



**ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF THE HISTORY, LANGUAGE, AND
LITERATURE OF TURKIC PEOPLES**

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Abstract. This article examines the actual problems in the study of the history, language, and literature of Turkic peoples within the context of globalization and socio-political transformation. The research analyzes methodological challenges in historiography, including the legacy of imperial and Soviet interpretations, and emphasizes the need for comparative Eurasian and interdisciplinary approaches. The study also explores contemporary linguistic issues such as alphabet reforms, terminology development, and the impact of globalization on language preservation. In addition, the article highlights the reinterpretation of classical literary heritage and the challenges faced by modern Turkic literature in balancing national identity with global integration. The findings suggest that coordinated academic cooperation, methodological innovation, and cultural policy harmonization are essential for strengthening Turkic studies as a dynamic and influential field of scholarship.

Keywords: Turkic peoples, historiography, linguistic modernization, literary heritage, identity formation, globalization, interdisciplinary research.

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada globallashuv va ijtimoiy-siyosiy transformatsiya sharoitida turkiy xalqlar tarixi, tili va adabiyotini o'rganishdagi dolzarb muammolar tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda tarixshunoslikdagi metodologik muammolar, jumladan, imperiyaviy va sovet davri talqinlarining ta'siri ko'rib chiqilib, qiyosiy yevrosiyo hamda multidissiplinar yondashuv zarurligi asoslanadi. Shuningdek, alifbo islohotlari, terminologik rivojlanish va globallashuvning til saqlanishiga ta'siri kabi zamonaviy lingvistik masalalar tahlil etiladi. Maqolada klassik adabiy merosni qayta talqin qilish va zamonaviy turkiy adabiyotning milliy identitet hamda global integratsiya o'rtasidagi muvozanat muammolari yoritiladi. Natijalar turkiy tadqiqotlarni rivojlantirishda ilmiy hamkorlik, metodologik yangilanish va madaniy





siyosatni muvofiqlashtirish muhim ahamiyatga ega ekanini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: turkiy xalqlar, tarixshunoslik, lingvistik modernizatsiya, adabiy meros, milliy identitet, globallashuv, multidissiplinar tadqiqot.

Аннотация. В данной статье анализируются актуальные проблемы изучения истории, языка и литературы тюркских народов в условиях глобализации и социально-политической трансформации. Рассматриваются методологические трудности историографии, включая влияние имперских и советских интерпретаций, обосновывается необходимость сравнительного евразийского и междисциплинарного подходов. Также исследуются современные лингвистические вопросы, такие как реформы алфавита, развитие терминологии и влияние глобализации на сохранение языка. Особое внимание уделяется переосмыслению классического литературного наследия и проблемам современной тюркской литературы в контексте баланса между национальной идентичностью и глобальной интеграцией. Сделан вывод о важности академического сотрудничества, методологического обновления и координации культурной политики для укрепления тюркских исследований.

Ключевые слова: тюркские народы, историография, языковая модернизация, литературное наследие, национальная идентичность, глобализация, междисциплинарные исследования.

Introduction. In the context of globalization and rapid socio-political transformations, the study of the history, language, and literature of Turkic peoples has acquired renewed scholarly and strategic importance. The Turkic world, stretching historically from the Altai Mountains to Anatolia and from Siberia to the Middle East, represents one of the most influential civilizational spaces in Eurasian history. The legacy of ancient Turkic states such as the Göktürk Khaganate and the Seljuk Empire, as well as powerful political entities like the Ottoman Empire, demonstrates the deep historical roots and geopolitical significance of Turkic peoples. However, despite this rich historical and cultural heritage, modern scholarship faces several pressing challenges in studying the Turkic past and its linguistic and literary traditions. One of the major problems lies in the fragmentation of sources and the politicization of historical narratives. During the 19th and 20th centuries, especially under imperial and Soviet historiography, many aspects of Turkic history were reinterpreted or





marginalized, which created methodological gaps and biased frameworks in academic research. Today, scholars are confronted with the task of re-evaluating historical processes on the basis of critical methodology, comparative analysis, and newly accessible archival materials.

Another important issue concerns the preservation and development of Turkic languages. Although many Turkic languages function as state languages in independent republics, the processes of globalization, migration, and digital transformation pose serious challenges. Language shift, dominance of global languages, and decreasing use of certain dialects threaten linguistic diversity within the Turkic world. At the same time, the transition of alphabets (for example, from Cyrillic to Latin scripts in several Central Asian states) has created both opportunities and difficulties in terms of educational policy, cultural continuity, and access to classical literary heritage. Literature, as a reflection of collective memory and identity, also encounters complex problems. Classical works such as the *Kutadgu Bilig* by Yusuf Khas Hajib and the epic narratives of *Book of Dede Korkut* remain foundational texts of Turkic civilization. Yet, their interpretation in modern literary studies often lacks interdisciplinary integration with history, anthropology, and political theory. Moreover, contemporary Turkic literature faces the challenge of balancing national identity with global literary trends, post-colonial discourse, and digital culture. In addition, the issue of cultural integration among Turkic-speaking countries has become increasingly relevant in recent decades. Institutions such as the Organization of Turkic States highlight the growing political and cultural cooperation within the Turkic world. Nevertheless, academic collaboration, unified terminology in historical research, and coordinated language policies remain insufficiently developed.

Therefore, the “actual problems” of the history, language, and literature of Turkic peoples are not merely academic questions; they are closely linked to identity formation, state-building processes, cultural diplomacy, and geopolitical positioning in Eurasia. Addressing these issues requires a multidisciplinary approach that combines historical analysis, linguistic research, literary criticism, and political science perspectives. This article aims to analyze the most pressing contemporary problems in the study of Turkic history, language, and literature, to identify methodological





limitations in current scholarship, and to propose directions for future research based on integrative and comparative frameworks.

Main Part. The study of the history, language, and literature of Turkic peoples today faces a number of interconnected methodological, conceptual, and political challenges that require critical reassessment. One of the most significant problems in the historiography of Turkic peoples is the issue of sources and their interpretation. Early Turkic history is largely reconstructed on the basis of external sources, particularly Chinese dynastic chronicles, Arabic and Persian historiography, and later Byzantine accounts. While these materials provide invaluable information about the political organization of early Turkic polities such as the Göktürk Khaganate, they often reflect the geopolitical interests and cultural perceptions of non-Turkic observers. As a result, the image of early Turkic statehood was frequently framed within a sedentary-centric worldview, portraying nomadic societies as peripheral or militaristic entities rather than as complex political systems with institutional continuity.[1] The discovery and interpretation of the Orkhon inscriptions, particularly those associated with Bilge Khagan and Kül Tigin, significantly transformed the understanding of early Turkic political thought. These inscriptions demonstrated that Turkic elites possessed a sophisticated conception of sovereignty, law, and collective responsibility.[2] However, modern historiography still struggles with balancing archaeological, epigraphic, and narrative sources within a unified analytical framework. In the 19th and 20th centuries, imperial Russian and Soviet historiography frequently subsumed Turkic history into broader narratives of steppe backwardness or economic determinism, marginalizing indigenous political agency.[3] Contemporary scholarship therefore faces the task of decolonizing historical methodology and re-evaluating Turkic statehood within comparative Eurasian perspectives. Another pressing issue concerns the conceptualization of identity and continuity. The historical evolution from early nomadic confederations to centralized empires such as the Seljuk Empire and later the Ottoman Empire raises complex questions about political transformation, Islamization, and cultural synthesis. The adoption of Islam profoundly reshaped Turkic intellectual life, integrating Turkic societies into the broader Islamic civilization while preserving linguistic and cultural particularities. Yet, in modern national historiographies, the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods are sometimes artificially separated, which obscures the





organic continuity of Turkic civilizational development.[4] Linguistically, the Turkic world presents both remarkable unity and significant diversity. The comparative study of Turkic languages reveals deep structural similarities across branches, yet contemporary sociolinguistic realities demonstrate uneven development. Globalization, urbanization, and migration have accelerated the dominance of global languages such as English and Russian in education, science, and digital communication. This has led to concerns about language shift, particularly among smaller Turkic-speaking communities. Alphabet reforms—especially the transition from Cyrillic to Latin scripts in several Central Asian states—have further complicated linguistic standardization and intergenerational transmission of literary heritage. While Latinization aims to facilitate integration into global information networks, it also creates temporary fragmentation in access to classical and Soviet-era texts.[5] The issue of linguistic modernization is closely connected to terminology development in science and political discourse. Many Turkic languages are still developing standardized academic vocabulary capable of expressing complex philosophical and technological concepts. This raises the broader question of whether modernization requires lexical borrowing or internal linguistic innovation. The absence of coordinated linguistic policy across Turkic-speaking states has limited the possibility of creating a shared intellectual space, despite the growing institutional cooperation under the Organization of Turkic States.[6] In the sphere of literature, classical works such as *Kutadgu Bilig* by Yusuf Khass Hajib and the epic cycle known as *Book of Dede Korkut* represent foundational monuments of Turkic intellectual history. These texts reveal early ethical philosophy, political theory, and mythopoetic structures embedded within Turkic culture. However, contemporary literary studies often approach them either as purely folkloric artifacts or as national symbols, rather than as complex texts open to interdisciplinary interpretation. There remains insufficient integration of literary analysis with political theory, memory studies, and postcolonial critique.

Modern Turkic literature faces additional challenges related to globalization and digital transformation. Writers must navigate between preserving national identity and participating in global literary markets. The rise of digital publishing, social media literature, and transnational readership has reshaped authorship and readership patterns. Yet, the translation of Turkic literary works into major world languages remains





limited, restricting their global visibility. Conversely, the influx of translated Western literature influences stylistic and thematic trends within Turkic literary production. Furthermore, the politicization of history and literature in contemporary nation-building processes complicates academic objectivity. Historical figures and literary classics are frequently mobilized as symbolic capital in domestic and foreign policy narratives. While cultural diplomacy strengthens collective identity, it may also encourage selective interpretation of the past. Thus, the challenge lies in reconciling scholarly rigor with cultural policy objectives.

Results and Discussion. The analysis conducted in this study demonstrates that the contemporary problems of the history, language, and literature of Turkic peoples are not isolated academic issues but interrelated structural challenges shaped by historical legacy, political transformation, and globalization. The results indicate that historiographical fragmentation, linguistic modernization, and literary reinterpretation form three interconnected dimensions of a broader civilizational process. First, the reassessment of Turkic historiography reveals that the legacy of imperial and Soviet-era interpretations continues to influence contemporary academic paradigms. Although significant progress has been made in re-evaluating early Turkic statehood—particularly through the study of the Göktürk Khaganate and related epigraphic sources—the methodological framework often remains reactive rather than innovative. The results suggest that comparative Eurasian approaches, integrating steppe studies with global imperial history, provide a more balanced understanding of political continuity from early nomadic confederations to later imperial formations such as the Seljuk Empire and the Ottoman Empire. This continuity challenges outdated dichotomies between “nomadic” and “civilized” societies and supports the thesis that Turkic political culture contributed significantly to Eurasian governance models.

Second, the study highlights that linguistic transformation in the Turkic world reflects both modernization and vulnerability. The shift toward Latin alphabets in several Central Asian states has strengthened digital integration and international communication; however, it has also created generational divides in literacy and access to earlier literary corpora. The results show that language policy must balance modernization with preservation. A coordinated terminological development strategy across Turkic-speaking states could facilitate academic exchange and reduce





dependency on external linguistic frameworks. In this context, institutional cooperation within the Organization of Turkic States may play a strategic role in harmonizing educational standards and scholarly communication. Third, literary analysis demonstrates that classical texts such as Kutadgu Bilig and Book of Dede Korkut remain underutilized as sources of political philosophy and ethical thought. The findings suggest that these works should not be confined to folkloric or symbolic functions but examined as intellectual foundations of Turkic political culture. Modern reinterpretation through interdisciplinary frameworks—combining literary criticism, political theory, and memory studies—can reveal new dimensions of Turkic civilizational identity. At the same time, contemporary Turkic literature faces the dual pressure of national consolidation and global integration. The relatively limited translation of Turkic literary works into major world languages restricts their participation in global cultural discourse, which underscores the necessity of translation policies and international literary collaboration. The discussion further indicates that identity formation remains a central theme linking history, language, and literature. In many Turkic-speaking countries, cultural heritage plays a strategic role in state-building and foreign policy narratives. While such mobilization strengthens collective cohesion, it also risks politicizing scholarship. Therefore, maintaining academic autonomy while contributing to national cultural development represents a delicate but essential balance. Overall, the results confirm that the future of Turkic studies depends on methodological innovation, interdisciplinary cooperation, and transnational academic networking. A shift from reactive historiography toward proactive theoretical production is necessary. Rather than merely correcting past distortions, Turkic scholarship should aim to contribute original concepts to global debates in history, linguistics, and literary theory.

Conclusion. The present study has demonstrated that the actual problems of the history, language, and literature of Turkic peoples are deeply interconnected and rooted in both historical experience and contemporary transformation. The reassessment of historiography, the modernization of linguistic systems, and the reinterpretation of literary heritage are not separate processes; rather, they constitute different dimensions of a broader civilizational rearticulation occurring across the Turkic world. The analysis confirms that one of the primary challenges in Turkic historical studies remains





methodological. Overcoming inherited imperial and ideological frameworks requires not only corrective reinterpretation but also the development of independent theoretical models capable of situating Turkic political and cultural evolution within global historical discourse. A comparative Eurasian perspective, combined with interdisciplinary methodology, offers promising opportunities to redefine the role of Turkic polities in world history. In the linguistic sphere, the tension between modernization and preservation continues to shape language policy and academic communication. Alphabet reforms, terminological development, and digital integration have opened new horizons for international cooperation, yet they also risk weakening continuity with earlier literary and scholarly traditions. Sustainable linguistic policy must therefore integrate innovation with cultural memory, ensuring both global competitiveness and historical depth. Literature, as a repository of collective consciousness, occupies a central position in this transformation. Classical texts represent not merely monuments of the past but living intellectual resources capable of informing contemporary ethical, political, and cultural debates. At the same time, modern Turkic literature must navigate the dual imperative of preserving national identity while engaging with global literary currents. Expanding translation initiatives and fostering cross-cultural academic exchange will be essential for increasing the international visibility of Turkic intellectual production. Ultimately, the challenges identified in this article should not be viewed solely as obstacles but as opportunities for intellectual renewal. The strengthening of transnational scholarly networks, coordinated research initiatives, and institutional collaboration among Turkic-speaking countries can transform Turkic studies into a dynamic and influential academic field. By combining historical awareness, linguistic resilience, and literary creativity, the Turkic world possesses the intellectual capacity to contribute original perspectives to contemporary global debates on civilization, identity, and cultural continuity.

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