

Mr. Timur Kocaoglu
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Dear Timur:

So many years have passed since we last met and talked! But I have always asked David and Tania how you are and how your studies in Turkology are progressing. Considering your rare abilities and insight, I have not been surprised to learn that your studies have been very successful.

Thus, it was a great pleasure to find out, when I first came to Washington in September, that you would soon be joining our Soviet Central Asian group, and especially that you and I would be working together on the compilation of a Kazakh-English Dictionary.

When I learned that you were hesitant to remove yourself and your family even from your present distance from the wellspring of Türkçilik, I must admit that my sympathy for your angst was mixed with regret. Spiritual identity is a deeply personal struggle. Good friends may populate our estrangement, and good research may calm our sense of futility. But in the private still moments, we only listen to our spirit, not to the lines we have written.

Garip kuşun yuvasını Allah yapar. We were very happy to hear that you have decided after all to come to Washington. I am sure your decision did not come easily, but I am confident that it is a wise decision, at least for the present stage of your career. The political situation in Turkey will continue to be confused and dangerous for some time. Turkological studies there, in any case, are "overinhabited", particularly with the influx of half a dozen Turkish specialists trained in Germany in the last decade (Semih Tezcan is especially good), and with the return of Turks from America (Fahir İz, Talat Tekin). It can be said with some accuracy that at the present time only our group, whose circle you will complete, will have the resources, training, and temperament to sustain research on Central Asia in the 20th century. That in itself makes your decision a fortunate and significant one to me.

I eagerly look forward to seeing you again and to our working together. Please convey my respects to your wife and children, whom I also look forward to meeting.

Yângi yilingiz qutluy bolsin!

Larry

Larry V. Clark
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