



glottothèque  
languages of Anatolia, Caucasus, Iran, Mesopotamia



# Turkic in the LACIM area

## The origins of Turkic

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# The origins of Turkic

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Turkic is a newcomer to the LACIM area, where it came into contact with numerous genetically unrelated languages.

- For centuries, Turkic functioned as a **means of communication** between different peoples of Central and West Asia, and between the various ethnic components of the large tribal confederations, the nomadic populations, and the army.
  - This function may partly explain the simple and regular structure and the high proportion of loaned or 'copied' elements.
  - Turkic traditionally enjoyed quite low prestige in Western Asia. Written languages developed relatively late.
  - At present, many speakers of minority languages in the LACIM area still use varieties of Turkic as a lingua franca.
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## The early history

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Chinese historians describe the 'barbarian' peoples of the North and of Central Asia, among which were also Turkic elements

- These peoples were predominantly pastoral nomads and horse breeders
  - They were organized in various multi-ethnic confederations of Turkic, Mongolian and Indo-European (e.g. Sogdian/East Iranian elements). The most powerful and long-lived confederation were the Hsiung-Nu or Xiongnu, mentioned in Chinese sources of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.
  - The Hsiung-Nu are probably related to the Huns appearing in Western Europe roughly 900 years later, in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. Some Hun elements may have been integrated in the Bolgar Empires of the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> centuries, where ***Ancient Western Turkic*** (AWT)/Oghuric was spoken. With the exception of Chuvash, spoken in the Chuvash Republic on the Volga, Ancient Western Turkic is nowadays extinct.
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## The Hsiung-Nu empire (4th century B.C.) of Inner Asia



## The Hsiung-Nu empire: a prototype of later Turkic states

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### **A nation of nomads, people on the march, organized like an army:**

- The ruler of the HSIUNG-NU was called the Chanyu.
- Under him were the Wise Kings (Tuqi Kings) of the **Left and Right**.  
The Wise King of the Left was normally the heir presumptive.

Next lower in the hierarchy came more officials in pairs of left and right, e.g.:

- the ***guli*** (kuli, 'kings'), the army commanders,
  - the great governors, the ***dunghu*** (tung-hu), the ***gudu*** (ku-tu).
- Beneath them came the commanders of detachments of one thousand, of one hundred, and of ten men.

The **organization of society in military divisions** is also highly characteristic of all later Turkic states. It is also reflected in the first explicitly **Turkic** states, the Qaghanates of the Göktürks (552 and 682 – 744 AD) in Inner & Central Asia.

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# The first Turkic State

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The Qaghanate of the Göktürks (552 AD) shows the characteristic division into the kingdom of the East, ruled by the Khaqan, and the kingdom of the West, ruled by the Yabghu.





# The earliest texts in Turkic language

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The earliest texts in Turkic language (= AET Ancient Eastern Turkic) known to us are the Orkhon inscriptions. They were written in a runic script during the second Qaghante (682 – 744 AD), near the river Orkhon in Mongolia.



# Ancient Eastern Turkic (AET)

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AET is basically an agglutinative language, but it also shows some features which remind of an isolating language (like Chinese).

Some verb forms consist of verbal nouns, which combine with an analytic form of the personal pronoun (later to be grammaticalized as a person suffix).

In present day Turkic, personal pronouns in the nominative/unmarked case may still function as copulas / personal suffixes of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons, e.g.:

- Azeri: *Bu sän sän?* (< DEM + PRON2SG + COP 2SG)      ‘Is this you?’,
- StT: *Sen misin?* (<PRON2SG + PARTCL + COP 2SG)

In Standard Turkish, the former pronoun is more difficult to recognize.

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# Ancient Western Turkic (AWT) and Qipchaq/Kipchak Turkic (-> AET)

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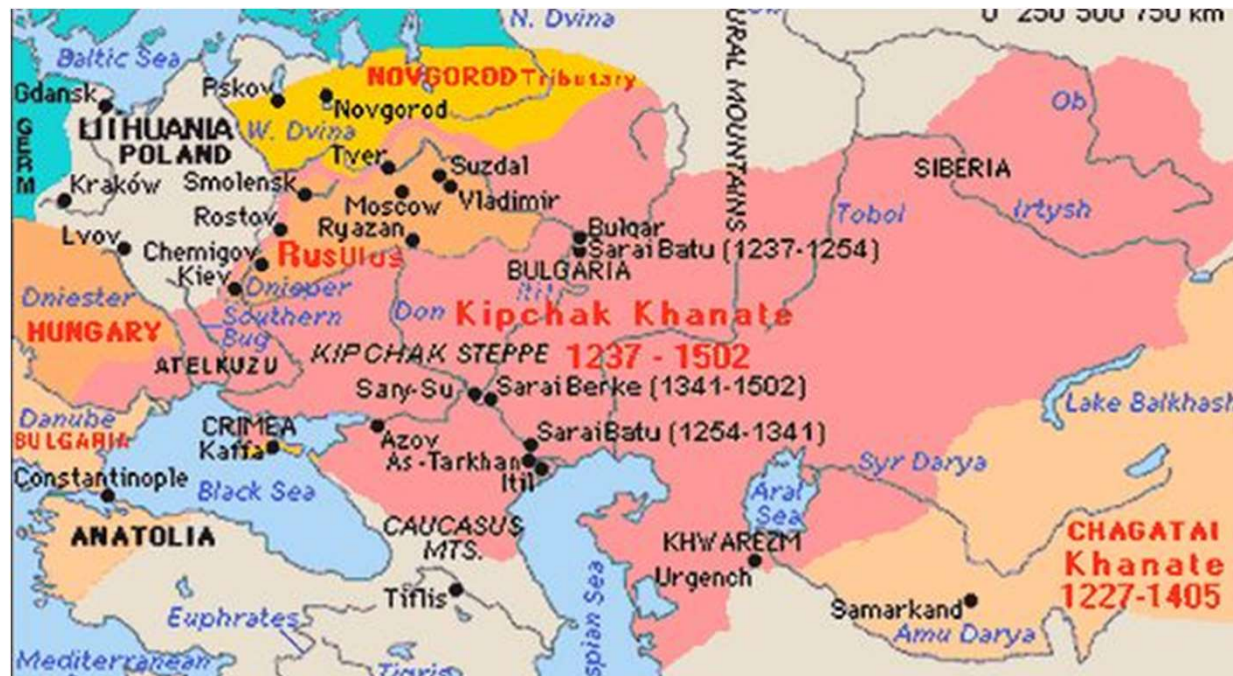
A successor state of the Western Khaganate is the Empire of the Khazars, between the late 7th and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. It comprised Oghuzic and Oghuric-speaking Turks (that is: speakers of Eastern and Western Turkic, the latter being relics of the older Bolgar states), as well as Iranian, Finno-Ugric and other elements. In 965, the Khazars had to surrender to the Rus, who were allied with Western Oghuz tribes.



## The Qipchaq Steppe or Dasht-e Qipchaq

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Other Turkic peoples, such as the Pecheneg and the Cuman-Qipchaq confederations settled in the former Western Turkic / Khazar heartland north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea -- later known as *Dasht-e Qipchaq*, the 'Qipchaq steppe'. AWT (Oghuric) was replaced by northwestern or Qipchaq Turkic, which is an Eastern Turkic language (= going back to AET).



# Turks and Islam

## Around 1000 AD: Islamic Turkic States in Central Asia

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Around 1000 AD, the Turks of Central Asia began to adopt Islam -- in a predominantly Persian guise.

- Thus, Turks are the ***third major ethnic and linguistic entity*** -- after Arabs and Iranians -- to join the **Islamic world**.

**The first Islamo-Turkic Dynasty are the Qarakhanids** (Khaqânîya 999-1211 AD), a confederation formed in the 9th century of Turkic tribes (Qarluq, Yaghmas and Chigil), and other ethnic and linguistic elements of Eastern Turkestan (Western Tian Shan / modern Qirghistan, and Western Xinjiang/Kashgharia).

- In the mid-10th century, they convert to Islam and rule over Transoxania, with the capitals Kashgar, Balasagun and Samarkand (source: the Kurdish historian Ibn al-Athîr).



**Shift from Iranian to Turkic predominance in Central Asia.**

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# Beginning of an Irano-Turkic synthesis:

## The Ghaznavîya/Ghaznavids (977-1186)

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The Ghaznavids are a Central Asian Turkic dynasty, former military slaves (*ghulâm*) of the Samanids of Persia.

Alp Tekin, a general of the Samanid army, gains control over Ghazna (Afghanistan), followed by his son-in-law Sebuktegin. His grandson Mahmûd declares independence of Samanid Empire.

- They rule over Iran (including present day Afghanistan), Transoxania (Mawarannahr), and North India.
  - The Ghaznavids are strongly Iranicized and promote Persian language and culture. During the revival of the Persian language, the Iranian poet Ferdousî wrote the Persian national Epos *Shâhnâmeh* – by order and for account of the Turkic ruler Mahmûd of Ghazna (!)
  - Turks were also in control of important centers of Islamic learning in Central Asia (e.g. Bokhara).
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The characteristic linguistic pattern of Islamic Turkic states emerged during the 11<sup>th</sup> century

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Three languages are used in functional distribution

- **Persian:** Official language, used by the ruling elites, the administration, and in literature & arts
  - **Arabic:** Theology, law, and natural sciences
  - **Turkic:** Language of communication of the multi-ethnic nomadic populations, and, consequently, of the military.
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## Saljûqs (= Trk. Selçuklular)

1038- 1092 in Iran, 1243/1307 in Rûm/Asia Minor

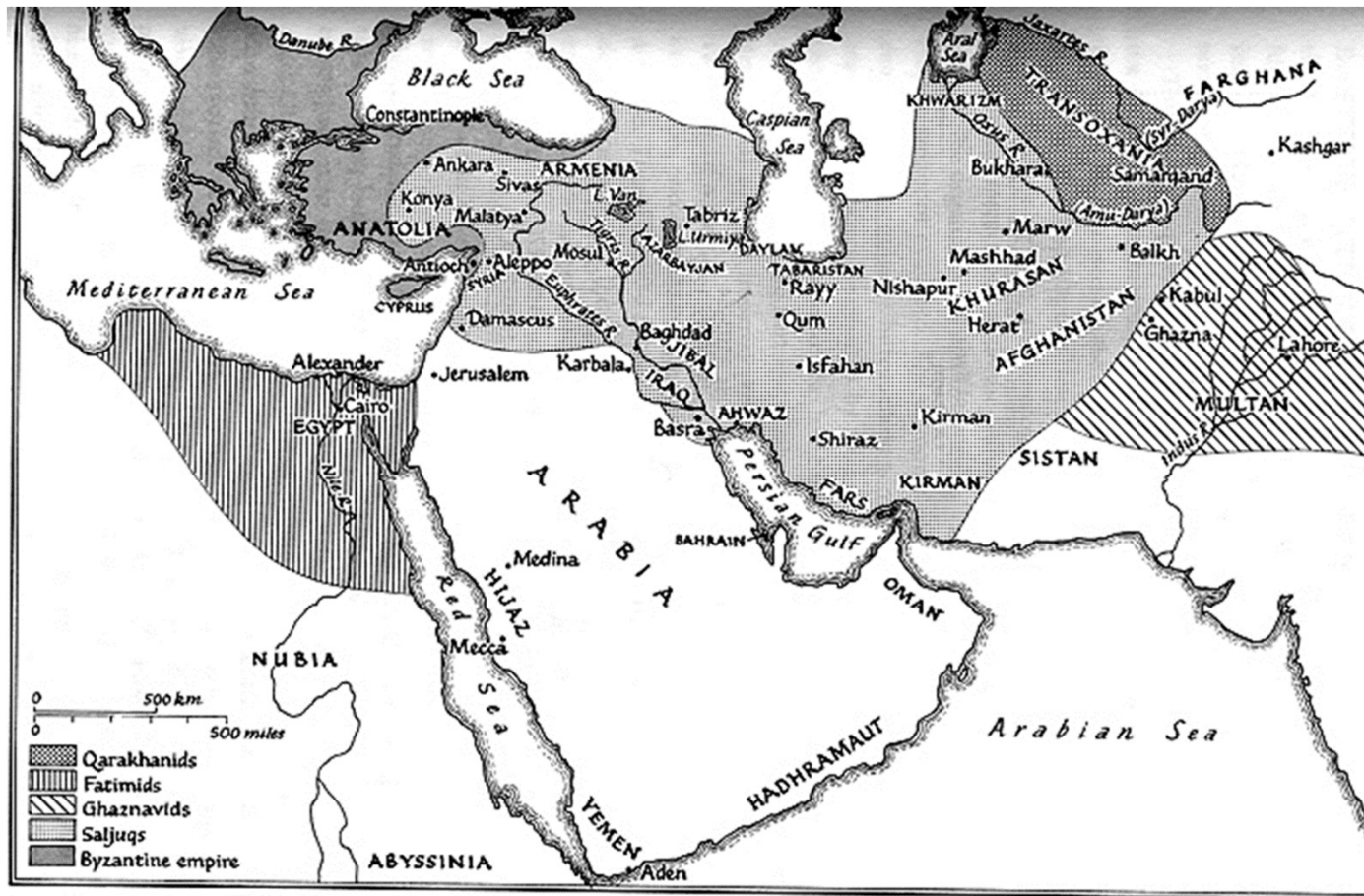
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- Around the year 1000 AD, Saljûq ibn Duqâq, leader of an Oghuz tribe settled in Transoxania, converts to Islam.
  - First in the service of the Ghaznavids, the Saljuq leader Tughril Beg (1038- 1063) gains control over Iran.
  - Strictly Sunni, he acts as protector of the Abbasid Caliphate against the Shii Buyids of Iran. In 1050, he conquers Baghdad, and is given the title 'Sultan of the East and the West'.
  - Alp Arslan (1063-1072), son of Tughril Beg, opens the way into Anatolia/Asia Minor (1071 Battle of Malazgirt).
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# The Saljuq Empire in the 11th/12th centuries

With the Saljuqs, Turks finally enter the LACIM area. These newcomers speak predominantly Oghuz varieties; they are Islamized and strongly Iranici(si)zed.



Map 6. The Saljuq empire in the late eleventh century.

## Islamization of the Golden Horde/Dasht-e Qipchaq

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The Northwestern Turks of the Qipchaq steppes become part of the Islamic World much later, when Uzbek Khan (1312 – 1342) unites the tribes of the Golden Horde under Islam. His followers start to call themselves “Uzbeks”.

- The population and the Mongol aristocracy of the Golden Horde speak the Qipchaq language. Russian and Western European historians generally called them ‘Tatars’.
  - Under **Abu'l-Khayr Khan** (1412-1468), the northern tribes between Volga and Lake Aral revolted and formed their own khanate, which they called Qazaq (‘part of a broken pair’) Khanate.
  - **Mohammad Shaybani**, grandson of Abu'l-Khayr Khan, leads parts of the Uzbeks back into Timurid Central Asia (1501 Samarkand, 1507 Herat).
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# The speakers of Turkic

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Major developments in the settlement history of the Turkic-speaking peoples were completed around the year 1500. At present, Turkic languages are spoken across a vast area, reaching from SW Asia up the NW.





# Classification of the Turkic languages

combining geographical distribution & linguistic features

NORTHWESTERN- or QIPCHAQ TURKIC <del>avag. qalyan. tawlı</del> <div><div></div><div></div></div>			NE <sup>N</sup> : North-Siberian <del>atax</del> <del>Yaqut</del> <del>Dolgan (dialect)</del>	
NW <sup>W</sup> : <del>Pontokaspian Group</del> <del>Qara'im</del> <del>East-Qara'im: Crimea</del> <del>West-Qara'im: Lithuania</del>  <del>Crimean Tatar (Dobruja-Tatar)</del> <del>Qarachay-Balqar</del> <del>Qumuk</del>		CHUVASH <del>ура</del> <del>(Volgabolgar)</del> <del>azag</del>	NW <sup>N</sup> : Volga-Uralian Group Tatar  Bashkir Volga, West-Siberia Ural	
			NW <sup>S</sup> : <del>Qazakh</del> <del>Qirghiz</del> <del>West Turkestan</del> <del>Qirgh. step</del>  <del>Qaraqalpaq</del> <del>Noghay</del> <del>south of Lake Aral</del> <del>North Caucasus</del>  <del>Qipchaq-Uzbek</del>	
SW: SOUTHWESTERN- or OGHUZ <del>avag. qalan. daylı</del>			NE <sup>S</sup> : South-Siberian Khakas subgroup: <del>atax</del> <del>(Shor, Beltir, Saghan, Qovbal)</del>  Tuva <del>adag</del> Altay (Qvrot) <del>avag</del>  <del>(Western Yugur &amp; Fu-yü Qirghiz in China)</del>	
SE: SOUTHEASTERN- or QARLUQ				
SW <sup>W</sup> : Ottoman/Modern Turkish Balkan <del>Turkic</del> <del>Gagauz</del>	SW <sup>C</sup> : Azeri, <del>Urum</del> East Anatolian & Iraq-Turkic  SW <sup>S</sup> : <del>Songor (trans.)</del> <del>Qashqā'i</del> <del>Aynallu</del>	SW <sup>E</sup> : Turkmen  (transitional) Khorasan Turkic	SE <sup>W</sup> : <del>avag</del> <del>Uzbek</del> West-Turkestan, NE- Afghanistan  <del>Uyghur</del> <del>Sinkiang</del>	SE <sup>E</sup> : <del>azag</del> Sari Uyghur West-Khiva, Kansu  Salar
	<del>Khalaj</del> <del>hadag</del>			

# this lecture

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A banner for the LACIM glottothèque project. It features a dark blue background with a faint image of the Earth. The text 'LACIM' is written in large, semi-transparent blue capital letters at the top. Below it, the word 'glottothèque' is written in a white, elegant serif font. On the left side, there is white text providing information about related lectures and a website URL. On the right side, the project's focus areas are listed in a white, monospaced font.

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