

RELATIONS BETWEEN AKKOYUNLUS AND KARAMANOĞULLARI

Ilhan ERDEM

(University of Ankara, Turkey)

Karamanogullari, one of the largest groups among those Turkish communities who lived in Anatolia, immigrated to Anatolia in the first half of the 13th century and settled in the southern parts of Toros Region, Ermenek Mut, Larende, etc., where they became a sovereign power in a short time and left their marks on the political, ethical and cultural areas. Their crowdedness and sound organizational structure distracted the attention of Seljuk Government, and Turkish Seljuks availed themselves of Karamans as a military power for their invasion raids. However, Karamans ran counter to the Government following the death of Aladdin Keykubad, which resulted in the Mogulian invasion of Anatolia (July, 1243 AD).

As the Mogulian sovereignty lessened the central authority of Turkish Seljuks, the balance of political powers in Anatolia began to re-shape. Turkmens proceeded to take action on the one hand, while the decentralized feudal aristocracy gained power in the state on the other. Karamans were the first group who took action for independence and fought against Moguls. In 1256, the process of establishment of principalities was completely carried out with the besiegement of Ermenek by IV Kilij Arslan, the Sultan of Seljuks in that period.

Karaman Beg (1256-61), the founder of the principality had it as a motto to fight against Moguls, and with this slogan, made a raid on Konya in 1261, in the name of the overthrown Sultan İzzeddin Keykavus. However, the alerted Seljuk-Mogulian forces blocked them in front of the Castle Gevele, and here Turkmens lost the battle. Not so much time passed after the battle, Karaman Beg died in the same year. His successor, Semseddin Beg (1261-77) followed up his father's policies, and combated against Mogulian forces in 1276 and

1277. With the help and encouragement from Sultan Baybars of Memluks who came to Anatolia, he captured Konya on May 14, 1277. Although he was able to stay in the capital city of Seljuks only for 37 days, his achievements in such a short period of time indelibly marked the political and cultural area. Firstly, he issued a decree declaring Turkish as the official language. After that, he made a distribution of Anatolia among Turkmen begs, who were Esref, Mentese and Hamidli.

Moguls killed Mehmed Beg. But, the movement initiated by him evolved fast. Turkmens having dominated over all parts of Anatolia, particularly on the borderlines of the region, waged war against Moguls. They got the upper hand of the command at all places from Sakarya to Menderes and from the Mediterranean coasts to the Black Sea. Moguls had recourse to appeasement by making concessions to ally Turkmens. The famous vizier Semseddin Cuveyni, who came to Anatolia in order to take the initiative in person, established a political regime in which Turkmens were allowed to represent themselves to some extent. Having served under Seljuk sovereignty for some time in 1284, Karamanogullari continued to fight against Moguls after 1291.¹

The beginning of XIV century marks increased influence and power of Turkmens. In the borderlines appeared many principalities, each of which started to claim sovereignty within its territory. Among these was the Ottoman Principality, established over Sogut-Domanic borderline in the same period, which, later on, would become an Empire. In that breakthrough period of Turkmens, Karamanogullari became the successor of Seljuks by taking hold of the command of Konya in 1308.

Karamanogullari having declared themselves as the successor of Seljuks was exposed to the continued interference by Moguls and in 1314 Emircoban reached up to Larende. It was only under the reign of Timurtas that Karamanogullari attained a rest to some degree, and even supported Moguls in their effort to establish a Mogulian regime in Anatolia. The fact that Timurtas abandoned Anatolia in 1327 made

Karamanogullari to finally settle down in Konya. However, they couldn't make further use of this opportunity due to the disputes occurred in their inner body.²

As Ilhanli State started to face disintegration with the death of Abu Said in 1335, the principalities mostly drawn from the west parts of Anatolia gave an end to the Byzantine sovereignty in the region. The virgin lands conquered thereafter witnessed settlement of Turkmens as well as other communities. All of a sudden Turkmen population burst out. During this time, the revived ideal *gaza* (holy war) led to the organization of these masses under groups called *gazi*, *dervis*, *ulema* and *ahi*. This system was completed when the chiefs of tribes and borderline principalities gave leadership to these groups. The most successful principalities among those who organized in such a manner were Aydinogullari and the Ottomans.³

Turkmens flowing into West Anatolia in large numbers weakened Karamans in the political area. Besides, the principal goal in the establishment of the principality, that is, to fight against Moguls, also lost its meaning and importance for long ago. In addition, the Turkish language and Turkmen culture became principal in all of the principalities; the Turkish works written in German, Aydin and Karesi Palaces attained enough quality to compete with Karaman's works of art. While the principality was experiencing a big fluctuation, it got its fighting tools back thanks to the interventions of Memluks notwithstanding the suppressions firstly from Eretna State centered at Sivas (1243-1381), and Turkish-Mogulian Kadi Burhaneddin State (1381-1398) thereafter.⁴

Another factor urging Karamanogullari into action was the Ottomans' attempt to pass into the Balkans. Aladdin Ali Beg, the Karamans' sovereign of the period foresaw that this move would resuscitate the spirit of *Gaza* and drive Turkmen masses towards the Ottomans, and therefore, he devised a counter attack policy. While treating his enemy warmly by appropriating his soldiers under his opponent's service and establishing alliance through relationships, on the one hand, he insidiously conspired to ruin the Ottomans in

Anatolia by creating new groups, on the other. In pursuing this strategy, firstly the Ahis located in Ankara were taken under protection, and then they used Varsak and Turgutlu Turkmens that were mostly drawn from Eretnas. However, they failed in this attempt, and Ankara and its surroundings came under the Ottoman rule in 1361.⁵

But, even after that, Karamanogullari didn't give up acting against the Ottomans, and attacked such principalities as Hamid and Germian who had to get on well with their rivals because of their lack of ability to fight with their own power. Additionally, Karamanogullari also challengingly opposed Eretnas, with whom it had made alliances from time to time. The aim of this was to render the reign of Seljuks dominant again in Anatolia by taking command of Kayseri. However, this Karaman policy being intended for Anatolia under the reign of Aladdin Ali (1360-1398), smashed to the impeding wall of the Ottomans and drove back each time, for as much as Ottomans held the upper hand of the situation in political and cultural sense by passing to the Balkans. Then, the West Anatolia principalities, seeing ongoing developments, tended to approach the Ottomans.⁶

In fact, Karamanogullari rode on a religious campaign on Crusaders of Cyprus in the name of *gaza*, along the Mediterranean coasts in 1360, for which it made alliances with Alaiye, Mentese, Hamid and Aydinogullari principalities, and successfully defended the coastal region from Alaiye to Antalya against the enemy through its outstandingly remarkable war tactics.

Yet, these achievements didn't yield so much for Karamanogullari. There never emerged power potential enabling them to compete with the Ottomans. What remained an option for Karamanogullari was only to wait their time for any failure of the Ottomans.

The death of Ottoman Emperor I Murad in 1389 in the 1st Kosovo War produced a great opportunity for Turkmens. The Beg of Karamans right away set up for an attack in alliance with Mentese and

the Begs of Aydın. However, the new Ottoman Sultan I Bayezid (1389-1403) speedily destroyed Saruhan, Aydın, Germian and Mentese Principalities. Then, marching towards Konya, he also forced Aladdin Ali Beg into submission.⁷

Facing such an attempt by the Ottomans, all principalities in Anatolia made alliances with each other, except, Aladdin Ali Beg who refused the offered cooperation and even declared war against Kadi Burhaneddin, the greatest political power of Anatolia in that period.⁸

During the period in which the balance of powers over Anatolia turned in favor of the Ottomans, appearance of Emir Timur, the Rulers of Cagatays in Turkistan region, came with new expansions. Except for Kadi Burhaneddin and Karakoyunlu Beg, all of the Anatolian principalities opposing the Ottomans, obeyed Timur's rule. Aladdin Ali Beg, the leader of Karamans, too declared obedience to Cagatay Sovereign in 1393, and encouraged Timur to march into Anatolia. As can be understood from the course of events, Beg of Karamans, since then acting under the direction of Emir Timur, combated with Kadi Burhaneddin on the one hand and with the Ottomans on the other. But this new political practice didn't yield success either. Finally, Yildirim Bayezid, marching into Konya in 1398, overthrew Karaman forces and captured the city. He, too, ordered the Beg of Karamans to be killed. While the principality was being terminated in this manner, the country came under the reign of the Ottomans.⁹

During the period in which Karamanogullari was terminated, Kadi Burhaneddin State was destroyed too. Following this event, Akkoyunlus and Ottomans confronted each other on the frontiers of Sivas for the inheritance of Kadi Burhaneddin (1399). Then, Kadi Burhaneddin, defeated in the war, incited Emir Timur to march over the Ottomans.¹⁰

As a result of the successive disappearance of Karamanogullari and Kadi Burhaneddin States in the XIV century, Ottomans established absolute sovereignty in Anatolia. Then, the Anatolian Turkmens and Akkoyunlus came under the patronage of Timur. The

reason these principalities preferred Timur was due to the fact that the Ottomans adopted a central organization model, whereas, Cagatays applied a system of confederation type corresponding to the country's characteristics.

Emir Timur captured Sivas in 1400. He received expressed support from Anatolian principalities. In the battle of 1402, Akkoyunlus fought on the side of Timur. When the Ottoman lost command over Anatolia, Karamanogullari got back their lands as well as new acquisitions and Akkoyunlus under the command of Timur established their principality in Diyarbakır region, at the upper part of Dicle (Tigris) Basin.

They consolidated their power under the management of Kara Yuluk Uthman Beg (1403-35) and expanded their territories up to Erzurum and Urfa.¹¹

Karamanogullari continued to fight against the Ottomans. Karamanoglu Nasiruddin Mehmed Beg reduced Bursa to ashes where he proceeded to after capturing Germians' Afyon Karahisar, Ushak and Kutahya vicinity. The forces commanded by Celebi Mehmed who accessed to throne in 1414, proceeded up to Konya and made peace with Karamanogullari. Karamanogullari came under the command of Memluks and became pacified against the Ottomans.

It is no doubt that Timur's death in Ankara Battle and the ongoing lack of a leader afterwards to maintain the system established by him made the Ottomans dominant over Anatolia. Following Timur's death, Shahruh could rule only in a limited part of the Empire after 1411. Timur's death, ideological failures of Memluks and public demand for peace made the Ottomans a significant choice in Anatolia.

Karamanogullari found support from Europe, which they sought to use against the Ottomans. In the period after 1420, they concluded alliances first with Serbians and Magyars, and then with Venice and the Papacy. Following the defeat of the Ottoman Army in 1432, Karamanogullari tried to take the opportunity. However, fthe ailed to resist the Ottoman counter movement. Konya came under the

Ottoman rule and the Ottomans again got the upper hand against Karamanogullari.¹²

The failed Belgrade siege in 1439 was followed by Karamanogullari's attack on the Ottoman territories, looting and plundering by taking the advantage of the absence of the Ottoman Army in the region due to its uninterrupted raids on Hungary after 1442. Despite the Crusades, the Ottomans carried out a raid campaign on Karamanogullari, forcing them to beg for peace. Then, the Ottoman Ruler agreed to make peace with them and the war against crusaders went on.¹³

But, after a short time, Karamanogullari broke the peace, and launched an attack against the Ottomans in 1444, upon which the Ottomans, this time, came to action to destroy them entirely. First, the *ulema* issued a *fetva* and, then the Karamanli realm entirely came under the Ottoman power.¹⁴

Karamanogullari served for the Ottomans devotedly up to the death of II Murad and continued to support the Ottomans by sending reinforcement to the enemy lines in 2nd Kosovo Battle. Karamanogullari, having been encountered with the Ottoman's policy to settle in the Middle Anatolia as well as with the conquest of Istanbul and II Mehmed's ascending to the throne, was badly weakened. In the meantime, new Alliances against the Ottomans were formed; Venice and its allies in the West and Akkoyunlu alliance in the East.¹⁵

In the year II Mehmed conquered Istanbul, Uzun Hasan, who had as many leading qualities as the former, was ascending to the Akkoyunlu throne. First attempt of Uzun Hasan, after shoring up his principality, was to establish control over Karakoyunlus. Next, he took the Greeks of Trebizond under his patronage against the Ottomans. He, even going further than this, included Karamanogullari into his alliance with Pope Calixtus III in order to remove the Ottomans.¹⁶

What might a first political relation be established between Akkoyunlus and Karamanogullari was in essence the long-term plans

pursued by Akkoyunlu Uzun Hasan concerning the Karaman's territories, though it was also partly due to the Ottoman threat.

The competition between the successors of Abraham Beg to ascend to the throne after his death early in 1464, turned into a conflict between the Ottomans and Akkoyunlus. When Pir Ahmad captured Konya, his rival, Ishak Beg requested help from Akkoyunlus. The bibliography about this historical period relates the event to the Ottoman State, and points out that Karamanogullari was under the reign of Akkoyunlus.¹⁷

But, the Ottoman bibliography narrates it from a different aspect. For instance, Ashik Pashazade narrates that Abraham Beg the Karamanoglu declared Ishak Beg as his successor before *ulema*, however, then Pir Ahmed ascended to the throne to rule Konya. According to the bibliography, Ishak Beg sought aid of Uzun Hasan as a result of which Pir Ahmed sheltered in the auspices of Sultan Mehmed.¹⁸

Yet another Akkoyunlu bibliography, the historical view of Hasan Bey Rumlu confirms those reported in the Ottoman bibliographies.¹⁹ To the Armenian authors, however, the event took place in 1464 and sovereign Uzun Hasan attacked Kayseri region with 20,000 riders.²⁰

Akkoyunlu-Karakoyunlu relations being founded on the threat from the Ottomans became a matter of international nature in a short time. The Republic of Venice entered into this alliance by passing a decree from the senate in September 26th, 1464. Common enemy, the Ottoman State, was to be destroyed and the captured lands to be granted to the Akkoyunlu State.²¹ Besides, Venice was to support Karamanogullari in any way. At the end of this period, Uzun Hasan became the protector of Anatolian Principalities, so to say another Emir Timur.

Meanwhile, II Mehmed hurried Ishak Pasha to the front to fight against Karamanogullari, upon realizing that Akkoyunlu-Karamanoglu relations were progressing adversely to his interest. Pir Ahmed Beg, having been defeated by the Ottoman forces, had to have

recourse to seek aid from Akkoyunlu ruler in the same manner as Kasim Beg, who as well took refuge in Akkoyunlus, after being defeated by the Ottomans (1471). Ottoman forces under the command of Gedik Ahmad Pasha thereby captured the fortress of Karamanoglu Principality.²² The link with Venice was almost broken off as the Ottomans captured Alaiyye Port which had a strategic significance. Then, upon the call by Karamanoglu Begs, Akkoyunlu forces entered into the territories of Karaman province through Tokat, very soon after being defeated in their war campaign to remove the Ottomans from Trabzon. This was not only because of the call of alliance by Karaman Begs, but also because of the fact of strategic importance of the territory; that is, Karaman's desire to reach the Mediterranean coast for cooperation with Venetian navy. However, Ottoman forces defeated this army commanded by Yusufca Mirza and it became evident that Akkoyunlu forces were no longer able to resist the Ottomans in the Karaman province.²³ Upon the Akkoyunlus' campaign for Anatolia in alliance with Karamanogullari and their alliance with Venice, the Ottoman Sultan decided to punish Akkoyunlus.²⁴

Karaman Begs were concerned about getting back to the Mediterranean coastal zones under the Ottoman reign in order to pass firearms from Venice to Akkoyunlus in the run up to the Great Battle. Accordingly, Kasim Beg got in contact with Venice.²⁵ Then, Gögös, Sigin and Silifke Castles were captured and delivered to the rule of Kasim Beg by the Venetians. What was left for Karamanogullari was just to wait for the Akkoyunlu army to appear.²⁶

We see Karamanoglu Kasim Beg attending Otlukbeli Battle in the left wing of Akkoyunlu forces.²⁷ After Ottomans defeated Uzun Hasan in the historical battle that took place on August 11, 1473, Gedik Ahmed Pasha first captured Ermenek and then Mennan Castle, and finally conquered Silifke. At the same time, Prince Mustafa occupied Karahisar (1474). In the meantime, Pir Ahmad died and Kasim Beg took the lead of Karamanogullari. In the reign of Kasim Beg, all war campaigns were terminated.²⁸ It can be seen that

Karamanogullari interfered in the internal struggles pursued for usurping the throne of Akkoyunlus through supporting alternative heirs in the rivalry. For instance, it is noted that Kasim the Karamanoglu supported Yakub in his rivalry with Sultan Halil, both of whom were heirs to the Akkoyunlu throne (1478).²⁹

Prince Cem Sultan, posted to Karaman as governor, became intimate with Karaman Begs. Kasim Beg, the last heir to the Karaman throne, reached an understanding with Prince Cem Sultan and Bayezid Khan, and then ruled some part of Ichel region under the Ottoman protection until he died in February 1483. With his death, Karamanogullari vanished. Mahmud Beg, the son of Turgut and son-in-law of Kasim Beg served as a flag officer in Ichel until 1487. His attempts to recreate this principality were impeded by the Ottoman forces. Being unable to resist, Mahmud Beg took refuge in Memluks, and thus, Karamanoglu country was wholly included in the territory of the Ottoman State under the rule of Sultan II Bayezid.³⁰

It can be concluded that Akkoyunlu-Karamanogullari relations begun and then shaped according to the Ottoman activities in the region. Relations lost their intensity after Otlukbeli Battle and Karamanogullari appeared only in domestic struggles of Akkoyunlus thereafter.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Refer to *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu-Karakoyunlu Devletleri* (Anatolian Principalities, and Akkoyunlu-Karakoyunlu States) by İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, p. 1, Ankara, 1988; *Karamanlılar* (Karamans) by Şehabeddin Tekindağ, İA (MEB) İstanbul 1982, Vol. 6, p. 316.
2. Tekindağ, *Karamanlılar* (Karamans), p. 321.
3. Refer to compare, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Kuruluşu* (Establishment of Ottoman Empire) by Fuad Köprülü, İstanbul 1993, p. 23; *Osmanlı Devletinin Doğuşu Meselesi* (Issue of The Birth of Ottoman Empire) by Halil İnancık, *Söğütten İstanbul'a*, Ankara 2000, p. 225 - 242.
4. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 14.
5. Tekindağ, *Karamanlılar* (Karamans), p. 322.

6. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 15.
7. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 15-17; Tekindağ, *Karamanlılar* (Karamans), p. 322.
8. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 17.
9. Tekindağ, *Karamanlılar* (Karamans), p. 323.
10. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 17-18.
11. İlhan Erdem, *Akkoyunlu Beyliği'nin Kurucusu Kara Yülük Osman Bey'in Hayatı ve Faaliyetleri* (? – 1435) (Life History and Activity Records of Kara Yuluk Uthman Beg, the founder of Akkoyunlu Principality), *Periodical Rewiev by DTCE*, Ankara, 1990, p. 101.
12. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 18-19.
13. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 19-24; Tekindağ, *Karamanlılar* (Karamans), p. 323-324.
14. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 25-28.
15. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 27-28; Tekindağ, *Karamanlılar* (Karamans), p. 324-325.
16. Walter Hinz, *Uzun Hasan ve Şeyh Cüneyd* (Hasan the Tall and Sheik Juneyd), translated by T. Bıyıkoglu, Ankara, 1948, p. 4.
17. Abu Bakr-i Tibrani, *Kitab-i Diyarbakır*, (Translated by Mürsel Öztürk), Ministry of Culture Publications, Ankara, 2001, p. 223-224.
18. *Aşık Paşaoğlu Tarihi*, edited by Nihal Atsız, Ankara, 1985, p. 167.
19. Hasan Bey Rumlu, *Ahsenü't-Tevdrih* (Publisher A. Hüseyin Nevai), Tehran, 1349, p. 435.
20. Avedis K. Sanjian, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1301-1480*, Harvard, 1969, p. 285; Woods, p. 171-172. Here, it should be noted that it is prudent to view the information reported in the bibliography with attention; firstly, there is no mention in the bibliography that this war campaign was carried out against Karamanoglu Principality; next, it is not within the bounds of possibility that Uzun Hasan had 20,000 riders at that time.
21. Şerafettin Turan, *Fatih Memet – Uzun Hasan Mücadelesi ve Venedik* (Fatih Mehmed – Uzun Hasan Struggle and Venice), *History Researchers Review*, Volume III, Issue 4-5, Ankara, 1965, p. 79-81.
22. Ibid, p. 94.
23. Ibid, p. 97-98.
24. Ibid, p. 101.
25. Ibid, p. 109.
26. Ibid, p. 109.
27. İlhan Erdem, *Akkoyunlu Kaynaklarına Göre Otlukbeli (Başkent) Savaşı*, (Otlukbeli (The Capital) Battle According To Akkoyunlu Bibliography), A.Ü. OTAM Review, Issue 4, 1993, p. 155-157; Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devlet*

- Təşkilatına Medhal* (The Prologue to the Ottoman State Organization), Ankara, 1984, p. 288.
28. Barbaro, *Travels*, p. 67. For further information on the development and effect of this battle, see John E. Woods, *Akkoyunlular* (Akkoyunlus), translated by Sibel Özbudun, İstanbul, 1993, p. 195-204. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu-Karakoyunlu Devletleri* (Anatolian Principalities and Akkoyunlu-Karakoyunlu States), Ankara, 1988, p. 34. Franz Babinger, *Fatih Sultan Mehmet ve Zamanı* (Fatih Sultan Mehmed and His Era), Trans. Dost Körpe, İstanbul, 2002, p. 263-275.
29. Eminüddin İsfəhani, *Târih-i Âlem ârrây-i Emînî*, Translated into English by V. Minorsky, London, 1957, p. 27-28; Rumlu, *Ahsen*, p. 571.
30. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri* (Anatolian Principalities), p. 35.

X ü l a s ə

AĞQOYUNLULAR VƏ QARAMANOĞULLARI ARASINDA ƏLAQƏLƏR

İlhan ƏRDƏM

(Ankara Universitəsi, Türkiyə)

Məqalədə müəllif XIII ərsin ortalarından başlayaraq Qaramanoğulları dövlətinin Anadoluda yürütdüyü yaşamaq uğrunda mübarizə siyasətini araşdırmış və bu kontekstdə, Qaramanoğullarının Ağqoyunlularla olan əlaqələrinin vacibliyini vurğulamışdır. Müəllifə görə, Qaramanoğulları ilə Ağqoyunlular arasında olan əlaqələrinin əsasını onların hər ikisinə qarşı Osmanlı tərəfindən gələn təhlükə təşkil etmişdir. Bu təhlükə qarşısında Qaramanoğulları Ağqoyunlu dövləti və bir sıra Avropa dövlətləri ilə ittifaqa girsə də, son nəticədə, o zamanlar yüksəlişdə olan və həm hərbi, həm də siyasi cəhətdən üstün olan Osmanlı dövləti qalib gəlmiş və XV əsrin ikinci yarısında Qaramanoğulları dövlətinə son qoymuşdur.