A NOTE ON THE TERMS RÜM AND ANATOLIA 
IN SELJUK AND EARLY OTTOMAN TIMES*

In the last twenty years or so scholarship has considerably advanced the study of Byzantine - Seljuk and Byzantine - early Ottoman relations in the westernmost Asiatic peninsula of Anatolia (Turk. Anadolu) or Asia

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Minor, i.e. roughly the area of the modern Turkish state\(^1\). Specialists on medieval Graeco-Turkish relations, like Claude Cahen and Speros Vryonis, have conclusively expounded the view that Byzantines and Seljuks were not only bitter opponents on the battlefields of Manzikert (1071), Myriokephalon (1176) and Antioch-ad-Maeandrum (1211), but also that they partook in mutual cultural exchanges and influences, which derived from their highly advanced Christian and Moslem-Iranian cultures and civilizations. Scholarship concludes that frequent contact between the Byzantine populations of Asia Minor and the Seljuks of the Sultanate of Rûm with their Moslem or pagan subjects (i.e. the Turkophone nomadic tribes, the Turkomans, Turk. Türkmenler) from the mid-eleventh century onwards, gradually established a considerable amount of an «interplay» and mutual influences in almost every aspect of everyday life, in administration, in art and architecture, in letters and the sciences, in philosophical thought, in religion, in social customs and in various other institutions\(^2\).

The crucial issue whether Greek-Christian culture decisively influenced the Seljuks in the formation of their state (Vryonis), or whether the Moslem element became prépondérant during the process of Anatolia’s islamization (Cahen and Osman Turan) will doubtlessly be further advanced by future scholars\(^3\), although a closer parallel study of Byzantine and


Seljuk or early Ottoman institutions and their mutual influence seems to justify the former viewpoint. The very fact that the Seljuks themselves referred to their territories as Sultanate of Rûm, i.e. of the «Roman» (= Byzantine Greek) lands, and to the area it occupied as Anadolu (deriving from the Greek word for «East»). 'Ανατολή) provides strong corroborative evidence for the extent of the Seljuks' debt to Byzantium. This note attempts a brief discussion of the terms Rûm and Anatolia and their various connotations in Seljuk and early Ottoman times (eleventh-fifteenth centuries).

The term Rûm, denoting the Seljuk Sultanate of Asia Minor with its capital initially at Nicaea (Iznik) from A.D. 1080/81 to 10974, and then to Ikonion (Konya) from the early twelfth century onwards5, while also designating the Greek Christian inhabitants of Asia Minor according to the information provided by various Moslem authors, like Ibn Bibi, Efikali, Ibn Battutah and Evliya Chelebi6, had its origin in an old Arabic term by which the Omayyads of Damascus and the Abbasids of Baghdad referred to «Rhomaic», i.e. Byzantine-Greek Anatolia7. There seems to be a con-


5. Taeschner, CMH, IV, 1, 741 ff.; A. Savvides, «Κυλιτζ Αρσλάν Α', Μασούτ Α'», MGEY.


nection — on account of the proximity of the Arab lands to Asia Minor— between the Arabic *Bilad al-Rum* (= lands of the Romans, i.e. Byzantines), and the old Greek term Ῥωμανία or Ῥομαίων/ῥωμαϊκαί χώραι, first attested in ninth century Byzantine sources. The Arabs themselves used to refer to Anatolia as *Natolu*, the Turks renamed it *Anadolu*, and the Latins (Frankish and Italian crusaders) rendered it *Anatolia*. A Koranic reference calls the Ῥωμαίοι *ar-Rum*, i.e. the Greeks, the Byzantines, a term which was later simplified as *Rûm* by the Moslem-Iranian Seljuks and the Osmanli Turks. The Turkophone Danishmendid emirs of Kaisareia (Kayseri) and Sebasteia (Sivas) also employed the terms Ῥωμανία and Rûm on their coinage («ἐμίρης ἀνατολικῆς Ῥωμανίας»). The late Paul Wittek correctly observed that much of the Byzantine-Greek character of Asia Minor survived the Turkish conquest and was — to a great extent — assimilated by the Seljuks and —later— by the

*Islamic Peoples* (New York 1973, repr. 1980) 258; C. Cahen, «The Turkish Invasion: The Selchukids», in K. Setton (ed.), *A History of the Crusades*, I (Madison Wisc. 196) 149-50; idem, *POT*, 144-45; D. Pitcher, *An Historical Geography of the Ottoman Empire from Earliest Times to the end of the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden 1972) 24 ff. and map VI. See also Taeschner’s important art. «Anadolu», *Elsl* 2, with excellent map, as well as the remarks by V. Gordlevsky, *Gosudarstvo Seldžukidov Maloi Asii* (= The Seljuk State of Asia Minor) (Moscow-Leningrad 1941) 125, 157, who also records that the word Ίκόνιον originates from the Greek word εικών, i.e. picture, image, portrait.


10. Ibid., 47 ff.
11. Ibid., 53 ff.
14. A. Savvides, *Byzantium - Near East*, 57 n. 5; idem, «Ντανισεμεντίδες», *ΜΓΕΥ*. 98
Osmanlis in their territories. As Wittek brilliantly put it, «it was only the Byzantine tarnish which vanished, to be replaced later on by an Islamic one. The local substratum remained»\(^{15}\). It certainly did, if we take into account the countless examples of Anatolian place-names, which from Seljuk times appear in variant forms of the Turkish language. Modern research has decisively proved that one of the most important cases of Byzantine influence over the Turks was that of toponymy; most of the medieval Turkish names for cities, towns, villages, mountains, rivers etc. (several among them surviving to our day) were simple transliterations or—in some cases—literal translations of the Greek originals\(^{16}\).

The names of the Anatolian Seljuk sovereigns, on the other hand, especially those of the successors of Kilij Arslan II after 1192, provide the best illuminating example for the existence of a Moslem-Persian character in Seljuk civilization. Their first names were almost invariably of Arabic origin, e.g. Ghiyath al-Din, Izz al-Din, Rukn al-Din or Ala al-Din, while their second names were unmistakedly taken from ancient Persian epic, e.g. Kay-khusraw, Kay-kawus, Kay-kubad etc. Taeschner and Cahen maintained that the system for the adoption of two names identifying these two distinct cultures, which merged into the Seljuk world, was introduced by Kilij Arslan II himself, who called his youngest son Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw, who in turn called one of his three sons Ala al-Din Kaykubad and another Izz al-Din Kaykawus\(^{17}\). The Byzantine authors of this period (chiefly second part of the twelfth-most part of the thirteenth century) were aware of those names, which often appear in the form of a hellenized adaptation in their accounts. The most frequent according to G. Moravcsik (\textit{BT}, vol. II) are:\(^{18}\)

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16. For a detailed treatment of this phenomenon see P. Wittek, «Von der Byzantinischen zu Türkischen Toponymie», \textit{Byzantion}, 10 (Brussels 1935) 11-64; also in Turkish transl.: «Bizanslılar Türklerle Geçen Yer Adları» (= Place Names taken by the Turks from the Byzantines), \textit{SAD}, 1, 139-246. See also the lists in A. Savvides, \textit{Byzantium - Near East}, 135-38.
18. For a complete list (with genealogies) of the Seljuk rulers of Rûm see A. Savvides, «Σελτζούκοι τοῦ Ρούμ», \textit{MGEY} (forthcoming). Byzantine authors also style the Seljuks of Rûm and the early Ottomans (mid-eleventh - early fourteenth
The term *Rûm* and the connotation it conveyed was also revered by the Ottoman conquerors of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, if we take into account the wish of sultan Bayazit I (1389-1402/3) to officially addressed to as *Sultan of Rûm*²⁰, as well as the orders of Murat II (1421-51) for the history of the glorious dynasties of Rûm to be written down. Murat’s court historiographer at Adrianople (Edirne), Yazidjioglu Ali, was to compile and continue the celebrated *Seljuk-nameh* of the thirteenth century Persian court chronicler at Konya, Ibn Bibi²¹.

*Rûm* as a term also appears in compound forms. According to Ibn Bibi²² the old Byzantine city of Theodosioupolis in the far eastern frontier zone of Anatolia was renamed *Erzurum* (*Erzerum*), which actually meant *Erd-i Rûm* or *Arzan al-Rûm*, that is, lands of the *Ῥωμαίοι* (= Byzantines)²³. One still wonders whether the south-eastern harboured stronghold of Iskenderun, the ancient Greek Alexandretta, has dropped to the form Iskenderun from an original *Iskenderum* (*Iskender al-Rûm*), conveying
the meaning of «lands of Alexander» (since the Persian name for Alexander the Great is Iskender)\textsuperscript{24}.

The origins of the term Anatolia, which was first used as such by the Latins, could well be associated with the old Byzantine Theme (military district) called 'Ανατολικόν (= Eastern) or τῶν 'Ανατολικῶν (= of the Easterners), founded in the seventh century and containing important centres such as Ikonion (Konya), Akroenon (Afyon Karahisar), Philomelion (Ak Shehir), Seleukeia (Selefke) and others, centering around its capital city of Amorion (Arab. Amuriyya). All those areas were later to become the core of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rûm\textsuperscript{25}. Another possibility, on the other hand, is that Anatolia was related to the Greek word 'Ανατολή (= East) and its derivatives ἀνατολικός (= eastern), ἀνατολικῶς (= eastbound), ἀνατέλλω (= rise [verb]) and ἀνατέλλων (= the rising [participle]), all conveying the meaning of east and sunrise\textsuperscript{26}. The archaic Greek word for 'Ανατολή was Ἔως or τὰ ἐδα μέρη/'Εδώ (= the eastern lands), a term by which ancient Greek authors as well as several early Byzantine chroniclers referred to the lands of the Orient, i.e. Asia and — more precisely — Asia Minor or Anatolia\textsuperscript{27}. According to Georgacas by the term Western Anatolia we should consider the area of the Smyrna hinterland, by Northern Anatolia the north-eastern coastal strip, the Marmaras region and the northern forest regions, by Southern Anatolia the southern coastal strip and forest regions and by Inner Anatolia the eastern plateau as far as the Armenian border and Azerbaijan\textsuperscript{28}.

In closing this note, it is evident from undeniable facts that the Moslem conquerors of Christian Asia Minor learned a lot from the conquered in

\textsuperscript{24} See details and refs. in T. H. Mordtmann, «Iskendarûn», \textit{Elsl}\textsuperscript{2}.

\textsuperscript{25} See the remarks by Georgacas, 45-7 & refs.; cf. A. Savvides, \textit{Byzantium- Near East,} 137 n. 2. According to the tenth-century Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (913-59), the Anatolikon theme began in the vicinity of Dorylaion (Eski Shehir), reached the Taurus Mountains in the south, and extended as far up as Ikonion: ed. A. Pertusi, Costantino Porfirogenito, \textit{De thematibus} (Rome/Vatican City 1952) 59 ff.

\textsuperscript{26} Georgacas, 35 ff.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 53. Georgacas also believes (p. 59) that the connotation of the word Levant, a popular way of referring to the Orient collectively, has its origins to the Italian levante, i.e. «the rising one», the east, where the sun rises. It is interesting to compare this with the modern Greek nautical term for the eastern wind: δὲ βάντες (!).
several aspects of administration, culture and everyday life matters. They adopted extensively the nomenclature and several institutions of Byzantium thus enhancing the conditions in their own states. «Anatolian Hellenism, or the medieval Greek cultural element of Anatolia», observes Vryonis, «was quantitatively and qualitatively significant during the Byzantine period. Thus, the Turkish conquest and Islamization of Asia Minor represent something more than a negative historical event, for the invaders had to subdue and absorb a vital society».