turks, Arabs, Indians, Iranians, Caledonians, Jews, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans and Chinese (Ortaylı, 2005: 21-22). Because of their long history and historical activities, the Turks have been largely studied by historians, researchers and others. The culture, character and appearance of the Turks amazed them to produce diaries, history books and articles in great numbers.

Turkistan—as the cradle of the Turkish people—had fascinated foreigners, especially the Europeans, up until it was thoroughly mapped up and made known in the first half of the twentieth century. Local peoples, cities, environments, historical roads, buildings, cultures and civilization had received a great deal of attentions from outsiders who had not only had wandering eyes but also practical purposes, including services to expansionist countries, namely Russia and Great Britain. Many people had come into Turkistan to satisfy their wishes for discovering the unknown.

Visitors who would be described as travelers, secret agents, missionaries, journalists, diplomats and tourists and who mainly came from Europe, especially from Britain and Russia, to visit Central Asia left important accounts on the culture, character and appearance of the Turkic peoples of Turkistan in the nineteenth century. These travelers were after different goals and they made of different interest groups. Some of them went to these places for secret missions, as disguised agents of Russia or Britain, to collect information concerning the geographic, economic, social, cultural and military aspects of the Central Asian Khanates. Some of them were after seeking opportunities to get enough information to write traveler's books or stories, which were quenching the thirst of many Europeans who had felt the need of reading tales about far away places, about which they had had a kind of romance. The Europeans who had the best chances to learn from daily newspapers, weekly magazines and scientific journals, which were common in Europe in the nineteenth century, were willing to pay big money for these works. Still, some of the visitors were missionaries who sought possibilities of spreading their faith.

Since, Turkistan had become the center of a great rivalry between Russia and Britain, most of the travelers were diplomatic or secret agents who were trying to both survey and gather first-hand information about the region and native peoples on the ground, and convince local rulers to serve for interests of their own governments. Almost all these travelers left some degree of accounts in the shape of a book, a booklet, a diary, an article in a newspaper or in a journal published in the nineteenth century. Such accounts about new places, as Mary Louise Pratt (1992: 12-15) suggested, had contributed to "planetary consciousness" with some Eurocentric ingredients. The accounts that produced by European travelers somewhat contributed to the idea of orientalism born in Europe in 1312 when "the Church Council of Vienna (decided) to establish a series of chairs in 'Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac at Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Avignon, and Salamanca.'" (Said, 1979: 49-50). According to Edward W. Said (1979: 3), "Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient." Said (1979: 327) pointed out that Orientalism would teach "intellectual dishonesty" and would lead to a wrong path in scholarship. Yet, writings, findings, conclusions and other claims of the orientalists would also be an asset for today's scholars to see history in a larger and clearer perspective.

The accounts about Turkistan contained vivid and eye-catching descriptions that would be a best service to the understanding of the social, geographical, cultural, economical and intellectual history of the region. After all, these accounts have been some of the main and important sources of the region's history, since native sources were limited. However, all of these foreign sources were inked by the outsiders some of whom had some, little or none first-hand knowledge about the region and about the local languages, which would have limited the objectivity and accuracy of these accounts.

This work focuses on accounts of European visitors, as well as accounts of some historians and researchers, written about cultures, characters and appearances of the people who were living in Turkistan. The geographic area of Turkistan comprises large lands stretching from the Caucasus and Iran in the west to China and Mongolia in the east, and from Siberia and the Steppes in the north to the Hindikush Mountains in the South. Throughout this work, these lands have been termed as both "Turkistan" and "Central Asia". These terms have been used interchangeably.

Turkistan in Declining State:

Turkistan that served as one of the enlightening centers for the Islamic world in the High Middle Ages and in the Early Modern Times has been the living center for the Turkish people since the time immemorial. The Turks have lived in there and created advanced civilizations. They affected surrounding places and cultures. "For a thousand years Central Asia and the Caucasus played a central role in the development of Muslim culture and the history of the *Dar ul-Islam*. These territories, part of the Turko-Iranian world, were the seat of mighty empires and brilliant centers of learning as important for the historical development of Islam as a whole as Turkey, Iran or India. It is enough that Tamerlan had his capital in Samarkand, that literary Persian was first used in Bukhara and that the greatest Muslim philosopher, Ibn Sina, was a native of Khwarezm" (Bennigsen and Broxup, 1983: 1-2). Yet, it became a forgotten place after many political, commercial and cultural developments prior to the nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century, its weaknesses contributed to its demise. "Turkistan was in eclipse and seclusion... Here was a political vacuum which would in the end be filled from without" (Caroe, 1967: 69).

Great geographic explorations that started in the mid-fifteenth century changed old Silk and Spices roads. Establishment of the Safevid state in Iran limited communications and transportations between Turkistan and the Near East. Russian eastward expansions narrowed spaces for the locals for commercial, educational and cultural activities. And, growing religious biases among the locals weakened chances of change in a direction of modernity.

The great geographic explorations greatly ended importance of Silk and Spices roads that had been bringing not only commercial goods but also cultures, sciences and news between the East and the West over Turkistan. Because of these historic commercial roads, Turkistan had received not only the commercial goods and wealth, but also fame, knowledge and civilization. Demise of these important historic roads in the early and modern times contributed to the region's backwardness, which decreased Turkistan's importance in the world affairs.

The establishment of the Safevid state in the beginning of the sixteenth century ended a lively connection between Turkistan and the Near East because of the Shii and Sunni separation in the Islamic world. Shii Safevids created obstacles before the Sunni peoples

and states populated and ruled most of Turkistan and the Near East, which caused Turkistan and the rest of the Turkish and Islamic world to lose their old-time ties that had helped for both sides in culture, civilization, science and wealth. Furthermore, Russia extended her lands invading the entire Volga basin in the mid-sixteenth century, which created great barrier on the way of religious, cultural and scientific intercourse between the Ottoman Empire and Turkistan (Yemelianova, 2002: 279). Finally, growing religious biases in daily lives of the people of Turkistan limited their abilities to seek new developments and modernity, which left them as a backward nation in the nineteenth century. "Turkestan stood lowest of all Muslim lands on the cultural scale...had no printing establishments, either in lithograph or in type, whereas Turkey and Persia had long possessed them. Turkey and Persia had shown signs of European influence in their political and social life already in the eighteenth century, while Turkestan still remained entirely medieval....And yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the Russian conquerors found in Turkestan nothing but barbarity and no cultural activity which they might foster. At the time of the conquest the economic welfare of the greater part of Turkestan was much higher than it had been a century earlier. Khiva and Samarkand were once more considerable cities" (Barthold, 1956: 66-67). The Khanates of Khiva and Khokand developed quite a high culture in literature especially in historiography. New irrigation systems and better agricultural techniques were introduced to the region. No real and big scale human migration was recorded in the nineteenth century Turkistan. All the population living there had averagely supported themselves. Despite imports from Russia and British India—Russian or English manufactured goods would have been slightly better than local products—Turkistan had had its own manufactured goods for local use before foreign supplies sold in their markets. Soaps, dying materials, shoes, saddles, harnesses, robes, tents, rugs and other household items had been manufactured in local factories (Schuyler, 1966: 105).

Yet, despite its worth of advances and quietness, Turkistan remained an undeveloped place on which Russia and Great Britain played a great game in the nineteenth century. Under the great game, the people of Turkistan suffered many military, political and social disasters.

Arminius Vambery's Views about Turkistan:

One of the first travelers who had some respect to the Turkish people and culture, and who had perfected his Turkish language, as well as Arabic and Persian, before going into Central Asia under the false dervish identity, was Arminius Vambery, a Hungarian Jew. He was a scientist in Turkish culture, language, history and social life and was appointed as a professor at the University of Budapest. Besides his language skill, he learned Islamic religion while he was staying in Istanbul. Though it was unclear whether Vambery had any secret agendas to serve either to the Ottomans or to the British, or he had a purely simple love to an adventure in an unknown region to satisfy a wanderer's thirst to produce literary works, he first went to Central Asia in 1863, just before the Russians were intensifying their efforts to invade the whole of the region.

Vambery started his journey from Istanbul. He went through the Eastern Anatolia to Iran and then to Turkmenia. He was carrying a letter of the Sultan, which earned him great respect from the local Turks throughout his trip (Alder, 1979: 116-117). Though he was a disguised dervish, his fair skin arose some suspicions among the Turkmens who thought him as a *Frangi* (a foreigner, European) who came to survey their country to report to the Russians, and then, the Russians would come to take away their flocks and children (Alder, 1979: 120).

Vambery had chances to study religious establishments and views of the locals. His opinion about a local dervish represented in one of his books presented a sense of social situation of the time in Turkistan. Here, he made some interesting remarks about local social standings, meaning of life, expectations in the world and more. According to Vambery, "The dervish is the veritable personification of Eastern life. Idleness, fanaticism and slovenliness are features which in him are regarded as virtues, and which everywhere are represented by him as such. Idleness is excused by allusion to human impotence; fanaticism explained as enthusiasm in religion; and slovenliness justified by the uselessness of poor mortals in struggling against fate. If the superiority of European civilization over that of the East was not so clearly established, I should almost be tempted to envy a dervish, who, clad in tatters and conversing in a corner of some ruined building, shows, by the twinkling in his eye, the happiness he enjoys. What serenity is depicted in that face; what placidity in all his action; what a complete contrast there is between this picture and that presented by our European civilization! It may disguise as a dervish it was chiefly this unnatural posture which made me nervous, and in the imitation of which I made, of course, the greatest mistakes" (Vambery, 1868: 1-2). He also mentioned a type of social equality among the natives. He wrote, "In a country like the East, where such social relations exist, and where we meet with such amusing extremes, the dervish or beggar, though placed at the very bottom of the social scale, often enjoys as much consideration as the prince who reigns over millions and disposes of immense treasures." The social life was not indeed determined by the wealth or power of a person, rather everyone enjoyed a feeling of equality among his fellowmen. From time to time, a rich or a prince sat on a same carpet and drank and ate in the same cup with a beggar or a very poor person. This may have seemed to the Europeans as a "surprise, and even sometimes with a feeling of amusement; but in the East it is considered as quite natural" (Vambery, 1868, 5). With these words Vambery would have showed the simple yet peaceful character of the ordinary life in Central Asia.

From Turkmenia, Vambery went to the Khanate of Khiva where he met with the Khan. When he presented the letter of the Sultan, the khan kissed it and touched it to his forehead as a respect to the Sultan-Caliph of Turkey whom they considered as a big brother ruling one of the most important states of the world. They were proud of the power and statue of the Turkish Sultan, and they were considering him as respected cousin. Vambery rejected the money offered by the khan, instead, he asked for a strong donkey to carry him and his luggage in his continuing trip (Alder, 1979: 135).

As part of their daily life, the Central Asian people had very hard times when they were traveling in endless deserts. When a caravan was moving, everyone had to store enough water and food to support his need since no one would be willing to share anything with each other out of the fear of death. Vambery witnessed hardship and difficulties of traveling in dry lands of Turkistan. He wrote, "It is a horrible sight to see the father hide his store of water from the son and brother from brother; each drop is life, and when men feel the torture of thirst, there is not, as in the other dangers of life, and spirit of self-sacrifice, or any feeling of generosity" (Alder, 1979: 142).

Vambery's some descriptions about Turkistan were negative. He criticized slavery and claimed that both the Turkmens and the Khan of Khiva had hundreds of Persian and Russian slaves to whom they treated quite worse. According to him, slave-owners were beating, leaving hungry and insulting their slaves (Alder, 1979: 117, 135). Furthermore, Vambery claimed that some nomads, such as the Teke Turkmens, who were the largest Turkmen group in Turkmenia and who were roaming on large territories in Akhal and Merv oases, were frequently attacking against all travelers and robbing "pious to

nakedness, and impious to death” in the wilderness (Alder, 1979: 142). This kind of negative descriptions had created mostly wrong views and prejudices in the minds of the westerners, which greatly exploited by the Russians to make pretexts for their expansionist policies.

Fighting Qualities of the Locals:

The warrior qualities of the nineteenth century people of Turkistan were not as high as it had been during the middle ages and early modern times. There was not a single sign of great warriors who once spread fear to harts of the whole world as in the name of Timur. In many wars, they engaged with the Russians in the nineteenth century, they sustained great losses. In this, their primitive weapons and untrained military persons, compared to modern Russian arms and armies, played important roles. However, despite their lack of modern weaponry and military techniques, the people of Turkistan had defended their lands during the Russian invasions. In these defenses, the Turkmen defenses of Geok Tepe in both 1879 and in 1881 created some real heroic moments.

During Russian expansions in Central Asia, especially in the oasis region in the second half of the nineteenth century, the khanates did not show any remarkable military resistance. In most of the engagements the local military forces failed to stop advancing Russian forces. There were many examples of bad defeats experienced by the khanates. One such example took place during the fall of Tashkent in 1865. General Charniayev took this important and large city with 1951 men and 12 guns against 30.000 armed defenders and 63 guns (Terentyef, 1876: 34). Romanovski (1870: 13) expressed their victory with the following words, “From a military point of view, the success was brilliant.”

The number of Russian forces in newly invaded places in 1866 was 13.000 (Romanovski, 1870: 18). During the Irjar battle on 21 May 1866, the Amir of Bukhara had 5000 regular, 35 000 Kirghız cavalry and 21 guns at his disposal. After some skirmishes between the Kirghız cavalry and the Cossacks, Romanovski ordered his artillery to bombard the Amir’s main forces. This bombardment proved successful. Amir and his forces were easily dispersed (Romanovski, 1870: 27). “The Amir fled with a small escort to Jizakh; and the Bokharan troops were scattered in all directions, leaving the whole of their artillery, treasure, and large quantities of stores in the hands of the Russians. In this battle the Bokharans are said to have lost over 1,000 men, while the Russians had only between 20 and 30 men killed and wounded—a very trifling loss, considering the great importance of the victory and its far-reaching effects” (“An Indian Officer,” 1894: 202-203).

After victory at Irjar, General Romanovski pushed forward to capture Khodjent, a very important strategic and economic center city of Turkistan. Though its inhabitants and garrison fought fairly, Russian forces surrounded the city on May 29 1866. During struggle, “for four days a heavy fire was maintained from eighteen guns and two mortars, and at daybreak on June 5 the assault was delivered...In this affair the Russians sustained a loss of 11 men killed or missing, and 122 wounded, while more than 2,500 Khokandians were placed *hors de combat*” (“An Indian Officer,” 1894: 203-204). Furthermore, in October 1866, Romanovski with the loss “of 3 officer and 200 men” captured Ura Tepe. At the same time, another Russian force led by General Krijhanovski attacked Jizakh. After hard fights 6,000 Bukharan were killed, the city was captured. During the battle for Jizakh, the Russians “only lost 6 men killed and 92 wounded” (“An Indian Officer,” 1894: 206-207).

According to Schuyler, Khokand had a poor army in 1873. "There about 12,000 troops in Khokand, all under very lax discipline. In the companies I saw hardly two men were dressed alike, or armed in the same way. Some had sticks, and some rifles or flint-lock muskets, or more generally match-locks, while some had nothing but the native club, the round brass, head of which was fastened on by a joint. The officers, besides their belts and swords, had wands of command" (Schuyler, 1966: 180).

Some British, including Rawlinson, expected that the Russians would face harsh times if they invaded Central Asia, as they had faced in Afghanistan in 1842. Some others, such as Curzon, found Central Asian people as peaceful and harmless. Curzon stated, "Bokharoits are not a turbulent or a fanatical people; and, though composed of several nationalities, present a fairly homogenous whole" (Curzon, 1889: 157). One of the authority on Turkistan in the nineteenth century, Arminius Vambery, stated that the locals were neither savages nor advanced people. They did not have chances to resist well equipped and trained Russian armies. He said, "I discovered in the roughest-looking Tartar a coward...Of such a character was the predominant majority of the enemies Russia had to fight. The whistle of a single ball was enough to scare away dozens of warlike-looking Sarts, Tadjiks, and Uzbegs. In reality how could it be otherwise, considering the difference existing between the arms of the Russian conquerors and those of the native defenders? Take the gun, for instance. The Russian is armed with a good modern rifle, and his gunpowder is of the best, whilst the poor Tartar has nothing but an old and rusty gun which rests on a kind of wooden fork. Before attempting to shoot, he is looking out for a level spot where to put down his wooden fork. He has to place the coarse gunpowder in the pan, then strike fire with the flint to ignite the tinder, and proceeds to tap upon the powder for at least five minutes. The rusty gun bursts, the fork tumbles down, and where the ball has gone to God only knows" (Vambery, 1885: 23-24).

Unlike poor resistances showed by the peoples of the khanates, the Turkmens showed good qualities in their resistance against both the Iranians and the Russians. They destroyed a large Iranian army in the 1860's while the Iranians were trying to invade Merv. They also destroyed a large Russian army led by General Lomakin in 1879, and heroically defended Geok Tepe in 1881.

Despite their warrior qualities, the Turkmens had a great weakness; fragmented society. The Turkmens were living in tribal groups and most of the time these tribes had showed hostilities against each other. As Edmond O'Donovan, a British journalist visited Turkmenia and lived among the Turkmens in 1879-1880 and wrote about two major Turkmen tribes, namely the Yamuds and the Tekes, who were at odd with each other. The Yomuds who had earlier accepted a Russian suzerainty greatly helped the Russian expedition of 1881 ("The Merv Oasis," 1883: 210).

Because of their fighting abilities and great resistances against the Russians, the Turkmens were twice, first in Khiva in 1873 and second in Geok Tepe in 1881, massacred in great numbers by the Russians (Yetişgin, 2004: 223-240). "The chief advantage of Russia's acquisition of Turkomania consists in the addition to the Tsar's armies of numerous races of high-mettled fighting men, trained by generations of almost constant warfare, whose utility and importance as border Cossacks on the Afghan and Persian frontiers cannot be too highly rated. This high value set upon the Turkomans as military material and future pioneers of Russia's possible advances, may not perhaps be apparent to every one, but will hardly fail to strike those capable of

appreciating the quasi-European and semi-Asiatic methods by which Russia ensures her successes in Central Asia” (Dobson, 1890: 328).

Fighting abilities of the Turkmens were described by Russian sources after the Russian defeat in 1879. Before the real battle took place on September 9 at Dengil Tepe, Russian soldiers and animals were sufficiently fed and there was no serious sickness or fatigue among them. They had been marching in the fertile soils of the Akhal country and they were picking up and eating delicious fruits, watermelons, corns, grapes as they moved. They also found great deal of *saman*, hay, buried under the ground by the Turkomans. When they engaged battle with the Turkmens, “The Tekkes, being mounted on swifter horses than the Cossacks, soon came up to the latter and a hand-to-hand encounter took place. The Tekkes were using their sabers and the Cossacks were defending themselves with the butts of their rifles. In all probability, the Cossacks would have been cut to pieces had not Borch ordered a few shells to be thrown among their assailants. Unused to these murderous missiles, the enemy detached themselves from the Cossacks, who instantly profited by the opportunity to retire to the rear of the column.” A *Novoe Vremya* correspondent wrote that “the Tekkes, in making their dash upon the column, threw down their caps, thereby occasioning the impression that they meant to surrender. ‘Figure to yourself,’ he writes, ‘ a well-built, tall man, with a swarthy face, beard black as coal, dark shaggy eyebrows, small glistening dark eyes, a sword dripping with blood held between his teeth, and a pistol in each hand. Then imagine thousands of such figures, on race horses, surging like a whirlwind round the column—the sensation is strong; but wait, a volley is fired, and in a few seconds the cloud clears off, the Turkomans have disappeared, and the plain is once more free of the enemy’s cavalry.’ The Tekkes, shouting ‘Allah il Allah,’ penetrated to within two hundred paces of the vanguard column” (Marvin, 1880: 215, 218).

Besides the Turkmens, the Kirghizes, who were mostly nomadic people, had natural fighting abilities. Their weaknesses were not coming from their warrior qualities but from constant conflicts among themselves. In-communal conflicts and lack of unification made them weak before their enemies. Hellwald wrote, “The numerous tribes are completely dissevered and constantly at war with each other; each individual tribe even subdivides into smaller branches, and then in like manner engages in internecine feuds. In this manner their material strength becomes absorbed by endless internal conflicts, as well as by frequent disputes with the Kazakhs, so that in spite of their inborn fierce courage they have been subjugated without difficulty by the Chinese and the Kokandese, consequently, in recent times, one tribe after another, with but few exceptions, has willingly accepted the sovereignty of Russia” (Hellwald, 1874: 112).

Hospitality:

The Turkish people who have always greatly valued freedom (Kafesoğlu, 1988: 221) came to appreciate free life. Al Cahiz, an Arap author lived in the ninth century, appreciated Turkish values, including straightforwardness, honesty, humbleness and righteousness (Altay, 1984: 5-6). The Turks have generally considered all peoples as free and equals. In their pre-Islamic period they hardly approached to slavery (Kafesoğlu, 1988: 226-228). Pierre Loti who had lived among the Turks wrote that in normal times the Turks showed “humble, overly tolerant and calm as daydreaming kits” characters (Loti, 1995: 61). Because of their freedom-loving nature, they have treated people with tolerance and equality. They have received others with respect. They have been admired by foreigners for their help to the guests, visitors and travelers. They have not carried any type of xenophobia. The Turks showed equal and close affection to

foreigners and their subjects without any sign of haughtiness despite their ruling power (Smyth, 1854: 181). Maybe, because it was their ability to accept foreigners and foreign structures, the Turks have succeeded in establishing great states in everywhere they lived. They feared no one; they showed love and respect to everyone. That has been one of main keys to their successful adaptation in different geographies they have lived.

Many Europeans in the nineteenth century wrongly called the people living in Turkistan as “barbarians”. When a western author visited a Kirghiz *aul* in the steppe, he was treated with a very cordial manner. He repeated the visit several time and everytime enjoyed drinking tea with lemon and best butter. He witnessed in his visit that these Kirghizes were using many cheap Russian products in their dwellings. According to him, though Russian cheap products replaced their old and precious goods, the locals have so skillfully decorated and arranged their dwellings to provide a lively environment for their daily life (Bateson, 1929: 27). The Kirghiz people were “very peaceable and pleasant” (Bateson, 1929: 46). Furthermore, when Curzon visited Bukhara, he wrote “One thing impressed itself very forcibly on my mind, namely, that Bokhara is not now a haunt of zealots, but a city of merchants. It contains a peaceful, industrious, artisan population utterly unfitted for war, and as wanting in martial instinct as in capacity.” And, the author stated that the natives contrary to assertions made by early travelers were very friendly, and helpful to foreigners. There was no deception or antagonism to anybody. Curzon did not hide to mention his admiration of these people’s dignified and honest character in this writings (Curzon, 1889: 174). In addition, Schuyler admitted this reality when he met with mullahs in a medresse in Khokand. He stated that these mullahs were “very kind and polite” people (Schuyler, 1966: 178). In Tashkent, Shoemaker admired in great deal the natives’ manner. He wrote, “It strikes me, however, that the upper classes are superior to those in Turkey and Egypt. They are cleaner and finer looking, and I have met several to whom the title of gentleman could be applied” (Shoemaker, 1895: 172). A British clerk who worked in Russia claimed that the Turks were fond of foreigners and were ready to help anyone who happens to travel or conduct business in their villages or cities. They offered tea, *pilaff*, and even dinner when they see a foreigner (Y.Z., 1934: 56).

Freedom-Loving People:

The Turks who have always had sovereign states throughout history loved freedom. This was especially quite visible among the Turkmens who had originated from the Oguz tribes and had mainly been living in the lands stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Hindikush mountains. Every one of them carried quite an independent manner. They told to Vambery that among themselves there were not “khan” or “Padishah” since every one of them felt they were “all equals”, “Padishahes” and “khans” (Togan, 1942-1947: 207).

European journalists, historians and others who had written about Central Asia presented some quick judgments and prejudices about the Turkmens. When Peter Hopkirk talks about a Russian officer-agent, Captain Nikolai Muraviev, who had faced a certain death or being a slave if he was caught by “the hostile and lawless Turcomans,” he mistakenly put the Turkmens, who had so many reasons, including Russia’s continuing expansions and destructions in Central Asia, to fear from the Russians, on the “hostile” and “lawless” category. Hopkirk also misjudged when he was presenting “freedom loving” Turkmens as “lawless”. He stated that the Turkmen country was full of “the raiders and slavers who lurked in the desert” to rob caravans and sold the Russians into slavery if they caught. Yet, Hopkirk could not explain how

Muraviev got to Khiva even though he was known by the locals as a Russian who was carrying rich gifts to the Khan and mapping the route as the caravan was moving toward Khiva. Commenting on Arthur Conolly's travel to Khiva, Hopkirk again erroneously stated that he was crossing the Caucasus "to enter some of the most dangerous country on earth." According to him, "Robbery and extortion...were perpetual threats in these lawless lands" (Hopkirk, 1992: 77-79). Hopkirk's approach was common among the western writers who saw a kind of power to judge others without being just and respectful to the others' social, cultural, geographical and religious manners and needs.

Although, nomadic segments of Turkistan, especially those of the Kazakhs, Kirghizs and Turkmens, had lived a free life and tried to escape from a centralized rule, they hardly preferred living in a chaotic environment. Their way of administration and obedience to authority was suitable to their environment and their independent character. According to Bacon, "Despite their dislike of excessive authority, nomads do not live in a state of anarchy...Below the *orda* level, the Kazaks had 'big *biis* and little *biis*' – chiefs of larger and smaller subdivisions in the tribal genealogy...At the base of this segmented political structure, the head of the family (*aqsaqal*, 'white beard') made decisions for the aul. A group of related *auls* had a *bii* who in turn made decisions concerning the welfare of the group, with the advice of the *aqsaqals* of the member *auls*." Though there was an aristocratic group called 'white bone,' the leadership purely based on abilities of the leader who had proven himself in courage, skill, wisdom, ability, and wealth. This sort of leadership never included a despotic character. In time of peace, the power of the leader reduced to a very limited level. Only in time of war or other sort of anxiety, a strong leader was sought to overcome the difficulties (Bacon, 1966: 38-39).

Religiousness:

According to Romanovski (1870: 20), upon their petition, the Islamic "clergy" received larger opportunities for controlling the Muslims after the fall of Tashkent in 1865. The Russians had initially appreciated and used religious men to act strongly in social, administrative and cultural matters. By this way they expected to find the region old-fashioned and ready to obey their authority.

Weaknesses of Turkistan in advanced and modern education, modernity and technology greatly helped the Russians to gain easy victories against the khanates. When the Russians were beginning to capture cities and lands in 1860's, the natives were still ignorant of the coming danger. Arminius Vambery who was in Bukhara in 1863 witnessed this ignorance. When he asked "a pious Mohammedan" about Russian threats, he was told that "the formerly sweet waters of the Yaxartes (Siri Daria) River have been utterly spoiled and rendered undrinkable, for the Russians have watered their horses and dipped their abominable idols into it; but as to the country of Kokand, they will never be able to conquer it, for the glorious spirit of the holy Khodja Ahmed Yessevi at Hazreti Turkestan is on the watch, and will never allow the infidels to pass into the region of Islam." Upon this answer, Vambery wrote "Unhappy dreamer!" and added that an "adventurist" General Cherniaev with two thousand men easily defeated at least twenty times strong Khokand army and captured Tashkent (Vambery, 1885: 14).

One of the Russian officials who put his initials, ZY, and hide his true identity when he published a book entitled *From Moscow to Samarkand* stressed that the Turkic people were devout Muslims since they had not gone under the ancient cultures. He wrote, "Mussulman influence can be seen in everything, in the religion of the people, the

architecture of the mosques, the costumes and turbans, language and customs. It is said that the members of the Turki race are the most devout Moslems in the world, since their culture, literature and manners have been formed under Moslem influence alone; while in the case of other and more cultured Moslem nations there was a previous inheritance of Aryan or Semitic culture, which tended to outweigh the Islamic tradition. The best examples of this in Central Asia are the Tadjiks, whose music, dances, manners and social philosophy are more pagan than Islamic and more Mediterranean than Eastern” (Y.Z., 1934: 56).

The nomadic people amazed some observers with affectionate love to each other and with higher moral quality. When Huntington was visiting a Kirghiz *kibitka*, (tent) he witnessed a heartbreaking scene. His native escort just met his brothers and sisters whom he had not seen for seven years. They hugged each other with such a warm feeling that they all could not help crying. The environment gave these people a feeling of love to each other. “Once more, the hardships of the nomadic life result in certain mental and moral traits, such as bravery, hardihood, and, unfortunately, laziness. Finally, the conditions of nomadic life determine the position and character of the Kirghiz women, and lead to certain of the higher moral traits, such as morality in the stricter sense, self-reliance, and even family affection” (Huntington, 1907: 132).

Appearances:

Many European travelers and researchers who had been to Central Asia in the nineteenth century gave vivid descriptions of the natives. One such traveler, Curzon, stated that the people living in the city of Bukhara were mostly the Tajiks and the Uzbeks. Both of them were “a handsome race” although the Tajiks were a little bit brighter in complexions (Curzon, 1889: 171). Von Hellwald, a German, who published his book in 1874, wrote, “The Uzbeks, who are the ruling people of Turkestan, belong to a purely Turkish race. They constitute the military and governing class in the three khanates of Khiva, Bokhara, and Kokand, and were estimated by Meyendorff at one and a half million souls. They have entirely subjugated the Tajik people. The Uzbeks in Khokand have decidedly kept a purer race than in Bokhara where they have intermingled with the Tajiks” (Hellwald, 1874: 105).

Commenting on the Kazakhs, Eugene Schuyler, who was an American diplomat and who visited Turkistan in 1873, stated that “despite their Turkish origin” the Kazakhs were “as much of a Mongol as of a Turkish type.” This was because of “The Kirgiz (In the nineteenth century, many foreigners wrongly called the Kazakhs as “Kirghizes” and the Kirghizes as “Kara Kirghizes”), until recent times, preferred whenever possible, to marry Kalmuk women....The Kirghiz are in general short of stature, with round swarthy face, insignificant noses, and small shape black eyes, with the tightly-drawn eyelid” (Schuyler, 1966: 20). Furthermore, Schuyler commented on the looks of the Tadjiks and the Ozbeks. He wrote, “The Tadjiks and Uzbeks are readily distinguished from each other, not only in appearance but also in character. The Tadjik is larger and fuller in person, with an ample black beard, and with an air of shrewdness and cunning. He is fickle, untruthful, lazy, cowardly, and boastful, and in every way morally corrupted. The Uzbek is taller and thinner, with a scanty beard, and a longer and more strongly marked face. He is simple in his manners and dress, while the Tadjik is devoted to his personal appearance, and fond of adorning himself. The Uzbeks look upon the Tadjiks with contempt, but at the same time they are dependent upon them. The Tadjiks treat the Uzbeks as fools and children of nature, and smilingly say that they have them entirely in their power. Inter-marriages, however, are not uncommon. The Tadjik has none of the

pride of race which the Uzbek possesses, and will rarely call himself by the name Tadjik. If asked who he is he will say, 'I am a man of Tashkent;' 'I am from Hodjent;' 'I am a Samarkandi,' as the case may be; while the Uzbek will say, 'I am an Uzbek of the clan of Jalayr or Kalagar,'" (Schuyler, 1966: 53).

As for the Kirghizes, Von Hellwald said, "The Turco-Tartars appear to be mixed race of Mongols and Turks, and they are usually called Kirghiz. But in this general denomination a sharp distinction must be drawn between the two different branches—namely, the Kazaks or Kaizaks, passing under the name of Kirghiz, and the Kirghiz, or, more properly speaking, the Kara Kirghiz... The Kara-Kirghiz, belonging originally to the Caucasian race, and called Buruk (hence Buryats) by the Chinese and the Kalmuks, dwell partly in Dzungaria and in Turkestan, and partly in the eastern portion of the Altai mountains; also in the mountain region where the Sir and its tributaries, the Chui and the Talas, take their rise... They speak a purely Turkish dialect. They form two distinct tribes—the one on the right called *On*, the other on the left *Sol*; these are again divided into tribes and families" (Hellwald, 1874: 111).

Sir Francis Younghusband who was a nephew of an English explorer of the Eastern Turkestan, Robert Shaw, visited the Eastern Turkistan. He was in Peking in China when he decided to visit the region. He planned to go India through overland crossing the Eastern Turkistan. After receiving a pass from the Chinese authorities, he left Peking on April 4, 1887. On the way to the Eastern Turkistan, Younghusband saw the first Turkish women at Morgai. He described the appearance of the women and compared them with other women of the locality. He wrote, "Here at Morgai... I saw the Turki women. Very different they were from the doll-like Chinese women, with painted faces, waddle about on contorted feet; from the sturdy, bustling Manchu women and from the simple, silly Mongol girls with their great red cheeks and dirty, and unintelligent faces. These Turkis were fine, handsome women, with complexions not much darker than Greeks or Spaniards. They had good colour on their cheeks and their eyes were dark and full. Their whole appearance was most picturesque, for they had a fine, dignified bearing, and were dressed in a long loose robe not confined at the waist, their long black hairs allowed to fall over their shoulders, only fastened at the ends into two thick plaits; on their hand, slightly inclined backwards, they wore a bright red cap, which set off their whole appearance very effectively" (Younghusband, 1937: 85).

After passing Tian-shan (Tanrı Dağları) range, the author was hoping to see more cultivated lands and better populated places. Yet he was disappointed to find out that the ground was as barren as Gobi desert. He met with people here and there. "The inhabitants were principally Tunganis and Chinese, and looked very poor; but the Turkis were all fine, healthy-looking men" (Younghusband, 1937: 88).

A detailed description about the Turkmens presented in Charles Marvin's words. Marvin said, "The Tekkes have an excellent outer appearance. Tall, splendidly built, wearing khalats of camel-hair cloth, and tiny white skull-caps, they may be always recognized by their distinctive head-gear... their feature are regular, and in this respect remind one of the Cis-Caspian Koomiki... the close resemblance between the Tekkes and the Koomiki impresses Gospodin Arsky with the belief that, in all probability, the Caucasians are a portion of the Central Asian hordes that passed through Akhal to Europe in the time of the Mongol irruption... They are brave, enterprising, and extremely capable. Their silver-work and their manufactured weapons have a celebrity throughout the whole of Central Asia. They themselves have recently manufactured breechloaders of various patterns, on the model of the European weapons that have

fallen into their hands, but the manufacture of cartridges for them has been beyond the skill of their artificers, and they therefore have been compelled to continue the use of double-barrelled guns and revolvers...But, in spite of this skill in manufactures, the insufficiency of water in the Tekke region and the barren nature of a large proportion of the soil render the people for the most part poor..." Though few Tekkes had over one thousand livestock including sheep, cattle, goat, most of them were poor people due to the scarcity of water to irrigate their fields. Thus, they "employ themselves during their leisure hours in stealing; for which purpose, from time to time, they institute raids against their neighbours the Khivans, Persians, Persian Kurds, Bokharans, and Turcomans of other tribes...without frequent forays, he (a Tekke) can hardly hope to scrape together sufficient money to buy a wife." Still, the Tekkes were extremely respectful of each other's possessions in the clan circle. When one wanted to go for an *alaman* (foray), he stuck his spear in front of his *kibitka*. Then anyone who wanted to join the foray came and spiked his spear next to one erected before. When the sufficient number was reached, they began their raid under a leader, Serdar. The Khans had no authority in making any change in these raids. Their horses were best quality and best suited to the task. "The Tekke horse is peerless. It is altogether a special breed of courser, and its build reminds one of the trained English race-horse; but it is much higher, finer, and more beautiful than the latter. To race at full speed for ten or fifteen miles at a stretch, or to proceed at a short gallop –the usual riding pace of the Turcomans- one hundred and ten miles a day, for several days in succession, is a very common thing for a Tekke horse" (Marvin, 1880: 40-41).

Both Turkmen men and women were admired by their looks. De Blocqueville who fought against the Tekkes in an Iranian invading army of Merv in 1860 stated that the Turkmen men were taller than average men. They had strong muscles, white skins, round faces, noticeable face bones and high foreheads. "Turkmen women were more eye-catching looks than Turkmen men. Despite all their ignorance, their skin was quite white. They had thick and short hairs." Their favorite cloth colors were red, yellow and claret red (De Bocqueville, 1986, 48-52).

Agriculture:

In Turkistan, people had always taken great care of their lands. In Timur times, Kesh, Timur's birthplace, was "situated in a plain, traversed in every direction by channels of water, which irrigated many gardens." The surrounding country was flat, and contained many villages, well watered pastures. It was a very beautiful, bright and well peopled country. "In these plains there were many corn fields, vineyards, cotton plantations, melon grounds, and groves of fruit trees" (De Clavijo, 1859: 123).

In Turkistan, farmers generally performed two types of crop raisings: grains, including wheat and barley, which were mostly grown in the skirts of the mountains and which were mostly watered by rain; and vegetables, fruits and cotton, which were grown in irrigated lands. The fruits that were growing in the orchards of the oasis region were appreciated by their flower and delicacies. Among the fruits, cherries, plums, apricots, pomegranates, pears were common. At least thirteen types of grapes were cultivated. Lands were divided into four types: private, state, *waqf* and community lands (Schuyler, 1966: 150-151, 153). In 1875, a British officer, Captain Frederick Gustavus Burnaby, saw splendid orchards and summer palaces of the Khan in Khiva. The gardens were full of "apple, pear and cherry trees, melon beds and vines" (Hopkirk, 1992: 373).

In the khanate of Khokand, "Owing to the fertility of the soil and the excellence of the climate the agriculture of the Khanate is in a most flourishing condition. Wheat, millet and barley are largely cultivated, the last of poor quality and used only for the food of horses. Rice grows in great abundance everywhere... but the two chief products of the khanate are cotton and silk, which are also the main articles of export. In point of agricultural wealth, Khokand will, I think, not be found inferior even to the valley of Zarafshan, and it will be possible to give greater development to its resources by extending the irrigation system, and bringing additional land under cultivation" (Schuyler, 1966: 204).

Estimated wealth of Merv at the time of Curzon's visit in 1889 was mainly coming from the agricultural produces and animals. Merv had 700.000 sheep and goats, 20.500 horses, 21.500 asses, 44.000 cattle, 16.500 camels, as well as 29.700.000 pounds wheat, 4.398.000 pounds barley and 2.400.000 pounds rice (Curzon, 1889: 114-115). Central Asian domestic animals that were sold in the animal bazaars were plenty, cheap and good quality. "Not far away was the horse and donkey market; a horse might be bought for any price from 5s. to 30l.; but a very respectable animal would cost about 10l" (Curzon, 1889: 183).

Despite their various richness, the Turkic people shared a similar life-style in Turkistan, which amazed the foreigners who had come from the capitalist west that had had a feudal past. The life in Central Asia was not expensive. The poor people were not showing a strong sign of sadness to their position. They were dignified people. "Many people are wretchedly poor; but ... undaunted by material woes, walks abroad with the dignity of a patriarch and in the garb of a prince" (Curzon, 1889: 172).

The nomadic segments of Turkistan, especially the Turkmens, according to some accounts, were forced to perform some unlawful deeds because of their needs for survival. "As nomads are not necessarily robbers, it is very probable that the Turkomans did not become marauders and manstealers by choice or preference, but were gradually driven to these expedients by dire necessity and stress of circumstances. After the destruction of the great cities of the plain and their principal works of irrigation, the Turkomans found themselves restricted by the ever-spreading sands to the wretched patches of meager pasture and arable land at the foot of the mountain frontier of Persia, and were led to engage in brigandage and the slave trade as auxiliary means of existence" (Dobson, 1890, 333). According to Huntington (1945: 185), the Turkmens had to perform *alamans* because of their life-style. He wrote, "We think of raids as robberies; to the nomads they are an essential part of getting a living. To us such raid seems the antithesis of hospitality; to the nomads there is no such inconsistency." However, De Bocqueville (1986: 81) stated that the Turkmens were skillful farmers. They opened water canals for irrigation, tilled soils with iron plow. They produced wheat, barley, red and white corn, melon, watermelon, squash, onion, carrot, pepper, bean and sesame.

According to Schuyler, "Central Asia has no stores of wealth and no economical resources; neither by its agricultural not by its mineral wealth, not by its commerce, nor by the revenue to be derived from it, can it ever repay the Russians for what it has already cost, and for the rapidly increasing expenditure bestowed upon it. Had Russia known fifteen years ago as much about the countries of Central Asia as she does now, there can be hardly a doubt that there would have been no movement in that direction. Even the steps taken in 1864 would not for a moment have been allowed" (Schuyler, 1966: 283).

Soils:

Turkistan had been considered as a rich place for receiving provisions, especially for armies. When Tsar Paul and Napoleon Bonaparte were making a “great design” to invade India in 1801, in order to convince Napoleon in the feasibility of such an undertaking, Tsar Paul stressed that Turkistan had plenty of fodders, provisions and water for both men and animals beyond the Caspian Sea. He said, “The country is not savage; it is not barren. It has long been traversed by open and spacious roads; ... rivers and water at almost every step. There is no want of grass for fodder. Rice grows in abundance, and forms the principal food of the inhabitants” (“An Indian Officer,” 1894: 55). One of the major reasons, according to Vambéry, for the Russians to capture Turkistan was large arable lands and precious gardens. However, Vambéry mocked this reason and claimed that Turkistan did not have fertile lands and gardens as it had been claimed. He wrote, “The fertility of Asiatic countries, and especially of such as depend upon a laborious system of irrigation, which in its turn ultimately depends upon a grater or less fall of snow, is not to be compared to the fertility of an alluvial soil in a temperate climate. Green and luxuriant meadows, rich cornfields, wooded hills, and inviting groves, are in these Asiatic countries the greatest rarities, and even their so highly praised artificial gardens appear to the eye that is accustomed to the cultivation of Central Europe or of America, to wear a character of poverty and meagerness... If then we admit that the favourable natural circumstances of the Akhal Tekke oasis, and of the tract from Ashkabad to the Tedjend are such as to enable them to shake off the curse that has rested upon them for more than six centuries, and to recover their former prosperity, still that would only mean an Asiatic degree of prosperity; the number of the inhabitants might be doubled, and yet the sanguine hopes expressed in the Russian organs would be very far from being realized” (Vambéry, 1887: 305).

Some accounts that focused on the barrenness and dryness of Turkistan, especially on Turkmenia, saw difficult side of living in Turkistan. One traveler, M. M. Shoemaker, who visited Turkistan in 1884, stated “The fertile and inhabitable portions from merely an oasis now and then, or fringe the banks of some river. All the rest, illimitable and vast, is sand – fine, yellow, drifting sand, changing every hour with the passing winds, so that the very features of a district familiar to you to-day are so utterly altered by the morrow that you know it not. ... In all the nine hundred miles between here and Samarkand, there are but two or three towns of any size; the rest is desolation most profound; and yet Russia claims to have conquered it. Perhaps so, so far as the few wandering tribes are concerned; but the drifting waves of sand, the heat, and the cholera are the true monarchs of these desolate regions” (Shoemaker, 1895: 76).

In Turkmenia, Akhal and Merv Oases were two important places on which wide variety of agricultural produces were growing. The first oasis was populated by the Tekke Turkomans, and located in the middle of deserts and mountainous regions. It was watered by thirty two streams running from the Kopet Dagh. There were twenty five fortresses, and thirty five second class settlements, corresponding to large European villages. It was estimated that there are 20,380 *kibitkas* in Akhal. “Reckoning seven persons to each kubitka, the population of Akhal may be said to consist of upwards of 140,000 people” (Marvin, 1880: 32). General Annenkov claimed that water in the region was abundant especially in Akhal Oasis, Kuren and Kopet Dagh. “The Tekke oasis... with the valleys of the Tchandeer and Sumbar, is really one of the richest counties in the world, and could easily sustain a million people” (Marvin, 1883: 14-15). Among the Turkmens, the Tekkes had the only permanently settled people. Most of the Turkmens lived a semi-nomadic life. Some of them were agriculturalists, *Tchoomori*,

and some were herdsmen, *Tcharvoi*. The former were the poorer class among the Turkomans. In both Merv and Akhal, the number of the Tekke Turkomans was estimated to be 280,000 people (Marvin, 1880: 37-38).

The Russians tried to control water and fertile lands after their invasions. After annexing Zerafshan Valley, in order to avoid “the dangers and expense of an occupation of the country,” they abstained incorporating all of the Bukharan territories into Russia. By holding Samarkand and Zerafshan, she had already gained two objects: fertile oases of Samarkand and Zerafshan, which controlled water sources of Bukhara, and strategic places that would allow Russia to impose her political, military and economic will over the khanate of Bukhara (“An Indian Officer,” 1894: 236).

Education:

A relatively sophisticated native school system was established in Turkistan. The children starting at the age of six spent seven years to complete their primary education. In these classes they were taught the Quran, religious manners, *mantyk* (logic) and ‘Farsegain.’ They read in Persian and Turkish and most of the time they just loudly repeated passages in the books without knowing the meaning of these passages. After the primary education, they attended to *medreses* where the education lasted about 15 years. Upon graduating from these schools, they become *imams*, or parish priests, teachers of schools, or *muftis*, and secretaries of the *Kazis*. “Besides the regular *medresse* there are some special schools, such as *Saliabat Khana*, where nothing but prayers are taught; *Karikh Khana*, where the pupils do nothing but learn the Koran by heart, so as to become *Kazi*; and *Masnavi Khana*, where the works of poet Masnavi are studied” (Schuyler, 1966: 93-94). After Russian authority established in Turkistan, “Educational facilities for the native population were limited and designed to Russianize the students, but they did provide a channel by which Western European ideas might trickle in” (Bacon, 1947: 388).

The Turkmens, especially the women, were proud to see their children to attend schools. Teachers were called as “molla” (De Bocqueville, 1986: 61). Despite their harsh, proud and serious looks, the Turkmens were sometimes joyful, relax and content and sometimes excited and exuberant people. In happy times, they were generous and openhanded. They were also brave and clever people. They appreciated straightforwardness, kindness and open gentleness. Among them they have a saying: “if words of a European would reach to the girdle, a Turkmen’s words would reach to the beard” (De Bocqueville, 1986: 64-65).

Cities:

In order to exploit riches of Central Asia, Russia contemplated its energies very early to gain a trade center closer to Central Asian oases. For this purpose, right after the capture of Tashkent, which had over 100 000 inhabitants in the mid nineteenth century, in June 1865, the Russians entertained an idea of making this great city “an independent town” to create “a great *entrepot* for Russian commerce with Central Asia” (“An Indian Officer,” 1894: 198). Russia’s strategy in shaping Tashkent was to create a totally new city to glorify their empire in the East. For this, they erected many memorials and monuments in the Russian section of the city. This section represented the Russian way (Shandeo, 204: 141).

The city of Khiva was an important urban center in Turkistan where there were “about 25,000 human beings within the walls of Khiva. The streets are broad and clean, while

the houses belonging to the richer inhabitants are built of highly polished bricks and colored tiles, which lend a cheerful aspect to the otherwise somewhat sombre color of the surroundings. There are nine schools” (Burnaby, 1883: 247).

One westerner who visited Semerkand in 1884 greatly admired it. He wrote, “In the old city (Samarkand) there is what I have never seen in Oriental towns before—a great square, and know of no more picturesque spot in the east. Three stately buildings, called ‘Medresses’ or universities, rise around it, a picturesque jumble of domes, alcoves, and fretted gateways, all covered with porcelain tiling of turquoise blue and dark blue on a ground of yellow, while minarets out of the perpendicular complete the fantastic effect. The square is the great mart of the city and crowds ebb and flow and sway hither and thither like the waves of the sea” (Shoemaker, 1895: 132-134).

Merv was a central place for the Tekke Turkmens. The city was “made of clay and surrounded by high and strong walls” in 1860. The walls was strengthened with castles and surrounded with a ditch. A branch of Murgab River, Karasu, was watering the region (De Bocquelville, 1986: 37).

Central Asian cities were received a great number of foreigners after the Russians established their control over Turkistan. Merv that had been one of the most important strategic centers as far as commerce and trade roads were concerned was populated by new comers who poured in after the Russian annexation of the place in 1884. Before the Russians came to the city, the only residents who had been living there were the Turkmen tribes, of which the Teke tribe was the largest group. After the Russian annexation, Merv turned into a growing city for immigrants from Russia and elsewhere. Lord Curzon who visited Merv in 1889 estimated that Merv had a total population of 170,300. This population was made of many groups as the following table shows.

The Population of Merv in 1889 (Curzon, 1889: 111)	
The Sarik and Salor Turkmens	60.000
The Teke Turkmens	100.000
The Persians and The Tatars	3.500
The Armenians	3.500
The Russians and Poles	2.000
The Khivans and Bukharoits	1.000
The Jews	300
Total	170.300

Some cities were not as good-looking as they were supposed to be. According to Schyuler, the city of Hazret-i Turkistan where Hodja Ahmet Yesevi was buried was in a quite bad position and looked quite poor. The only formidable building was a mosque; everything else was its in decay in the city (Schuyler, 1966, 37).

Country Life:

Describing Turkmen settlements in Akhal, Charles Marvin stated that The Tekke settlements were almost all identical in their construction. In the large settlements, a shallow ditch covers all the location. Behind this ditch an outer walls erected. These walls were made of clays and 10 or 15 feet in height. Behind these walls, the *kibitkas* were erected. In the middle of the settlement another wall was erected. This wall was called *kala*, and reached to almost 18 feet. Inside these inner walls, the cattle were confined in order to protect them against the robberies of others. The inner walls were

also circled with ditches. As far as modern warfare concerned, these walls were not counted as obstacle, except the raids of other Turkmen cavalries. People lived in *kibitkas* which generally erected inside a clay walls. Some houses were made of clays and had a small loop-hole for sunlight. Around the house, bake houses, goat-pens and sheep enclosures were constructed. Meadows and corn fields were surrounding each settlement. "The maze is growing sufficiently high to conceal a man on horseback. The ploughs used have small iron shares, and are commonly drawn by camels or oxen. Wheat and barley are largely cultivated, and also immense quantities of maize, here called *sorgo* or *djevena*, and its seed *saman*." *Youndja*, clover-grass, was grown, and harvested four times a year. It was given to animals as a food and dried as hay to feed animals in winter. The melon which had an exquisite flavor was produced in excessive quantities. Near Geok Tepe, mulberry trees grew and cotton was produced. When the Russian soldiers who were mostly peasants saw the well-tilled and ingeniously arranged fields, could not restrain to tell that these places were good places for one to live a pleasant life. In all the Akhal oases, mulberry, peach, wine, apricot, apple, pear orchards were flourishing. Especially in the East Akhal, the cotton was growing in large quantities (Marvin, 1880: 33-37).

People in Turkistan, especially the Kazakhs, had different customs in their weddings. One of such custom was "Love Chase" game. According to the game, a young girl who wanted to get married was riding a horse while holding a whip. Young men who were willing to marry with her were running after her. Among the men whoever touched to her was going to marry her. It was said that the young girl would let the only person that she had feelings for touch her (Schuyler, 1966: 25).

Daily Consumed Food:

Celebrated Central Asian gardens had always admired foreigners. When a Spanish ambassador, De Clavijo, visited Timur on Monday, the fifteenth of September, 1403, he was taken to a splendid garden he found that "This garden had a very lofty and handsome entrance, made of bricks, and adorned with tiles in blue and gold, arranged in various patterns." It was "very large and contained many fruit and other trees, which give shade. Amongst them there were avenues, and wooden terraces, on which the people walked." When they dined, they were served delicious horse and sheep meats, boiled and dressed in different spices. After the meal, they were served fruits of all kinds, including nectarines, peaches, apples, melon, etc. They were also served a very delicious sweet drink. All these were served on the golden or silver plates and glasses (De Clavijo, 1859: 135-136).

Turkistan produced plenty of fruits and vegetables in the nineteenth century. Food prices in general were affordable. Many foreigners amazed to see how these foods were cheap and at the same time quite delicious. "Street vendors of meat went about shouting their wares, which consisted of kebobs and patties on trays. Fruit was extraordinarily luxuriant and good. Magnificent melons were sold at not more than a farthing apiece; and the price of luscious white grapes was only a rouble (two shillings) for eight pouds, or 288 English lbs. Peaches, apricots, and the celebrated Bokharan plums were not then in season" (Curzon, 1889: 183).

In Zarafshan Valley, people were living in large houses with marvelous gardens. When Schuyler visited Pishkent, the birthplace of Yakub Khan of Kashgaria, he wrote, "a thriving little town, chiefly noted for the immorality of its inhabitants" (Schuyler, 1966: 163).

Despite arable lands in oases and growing grain in mountain skirts, most of Turkistan's lands consisted of dry lands on which animal raising was the best suitable activity. The Turks of Turkistan had perfectly adopted themselves to this geography for centuries. They developed a semi-nomadic life that involved both animal raising and farming. Because of this way of life, their daily diet consisted of both grains and meat. However, it would be said that their daily food was not luxurious. According to De Bocquelville (1986: 59), ordinary foods of the Turkmens in their daily diet were consisted of "bread, onion, ayran, squash, melon and watermelon." Furthermore, O'Donovan who lived among the Turkmens reported that "The dietary of an ordinary Turcoman is by no means luxurious. Before the sun rises he partakes of some hot half-baked griddle bread, which has an intensely clayey taste and odour. This is washed down by weak black tea, and he thinks himself fortunate if he can now and then procure himself a piece of sugar wherewith to sweeten this draught. When he happens to meet with this luxury, he adopts, with a view to economy, the Russian peasant's method of sweetening his tea. A small lump of sugar is held between the teeth, the tea being sucked through it. Several glasses are thus got through with an amount of sugar which would scarcely suffice for one glass taken by Western Europeans. While the Turcomans of the Caspian littoral and hundred miles inland use only black tea, their more Eastern brethren constantly consume green. Should he be at home, his midday meal consists of pilaff, made of rice if he be in funds, or of brownish oatmeal if otherwise. The usual accompaniment to this is a little grease or butter boiled through the mess, or, as is more generally the case, some dried salt fish. Sometimes, on fete days, dried plums or raisins are mixed with the pilaff. The evening meal, partaken of a little after sunset, is the best of the day and for it is secured a small portion of mutton to accompany the pilaff, or a couple of wild ducks caught or shot by some male member of the family" (O'Donovan, volume 1, 1882: 211-212).

Slavery:

One of the most criticized aspects of Turkistan was slavery that was Russia's primary pretext in her invasions. The Russians claimed that the khanates had hundreds and thousands of Russian slaves caught by the nomads and sold in the big cities of Turkistan. The British politicians also blamed the Turkmens for the slavery. In a discussion in parliament, a parliamentarian said, "...the Turkumans and not the Uzbeks were responsible for the murders and other atrocities which marked the slave trade in Central Asia, and the Uzbeks had no power to control the Turkumans...Even if the Uzbeks had not bought slaves, the Turkumans would have captured men for their own service. The Uzbeks treated their slaves well, allowed them to save up money to purchase their freedom, and granted them some singular priviledges" (Hansard, 22 April 1873). In 1873, the Khan of Khiva was accused of holding Russian slaves before Khiva was captured by the Russians. Even though the khan freed all slaves and abolished slavery in his domain before he lost his capital, (Terentyef, volume 1, 1874: 218) the Russians continued to capture Khiva and imposed harsh treaty on the khan.

The Russians claimed that after the fall of Khiva thousands of slaves were sent to Iran and Russia. "According to the account of the slaves themselves, the total number of all the slaves themselves, the total number of all the 'dugmas' and 'churis' in the 140 towns and villages of the Khanate amounted to 30,000 souls. The number of those who had previously been liberated by the Khan and by private individuals amounted to about 6,500, who had received niggardly grant of land to the extent of 2,634 tanaps or 44 Russian 'desyatins'." Most slaves were not given any land, but taken to Iran with 5 or 6 hundred companies (Terentyef, volume 1, 1874: 219-220).

When he was visiting Bukhara, Schuyler found out that the city had a slave market in 1873. He wanted to visit it. The *Taksaba* has taken him to the market. Schuyler saw several boys, a couple of small girls, and several elderly Persians were being sold to customers. He bought one of the boys and paid around 900 (27£) kopeks. But, the boy was not delivered to him the next day. He was given several excuses such as the boy has escaped, and he was lost. The truth was that the Bukharan authorities were afraid that Schuyler would take him to Tashkent to show the Russians that the slave market was still open and working. Schuyler neither recovered his money nor found the boy, yet he bought another slave boy for 700 tengas (21£) to take with him to Tashkent and free him. He says he named him Husseyin, brought this boy to St. Petersburg, and educated him for two years, and then gave him to a Muslim Tatar family to raise (Schuyler, 1966: 238-242).

An overly negative tone about slavery found its place in Hedin's book. Hedin (1925: 81) visited Khorassan in September 1890 and gave descriptions about ethnic and historical structures. He wrote, "As recently as fifty years ago, the name 'Turkoman' aroused the greatest terror among the inhabitants of this region. The Turkomans organized marauding-expeditions into Persian territory, and returned with rich spoils, comprising goods, cattle, and slaves. The slave-trade flourished. When Muravieff was Russian Ambassador at Khiva, in 1820, there were thirty thousand slaves there, Persians and Russians. Christians who rejected Islam were buried alive, or were nailed by the ear to a wall, where they were left to starve. Skobeleff freed twenty-five thousand slaves, when he took Geok Tepe, in 1881."

Despite all pessimistic tones, Burnaby stated that contrary to the Russian announcement of the cruelties committed by the Khan, there had not been signs of any serious brutality. "...I must here remark that the many cruelties stated to have been perpetrated by the present khan previous to the capture of his city (Khiva) did not take place. Indeed, they only existed in the fertile Muscovite imagination, which was eager to find an excuse for the appropriation of a neighbor's property. On the contrary, capital punishment was only inflicted when the laws had been infringed; and there is no instance of the khan having arbitrarily put any one to death" (Burnaby, 1883: 246).

Administration:

Russian administration in Turkistan was a military rule. It started with initial invasions and widened as new captures of lands were added. It also started as a harsh administration. When Cherniayev captured Tashkent in 1865, he prohibited all Bukharan subjects from trade and business from the region. He also wrote to the Orenburg governor to do the same thing, which caused the arrest of all Bukharans in the place (Romanovski, 1870: 13).

According to Schuyler, in 1873, "The whole population of the Russian province of Turkistan is estimated at about 1.600.000, of whom 1.000.000 are nomads" (Schuyler, 1966: 54) A Russian, General Annenkoy, who wrote *Akhal Tekke Oasis and Roads to India* and was ordered to construct the first Transcaspian railroad in 1877, stated that the population of Turkistan under the Russian controlled area was 3.500.000 and 45.000 Russian troops (Marvin, 1883: 11). Romanovski (1870: 6)'s estimation of Turkistan's population in 1860's was 6 to 7 million.

For some foreigners, Central Asia presented a large nomadic place. Foreigners wrongly believed that no law and order was established and a somewhat chaotic relations among

all people existed. Yet, the Turks of Central Asia had survived for many centuries and successfully penetrated into neighboring regions. They succeeded in establishing many big states. It would not be expected the Turkic peoples would let their own life be paralyzed in a chaotic environment. They had their own style of rule and leaders called *beys*, *aksakals* and *kagans*. Though, an aristocratic group called “white bone” seemed to have had rights to rule over others, local leaders had been chosen according to skill, courage, astuteness, judiciousness, cleverness, perfectness and wealth. The power of the leaders was limited to a small proportion during peacetimes. Only in time of war or other sort of anxiety, a strong leader was sought to overcome difficulties. Their concept of leadership had not contained any type of despotic character (Bacon, 1966: 38-39).

The Turkmens who had been formed many tribal groups and settled in their traditional lands had a system of administration that perfectly suited to their daily life style. They were freedom-loving people who had not developed a complicated system of administrative cadres. Their system was based on simplicity and easiness. For examples, Merv Tekkes were divided into 24 tribes. “Each tribe lives on its own land in peace and quietness. In case of a danger, all of these tribes unite in a blink of time. Each tribe chooses its own leader” that was called Turkmen *Aksakal* (De Blocqueville, 1986: 53-54). However, “The Tekkes possess no political or civil organization in the European sense of the term. The free will of the people, or rather of each settlement, always prevails, and only a few persons here and there enjoy any influence over the masses. The Tekkes do not recognize the existence of any authority over themselves, founded either by right or by might, and, so long as any question of a national character does not appear on the scene, they live independently in the fullest sense of the term, being guided exclusively by their own individual will. They assemble in bands to cut a new canal near their settlements, just in the same manner that they gather together for the foray or alaman. Permission or prohibition is terms which have no significance among them. Nobody is recognized as possessing authority or power. Neither in the fortresses nor the agricultural settlements are there any national rulers or elders in our sense of the term. Still, all the same, there are certain individuals enjoying, by virtue of wealth, wisdom, or experience, a degree of influence which is tantamount to authority; and, from such individuals usually precedes the initiative in matters of national interest. When any such individuals die, others take their place by tacit consent, without any election, and are regarded by the people as the disposers of public affairs. The smaller *aouls*, or encampments, situated near a settlement with a *kala*, or fort, usually assent to all the decisions of the inhabitants of the latter; and questions concerning the welfare of two or more fortresses are settled by their respective representatives, each delegate enjoying full powers for negotiation and decision.” Some able individuals, who were generally called as *Sardars*, can advice large groups, and led in time of importance. “*Sardar* signifies in Akhal an experienced guide, or, more accurately still, a leader of expeditions, knowing accurately the road to the region usually ravaged, the wells on the way, and the best localities for obtaining booty” (Marvin, 1880: 46-47).

Besides the *Sardars*, the *Eeshans*, (*Imams*, or *Mollah*), have a good deal of authority in the Akhal country since these persons applied the *Sheria*, or the Islamic law, to the criminal and other cases. “The only criminal offence recognized in Akhal is murder, to expiate which, as a rule, the guilty party pays the relatives of the victim a fine of three thousand krans. The rest of the crimes and offences are subjected to no tribunal whatever, and are settled peaceably among the parties interested, themselves; the amount of recompense and its nature being arranged by mutual agreement.” Though the khans seemed to have been the top leaders of the Turkmens, they possessed no real

power over “an ultra-independent race.” “The affix of Khan possesses no special significance in the Tekke region. Imitating the Persians and Khivans, the people give the title without distinction to all individuals enjoying any influence in a camp, fortress, or settlement, although, at the same time, the affix is constantly found attached to the names of ordinary persons having no influence whatever.” Nur Verdi Khan, who was the present leader of the both Akhal and Merv Tekkes, was chosen as leader. He already announced his son Berdi Murad as heir apparent. Noor Verdi Khan was an old, aged, gray-bearded warrior, “dauntless in the field, and, at home, honest and equitable to the highest degree. Almost all Turkomans respect him, and have trust in him (Marvin, 1880: 48-50).

Russian sources, especially official sources, such as Gorchakov circular of 1864, had often claimed that the Central Asian people had not had joyous life style and had not developed an advanced civilization, which made Turkistan an unreliable border and forced Russia to capture one large land after another (“An Indian Officer,” 1894: 302-308). W. T. Stead in his book *Truth about Russia* (London: Cassell & Co., 1889), however, stated that the Russian occupations in Central Asia brought more wiles than goods. According to this, Russian local military or civilian officials were corrupt. They were obeying no law; bribing people and trying to get more money from the locals. The author stated that the civilizing effect of the Russian conquests in the East was pure speculation and nonsense. He pointed out that the Russians had nothing to give to the local people or improve their progress. Indeed, the Russians had in many instances been pillaging their belongings and exerting troubles on the natives. In an article published in *Russian Historical Review* which was patronized by the state, the author wrote, “In one of the conquered districts the officials oppressed the Kirghiz tribes in a shocking manner. They stole their sheep, deprived them of their camels and horses, and ruined whomsoever they could, filling their own pockets with the booty.” The Kirghiz tried to petition to a general who was passing by in their district. The interpreter changed their complaining words and told other things to the general because he was not given bribes by the natives. Then, the interpreter told them that if the general caught them again on his way complaining about the officials, he would punish them (“Some Truth about Russia,” 1889: 281).

Establishment of the Governor General of Turkistan after victories over the Bukharan forces and capture of important towns—namely Tashkent, Khodjent, Ura Tepe, Jizakh, Hazret-i Turkistan, and Chimkent—a commission was ordered to draw a new administrative plan for these newly captured lands. This Steppe Commission, “consisted of Giers, Colonels Giens, Protsenko, and Dandeville; and these officers, after careful inquiries, submitted an elaborate report in the spring of 1867, which was submitted for the consideration of a superior committee, under the presidency of the Russian Minister of War, who was assisted by delegates from the Ministries of the Interior, of War, and of Foreign Affairs. As the result of these deliberations, an *ukase* was published on July 23, 1867, announcing the formation of the Province of Turkestan, which was to be ruled by a Governor-General, who would be appointed by the Emperor, and placed under the orders of the Russian War Office. This new province was to include the whole of the newly acquired territory, together with that portion of the Siberian Province of Semipalatinsk which lies to the south of the Tarbagatai Mountains. Tashkent was fixed as the headquarters of the province, which was divided into two districts of the Syr Daria and Semiretchinsk, each of which was to be controlled by a military governor nominated by the Ministry of War. The district of Syr Daria included the ‘*uyezds*,’ or sub-districts, of Kazala, Perovski, Turkestan, Chimekent, Aulie-Ata, Kurama, Khojent,

and the city of Tashkent (which formed a separate sub-district of its own); while the district of Semiretchinsk was divided into the 'uyezds' of Sergiopol, Kopal, Vernoye, Issik Kul, and Tokmak" ("An Indian Officer," 1894: 208-209).

"Despite their dislike of excessive authority, nomads do not live in a state of anarchy...Below the *orda* level, the Kazaks had 'big *biis* and little *biis*' – chiefs of larger and smaller subdivisions in the tribal genealogy...At the base of this segmented political structure, the head of the family (*aqsaqal*, 'white beard') made decisions for the *aul*. A group of related *auls* had a *bii* who in turn made decisions concerning the welfare of the group, with the advice of the *aqsaqals* of the member *auls*." Though there was an aristocratic group called 'white bone,' the leadership purely based on abilities of leaders who had proven themselves in courage, skill, wisdom, ableness and wealth. This sort of leadership never had a despotic character. In time of peace, the power of the leader reduced to a very limited level. Only in time of war or other sort of anxiety, a strong leader was sought to overcome the difficulties (Bacon, 1966: 38-39).

Burnaby had an interview with a khan who was quite curious to know about the world issues. He twice showed his sorrow during the interview; once he asked why England refused to help him when he sent an emissary to India to seek help against the Russian aggression in 1873. For this, Burnaby told him that he did not know political issues of the time. Second, the Khan sorrowfully stated that the Russians were taking money from him. "The actual khan, after paying his annual tribute to the Tzar, has 100,000 rubles, or about £14,000, a year left for himself. He has no army to maintain, and some of the Turkoman tribes are recommencing to pay him taxes. This they do for fear lest otherwise it might be made a pretext for a Russian advance into their country" (Burnaby, 1883: 262).

Burnaby appreciated his being treated respectfully. "...when I took my leave; the impression being left on my mind that the Khan of Khiva is the least bigoted of all the Mohammedans whose acquaintance I have made in the course of my travels, and that the stories of his cruelties to Russian prisoners, previous to the capture of his city, are pure inventions which have been disseminated by the Russian press in order to try and justify the annexation of his territory" (Burnaby, 1883: 268).

Conclusions:

Sources that had evaluated Turkistan in the nineteenth century had their own shortcomings. Most of the foreigners judged the locals from their own short period of experiences. They did not live longer among the natives to present more accurate views. They had little knowledge about language, history and culture of the natives. Because of these, foreign sources failed to present a full story of the Turkic people.

As the sources represented, the people of Turkistan did not have an advanced cultural level in the nineteenth century as far as modern technologies, armies, educational, political and social structures were concerned. However, the people of Turkistan had long and proud past and an advanced old civilization. They still had their own life styles that were advanced enough to make them happy in their daily life. They had respect to each other, education to run daily matters, rulers to administer their communities and self-styled economies to have their needs in local stores. They were traditional societies who had not been corrupted by luxurious expectations that modern times had forced on "modern" peoples.

Opinions and accounts about Turkistan generally appreciate Turkic characters and appearances. According to them, they were straightforward, honest, relax, good-looking, freedom-loving, open, frank, sincere, truthful, reliable, honorable, trustworthy and just people. They had not lived in a state of anarchy nor did they present a real danger to surrounding places. Many Russian claims for invading the region were found as merely alleged reasons.

Despite generally positive and affirmative approaches to the locals, writings and texts about Turkistan contain views of outsiders which have not presented the whole picture of the region. However, they have been important sources for historians and researchers to make comments about history, culture, civilization and society of Turkistan. They contain vivid and colorful descriptions that represent important information. Without such descriptions it would be difficult to have a larger perspective about historical, social, cultural and geographical aspects of Turkistan.

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