

= Turahan Bey =

Turahan Bey or Turakhan Beg (Turkish : Turahan Bey / Be? ; Albanian : Turhan Bej ; Greek : ??????????? , ?????????? ?????? or ??????????????? ; died in 1456) was a prominent Ottoman military commander and governor of Thessaly from 1423 until his death in 1456 . He participated in many Ottoman campaigns of the second quarter of the 15th century , fighting against the Byzantines as well as against the Crusade of Varna . His repeated raids into the Morea transformed the local Byzantine despotate into an Ottoman dependency and opened the way for its conquest . At the same time , his administration of Thessaly , where he settled new peoples , founded the town of Tyrnavos and revitalized the economy , set the groundwork for Ottoman rule in the area for centuries to come .

= = Life = =

Nothing is known of his birth date or early life , except that he was the son of Pasha Yi?it Bey , who conquered Skopje in 1392 and was the first Ottoman governor of Bosansko Kraji?te .

He is first mentioned in 1413 as governor of Vidin , and then again in 1422 , when he fought against the Byzantine governor of Lamia , Kantakouzenos Strabomytes . He was one of the supporters of Mustafa Çelebi during the latter 's struggle against Mehmed I and Murad II . He became governor of Thessaly in early 1423 , and led his first major expedition in May ? June of the same year , against the Peloponnese peninsula in southern Greece . His cavalry breached the recently rebuilt Hexamilion wall on 21 / 22 May and ravaged the interior of the peninsula unopposed . He attacked some Byzantine towns and settlements like Mystras , Leontari , Gardiki and Dabia . Aside from the plunder , the expedition was also probably a reconnaissance mission ultimately aimed against Venetian possessions in the area , as Venice was the main driving force behind attempts to unite the various Christian rulers of Greece against the Ottoman advance . Soon after , the Byzantine historian Doukas reports Turahan 's presence on the shores of the Black Sea . At about the same time , he also campaigned in Epirus , defeated local Albanian tribes and made them tributary to the Ottoman state . In the 1430s along with Ali Bey and Ishak Bey he participated in the campaigns that suppressed an Albanian revolt , led by Gjergj Arianiti and Andrew Thopia .

Despite the devastation visited upon the Peloponnese , Turahan 's 1423 expedition was only a raid , and the Byzantine Despots of the Morea were able to restore their position and gradually over the next few years bring the entire peninsula under their control . In 1431 however Turahan again breached and destroyed the Hexamilion and took Thebes in 1435 , to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Moreot Byzantines . The Despotate of the Morea , under the constant threat of renewed Turkish invasion clung on to a precarious independence only through continuous gifts and tribute to Turahan .

In November 1443 Turahan participated in the Battle of Ni? against John Hunyadi , which ended in an Ottoman defeat . During their retreat from Ni? , Turahan Bey and Kasim Pasha burned all villages between Ni? and Sofia . Turahan persuaded Sultan Murad II to abandon Sofia as well , and follow a consequent scorched earth strategy against the Hungarian advance . Although the Hungarians were badly mauled in the Battle of Zlatitsa , in a subsequent action at Kunovica they were able to capture Mahmud Bey , the Sultan 's son @-@ in @-@ law , creating the impression of an overall victorious campaign . Contemporary Ottoman sources blame rivalry between Kasim and Turahan for the defeat at Kunovica , while some claim that the Serbian Despot ?ura? Brankovi? bribed Turahan not to participate in the battle . Turahan fell from favour as a result and was banished by the Sultan to a prison in Tokat .

Nevertheless , he was soon restored to his position , as he was present in Murad 's 1446 campaign against the Morea . Murad was reportedly disheartened by the strength of the Hexamilion , but Turahan insisted on an assault . Aided by an artillery bombardment , the Ottomans again breached the Byzantine defences and ravaged the Peloponnese at will . As a result , the Morea was now officially reduced to an Ottoman vassal state . In early October 1452 , Turahan and his sons Ahmed and Ömer led a large force into the Peloponnese . Sultan Mehmed II ordered them to remain there

during the winter in order to prevent despots Thomas and Demetrios from assisting their brother , Emperor Constantine XI , during the Siege of Constantinople in 1453 . Turahan again stormed the Hexamilion and penetrated into the Morea , raiding from Corinth through the Argolid and Arcadia to Messenia . The Byzantines put up little resistance after Hexamilion , although Turahan 's son Ahmed was captured in an ambush at Dervenakia and imprisoned in Mystras .

The fall of Constantinople on 29 May 1453 had great repercussions in the Morea . The two despots , the brothers Demetrios and Thomas , heartily detested each other and were unpopular among their own subjects . A rebellion broke out against them in autumn , supported both by the local Albanian immigrants and the native Greeks , and spread quickly . As the Sultan 's vassals , the despots called upon Turkish aid , and Turahan 's son Ömer arrived in December . After a few successes , he departed after securing the release of his brother from captivity . The revolt did not subside , and in October 1454 Turahan himself was forced to intervene . After sacking a few fortresses , the rebellious populace capitulated . Turahan advised the two Palaiologoi to compose their differences and rule well , and then departed the peninsula . The two brothers were however unable to reconcile themselves , and soon reverted to quarrelling and conspiring with Western powers against the Sultan . In retaliation , Mehmed II campaigned in the Morea in 1458 and seized the northwestern half of the country , which became an Ottoman province under Ömer . The rest of the despotate followed in 1460 .

Turahan himself was recalled to Adrianople in October 1455 and died ca . August 1456 . He was buried at Kirk Kvak near Uzun Köprü in Thrace , but his memorial tomb (türbe) survives to this day in the city . His descendants , the Turahanoğlu , were wealthy landowners in Thessaly until the end of the Ottoman rule there in the late 19th century ; with the exception of his sons however , they did not rise to any wider prominence .

= = Legacy = =

Turahan Bey ranked among the great , practically semi - autonomous Ottoman " marcher lords " (uç beyi) of the 15th century Balkans , along the likes of Gazi Evrenos . He was instrumental in the establishment of Ottoman rule in Thessaly and central Greece in general . Aside from his campaigns of conquest , he brought in 5 000 Turkish settlers (Yörüks and Koniars) whom he settled in a string of twelve villages across the province to strengthen Ottoman military control . In addition , according to Turahan 's Arab language biography , which the Scottish traveller David Urquhart reported to be still extant in the 1830s in Tyrnavos , he was also the first to institute a Greek militia for the lawless mountainous regions of central Greece , the forerunners of the later Armatoloi .

Turahan also took several measures to restore order and prosperity in his province , most notably the foundation (or re - foundation) of the town of Tyrnavos , which before was a small pastoral settlement . To attract and protect the local Greek Orthodox population , he granted it special privileges , such as special administrative status as a waqf (a religious endowment) of the Sharif of Mecca , tax exemptions and the prohibition of Ottoman troops from passing through the town . He also endowed it with both a mosque (destroyed after the Greek annexation of Thessaly in 1881) and a church , St Nicholas Turahan , which survives to this day . Turahan also endowed many other public buildings such as mosques , monasteries , madrasas , schools , caravanserais , bridges and baths across the province . He also took care to maintain and foster the Thessalian cotton , silk and wool textile industry , to the extent that later generations attributed to him the introduction of new dye techniques based on yellow berries , madder and the kali plant , used in the manufacture of potash . From there these materials spread to the rest of Rumelia and thence to Western Europe .

= = Family tree = =

After Franz Babinger in the Encyclopedia of Islam :