

2011

VOLUME I

57497

# CHRONICA

ANNUAL OF THE INSTITUTE OF HISTORY  
UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED



# CHRONICA

---

ANNUAL OF THE INSTITUTE OF HISTORY  
UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED  
HUNGARY



Editor-in-chief:  
*Lajos Kövér*

Editors:  
*Zsolt Hunyadi, István Zimonyi*

Editorial Board:  
*László Koszta, Tibor Almási, László J. Nagy,  
Enikő Sajti, Sándor Csernus*

Proof Readers:  
*Judith Everard (United Kingdom)  
Frederik Felskau (Germany)  
Pongracz Sennyey (USA)*

Articles appearing in the CHRONICA are abstracted in  
HISTORICAL ABSTRACT and AMERICA: HISTORY AND LIFE

---

ISSN 1588 2039  
Published by the Institute of History  
University of Szeged  
2. Egyetem u.  
H-6722 Szeged  
Hungary

e-mail: [chronica@primus.arts.u-szeged.hu](mailto:chronica@primus.arts.u-szeged.hu)  
<http://primus.arts.u-szeged.hu/chronica>

Printed in Hungary, on acid-free paper  
by E-press Ltd, Szeged

Copyright © 2011, by the authors and the editors

# Contents

ISTVÁN ZIMONYI	
Medieval Nomadic conference in the shadow of the Egyptian revolution (Fourth International Conference on Medieval History of the Eurasian Steppe. January 25-30, 2011. Office of the Hungarian Cultural Counsellor in Cairo 13, Gawad Hosni St. 2nd. Floor Abdin, Cairo) .....	3
FRANÇOISE AUBIN	
Two case studies of law and institutions in Chinggisid China (Yuan era)	6
LÁSZLÓ BALOGH	
Nicephorus Phocas and the Scythians .....	12
V. A. IVANOV and M. I. IVANOVA	
Geographical and political background of medieval nomads' settling in the steppes of Eastern Europe .....	18
JOHANNES STEINER	
Some remarks on the deaths of Mongol Khans ("Deathbed scenes" and supernatural incidents) .....	35
NIKOLAY RYBAKOV	
Materials of Yenisei Manichaeism .....	50
GYULA WOJTILLA	
Agriculture versus pastoralism in Indo-Aryan prehistory .....	62
TATIANA A. ANIKEEVA	
The <i>Kitab-i dedem Qorkut</i> as a source for the cultural history of the Oghuz Turks .....	71
VASCO LA SALVIA	
Germanic populations and steppe people (An example of the integration of material cultures. The diffusion of the stirrup in the eastern Merovin- gian area) .....	78
MIHÁLY DOBROVITS	
On some eastern parallels of the development and consolidation of the early Hungarian state .....	96
SZABOLCS POLGÁR	
The ethnonyms Turci, Turchi in the medieval (western) European Latin sources .....	104
KATALIN NAGY	
Scabbard accessories found in a tomb of the early Migration Period on Pácin-Szena-hill .....	113
SZILVIA KOVÁCS	
The origin of the Cumans in the Russian Primary Chronicle .....	125

HEINRICH HÄRKE and ANDREJ BELINSKIJ	
The 'elite plot' in the cemetery of Klin-Yar (Russia) (The emergence of a hereditary elite in the early Alanic North Caucasus?) .....	135
TAKASHI ŌSAWA	
A hypothesis on the etymology of the Old Turkic royal clan name Ašina/Ašinas and the transformation process in the early Abbasid period .....	145
L. N. ERMOLENKO	
On the Attributes of heroic virtue (valor, glory, heroic name) in heroic poetry and ancient Turk texts .....	154
S. A. TEPLOUKHOV, S. V. KISELYOV and L. YU. KITOVA	
Pioneers of archaeological research on nomads in medieval South Siberia.	161
AGUSTÍ ALEMANY	
Alans in Khazaria and Khazars in Alania (On the nature and role of North Iranian elements in the Khazar Empire) .....	168
VIRGIL CIOCÎLTAN	
Khalisen, Kabaren, Khasaren: Stamm oder Stand? .....	178
A. M. BELAVIN and N. B. KRYLASOVA	
Ancient Khakasses and the Permian Cis-Urals .....	193
ELMETWALI TAMIM	
Cumans and Russians (1055–1240) .....	198
MÁRIA IVANICS	
Die Frauen der Khane in der Goldenen Horde und in ihren Nachfolgestaaten .....	211



# *Medieval Nomadic conference in the shadow of the Egyptian revolution*

Fourth International Conference on Medieval History  
of the Eurasian Steppe. January 25–30, 2011.  
Office of the Hungarian Cultural Counsellor in Cairo  
13, Gawad Hosni St. 2nd. Floor Abdin, Cairo

ISTVÁN ZIMONYI



The Department of Medieval History at the University of Szeged and the Office of the Hungarian Cultural Counsellor organized the Fourth International Conference on Medieval History of the Eurasian Steppe in Cairo in January 25–30, 2011. The Medieval Nomads evolved from the conferences on the history of the Eurasian steppe in the Middle Ages held in 1997, 2000 and 2002 at the University of Szeged. These early conferences were the forum for the Hungarian historians and orientalists and their proceedings were published in Hungarian.

In 2004 it was decided to convene an International Conference on Medieval History of the Eurasian Steppe. The first conference of this kind was held in Szeged in 2004, the second in Jászberény in 2007 and the third in Miskolc in 2009 (Hungary). The proceedings have been published in *Acta Orientalia* (58: 2005) and *Chronica* (7–8: 2007–8).

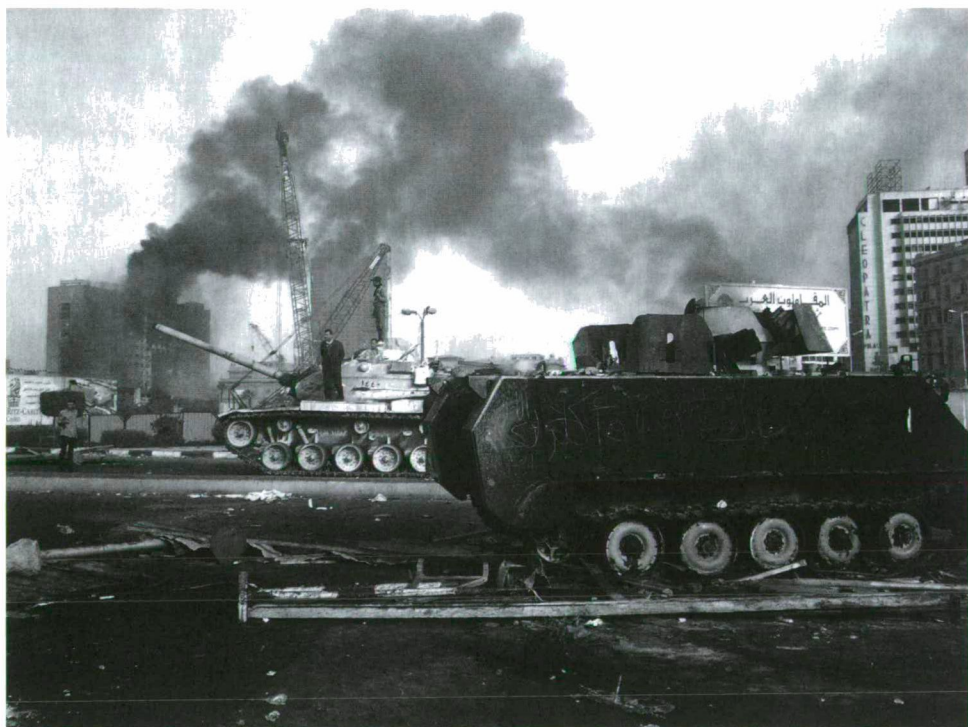
As I worked as the director of the Office of the Hungarian Cultural Counsellor in Cairo from 2007 until 2011 and I organized the former conferences with my colleagues, I decided to prepare a conference in Cairo.

The cooperation based on the idea that the nomadic people played an important role in the medieval history of Egypt and the Hungarian Kingdom. The formation of the Hungarian tribal confederation and its history until the conversion to Christianity was an integral part of the medieval nomadic history. Pecheneg and Ghuzz groups moved to the Carpathian Basin in the eleventh century. Cumans and Alans joined the Hungarian Kingdom in thirteenth century after the Mongol invasion and integrated into the kingdom. The medieval nomads of Eurasian steppe also played a major role in Islamic history of Egypt. The first independent Muslim dynasty of Egypt, the Tulunids were of Turkish origin in the ninth century (868–905). The Cumans known as Kun among Hungarians and Kipchaks in the Muslim sources had a strong impact on Egypt. The Kipchaks founded the Mamluk dynasty in Egypt, Syria and they brought prosperity for

Egypt and they could stop the attack of the Mongol Empire in Syria. The Bahri Mamluk dynasty (1260–1382) was of Kipchak origin.

The preliminary program of the conference included 45 lectures and the participants came from France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Japan, Russia, Turkey besides the Egyptian and Hungarian historians.

On 25 January 2011 the majority of conference participants was received at Cairo airport. The first working day started at 10 o'clock on 26 January, as the cultural counsellor I welcomed the participants and opened the conference. Professor András Róna-Tas made preliminary remarks on the study of present stage of nomadic peoples of Eurasian steppe and tributed commemoration to the late Professor Denis Sinor, the pioneer of this field of research. Mihály Dobrovits informed the participants about the process of publication of the proceedings of the former conference. Then the lectures were read till 6 pm in the Great Hall of the Cultural Office. On the way to the hotel in the evening we realized the unusual present of riot police around Tahrir-square. As the news of protests and demonstrations came continuously I decided to organize two sessions on 27 January to finish the professional work. 37 lectures were delivered from 15 countries (France, Germany, Hungary, Austria, Italy, Spain, Egypt, Russia, Ukraine, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Tuva, Japan, Armenia, Turkey), historians, archaeologists and orientalists were involved. The majority of presentations followed by lively debate.



*Photo by Heinrich Härke, 29 January 2011 Cairo, Tahrir*

By 6:30 we finished the lectures and a reception was held in a fish restaurant in the evening. As the next day was Friday, the Muslim week-end and a huge demonstration was announced in Downtown, we organized an excursion to the pyramids of Dakhshur, Sakkara and Giza. At Giza we saw people in the streets after the *khutba* 'Friday preach'. On the way back to the hotels our buses ran into a mass protest on the July 26 bridge next to Zamalek. The protesters were attacked by the riot police with tear gas. We had to retreat and the bus drivers could find a roundabout way to the other bridge to approach Zamalek, so we could reach one of the hotels for the participants, but the other hotel was in Downtown in the vicinity of Tahrir Square, the centre of demonstrations and the bus driver could not risk to go there. Thus, the participants of the conference living in Zamalek shared their rooms with those who could not leave for their hotel. The internet and mobile services were shut down by the government, the participants could use the landline of the hotel to inform their relatives at home. From 6 p.m. the government introduced curfew. Next morning the colleagues living in the hotel of the Downtown could go home. Originally we planned to visit the Egyptian Museum and the Museum of Islamic Arts, but the situation was quite dangerous as the police left the streets uncontrolled and the prisons were opened. I advised the participants to leave Cairo as soon as possible. Most of them safely left Cairo on 30 January, Saturday.

I express special thank to my colleagues from the University of Szeged, Szilvia Kovács, Balázs Sinkovics and Katalin Nagy and my colleagues at the Office of the Cultural Counsellor Tímea Ficsor, Aisha Ibrahim, Abdallah Abdel-Aty, Shawky Sayed Mohamed, Abdel Mokhsen and Mohammad Allam for their work during the conference. As for the publication, I thank to Zsolt Hunyadi who made extraordinary efforts for editing the proceedings of the conference.

As a historian it was an extraordinary experience, the historians usually study the important events of the past from their present point of view, but it is another case when you feel the breeze of history on your skin.

*Szeged, March 2011*

# *Two case studies of law and institutions in Chinggisid China (Yuan era)\**

FRANÇOISE AUBIN

*(Emeritus Director of Research at the National Centre  
for Scientific Research, CNRS, Paris)*



Take any textbook on Chinese history issued by the People's Republic of China for the enlightenment of foreigners: it features Genghis Khan as the sovereign of a "Chinese minority" who dominated China for a relatively short while and brought with them nothing less than chaos. As a rule any general history of China, whether published during the Republican era or later, sees the period of Mongol domination as a kind of hiatus in the course of Chinese history. Moreover, a period of time as short as possible is granted to it: as the first mark of prejudice against it, its beginning is almost invariably set between 1277 and 1279, which was the time of the final collapse of the southern Song dynasty. This fails to take into account the fact that the Chinggisids began to rule the region of Beijing in 1215 before finally dominating the whole of northern China in 1234, after the fall of the Jürchen Jin dynasty. If they reigned for less than one century over southern China, they nevertheless had control of northern China for about a century and a half.

If we try to characterize the peculiarities of the Mongolian administration in China, we find the importance of military management during the first steps of their domination, and in the long term the overlapping of military and civilian functions. An example is the case of the very important post of the *darughachi*, "one who impresses the seal", a key institution at both the regional and local levels.<sup>1</sup> The ethnic variety of the military establishment is surprising, being filled not only with Mongols but also with a great number of foreigners and even of Chinese. From an administrative point of view, another specificity was the piling up of multiple hierarchical and geographical levels of governmental units, which encouraged a trend towards decentralization.

---

\* Many thanks to Mrs Ann. Eastell who kindly polished my English text.

<sup>1</sup> The central role of the *darughachi* / *daruyacı* under Mongol rule is the subject of Elizabeth Endicott-West, *Mongolian Rule in China: Local Administration in the Yuan Dynasty*, Cambridge MA 1989.

Among the diverse institutions typical of the pre-Yuan and Yuan periods, I have chosen to concentrate on two. One presents a distinctively nomadic overtone – a system of infeudation in northern China which is unique in the history of China. The second is definitely Chinese in its purpose – the provincial administrative and judiciary surveillance system. Here I give the content of my talk at the Cairo conference, while a more detailed treatment of the subject, with full references, can be found in a future issue of *Acta Orientalia*.<sup>2</sup>

### *The system of enfeoffment*

We do not need to insist on the fact that all the countries conquered by the armies of Genghis Khan were supposed to be the Grand Khan's personal possessions, which he could allot freely to his near relatives in shares called *qubi*: at that time the subjugated peoples were nothing more than slaves pertaining to the holder of this gift. Before long, however, it occurred that one of the dominated countries was a part of China. At that time the advisers of the conqueror of northern China, Muqali, happened to be Chinese warlords, referred to by the generic term of *shihou* 世侯, and the main counsellor of the Grand Khan Ögödei was a famous sinicized Khitan, Yelü Chucai (1189–1243). From that time on, the nature of infeudation changed under Chinese influence: the system adopted was called the *touxia* (投 or 頭下), a term designating the fief as well as its holder. In the form we are concerned with here, it was put into practice in northern China by Ögödei, mainly in 1236, for providing income to members of his family and to meritorious servants of the khan or their offspring, and organizing a nucleus of administration over the peasants of the Great Plain. Its implementation was prepared by a census of the population in the conquered Chinese territories, which was directed in 1236 by Shigi-Qutuqu (ca. 1180–ca. 1260), an adopted son of Börte, Genghis Khan's first wife.

An appanage *touxia* was made up of Chinese families living in a given district of northern China, the reward being not slaves, but a fixed tax imposed on the families. These families were called the *wuhu sihu* 五戶絲戶, "Five-Household Silk Households", because five households were bound collectively to pay one pound of silk yarn to their lord, besides a tax to the central government. Each appanage was thus quoted as "so many Five-Household Silk Households in such district". So, for the first time in 1236, the Mongolian emperor took a definite district as the basis for a gift. Nevertheless the fiefs were not the land itself, but following Mongolian custom, a certain number of the population (households) living on it; and the compromise between Chinese and Mongolian habits is evident in the fact that these entrusted people were not slaves but payers of taxes.

It seems that everything has been researched about this system and the changes in its taxation experienced over the course of one hundred and thirty years.

---

<sup>2</sup> Besides an immense gratitude to our host, the Hungarian Cultural Counsellor in Cairo, Professor István Zimonyi, I wish to express all my thanks to the editors of *Chronica* and of *Acta Orientalia* who both agreed to publish my articles on the *touxia* and the *anchasi/lianfangsi* systems.

But the case remains worthy of examination in the context of the meeting of Chinese and Mongolian political traditions in the thirteenth century. Thanks to the "Economic Treatise of the Yuan History", we have a list of all the appanages – that is an allocation of certain taxes – granted to one hundred and fifty-four family branches during the Mongolian rule in China. The name quoted is the name of the founder of the branch whose close kinship with the Grand Khan or his services were the cause of the gift and who was supposed to benefit in his lifetime or, more often, after his death from the imperial liberalities – in each generation a son appears as his father's representative, so that sometimes it is difficult to know who was the real beneficiary by 1236. If we consider the distribution in 1236 and take into account only the appanages significant for their size, we find twenty-five grantees whose grant of a *touxia* ranges from eighty thousand households to a little more than nine thousand.

A subject of contention at the time of the census was the definition of a household. The Mongol point of view was that every male adult – over fifteen years – was supposed to be the head of a household. However, Yelü Chucai demonstrated to Ögödei that in China several generations lived under the same roof, in such a way that one household ought to include all the inhabitants of a house: that was a way to reduce the burden of tax on the peasants; and he was listened to. But although the counsellor explained the benefit of administrative centralization, Ögödei adamantly maintained his requirement of independence for the fief holders. Later on, the fight between them and the government began when Qubilai tried to impose centralization in the Chinese way, but it amounted to virtually nothing: the holders of large appanages remained, at least until the end of the dynasty, lords in their domain.

The list of the beneficiaries of *touxia* and the amount of their share also give an insight into the factual history of the Chinggisids during the first decades of the thirteenth century. The questions are: who received what, and why? For example, an interesting case is supplied by the most significant allotment, eighty thousand households in Zhending *lu* 真定路 (in Hebei), which was given, according to the "Economic Treatise of the Yuan History", to Ariq-Böke. This piece of information is quite unexpected, as Ariq-Böke, a grandson of Genghis Khan and the younger brother of Qubilai – later his fierce enemy and rival from 1259 – is merely a nephew of Ögödei, yet the fief is a very large one. Anyway, we know that he actually held a fief in Zhending *lu* under the reign of his older brother Möngke (1251–1259). But in 1236, Ariq-Böke was no older than eighteen years at most and none of his brothers received anything at that time. The solution is supplied by the "Main Annals of the Yuan History": the beneficiary of the Zhending fief was the "Empress dowager", certainly the famous Sorqaqtani, the widow of Tolui, the mother of Möngke and Qubilai. Therefore, Ariq-Böke appears to have been in the privileged position of the youngest son linked to that of his widowed mother. Tolui himself was the youngest son of Genghis Khan and Börte, and when he died in 1232 at the early age of about forty years, it was common knowledge among the Mongols that this death was a voluntary act on his part, to take the place of his brother the khan, threatened by the vengeful spirits of the defeated Jürchen

Jin dynasty. Ögödei, highly indebted to his sister-in-law, gave her all the appanages of Tolui and in 1236 the most important fief in northern China. When she died in 1252, her fief was transmitted to her youngest son Ariq-Böke in the normal way. The principle of ultimogeniture, often coupled with the widowed mother's power, was an important factor in the political and social history of the thirteenth century and remained deeply implanted in customary practices until the present day: this is a lesson taught by the first case of the 1236 list of *touxia*. And there are many others.

### *The system of provincial and local administration and judiciary*

Let us turn now to the system of provincial and local administrative and judiciary surveillance which left its trace in the centuries following the collapse of the Yuan dynasty in 1368. Popular historians generally consider authoritarianism and despotism as the unavoidable result of Mongol domination, especially in Russia and China. For China the idea is that the significant strengthening of authoritarianism in the Ming and Qing eras was the outcome of the politics of administrative surveillance enforced by the Yuan. What do the overabundant Chinese sources allow us to detect?

As soon as Qubilai was elected Grand Khan under the guise of a Chinese emperor, he had the ambition, like any other founder of a Chinese dynasty, to emulate the administrative system of the Tang and Song; but, as had been usual in the course of two millennia, the formal names and titles handed from one dynasty to another hid different realities. Under the guidance of his Chinese or sinicized counsellors, in 1268 Qubilai instituted a Censorate, later with two detached provincial branches. One year later, to help to carry out the work at the provincial and local levels, he created the Regional Investigation Offices, first named the *ti-xing anchasi* 提刑按察司, then in 1291 the *suzheng lianfangsi* 肅政廉訪司: these offices are the object of the present reflection.

There were twenty-two such offices, each responsible for a broad geographical region created for the purpose under the name of *dao* 道 ("the way", here a "circuit"). The major task officially assigned to the censorates and the regional offices dependent upon them was the denunciation of illegalities, essentially acts of bribery, corruption and exaction, in order to impede civil and military officials from plundering the people. They had, moreover, various duties of control and later they received as an extra charge the burden of the encouragement of agriculture which encompassed not only the promotion of agriculture and sericulture, the planting of mulberry trees, the management of water resources, and the establishment of relief granaries for preventing famine, but also the good management of the small local communities, the *she* 社 – a specificity of Yuan administration since Qubilai – where basic education in local schools was strongly advised. Also, in the balance, they must call for all the available talents and recommend to virtuous and scholarly men, especially in southern China after the fall of the Song. The name of the second generation of this institution, the *suzheng lianfangsi*,

entails the idea of respectability, rigour and probity which were expected from the employees of these offices, called "the eyes and the ears of the emperor".

Who were these officials? Happily for historians, the Chinese *literati* were great producers and consumers of all kinds of biographies. Some decades ago, when I was researching the history of these Regional Investigation Offices, I collected two hundred and eighty-one cases of persons, generally very distinguished, who at one time or another had filled a post in one of these offices. The breakdown of this number is interesting: one hundred and ninety-eight Chinese, that is more than two-thirds of the total, eighty-three non-Chinese, including thirty-four Mongols (so it would appear according to their name), seventeen Uyghurs, sixteen Tangut Xixia, eight Central Asian Muslims, four Jurchens, and two Khitans. Thus, the Mongols and their faithful non-Chinese helpers were present, but not overwhelmingly so. For many of them, Chinese as well as non-Chinese, their progress through a Regional Investigation Office was a stage in a brilliant career. Others, mainly Chinese, could spend their whole career in the field of the investigation or related areas. Generally they were *literati* trained in Confucianism (which did not impede them from following a religious creed, essentially Buddhism).

If they were of foreign origin, very often they were descended from military servants at the time of the conquests, that is at the third or the fourth generation, and had themselves the opportunity of getting a Confucian education and, obviously, a certain command of the Chinese language. For the Confucianists, the teaching of virtue to civil and military servants and the promotion of a natural economy were self-evident duties. This idea of virtue also appealed to the Mongols who until modern times have always loved moral precepts and advocated the virtues of loyalty and uprightness. The *Xiaojing* (孝經, "Classic of the Filial Piety") - a compendium of basic moral principles for young Chinese - was, even before the Chinggisids, a manual popular in the steppes through its translations into Xianbi, Khitan, Jurchen and Tangut. A Mongolian translation (in pre-classical language) was published sometime in the thirteenth century or the beginning of the fourteenth, and this text was used for the upbringing of the young imperial princes of each generation.

I do not wish to give a rosy picture of the Chinggisid rule in China and present that time as a paradise for human rights. We know that there were murders, suicides committed to escape political persecution, and imprisonment on false accusations. But these brutal illegalities did not interfere with the work of the censorial institutions: they were the fact of crude ambition at the upper level, especially in the financial field (the case of Ahmed is well known) and inside the imperial family. They were also the result of the permanent balancing act between preserving Mongolian traditions versus converting to Chinese ways of thinking and doing. We also know that from very early in their conquest of China, Mongolian rulers were well aware of the financial advantages to be drawn from farmers: if peasants could produce more, they would pay more taxes. Anyway, my argument is that, when creating a Censorate and the Regional Investigation Offices, Qubilai, who admired Chinese accomplishments and was aware of



the importance of personal merits, wished sincerely to improve the quality of life of his people. Contrary to the prejudice of historians unversed in the field of Mongolian studies, neither in the creation of these institutions nor in their functioning can we discover hints of a forceful introduction of despotism.

To strengthen my argument, I could summarize some conclusions on penal law in the Yuan era which I have already discussed elsewhere: the Mongolian penal law was based on principles and a spirit dramatically different from the Chinese ones and was certainly more humane. For example, basically it took into account the interest of the victim more than the benefit of the State.

In conclusion, China in the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth century was indeed a constituent part of Inner Asia, taking from it as much as giving to it, and not as a dominant power. Its administrative and judicial institutions made up extraordinarily complex systems in such a way that it is impossible to characterize them from outside with some stereotyped sentences talking of despotism and dictatorship. The reality is much more subtle and unexpected and still awaits deeper exploration into the biographies and the collection of judicial cases to be better defined, and then the flexibility of nomadic culture will become more conspicuous. Concerning the Yuan legacy in Chinese society, I would like to remind the reader that the Muslim communities, so solidly established all over China in modern times, had their roots planted under Mongolian rule in the Middle Ages.

# Nicephorus Phocas and the Scythians

LÁSZLÓ BALOGH



Hungarians conquered the Carpathian Basin in the late ninth century. From there they conducted numerous campaigns to both the East and West in the course of the tenth century. However, while the western campaigns are well known in the Latin sources,<sup>1</sup> the attacks against the Byzantine Empire, are mentioned in few sources. In the present paper, I would like to discuss a short source detail which have not yet been connected by historians to the Hungarians of the tenth century.

Byzantine sources of the Hungarian history in the ninth-tenth centuries – thanks to the meticulous and all encompassing work of the renowned Hungarian Byzantinologist, Gyula Moravcsik<sup>2</sup> – have hardly increased in number during the past decades. Recently, Ferenc Makk has collected the new sources concerning Hungarian history in the ninth-tenth centuries.<sup>3</sup> He mentioned only one sentence in the work of Joannes Skylitzes that Moravcsik did not know of, which refers to tenth-century Hungarians.<sup>4</sup> In 2009, István Baán drew the scholars' attention to a

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Fasoli, *Le incursioni ungare in Europa nel secolo X*. Firenze 1945; Sz. de Vajay, *Der Eintritt des ungarischen Stammebundes in die europäische Geschichte (862–933)*. Mainz 1968; Gy. Kristó, *Levedi törzsszövetségétől Szent István államáig*. [From the tribal confederation of Levedi to the state of Saint Stephen] Budapest 1980; M. G. Kellner, *Die Ungarneinfälle im Bild der Quellen bis 1150*. Studia Hungarica. Schriften des Ungarischen Instituts München. Bd. 46. München 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gy. Moravcsik, *A magyar történet bizánci forrásai*. [Byzantine sources of the Hungarian History] A Magyar Történettudomány Kézikönyve I. Vol. 6/b. Budapest 1934; Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*. I–II. Zweite durchgearbeitete Auflage. Berlin 1958; Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantium and the Magyars*. Budapest 1970; Gy. Moravcsik, *Az Árpád-kori magyar történet bizánci forrásai*. [The Byzantine sources related to Árpadian Hungarian History] Budapest 1988<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> F. Makk, "Külföldi források és a korai magyar történelem (X–XII. század)." [Foreign Sources and the Early Hungarian History (10–12th centuries)] in F. Makk, *A turulmárdártól a kettőskeresztig*, Szeged 1998, 95–96, 104–107, 112–114.

<sup>4</sup> Ioannis Scylitzae *Synopsis historiarum*. Recensuit I. Thurn. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5. Berolini–Novi Eboraci 1973, 305<sup>21–23</sup>; Jean Skylitzès *Empereurs de Constantinople*. Texte traduit par B. Flusin et annoté par J.-Cl. Cheynet. Réalités Byzantines 8. Paris 2003, 255. cf. F. Makk, "Új forrásadatok a X. század végi magyar–bizánci kapcsolatok értékeléséhez." [New sources on the Hungarian–Byzantine relationship in the tenth century] *A Nyíregyházi Jósza András Múzeum Évkönyve* 43 (2001), 271–274; F. Makk, "A bizánci fenyegetés árnyékában. Géza fejedelem politikai-vallási választása," [In the

Byzantine diploma which mentioned the destruction of Hungarian troops in the Byzantine Empire during the tenth century.<sup>5</sup> The number of new details is very limited.<sup>6</sup> Thus any information – even if it is very brief – serves as a valuable addition to our knowledge of Hungarians in tenth-century history.

The Byzantine army of Asia Minor proclaimed Nicephorus Phocas as emperor in 963. He told them that they should expect a serious civil war. Previously they fought bravely against Cretans, *Scythians* and Arabs, but they now had to fight against their countrymen.<sup>7</sup> The three examples of related events were certainly known to the soldiers.

Nicephorus Phocas' army invaded the island of Crete in the summer of 960. The besiegers conquered the capital city, Kandia, in 961. As a result of the victory, after one and a half centuries of Muslim rule, the island again fell under the control of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>8</sup> Almost simultaneously, Nicephorus Phocas's brother, Leon Phocas took a part of the Byzantine troops from the Balkans to Asia Minor. Exploiting the fact that most of the Byzantine army was on the island of Crete, Sayf al-Dawla, the prince of Hamdanids carried out more attacks against the border of the Byzantine Empire in Asia Minor. When Emperor Romanus II found out about this, he sent Leon Phocas, who previously had successfully defended the Balkans' border of the Empire, to Asia Minor fighting against the Muslims. Leon Phocas's troops defeated Sayf al-Dawla's army when they returned home with booty and numerous Byzantine prisoners on 8 November 960. In the course of the attack the prince barely escaped due to his ingenuity. Subsequently Leon Phocas went to Constantinople, which held a triumph in his honor.<sup>9</sup>

shadow of the Byzantine threat. The politico-religious choice of prince Géza] *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 114 (2001), 130–138. cf. Хр. Димитров, *Българо-унгарски отношения през средновековието*. София 1998, 80, 358.

- <sup>5</sup> I. Baán, "Újabb lehetséges adalék a magyarok balkáni kalandozásaihoz." [Another possible datum to the campaigns of the Hungarians in the Balkan] in *Fons, skepsis, lex. Ünnepi tanulmányok a 70 esztendő Makk Ferenc tiszteletére*. ed. T. Almási-É. Révész-Gy. Szabados, Szeged 2010, 21–25.
- <sup>6</sup> L. Balogh, "A New Source on the Hungarian Raids against Byzantium in the Middle of the Tenth Century." *Chronica* 7–8 (2007–2008), 16–25; L. Balogh, "The Turks in the *Vita Sancti Athanasii Athonitae*. Vardariota-Turks or Hungarians?" *Chronica* 9–10 (2009–2010), 15–25.
- <sup>7</sup> *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis Historiae*. ed. C. B. Hasii, Bonnae 1828, 42<sub>21</sub>–43<sub>1</sub>; *The History of Leo the Deacon. Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century*. Introduction, translation, and annotations by A.-M. Talbot and D. Sullivan with the assistance of G. T. Dennis and St. McGrath, Washington 2005, 93.
- <sup>8</sup> *Leonis Diaconi Historiae* 7<sub>9</sub>–16<sub>23</sub>, 17<sub>1-2</sub>, 24<sub>9</sub>–29<sub>2</sub>; *The History of Leo the Deacon* 60–70, 76–81; Ioannis Scylitzae *Synopsis historiarum* 249<sub>24</sub>–250<sub>47</sub>; Jean Skylitzes *Empereurs de Constantinople* 210. vö. L. Bréhier, *Vie et mort de Byzance*. Paris 1969, 178–179; G. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Staates*. München 1963, 237; G. Schlumberger, *Un empereur byzantin au dixième siècle Nicéphore Phocas*. Paris 1890, 46–98; E. Ekkehard, *See-krieg und Seepolitik zwischen Islam und Abendland*. Berlin 1966, 341–342.
- <sup>9</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 17–24<sub>8</sub>; *The History of Leo the Deacon* 70–76; Ioannis Scylitzae *Synopsis historiarum* 250<sub>47-61</sub>; Jean Skylitzes *Empereurs de Constantinople* 211; Schlum-

Following the successful campaign against Crete, Nicephorus Phocas continued the war against the Hamdanids. As a result, the capital of Sayf al-Dawla, Aleppo fell into the hands of the Byzantines in 962 with the exception of its citadel.<sup>10</sup> It appears that the fighting against Cretans and Arabs which is mentioned in Nicephorus Phocas' speech refers to these two victorious wars. It is obvious that Nicephorus Phocas (or Leon Diaconus, who attributes the speech to him) wanted to refer to well-known, recent events in the case of the war against the *Scythians*.

Leon Diaconus used the *Scythian* name to indicate a number of peoples who lived then or at once in *Scythia*, north of the Danube area and the Black Sea. It was him who called the Bulgarians,<sup>11</sup> the Hungarians<sup>12</sup> and the Russians,<sup>13</sup> and in general the peoples living in *Scythia* (which in some cases perhaps also included the Pechenegs) all *Scythians*.<sup>14</sup> The question is raised, however, which of these peoples were defeated by the Byzantine soldiers?

Bulgarians cannot be identified with these *Scythians*. There was peace between the Byzantine Empire and Bulgaria around this time, which only ended after the Nicephorus Phocas occupied the throne.<sup>15</sup> Thus it is not surprising, that the collection containing the Byzantine sources of Bulgarian history does not mention the emperor's speech.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, we know of no Russian or Pecheneg attacks in the 950s reaching the Byzantine Empire.<sup>17</sup>

berger, *Un empereur byzantine*, 131-146; G. W. Freytag, "Geschichte der Dynastien der Hamdaniden in Mosul und Aleppo." *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 11 (1857), 195-197; E. Honigmann, *Die Ostgrenze des byzantinischen Reiches*. Bruxelles 1935, 85-86.

<sup>10</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 29<sub>3</sub>-30<sub>8</sub>; *The History of Leon the Deacon* 81-82; Schlumberger, *Un empereur byzantine*, 155-250; Bréhier, *Vie et mort de Byzance*, 179-180; Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Staates*, 243; Freytag, *Geschichte der Dynastien der Hamdaniden*, 197-203.

<sup>11</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 61<sub>19-20</sub>, 123<sub>10</sub>, 173<sub>3</sub>. cf. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, 2: 280.

<sup>12</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 18<sub>22</sub>, 19<sub>5</sub>, 10; Moravcsik, *Az Árpád-kori magyar történet*, 72. cf. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, 2: 280.

<sup>13</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 143<sub>10</sub>, 143<sub>12</sub>, 143<sub>15</sub>, 144<sub>12</sub>, 145<sub>4</sub>, 148<sub>5</sub>, 148<sub>11</sub>, 149<sub>3</sub>, 149<sub>11</sub>, 149<sub>13</sub>, 152<sub>17</sub>, 152<sub>23</sub>, 153<sub>4</sub>, 153<sub>12</sub>, 153<sub>14</sub>, 153<sub>19</sub>, 153<sub>24</sub>, 154<sub>16</sub>, 155<sub>2</sub>, 155<sub>10</sub>, 156<sub>18-19</sub>, 157<sub>12</sub>. etc.

<sup>14</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 77<sub>7-9</sub>, 108<sub>11-16</sub>, 109<sub>7-1117</sub>. cf. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, 2: 280.

<sup>15</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 61<sub>12-6212</sub>; *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 109-110; S. Runciman, *A History of the First Bulgarian Empire*. London 1930, 198-200, 303-305; J. V. A. Jr. Fine, *The Early Medieval Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century*. Ann Arbor 1989<sup>5</sup>, 181; Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Staates*, 242; Bréhier, *Vie et mort de Byzance*, 193-194.

<sup>16</sup> *Лъв Дякон, История. Увод, превод и бележки от Г. Цанкова-Петкова. in Гръцки извори за Българската история. VI. ed. И. Дуйчев et al. Fontes Historiae Bulgaricae* 10. София 1965, 246-247.

<sup>17</sup> Relations of the between the Byzantines and the Pechenegs in the tenth century: F. E. Wozniak, "Byzantium, the Pechenegs and the Rus': the Limitations of a Great Power's Influence on its Clients in the 10th Century Eurasian Steppe." *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 4 (1984), 299-316; E. Malamut, "L'image byzantine des pechenégues." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 88 (1995), 105-117; И. О. Князький, *Византия и кочевники южнорус-*

Therefore it is most likely that by a struggle against the *Scythians* we are to understand *Scythian* invasion which was successfully beaten back by Nicephorus Phocas brother's Leon Phocas, according the Leon Diaconus' work. According the unanimous opinion of historians, the same event was reported in one part of the *Vita Athanasii*.<sup>18</sup> Leon Diaconus mentions that when a *Scythian* army crossed the Danube, Leon Phocas did not immediately enter into a battle with them because he had only a very small army, instead, he was waiting for the appropriate moment and he attacked the opposing camp at night. The Byzantine troops killed many of the *Scythians*, while many others were forced to flee.<sup>19</sup> The *Vita Athanasii* mentions that Leon Phocas, who was the "commander of the West(ern affairs)" brought a serious defeat onto the *Scythians*.<sup>20</sup> The identification of the enemy is very clear in this case. The Byzantine sources reported an ill-fated attack by a Hungarian army.<sup>21</sup>

This campaign could be identical with the Hungarian campaign which had reached the Byzantine Empire in 961.<sup>22</sup> According to Theophanes Continuatus, Hungarian troops invaded the Byzantine Empire at the Easter of 961 (on 7 April, 961). Emperor Romanus II sent *Marianos Argyros*, who was the "commander of the West", to stop the attackers. The Byzantine general defeated the Hungarians, and forced them to return home.<sup>23</sup>

However, this view is hardly tenable. Scholars probably dated the Hungarian attack to be in the year 961 because this date was written on the margin of the text in the collection of sources.<sup>24</sup> However, it is not the date of the fight against the *Scythians*: it only indicates that Leon Diaconus's second book discusses the events of 961.<sup>25</sup> The Byzantine author only makes a brief mention of Leon Phocas's pre-

*cxux cmeneū*, Санкт-Петербург 2003, 11–36. Relations of the between the Byzantines and the Russians in the tenth century: S. Franklin-J. Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus (750–1200)*. London–New York 1996.

<sup>18</sup> P. Lenerle, *La Vie ancienne de saint Athanase l'Athonite composée au début de XIe siècle par Athanase de Lavra*. in *Le millénaire du Mont Athos (963–1963)*. I. Chevetogne 1963, 74. Note 47.; Moravcsik *Az Árpád-kori magyar történet*, 74. Note 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 18<sub>19</sub>–19<sub>12</sub>; *The History of Leon the Deacon*, 71–72; Moravcsik, *Az Árpád-kori magyar történet*, 72.

<sup>20</sup> *Vitae duae antiquae Sancti Athanasii Athonitae*. Editae a J. Noret. Corpus Christianorum. Series Graeca 9. Brepols–Turnhout 1982, A 55<sub>3-9</sub>, B 20<sub>3-9</sub>; *La Vie de Saint Athanase l'Athonite*, Chevetogne 1963, 37; Moravcsik, *Az Árpád-kori magyar történet*, 74, 76.

<sup>21</sup> Moravcsik, *A magyar történet bizánci forrásai*, 141; Moravcsik, *Az Árpád-kori magyar történet*, 74. Note 1.

<sup>22</sup> K. Szabó, *A magyar vezérek kora. Árpádtól Szent Istvánig*. [The Age of the Hungarian Prince from Árpád to St. Stephan] Pest 1869, 318–319; Moravcsik, *Az Árpád-kori magyar történet*, 69. cf. Kristó, *Levedi törzsszövetségétől*, 294–295; Gy. Kristó, *Az Árpád-kor háborúi*. [The Wars of the Arpad's Age] Budapest 1986, 44; P. T. Antonopoulos, "Byzantium, the Magyar Raids and their Consequences." *Byzantinoslavica* 54 (1993), 262.

<sup>23</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus*. Ex recognitione I. Bekkeri. Bonnae 1838, 480<sub>13-17</sub>.

<sup>24</sup> *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 19. cf. Szabó, *A magyar vezérek kora*, 318–319.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Leon Diaconi Historiae*, 18–28.

vious victory as the one that reveals his courage.<sup>26</sup> However, Leon Phocas left the Balkans in 960. Romanus II sent Leon Phocas to Asia Minor, because the commander fought successfully against the *Scythians*. Thus, he could not be fighting the *Scythians* in 961 or later.

The *Vita Athanasii* mentions that Leon Phocas visited Athanasios after having brought defeat onto the *Scythians*.<sup>27</sup> The source explains that first Athanasios met Leon Phocas, then he was tempted by the Devil for one year, afterwards he visited Nicephorus Phocas in Crete in 961.<sup>28</sup> This also suggests that the campaign against the *Scythians* took place in or before 960 but not in 961. According to the *Vita Athanasii*, Leon Phocas fought against the *Scythians* as commander of the West. But in 961 it was Marianos Argyros and not Leon Phocas who occupied this position.

Thus, it is obvious that Leon Phocas cannot have been fighting against the *Scythians* in 961. When did, then, Leon Phocas fight against the *Scythians*? And who were these *Scythians*?

Two Byzantine authors, Theophanes Continuatus and Pseudo-Symeon mention that the Hungarians (*Turks*) attacked the Byzantine Empire in 959. The emperor, Constantinus Porphyrogenitus, sent Pothos Argyros, the commander of a guardian army with general of Bukellarioi, Opsikion and Thrakesion, against them. The Byzantine troops attacked the Hungarians in the night and defeated them – just like Leon Phocas's troops in the story by Leon Diaconus. The Hungarian army was forced to return home.<sup>29</sup> The details of the campaign: a night attack, the year 959, the enemies (*Turks*, *Scythians* namely the Hungarians) it creates an impression that Leon Diaconus, Theophanes Continuatus and Pseudo-Symeon reported about the same war.<sup>30</sup>

Some problems, however, remain. Theophanes Continuatus only mentions Pothos Argyros but not Leon Phocas in relation with the war to the spring of 959. According to *Vita Athanasii*, Leon Phocas was the „commander of the West(ern affairs)“, but he was appointed to this rank by Romanus II, at the end of 959.<sup>31</sup> Assumptions are necessary to interpret of the sources. It is presumable that since Leon Phocas fought at the eastern and western borders of the Empire in 959–960, the *Vita Athanasii* did not exactly follow the rapid changes of his titles, sometimes identifying him as commander of the West already during the spring of 959. In such a mistake, a bibliography of a saint would not be unusual to some extent. It is also possible that the Byzantine chronicles only accidentally fail to mention Leon Phocas in relation with the fight of 959 (perhaps he would be the unnamed general of Bukellarioi, Opsikion and Thrakesion). The other possibility is that the sources do not speak of the same campaign. If we accept that Leon Phocas was

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Leon Diaconi Historiae* 107<sub>19</sub>–108<sub>9</sub>; *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 158.

<sup>27</sup> Noret 1982, A 55<sub>1-17</sub>, B 20<sub>1-23</sub>; *La Vie de Saint Athanase l'Athonite*, 37–38.

<sup>28</sup> Noret 1982, A 56<sub>1-60</sub><sub>28</sub>, B 21<sub>1-22</sub><sub>50</sub>; *La Vie de Saint Athanase l'Athonite*, 38–40.

<sup>29</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, 462<sub>19</sub>–463<sub>7</sub>, 746<sub>1-5</sub>.

<sup>30</sup> L. Petit, „La Vie de Saint Athanase l'Athonite,“ *Annalecta Bollandiana* 25 (1906), 29. Note 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, 472<sub>5-7</sub>.

the commander of the West when he fought against the Hungarians (his brother, Nicephorus Phocas was the general of Anatolia at this time),<sup>32</sup> then a Hungarian army again attempted to attack the Byzantine Empire in the beginning/early summer of 960. So Pothos Argyros and Leon Phocas defeated two different Hungarian armies using the same tactics<sup>33</sup> on two occasions.

After Leon Phocas gained victory over the Hungarian troops (959 or 960), Emperor Romanus II sent the successful general to the eastern border of the Empire. But the Hungarian attacks did not end. Again a Hungarian army invaded the Empire in 961. Although these raids were beaten back by the Byzantine army, but Byzantine soldiers were able to experience how dangerous their enemy was. In 963 Nicephorus Phocas mentions three dangerous enemies: the Arab warriors on the island of Crete, the army of Hamdanids in Asia Minor, and the *Scythians*, that is the Hungarians in the Balkans. He tells the truth; Hungarian troops regularly attacked the Byzantine Empire at this time.<sup>34</sup> Thus the short datum in speech of Nicephorus Phocas provides a piece of the colorful mosaic of the tenth-century history of the Hungarians.

---

<sup>32</sup> Noret 1982, A 22<sub>1-5</sub>, 28<sub>1-3</sub>, B 16<sub>1-3</sub>, 19<sub>5-6</sub>; *La Vie de Saint Athanase l'Athonite*, 33, 36. cf. Ioannis Scylitzae, *Synopsis historiarum*, 249<sub>24</sub>-249<sub>30</sub>; Jean Skylitzes *Empereurs de Constantinople* 210. *Theophanes Continuatus*, 462<sub>5-11</sub>. cf. N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes des préséances byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*. Paris 1972, 329.

<sup>33</sup> *Three Byzantine Military Treatises*. Text, Translation, and Notes by G. T. Dennis. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 25. Washington 1985, 139-140, 164-167, 190-197.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Ioannis Scylitzae, *Synopsis historiarum*, 276<sub>23</sub>-277<sub>31</sub>; Jean Skylitzes *Empereurs de Constantinople*, 232-233.; Moravcsik, *Az Árpád-kori magyar történet*, 69-71, 85-86.

# *Geographical and Political Background of Medieval Nomads Settling in the Steppes of Eastern Europe<sup>1</sup>*

V. A. IVANOV and M. I. IVANOVA  
(Ufa, Russia)



Beginning in the middle of the first millennium (the period of the Great Migration), the steppes of Eastern Europe became a territory subject to the periodic penetration of nomadic Turkic tribes of Central Asian origin. The Huns, the Avars, the Khazars and the Bulgars, conquering the western part of the Great Belt of the Eurasian steppes, created their own states and gradually dissolved into an ethnic array of tribes subjugated by them. Later came the Pechenegs, the Oguzes, the Kypchaks/Cumans/Polovetses, who although did not manage to create their own states made a noticeable impact on the ethnic and political history of Eastern Europe.

The modern climate of the steppes of Eastern Europe becomes softer from east to west. The steppes located to the east of the Volga are closer to the harsh steppes of the Asian part of the Great Belt of the Eurasian steppes. In physical-geographical terms the steppes to the east of the Volga and the Southern Urals region are a huge monotonous plain with an area of 750,500 square kilometers lowering from east to west, with a drop of altitude from 400 meters in the eastern part to 50 meters in the southwest (the Caspian Lowland). The land is gently undulating, with ridged ravines and the riverbeds of the steppe rivers. It has a distinct continental climate, arid and low in rainfall. Vegetation is herb-fescue-feather; shrub and tree vegetation is found mainly in the floodplains of the major rivers – the Volga and the Ural. There are also floodplain meadows rich in herbs. Much of the area is occupied by salt-marsh and solonchic soil.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, the climate of the steppes located to the west of the Don and the Azov Sea, though

---

<sup>1</sup> The article is written in accordance with the plan of research for the federal target program, "Ethnic and confessional history and linguistic heritage of the peoples of the Urals." Application 2010-1.1-300-151-037.

<sup>2</sup> F. N. Milkov, "Obshaja harakteristika prirody Chkalovskoy oblasti." *Ocherki fizicheskoi geografii Chkalovskoy oblasti*. Chkalov 1951, 22.



still continental, is mitigated by the impact of the Atlantic cyclones; with greater humidity and more varied and rich vegetation.<sup>3</sup>

Such is the climatic situation in the steppes of Eastern Europe today, and in fact, it was the same a thousand years ago, at the beginning of the second millennium. The results of paleo-agrological analyses obtained from the archeological sites of the Middle Ages on the territory of the southern Trans-Urals (the Arkaim Reserve), Orenburg region (the Kargalinsky mine, Pokrovsky, the Mustaevsky mounds), Samarskaya Luka, Mordovia (the Lyadinsky burial, tenth-twelfth century), in the Lower Volga region (the burial mounds of Olkhovka, Gusevka, Plemhoz Nedostupov, Petruninsky, Kostarevo, Avilovsky, Abganerovsky, Aksay, Malyaevka, Kolobovka and others) show that there have not been abrupt landscape (or presumably climatic) changes in the region for the last two or two and a half millennia.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the landscape situation that we can see now, and which is fixed on the available maps, without taking into account the human impact of the last two centuries, was also characteristic of the period we are interested in, that is, the first millennium and the first half of the second millennium.

However, describing the period of medieval development (eleventh-fourteenth centuries), soil scientists have noted the change from dry (similar to modern) soil conditions to more humid conditions. According to them, this period was characterized by the moistening of the climate, with a notable evolutionary transformation of the soil, accompanied by a very substantial improvement in its quality and increased natural fertility. The average annual precipitation was higher than at the present time, moist steppe began to extend to the south, and the semi-desert turned into dry steppe. There came the period of the "Medieval Climatic Optimum" which peaked in the thirteenth century, and which at the end of the fourteenth century was replaced by a period of a regular arid climate continuing up to the present day.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/es/90726/УКРАИНСКИЙ>.

<sup>4</sup> I. M. Batanina, „Prirodnye osobennosti 'strany gorodov'." *Arkaim. Po stranicam drevnei istorii Juzhnogo Urala* Cheljabinsk 2004, 155; M. I. Martines-Navarrete, H. M. Visent-Garsia, P. Lopes-Garsia, H.A. Lopes-Saec, I. de Zavala-Morenkos, P. Dias-del-Rio, "Metallurgicheskoe proizvodstvo na Kargalah I rekonstrukcija okruzhajushei sredy." *Rossiiskaja archeology* 4 (2005), 91; T.V. Tezikova, „Samarskaja Luka. Kratkaja fizico-geograficheskaja harakteristika vostochnoi chaste." *Samarskaja Luka v drevnosti. Kraevedcheskie zapiski. Vypusk III.* Kuibyshev 1975; O. S. Hohlova, „Morfologo-genetichesky analiz chronorjadov pochv kurgannyh grupp Pokrovka 1, 2 i 10 v 1995 godu." *Kurgany levoberezhnogo Iлека*, Vyp. 4. Moscow 1996, 66; A. A. Hohlov, O. S. Hohlova, „Paleopochvennye issledovaniya kurgannogo mogilnika Mustaevo V v Novosergievskom raione Orenburgskoi oblasti." *Archeologicheskie pamjatniki Orenburzhia*. Vypusk VII. Orenburg 2005, 58; R. F. Voronina, *Ljadinskie drevnosti. Iz istorii mordvy-mokshi. Konec IX-nachalo XI veka*. Prilozhenie 2. Moscow 2007; V. A. Demkin, T. S. Demkina, A. V. Borisov, A. S. Jakimov, I. V. Sergackov, "Izmenenie pochv i prirognyh uslovii polupustynnogo Zavolzhia za poslednie 4000 let." *Pochvovotdenie* 3 (2004).

<sup>5</sup> A. S. Jakimov, *Paleopochvy i prirodnye uslovija stepei Nizhnego Povolzhia v epohu srednevekovia (VIII-XIV vv. n.e.)*. Avtoreferat diss. kand. geogr. nauk. Moscow 2004; V.

The geography of monuments of the Oguz, Pecheneg, Polovets-Kypchak and the Golden Horde nomads currently identified in the steppes of Eastern Europe shows that the ranges of these tribal nomads were formed in close connection with the natural and climatic conditions of the landscape zone of their habitat – the steppes (or under their influence). At present in the steppes of Eastern Europe, from the South Urals (Mugodzhara mountain) to the Dniester river and the Lower Danube, we have accounted for 514 burials of the Oguz-Pecheneg era (tenth–eleventh centuries). They are located as follows (see Table 1 and Figure 1).

TABLE 1.  
*The distribution statistics of nomad burials in the steppes of Eastern Europe (%)*

Region	Oguz and Pecheneg	Kypchak/Polovets	The Golden Horde
Ural and Volga regions	32.1	13.3	63.2
The Volga-Don interfluve	13.6	15.1	9.8
The Don	15.3	15.4	6.9
The Ukraine	39.0	56.2	19.1
Total number of burials	514	383	720

Among the 514, there are 114 burials characterized by the following features:

- Burial of horse skin over a person, inside the grave or on a wooden floor (Figure 2);
- Presence of a *reshma* plaque, the main decoration of a horse-bridle headband, among the accompanying accessories;
- Presence of bird-like amulet pendants and *kopoushki* pendants in the decoration of female costume (Figure 3, 1–6, 14–16).

These features, according to the firm opinion of the majority of modern researchers of nomadic medieval monuments, characterize the Oguz funeral rite. Just over half (58%) of the burials with similar characteristics are located in the steppes of the southern Urals and Trans-Volga region and thus are naturally combined with the data of oriental authors of the tenth century. Ahmad ibn Fadlan (922) passed the territory of Oguz nomads at the northern slopes of Ust-yurt. His contemporary, al-Istakhri, placed “the boundaries of the Oguz country” to the west of Maverannah (between the Syr-Darya and the Amu-Darya), between the Khazars and Kimaks, the country of the Karluks and the Bulgars and the borders of Muslim countries from Jurjan to Farab and Isbidzhab. On the modern map this is quite a large area, from the upper Syr-Darya in the east to the northern Caspian Sea and the Lower Volga in the west. The same borders of the

---

A. Demkin, M. I. Dergacheva, A. V. Borisov, J. G. Ryskov, Oleinik S. A., “Evoljucija pochv i izmenenie klimata vostochnoeuropejskoj polupustyni v pozdnem golocene.” *Pochvovedenie* 2 (1998), 148–157; V. A. Demkin, A. V. Borisov, T. S. Demkina, T. E. Homutova, B. N. Zolotareva, N. N. Kashirskaja, S. N. Udalcov, M. V. Elcov, *Volgo-Donskie stepi i drevnosti b srednevekovie*. Pushino 2010, 83.

Oguz settlements are also mentioned by Ibn Hawkal (in the 970s). The Arab writers considered the Volga (the Itil, the Atil, the Khazar river) to be the western boundary of Oguz settlement in the tenth century. Thus, the works of al-Masudi († 956) testify to the fact that the Guz roamed the North Caspian region, between the mouths of two large rivers flowing into the Caspian (Khazar) Sea. According to al-Masudi, these are the Black Irtysh and the White Irtysh, actually corresponding to the Yaik (the Ural) and the Emba.<sup>6</sup>

A second group of burials containing the remains of a horse skin dating from the tenth century to the first half of the eleventh century in the steppes of Eastern Europe are represented by burials in which a horse's skull and leg bones lie on the left or right side of the human skeleton and on the same level (Figure 4). In total, we have accounted for 201 such burials (169 burials with horse bones on the left, 32 on the right). Their geography is inversely proportional to the geography of Oguz burials: 21.4% are located in the steppes of the Ural-Volga region. To the west of the Volga the frequency of occurrence of these graves increases: among 78.6% of the remaining burials, 12.9% were found in the steppes of the Volga-Don interfluvium, 15.4% in the Lower Don region, and 48.2% in the territory of modern Ukraine up to the Dniester in the west (Figure 1).

These territories, according to written sources, from the end of the ninth up to the middle of the eleventh century were the main area of the Pechenegs' settlement in the steppes of Eastern Europe. This was a consequence of the Oguz-Pecheneg wars at the end of the ninth century which were fought for possession of the steppes of the Trans-Volga and the Aral Sea region (according to al-Masudi and Constantine Porphyrogenitus).<sup>7</sup> The geographical distribution statistics of the Pecheneg burials to the west of the Volga River shows that much more rarely (12.9% of the total number of burials) they are found in the steppes between the Volga and the Don rivers, including the North Caucasus, that is, on the territory that in the first half of the tenth century pertained to the Khazar Kaganate. These data clearly explain the nature of the formation of "the Pecheneg oecumene" in the steppes of Eastern Europe: being expelled from the steppes of the Lower Trans-Volga and the Aral Sea region by the Oguz, who joined a military alliance with the Khazars, the Pechenegs

"fled and wandered round casting about for a place for their settlement; and when they reached the land which they now possess and found the Turks<sup>8</sup> living in it, they defeated them in battle and expelled and cast them out, and settled in it, and have been masters of this country, as has been said, for fiftyfive years to this day."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Materialy po istorii..., 1939, 166.

<sup>7</sup> A. V. Garkavi, *Skazanija musulmanskih pisatelei o slavjanah I russah*. Sankt-Petersburg 1870, 127; Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*. ed. Gy. Moravcsik, English transl. R. J. H. Jenkins. Budapest 1949.

<sup>8</sup> Here by "the Turks" the Magyars are meant.

<sup>9</sup> Constantine, *DAI*, 167.

This circumstance – the expulsion of the Pechenegs from the east of the Volga and the Aral Sea region – was turned to their advantage. After leaving for the west, the Pechenegs found themselves in more favorable climatic conditions, since they now occupied the bunch-grass steppe typical of the south of Eastern Europe with a milder climate and denser hydrological system. Another consequence of the Pechenegs' incursion into Eastern Europe was the ancient Magyars' conquest of their new homeland in the Carpathian-Danube basin, which happened due to the Pechenegs forcing them out of the basin of the Don and the Dnieper (the area of Levedia and Etelköz).

The Pechenegs' adversaries – the Oguz – were forced onto the dry and saline Volga-Ural steppes and semi-deserts. Obviously, it was the insufficient environmental capacity of the steppes east of the Volga and the Transural region that pushed the Oguzes to endless attacks on their former allies – the Khazars (al-Masudi) and the Muslim regions of Maverannah (Hudud al-Alam).<sup>10</sup>

The geographical statistics of monuments of the next, Kypchak-Polovtsian stage in the history of the nomads of Eastern Europe (second half of the eleventh to first half of the thirteenth century) shows that the Sary-Kypchaks (the Polovtsy/Cumans) in their movement to the west did not consider the steppe of the Ural-Caspian and the Volga region as the object of their expansion (see Table 1).

Like the Pechenegs, the Sary-Kypchaks migrated to the steppes of Eastern Europe because of the wars that happened in the steppes of Central Asia in the first half of the eleventh century. Retreating under pressure from the Khitans, a large group of Turkic tribes – the Cumans and the Kais – moved to western Siberia, northern Djungaria and north-east of the Seven Rivers. There they mingled with another group of Turkic tribes – the Sarys and the Basmyls. After being defeated in wars with the Karluks, the Cumans, the Kais, the Sarys and the Basmyls moved further to the west, and somewhere in the steppes between the southern Urals and the northern Aral region they faced the Cumans and the Shary-Polovtsy.<sup>11</sup> This conglomeration of nomadic Turkic tribes, in which the political leadership was soon transferred to the Kypchaks, moved further to the west, and in the middle of the eleventh century it dominated the steppes to the west of the Volga River (Figure 5).

The hallmarks of a funeral ceremony of the Kypchaks/Polovtsy (see Table 1) are: burial under an earthen mound (88.8%), with one burial in a mound (90%); half of these are "inlets" into the mound (54.2%); the burial pit is simple (50%); in 10% of burials a hardwood floor on grist graves was recorded; in 27% of burials the grave pit design is not established (usually in the inlet ones in the earlier mounds). In total, 52.5% of burials are accompanied by the remains of horse burial. Of these, 39% are the remnants of a horse (skull and leg bones). In 17% of the burials, a horse skin was placed on the left of the human body, in 9% of the burials on the right), and 13.5% contain a skeleton of a horse (8.1% to the left of a hu-

<sup>10</sup> V. Minorsky, *Hudūd al-‘Ālam. The regions of the World*. London 1937, 100–101.

<sup>11</sup> S. G. Klyashtorny, "Kimaky, kypchaky i polovtscy." *Istoriya tatar s drevneishih vremen*. Vol. 1. *Narody Stepnoi Eurazii v drevnosti*. Kazan 2002, 346.

man; 2.5% to the right, and 2% on the steps) (Figure 6). Parts of a harness (stirrups and bits), but without the horse, were found in 9.9% of burials.

The predominant orientation of the buried is western (33.7%) or eastern (21%). The orientation for other azimuths ranged from 8.6% to the north-east down to 1.2% to the south.<sup>12</sup> In 21% of burials the remains of plank coffins are recorded, and in 10.6% there were clay stucco pots.

Roaming the steppes of the Lower Don Basin and the Dnieper, the Kypchaks/Polovtsy drop out of sight of oriental authors, and therefore the main source of information about them until the middle of the thirteenth century comes from Russian chronicles. It is likely that the reason for the Sary-Kypchaks/Polovtsy choosing the mentioned areas as the main territory of their settlement in Eastern Europe is not only the low ecological potential of the steppes of the Ural-Volga region, but also the extreme ethno-political situation in the east of the Great Belt of the Eurasian steppes in the first half of the eleventh century, as was mentioned above.

Moving to the west, the grouping of the Cumans-Sary-Kypchaks attacked the Oguz, who as we have seen were nomads in the Aral Sea and the Volga River region, and forced them to go beyond the Volga. However, as noted above, the steppes of the Ural-Volga region were not attractive to the Sary-Kypchak tribes, and they continued to harass the Oguz until they and the Pechenegs were expelled from the steppes of the northern Black Sea and the Azov Sea. Thus, the steppes of the Volga and the Ural regions became the eastern and little-populated periphery of the Dasht-i-Kypchak or "Polovtsian field" (Figure 5). This, in addition to the geography of the Kypchak/Polovtsian burials in Eastern Europe, is proved by the geography of the Polovtsian stone statues that were a characteristic feature of the Kypchak-Polovtsian culture of the twelfth-early thirteenth centuries: the great majority are located between the rivers Don, Seversky Donets and Dnieper.<sup>13</sup>

The geographical statistics of nomadic monuments of the Golden Horde (the second half of the thirteenth to the fourteenth century) present a completely different picture. The bulk of the currently known burials of nomads in the steppes of Eastern Europe of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries are concentrated in the Lower Volga and Southern Urals (Table 1, Figure 7).

The overall characteristics of the nomadic funeral rite in the Golden Horde epoch are expressed in the following traits: burial under an earthen mound (79.7%), containing, as a rule, one burial (90.1% of all the burials studied are single in a mound). Other types of over-grave construction occur much less frequently: 10.46% of the burials are found under stones thrown and lined over the grave; 2.5% under a mound of rock and earth; 2.7% inside a circular or rectangular stone fence; 2.4% under an earthen mound, lined by top rock ("stone armor"); slightly fewer (2.08%) under a mound in the form of a heap of stones; 4.3% of burials are from moundless (ground) cemeteries; 2.4% of the burials occurred

<sup>12</sup> The orientation of 12.7% of the burials could not be identified.

<sup>13</sup> S. A. Pletneva, "Donskie polovtsy." *Slovo o polku Igoreve i ego vremja*. Moscow 1985, 252.

within a fence of raw brick; 0.7% of the burials were inside the stone fence, covered with an earthen mound (Figure 9). The type of an over-grave construction has not been defined (destroyed during the excavation, not fixed) in 3.4% of the burials. Most frequently (12.4% of the burials) in over-grave mounds animal bones – the remains of a memorial funeral feast – are found, and 7.7% of the burials were made under earthen mounds, belted with a small trench at the base. About the same number of burials were committed under mounds that contain some wooden structures (1.9%), fire-pits (3.2%) or pieces of coal (2.2%), and pottery fragments (2.6%).

As was mentioned above, most of the burials studied are single, and within the investigated mound. However, occasionally (6.5%) the burial had been "let" into an earlier mound, and pair burials occur a little more frequently (9.9%).<sup>14</sup>

The construction of the burial pit is generally extremely simple: a rectangular or oval-shaped hole with vertical walls and flat bottom (65.6% of the burials). Graves of complicated structure are less frequent: with steps along the long walls (6.6% of the burials); with a step to the left of the deceased (5.7%); recessed (niche) with a step/ledge in front of the recess (5.2%); recessed (niche), but without a step/ledge at the entrance to the recess (3.2%); with step/ledge along all four walls (2.2%); with a step to the right of the deceased (1.3%).

In nearly one-third of the graves studied (31.1%) the remnants of wooden floors (coverings) made of planks, scaffolding or poles were found. In 20.4% of these burials the floors lay on the filling of the grave pit. In 5.4% of the burials the floors were based on a step/shoulder, in 3% of the burials the recess was covered, and in 2.3% the covering was based on a step. Graves whose walls were lined with stone (1.4%) or filled with stones (1.1%) occur sporadically.

A significant part of the Golden Horde nomadic burials (39.5%) can be interpreted as equestrian, since they contain the remains of horse skulls and leg bones (10.1%), the whole horse skeleton (8%), or harness but without a horse (21.4%). Among the first, in 5.0% of the burials the horse bones lay to the left of the human skeleton, in 2.2% of the burials the bones of a horse were found in the grist of the grave above a man, in 1.04% – to the right of a man, in 0.8% – above a man, but on the covering. Among the second in 3.5% of the burials a horse skeleton was located on the left of a man, in 2.3% – on a step and in 2.3% – in a separate pit. It should be noted that in cases where the orientation of the horse is fixed, it corresponds to the orientation of the human skeleton (12.3%). In the tombs equipped only with a harness the latter was located either at the head or the feet of the deceased.

The predominant orientation of the burials is western (43.7%) and north-eastern (10.9%). Then follow the orientation to the south-west (9.4%), north-west (9.2%), east (6.6%), north (6.5%), south (2.2%) and south-east (1.3%). In 9.5% of the burials the orientation is not defined.

The most common position of the deceased is stretched on his or her back (89.3%) with hands outstretched over the body (71.7%). More than 17% of the de-

<sup>14</sup> Here two burials under one mound is meant.

ceased are laid in the grave with arm/s bent at the elbow and the hand/s resting on the pelvis: 6.9% have both arms bent, 5.2% the right arm bent, and 5.0% the left arm bent.

About one-third of the burials investigated had additional constructions inside the graves, such as a plank coffin (23.7%), a wooden deck (7.9%) or a framework of planks (1.95%), and 7.5% of the buried lay on the bast (96.1%) or grass (1.4%) litter.

Some of the burials (17.9%) contained traces of a funeral meal in the form of animal bones (among which sheep bones dominated (12.5%)), arranged at the head (8.6%) or at the feet (4.0%) of the deceased, or in the filling of the grave pit (4.4%).

In a few cases (3.15%) burials contained clay pots, placed in the filling of the grave (1.7%), at the feet (0.8%) or head (0.65%) of the deceased.

The data presented give a general description of the funeral rite of the nomads of Ulus Jochi (the Golden Horde), which occupied a vast territory encompassing the entire steppe of Eastern Europe (Figure 7).

Since the appearance of the fundamental work by G. A. Fedorov-Davydov,<sup>15</sup> the analysis of the funeral rite of the Golden Horde nomads in the South Urals, aimed at ascertaining their ethnicity, has been repeatedly performed by different researchers, who in general came to similar conclusions. Their essence is reduced to the following points:

- The two groups of burials of the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries, distinguished in the steppes of the Southern Urals, that differ in over-grave constructions – earthen mounds and mounds constructed with stone – reflect the heterogeneous ethnic composition of the nomadic population in the eastern part of Ulus Jochi.
- Among this population it is possible to distinguish the groups that are of Kypchak ethnicity (earthen mounds), and the groups that came to the region together with the Mongols from the steppes of southern Siberia and Altai.<sup>16</sup>
- Among the latter there could be the Uighurs and the Kangly.<sup>17</sup>

This article does not seek to consider thoroughly the ethnic composition of the Golden Horde nomads. In this case, the subject of our study is the historical geography of nomadic sites and the factors that might determine it. As was already mentioned, the majority of nomad burials of the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries are located in the steppes of the Trans-Volga region and the southern Urals, i.e., in the area which in the fourteenth century became the center of Ulus Jochi urban life. In our opinion, it was determined by the following factors: first of all, by the

<sup>15</sup> G. A. Fedorov-Davydov, *Kochevniki Vostochnoi Evropy pod vlastju zolotoordynskih hanov*. Moscow 1966.

<sup>16</sup> Ivanov V.A., Kriger V.A. *Kurgany kypchakского времени na Juzhnom Urale (XII-XIV vv.)*. Moscow 1988, 66.

<sup>17</sup> A. F. Jaminov, *Juzhnyi Ural v XIII-XIV vv.* Avtoreferat diss. kand. ist. nauk. Ijevsk 1995; V. P. Kostjukov, *Ulus Shibana Zolotoi Ordyy v XIII-XIV vv.* Kazan 2010, 127–129.

administrative policy of the Golden Horde khans aimed at the liberation of the fertile steppes of the Don and the Dnieper from the Kypchak-Polovtsian population. The distribution of graves under earthen mounds that have direct parallels with the funerary rites of the Kypchaks/Polovtsy of the pre-Mongol period (mostly related to the so-called "equestrian" burials) serves as a vivid example of the point. Secondly, the initial mass resettlement of nomads in the indicated area was not accompanied by an environmental crisis, since the steppes of this region were experiencing a peak of humidity, during which even the salt-marsh deserts and semi-deserts of the Caspian lowlands turned into a dry steppe and were quite suitable for the nomadic economy although to a limited extent.<sup>18</sup>

It would be very tempting to assume the development of the Lower Volga towns of the Golden Horde to be one of the factors that also determined the geography of the Golden Horde nomads' resettlement in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries. However, the distance from nomadic mound burials to the urban centers shows that nomadic sites cannot be "inserted" into the urban district. For example, the area with a concentration of nomadic burials if the Golden Horde the nearest to the town of Saraichik - the lower course of the Uzen (Mokrinsky I, Lake Raim, Dzhangala [Nov. Kazanka] Dzhangala [Kara-Oba] and others) - is 240 km from the town in a straight line, a journey of at least five to six days on horseback.

The graves on the Uzen are even more remote from the Mavliberdinsky settlement on the Uil river (320-340 km in a straight line), where the remains of brick walls of thirty to forty buildings and irrigation canals are found.<sup>19</sup>

Near the town of Hadzhitarhan (Shareny Bugor), which sprang up in the fourteenth century,<sup>20</sup> nomadic burials did not occur at any rate. First, the city is located in the Volga delta, and the nearest burial mound to it - Seitovsky (30 km to the north-east)<sup>21</sup> - is located on the left bank of the Akhtuba in the semi-desert zone.<sup>22</sup> Secondly, this very area (dry steppe at the relevant time) would hardly attract nomads to its intensive development. Therefore, the absolute majority of nomadic burials of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries that are well known in modern Astrakhan (Nikolsky, Cherny Yar, Krivaya Luka, Solyenoye Zaymishche, Staritsa etc.) are found much further north, beyond the Caspian deserts and semi-deserts.

---

<sup>18</sup> V. A. Demkin, T. S. Demkina, „Archeologicheskoe pochvovedenie: novoe napravlenie v izuchenii drevnei i srednevekovoi istorii prirody i obchestva." *Archeologia vostochnoeuropeiskoi stepi* <http://www.sgu.ru/files/nodes/41059/05.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> V. L. Egorov, *Istoricheskaja geografija Zolotoi Ordy v XIII-XIV vv.* Moscow 1982, 127-128.

<sup>20</sup> A. V. Pachalov, "O vremeni vzniknovenija goroda Hadzhitarhan." *XVIII Uralskoe archeologicheskoe soveshchanie: kulturnye oblasti, archeologicheskie kultury, hronology.* Materialy XVIII Uralskogo archeologicheskogo soveshanija. Ufa 2010, 349-351.

<sup>21</sup> The burial has not been explored, so its reference to the Golden Horde is defined only by bricks found in the site (L. F. Nedashkovsky, *Zolotoordynskie goroda Nizhnego Povolzhia i ih okrug.* Moscow 2010, 154).

<sup>22</sup> At that time it must have been a dry steppe.



Naturally, we cannot but mention the 528 moundless burials of the Golden Horde era, found and studied in the vicinity of the settlement of Shareny Bugor.<sup>23</sup> But what does "in the vicinity" mean in this case? The largest cluster of moundless burials of the Golden Horde era (more than 370 burials) – the burials of Baranovka (Kalmatsky Bugor), Vakurovsky Bugor I and II, Mayachny Bugor I-III, Mechetny Bugor I and II – are located 30 km east of the fort, on the left bank of the Buzan branch<sup>24</sup>. Such territorial remoteness makes it very difficult to consider these burial grounds as an element of the socio-cultural structure of the city of Hadzhitarhan (despite the fact that the burials are mostly Muslim).

The city of Saray al-Mahrus (Selitrennoye settlement) did not have nomadic mounds in its surroundings at all. The nearest (the only) nomadic burial – Yeno-taevsky – is located 35 km to the north-west, on the right bank of the Volga<sup>25</sup>, and does not have any relationship to the urban complex.

In the immediate vicinity of the town of Beldzhamen (Vodyansky settl.)<sup>26</sup> nomadic burials of the Golden Horde era have not been revealed either. Six of the burials at the cemetery near the settlement of Verkhneye Pogromnoye are located on the left bank of the Volga, opposite the settlement. The burial in the mound of s. Gusevka is 70 km north of Vodyansky settlement.<sup>27</sup>

A similar pattern is observed in the vicinity of Uvek (outskirts of modern Saratov). The burial mounds nearest to the town – Pokrovsky, Zaumorie, Skatovka – are located on the left bank of the Volga, and Atkarsk ground burial area is 70 km to the northwest. The territory of modern East Tatarstan, where the largest number of cities that existed in the era of the Golden Horde are concentrated, is known for only four nomadic burials, at Balymersky cemetery. They can be interpreted as no more than a random phenomenon in the area (Figure 7).

In the steppes to the west of the Volga a similar picture is observed: in the immediate vicinity of the Golden Horde cities of Majari, Azak, Shehr al-Jadid (Old Orhei), Ak-Kerman and Kealia no nomadic burial mounds were found.<sup>28</sup>

Fedorov-Davydov in his time advanced the thesis that two cultural traditions were combined in the Golden Horde – urban and nomadic. The first represented a syncretic phenomenon characteristic of the poly-ethnic and multi-confessional population of the Golden Horde cities, and the second continued the traditions of nomadic culture of the steppes of Eastern Europe in the twelfth–early thirteenth century. They existed in parallel and independently of each other:

<sup>23</sup> Nedashkovsky, *Zolotoordynskie goroda*, 137–154.

<sup>24</sup> Nedashkovsky, *Zolotoordynskie goroda*, 124, Figure 4

<sup>25</sup> Nedashkovsky, *Zolotoordynskie goroda*, 91, Figure 3

<sup>26</sup> Egorov, *Istoricheskaja geografija*, 109–110.

<sup>27</sup> G. N. Garustovich, A. I. Rakushin, A. F. Jaminov, *Srednevekovye kochevniki Povolzhia*. Ufa 1998, 83.

<sup>28</sup> The nearest to the town of Azak the mounds Russkiy Kolodets and Manuylovka are located 50 km far from it, across the Taganrog Bay, and the nearest to the town of Kilia Trapovskiy burial is situated 60 km to the north-east on the eastern shore of lake Sasyk (Kunduk).

"In the fourteenth century the material culture of the nomadic population and the culture of the steppe cities of the Golden Horde were dissimilar phenomena that had little in common. These two types of population are mostly united by their common reference to the Golden Horde, that is, the Khan's total despotic power."<sup>29</sup>

The results of this analysis of the geography of the Golden Horde cities and nomadic burials of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries fully confirm this thesis.

Taking all the aforesaid into consideration, we can put forward a number of conclusions:

Firstly, the emergence of the Pechenegs in the steppes of Eastern Europe as a result of their defeat in wars with the Oguz ultimately might not contradict the policy goals of either the Khazar or Byzantine rulers. The Khazars, evidently, had not created (or had failed to create) an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the Pechenegs' movement to the west, so the Pechenegs, displacing the Magyars from Levedia (between the rivers Seversky Donets and Dnieper)<sup>30</sup> found a more favorable ecological niche than their victors - the Oguz. This allowed them quickly to become a powerful political and military force which at that time actively influenced the course of the Balkan-Mediterranean policy of Byzantium and the Kievan Rus.

Secondly, the Oguz staying in the Trans-Volga region could not become a real force in the steppes of Eastern Europe (although they contributed to the defeat of the Khazars by the Kievan Prince Svyatoslav in 965), and therefore their subsequent history developed in West Asia, where they retreated under the onslaught of the Kypchaks/Polovtsy.

Thirdly, the Kypchaks/Polovtsy themselves in their expansion to the west had no serious hindrance from the Khazar Khanate, so they passed quickly across the Trans-Volga steppes, chasing the Oguz, who, for whatever reasons, had not gone to the south with the Sultan Seljuks. More favorable from an environmental viewpoint, the steppe between the Kuban and the mouth of the Danube soon became the Kypchak-Polovtsian domain, known to oriental authors as *Dasht-i-Kypchak*, to Russian authors as *Polovetskoye Polye*, and to European and Byzantine authors as *Kumania*.

Fourthly, a reverse migration of the Kypchaks/Polovtsy into the steppes of the east of the Volga and the southern Urals in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries was determined by the administrative policy of the Golden Horde khans (*Ulus Djuchi*), who resettled the Kypchaks/Polovtsy dependent on them to less comfortable margins of the steppes of Eastern Europe.

Thus, the contours of the map of the medieval settlement of nomads in the steppes of Eastern Europe were formed not spontaneously, but under the influence of the political situation of that time.

---

<sup>29</sup> G. A. Fedorov-Davydov, *Iskusstvo kochevnikov i Zolotoi Ordya*. Moscow 1976, 118.

<sup>30</sup> It happened not long before 895.

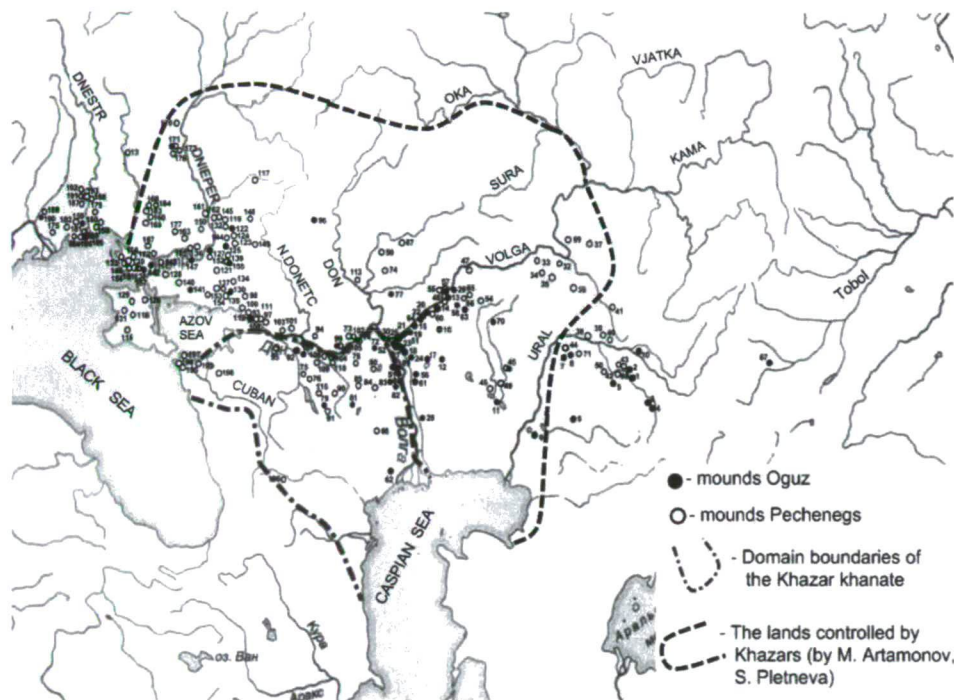


FIGURE 1. Map of Oguz and Pecheneg mounds in Eastern Europe from the end of the ninth to the beginning of the tenth century

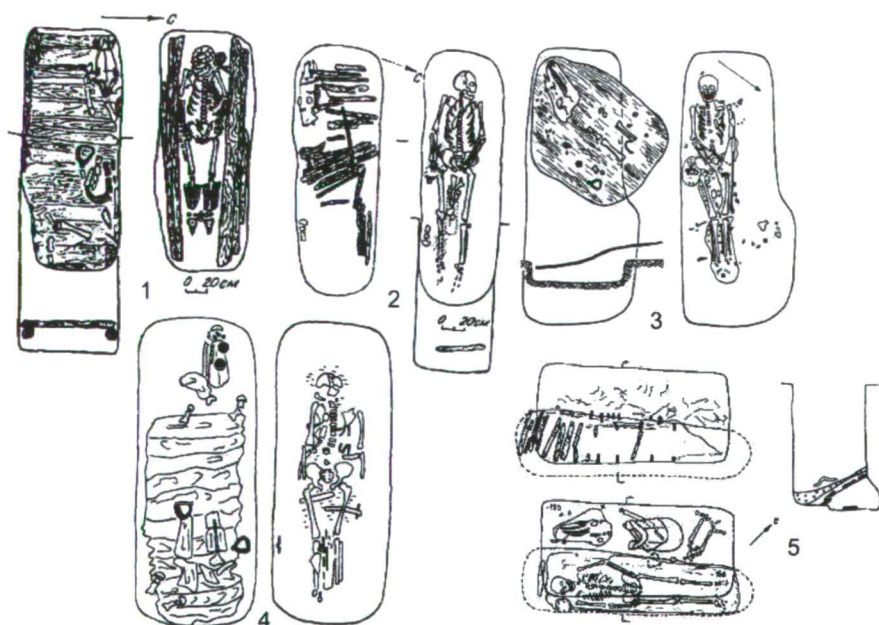


FIGURE 2. Burials of the Oguz  
1-Uvak; 2-Bykovo I; 3-Chenin; 4-Verchny Balyklei; 5-Bolgarka I

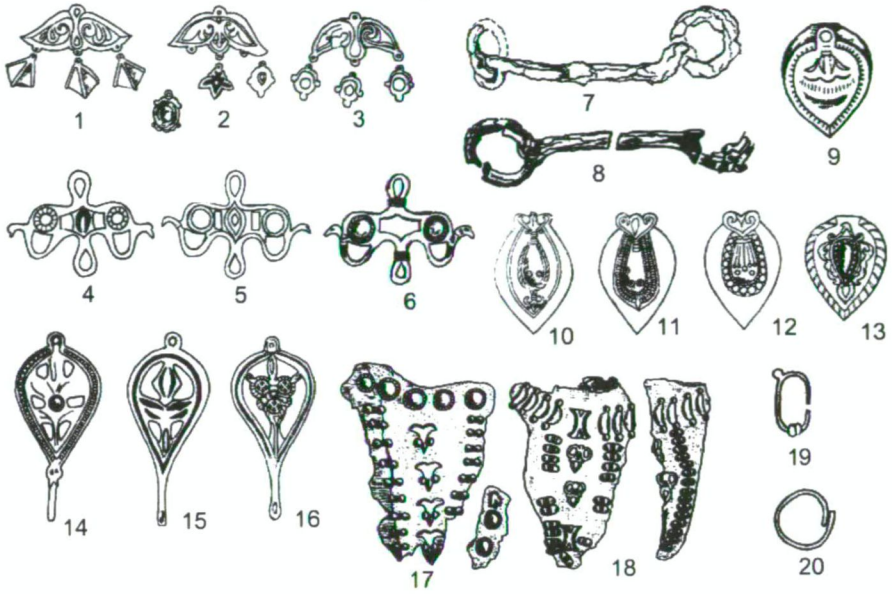


FIGURE 3. Characteristic (ethnographic) items from Oguz and Pecheneg burials  
 1-6 ptitsevidnyye pendants-amulets; 9-13 plates, Reshma; 14-16 Pendants-kopoushki;  
 17-18 jewelry, shoes; 7,8,19,20 horse bits and earrings from Pecheneg mounds.

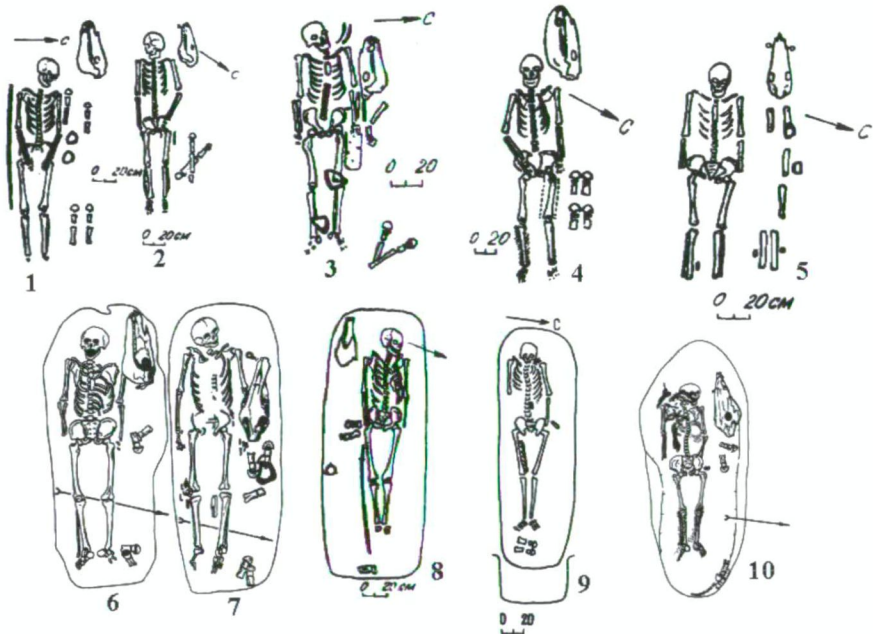


FIGURE 4. Pecheneg burials  
 1-Juzefovka; 2-Kazanka I; 3-Novaja Molchanovka; 4-Rovnoe; 5-Kagarlyk; 6-Sarkel, b.35; 7-Sarkel,  
 b.8; 8-Kupcyn-Tolga; 9-Nikolskoe; 10-Sarkel, b.47.

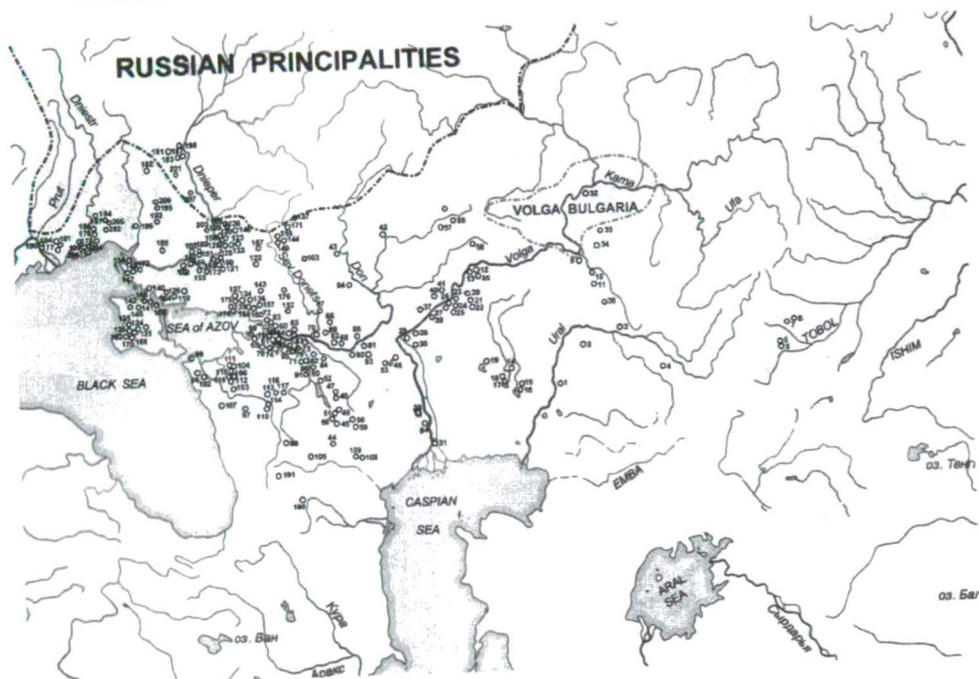


FIGURE 5. Distribution map of Kypchak/Polovtsian mounds in the steppes of Eastern Europe (second half of the eleventh-beginning of the thirteenth century)

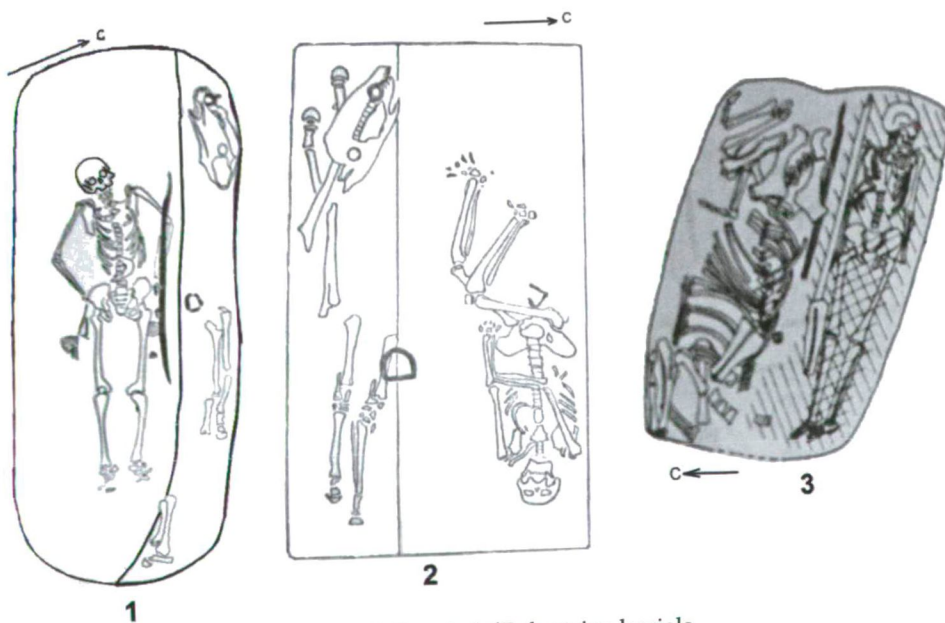


Figure 6. Kypchak/Polovtsian burials  
1- Canal Volga-Chograi 42; 2- Canal Volga-Chograi 240; 3- Zergenta.



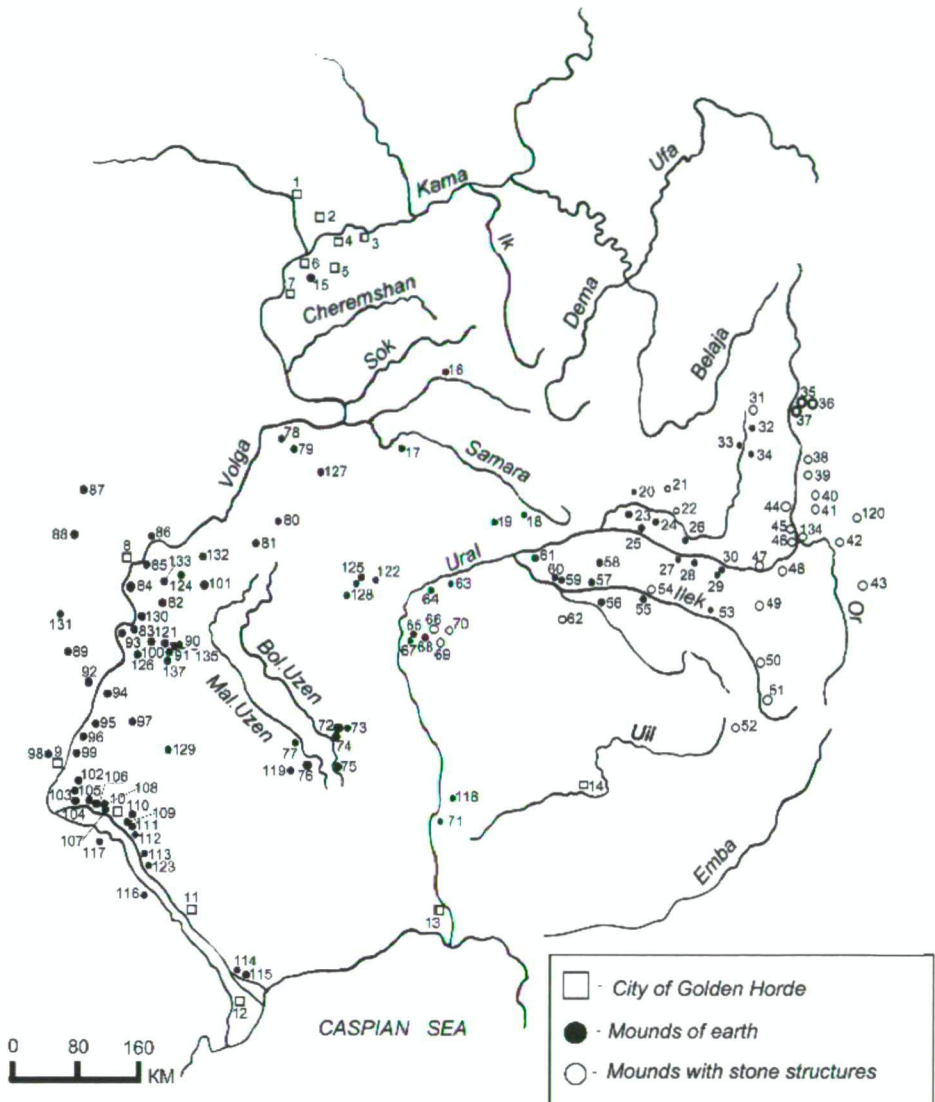


FIGURE 7. Map of the Volga Ulus Jochi (Golden Horde) in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries

1 - Kazan; 2 - Kermenchuk; 3 - Dzhuketau; 4 - Kashan; 5 - Biljar; 6 - Bulgar; 7 - Suvar;  
 8 - Uvek; 9 - Beldzhamen; 10 - Saray al-Jedid; 11 - Saray al-Mahrus; 12 - Hadzhitarhan;  
 13 - Saraychik; 14 - Mavliberdinsky settlement.

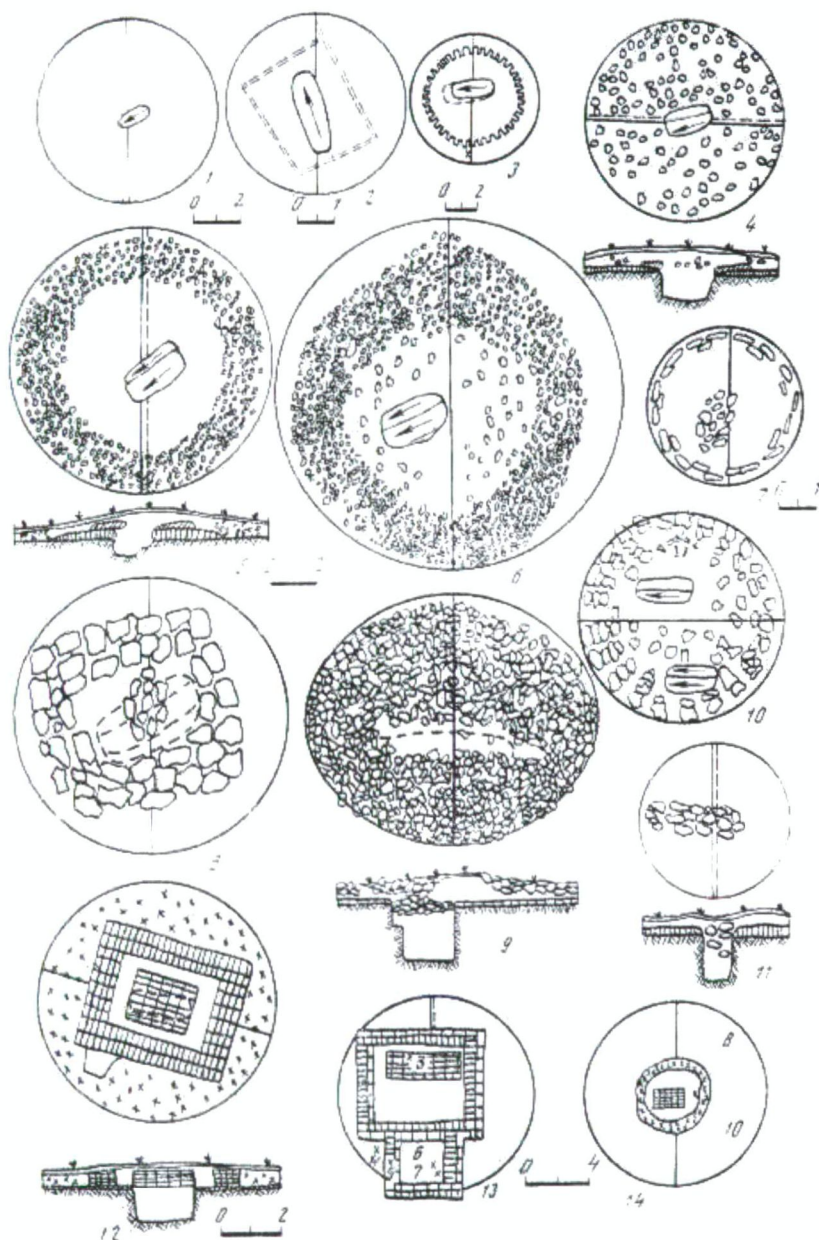


FIGURE 8. Types of nomad barrows of the Golden Horde era from the Ural-Volga region  
 1 - Novy Kumak, b.1; 2 - Tl'javgulovo, b.2; 3 - Imangulovo II, b.1; 4 - Novy Kumak, b.15; 5 - Novy Kumak, b. 29; 6 - Novy Kumak, b. 9; 7 - Tl'javgulovo, b.4; 8 - Urta-Burtja, b.2; 9 - Novy Kumak, b. 3; 10 - Novy Kumak, b. 16; 11 - Urta-Burtja, b.1; 12 - Lebedevka VIII, b.1; 13 - Karaul-Tube, b.1; 14 - Karaul-Tube, b.5.

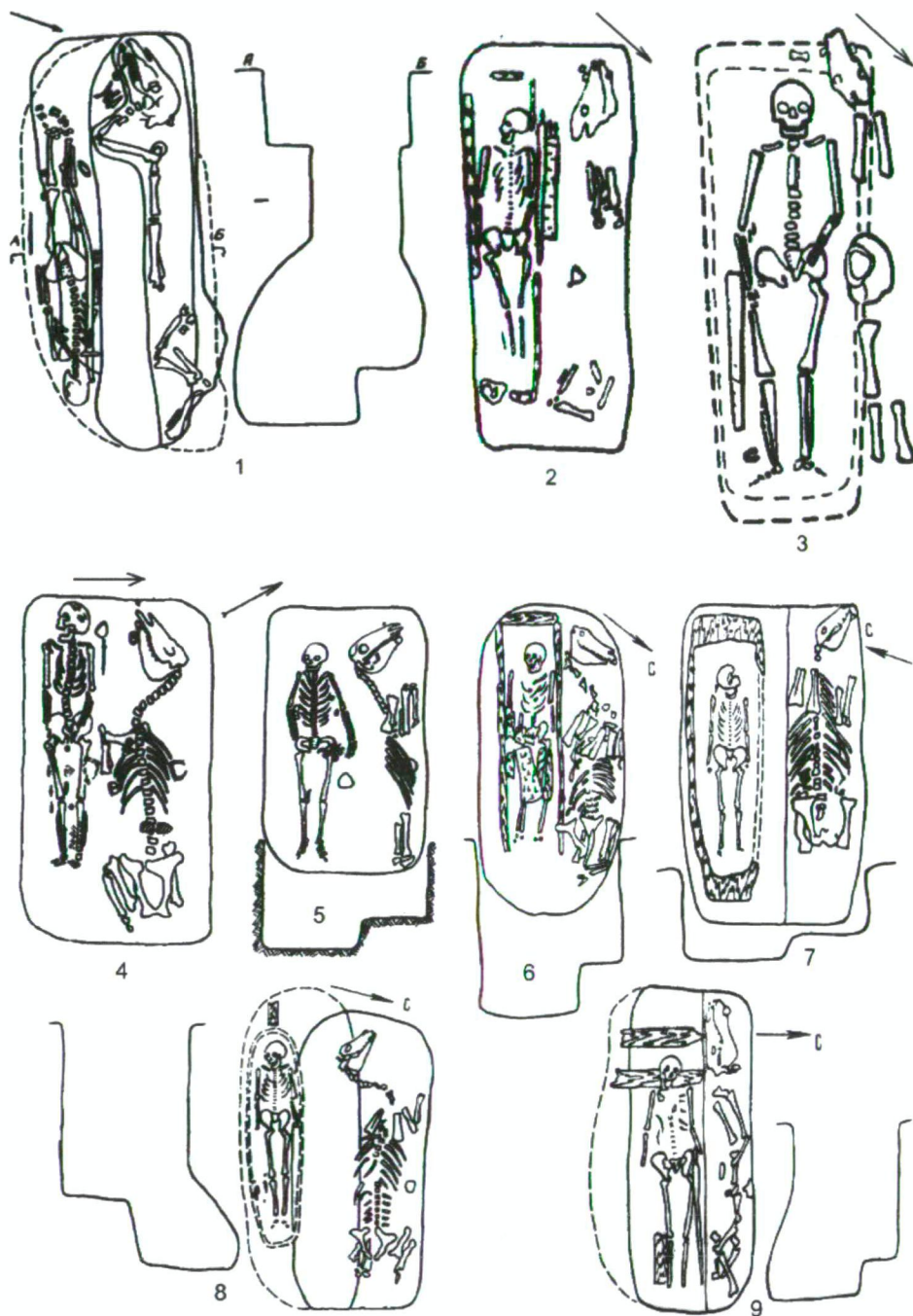


FIGURE 9. Nomad burials of the Golden Horde era from the Ural-Volga region  
 1-Lebedevka VIII; 2 - Ivanovka IV; 3 - Ankersk, b. 21; 4 - Tljavgulovo; 5-Ural; 6 - Novy Kumak,  
 b. 8; 7 - Novy Kumak, b. 14; 8 - Novy Kumak, b. 28; 9 - Novy Kumak, b. 2.



# *Some remarks on the deaths of Mongol Khans*

“Deathbed scenes” and supernatural incidents

JOHANNES STEINER  
(Graz, Austria)



## *Introduction*

The death of a medieval ruler was always an event of political and sometimes of religious importance and furthermore often a turning point in the history of a ruling dynasty or empire.<sup>1</sup> It is a matter of fact that it depends on the point of view of the author of a source (or the ambitions of his patron) how and what to write about the circumstances of the death of an emperor, and the way this event is described and at least evaluated – even morally.<sup>2</sup> Therefore the circumstances of the deaths of members of the ruling class were written down or kept secret by vested interests, or sometimes even embellished or manipulated by editors and later on in the historical tradition.

When describing a ruler's death there is in every culture a specific rhetoric of death or dying and meaning.<sup>3</sup> Thus similar elements and events can be found in

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper is work in progress and reflects the current state of my research – further research is necessary.

<sup>2</sup> “Dying and death themselves were political acts, with many surviving records being apparently constructed to match certain ideals rather than to mirror reality.” Cited after: Tagungsbericht, Death at Court, 12.07.2010–14.07.2010, Greifswald, in *H-Soz-u-Kult*, 17. 11. 2010, <<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=3380>> [28. 02. 2011]. For death in medieval European society see: A. Patschovsky, „Tod Im Mittelalter. Eine Einführung,” in A. Borst, ed., *Der Tod im Mittelalter*. Konstanz 1993, 9–23; H. M. Schaller, „Der Kaiser stirbt,” in A. Borst, ed., *Der Tod im Mittelalter*, Konstanz 1993, 59–75. *Ibid.*, 60: “Wir wissen natürlich nicht, ob sich das Sterben unserer Kaiser und Könige jeweils genauso abgespielt hat, wie uns die Quellen erzählen. Der eine Chronist kann die Vorgänge aus politischen Gründen feindselig-verzerrt dargestellt haben, beim anderen erscheint das Sterben des Helden – im Interesse des Thronfolgers und der Dynastie – hagiographisch verklärt.” N. Ohler, *Sterben und Tod im Mittelalter*. München 1990, 51–77; P. Ariès, *Geschichte des Todes*. 10. Aufl. München 2002.

<sup>3</sup> “[...] a certain rhetoric of death or dying was applied in the accounts of a ruler's death in every culture, often referring to his character in life rather than the immediate cir-

the sources although they have different cultural backgrounds. To exemplify this, this paper will concentrate on the following three phenomena which were often connected with the deaths of rulers in history, in our case the deaths of Mongol Khans.

(1) The "deathbed scene" in which we find the last orders of an emperor as a legitimating act of succession and therefore also a political statement.

(2) The appearance of supernatural elements as omens of an approaching death. Here, the ruler is thought to be in close connection with nature and spirits. This includes the fact that, according to the sources, the rulers themselves and/or people generally might know about the time of forthcoming death in advance.<sup>4</sup>

(3) The modalities of death as the final moral evaluation of the reign of an emperor - in plain English, a good life will lead to a peaceful end; an immoral life will cause mortal agony.

### (1) "Deathbed scenes"

In descriptions referring to the final hours in the life of an emperor, especially when the sources are dealing with his (supposed) last will, the character of the dying ruler becomes manifest (e.g., in the last words he utters), and questions of succession are stressed. If we speak about the deaths of the Mongol Khans, first we have to deal with Genghis Khan who died in August 1227.<sup>5</sup> What do the sources say, or better: what do they want us to know, about the last things the Khan did, knowing that he would die? The death of the "founder of the Mongolian *imperia*" is handed down to us in different and even contradictory ways. It seems as if the circumstances of Genghis' last hours were not known or at least of no interest to the missionaries of the Western legations. The Christian monk John of Plano Carpini (ca. 1180-1252), who travelled to Mongolia about 1245, tells us

---

cumstances of his death; a comprehensive comparison of these literary strategies would probably provide new insights into cultural differences." Cited after: Tagungsbericht, *Death at Court*.

<sup>4</sup> In traditional belief, European kings knew about their death in advance. E.g. Schaller, *Der Kaiser stirbt*, 62. Sources listed in: *Ibid.*, 71., n. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. P. Pelliot, *Notes sur Marco Polo I*, Paris 1959, 305-330; E. Haerisch, „Die letzten Feldzüge Cinggis Khan's und sein Tod. Nach der ostasiatischen Überlieferung," *Asia Maior* 9 (1933), 503-551; D. C. Wright, "The Death of Chinggis Khan in Mongolian, Chinese, Persian, and European Sources," in Á. Berta, ed., *Historical and linguistic interaction between Inner-Asia and Europe*, Proceedings of the 39<sup>th</sup> PIAC, Szeged, Hungary, June 16-21, 1996), Szeged 1997, 425-433; Yu. I. Drobyshev, "Funeral and memorial rituals of the medieval Mongols and their underlying worldview," *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia* 45:1 (2006), 65-92; B.-O. Bold, "Death and burial of Chinggis Khan," *Central Asian Survey* 19:1 (2000), 95-115. J. Steiner, "'Empfange und Du wirst einen Sohn gebären, welcher der Herrscher über die Erde werden wird...'" Vorstellungen über Geburt und Tod Tschinggis Khans," *Chronica* 7-8 (2007-2008), 227-232.

for example that Genghis Khan enacted several laws, and after this he was struck by lightning.<sup>6</sup>

In the so-called *Secret History*, which is the contemporary Mongolian account of the rise of Genghis Khan, it is told that the Khan was hurt in a riding accident, but nevertheless he wanted to take his revenge for a treachery – even, as it is quoted, if he should die.<sup>7</sup> His state of health grew worse, but he kept his promise and annihilated the Tangut people. After this action, he died.<sup>8</sup> In contrast to this, the Persian historian Rashīd al-Dīn (1247–1318) records the command of Genghis Khan to vanquish the enemy. He writes that Genghis Khan's illness grew worse, the Khan knew that he was going to die and thus gave his last orders, namely, that the enemy must not know about his death, but when they surrendered, all should be killed. After this command Genghis Khan died "by reason of that condition which no mortal can escape".<sup>9</sup>

Descriptions of dying emperors often focus on "deathbed scenes" in which the ruler gives advice and admonitions to his sons or heirs and in which he arranges his succession.<sup>10</sup> Therefore the dying and death of a ruler were also political acts and of political interest.<sup>11</sup> Armenian chronicles relate Genghis Khan's deathbed scene in detail, with a focus on these matters of royal advice and legacy. The Armenian Hayton of Corycus (1245–1316), whose work is rather pro-Mongol, wrote of Genghis Khan's death about 80 years after the event. His records indicate that Genghis became ill "by the will of God" and the doctors were not able to cure him. For this reason, Genghis met his twelve sons and admonished them that they should always be unanimous. He told them that one arrow can be broken easily, but if they should stay together – like a bunch of arrows – no one would be able to besiege them, just as no one, not even the strongest man, is able to break a bunch of arrows. This story is one that recurs in the *Secret History*, it is not origi-

<sup>6</sup> J. Gießauf, *Die Mongolengeschichte des Johannes von Piano Carpine*. Einführung, Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar. Graz 1995, chap. V, 19, 98; see also: C. de Bridia, "The Tartar Relation". Edited, with introduction, translation, and commentary, by G. D. Painter, in Skelton, Marston and Painter, eds., *The Vinland Map and the Tartar Relation*. New Haven CT and London 1965, § 16, 67.

<sup>7</sup> M. Taube, ed., *Die Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen*. Aus dem Mongolischen übertragen und kommentiert. München 1989, § 265, 198.

<sup>8</sup> Taube, *Geheime Geschichte* § 268, 200. See also F. E. A. Krause, *Chingis Han. Die Geschichte seines Lebens nach den chinesischen Reichsannalen*. (= Heidelberger Akten der von-Portheim-Stiftung 2). Heidelberg 1922, fol. 22a-b, 40.

<sup>9</sup> J. A. Boyle, ed., *Rashīd al-Dīn, The Successors of Genghis Khan*. Translated from the Persian of Rashīd al-Dīn. New York–London 1971, 29.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the deaths of European emperors, based on a Christian background. E.g. Charles the Great, d. 814 (*Einhardi Vita Karoli Magni*); Louis IX, d. 1270 (Jean de Joinville, *Vie de Saint Loius*). Further comparison analysis might be valuable.

<sup>11</sup> It is obvious that "Before eventual death, most nobles would have made provision for their inheritance, both political and material, by drafting a will. Dying and death itself were political acts, with many surviving records being apparently constructed to match certain ideals rather than to mirror reality." Cited after: Tagungsbericht, *Death at Court*.

nal to Genghis Khan.<sup>12</sup> The dying emperor then passed on many other good examples and laws, and named his son Ögedei – said to be the “wisest” and “best” of his sons – Khan. After he had done all this, he died in peace.<sup>13</sup>

According to the *Secret History*, on the other hand, the decision to translate the empire to the third son of Genghis, Ögedei, happened a long time before Genghis Khan’s death. One of Genghis Khan’s wives had urged him to think of an heir before he went on a military campaign. In this narration, which is very detailed, Genghis Khan seemed to be in favor of his oldest son Jochi, but his other sons didn’t agree with this decision. Tschagatai even named his brother Jochi “a bastard of the Merkit” (because Jochi was born some time after Genghis Khan’s wife Börte had been kidnapped by the Merkit) and they started to quarrel. Some speeches were made and then the situation calmed down. Finally Genghis Khan decided that Ögedei should be his heir.<sup>14</sup>

The literary compilation of wise words, succession plan and “deathbed scene” of Genghis Khan is also delivered in the *History of Armenia* by the Armenian Kirakos of Gandzak (ca. 1200–1271) who wrote this opus between 1241 and 1265. Kirakos mentions that Genghis summoned his troops and his three sons and told them – while dying – “the entire truth” about their characters. After that he ordered his people to prostrate themselves in front of their favorite: “They approached the youngest [*sic*], whose name was Ögedei-Khan (Hok’ta) and bowed to the ground before him. His father placed the crown on his head and then died.”<sup>15</sup>

Also in the *History of the World Conqueror*, which was written in the middle of the thirteenth century by the Persian historian and official of the Ilkhans, Juvaini

<sup>12</sup> In the *Secret History* this parable is narrated by female ancestors of Genghis, namely Alan Qo’a (Taube, *Geheime Geschichte*, § 19, 8) and Genghis Khan’s mother, Ho’elün, in order to convince her sons to be unanimous (*Ibid.*, § 76, 25).

<sup>13</sup> W. Baum, ed., *Hethum von Korykos. Geschichte der Mongolen*. Übersetzt von R. Senoner. Klagenfurt; Wien 2006, 51; John Mandeville, who was copying in his work parts of Hayton, relates the same story: Ch. Buggisch, ed., *Reisen des Ritters John Mandeville. Vom Heiligen Land ins ferne Asien 1322–1356*. Lenningen 2004, 227.; Rashid al-Din recorded that only two of Genghis Khan’s sons, namely Ögedei and Tolui, were at the scene, while Juvaini counts six of them. Cf. J. A. Boyle, ed., *Ala ad-Din `Ata Malik Juvaini, Genghis Khan. The History of the World Conqueror*. Translated from the text of Mizra Muhammad Qazvini by J. A. Boyle with a new introduction and bibliography by D. A. Morgan. Manchester 1997 (henceforth: Boyle, *Juvaini*), 180.

<sup>14</sup> Taube, *Geheime Geschichte*, § 254., 183–190.

<sup>15</sup> Kirakos cited after: Kirakos Ganjakets’i’s *History of the Armenians*. Translated from Classical Armenian by R. Bedrosian. Online: <<http://rbedrosian.com/kg8.htm>> [28. 02. 2011]; For the Latin text and the French translation see: S. Dörper, ed. *Die Geschichte der Mongolen des Hethum von Korykos (1307) in der Rückübersetzung durch Jean de Long, Traitez des estas et des conditions de quatorze royaumes de Aise (1351)*. Kritische Edition mit parallelem Abdruck des lateinischen Manuskriptes Wrocław, Bibliotheka Uniwersytecka R 262. Frankfurt am Main et al. 1998 (= Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe XIII: Französische Sprache und Kultur), 248; On the death of Genghis Khan see also: Jean-Paul Roux, *Histoire de L’Empire Mongol*. Paris 1993, 234.

(1226–1283), the matter of succession is stressed. Juvainī states that Genghis Khan, after he had purged a whole region “of the evilness of his enemies”, was overcome by an incurable disease arising from the insalubrity of the climate.<sup>16</sup> This source again records that Genghis sent for his sons, knowing of his approaching death, and told them, “The severity of my illness is greater than can be cured by treatment, and, of a truth, one of you must defend the throne and the power of the State and raise up the pedestal which has received so strong foundation.”<sup>17</sup> He told them the parable of a snake with many heads, to demonstrate the necessity of one leader, whom they should obey after his death.<sup>18</sup> To quote Genghis Khan in the account of Juvainī again,

“But if there is no leader among you, to whose counsel the other brothers, and sons, and helpmeets, and companions submit themselves and to whose command they yield obedience, then your case will be like unto that of the snake of many heads. One night, when it was bitterly cold, the heads desired to creep into a hole in order to ward off the chill. But as each head entered the hole another head would oppose it; and in this way they all perished. But another snake, which had but one head and a long tail, entered the hole and found room for this tail and all his limbs and members, which were preserved from the fury of cold.”<sup>19</sup>

Then he wished that Ögedei should be his heir. “All Ögetei’s brothers obeyed his commandment and made a statement in writing. Chingiz-Khan’s illness grew worse, and it being impossible to remove him from where he was he passed away.”<sup>20</sup>

This scene, in which Ögedei is acknowledged to be Genghis Khan’s heir, is crucial in the question of succession within the Genghisid family. The claims to rule made by different branches of the family would eventually lead to the decline of the Mongol Empire.

It is very interesting that the same act of a “deathbed scene”, where questions of succession are solved by a dying Khan and therefore the future of the empire is saved, is also told about Kubilai Khan<sup>21</sup> by the Persian historian and official of the Ilkhans, Wassāf (fl. 1299–1323). He wrote his history (*The Allocation of Cities and*

<sup>16</sup> Boyle, *Juvainī*, 180. See also Taube, *Geheime Geschichte*, § 266. Cf. Boyle, *Juvainī* (p. 181 note 7), who notes that according to Rashid al-Dīn this interview took place in spring 1227, whereas Genghis died in August, and only Ögedei and Tolui were present.

<sup>17</sup> Boyle, *Juvainī*, 180f.

<sup>18</sup> The fables of the arrows and the snake with many heads are given in Boyle, *Juvainī*, 41. Cf. also 41, note 7. The lection with the arrows, in order to “advice and instruct them each” can also be found in, 593. There it is said that Genghis told this story “at the first rising to power”.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

<sup>21</sup> Concerning the death of Kublai cf. Roux, *Histoire*, 416.; Morris Rossabi, *Kublai Khan. His Life and Times*. London 1988, 225.

the *Propulsion of Epochs*) as a continuation of Juvainī (whose work ended in 1257). Wassāf writes that Kubilai knew that he would die and because of this knowledge he called for the members of his government. When they were assembled, he told them that he would die and suggested they vote for Temür as the new Khan and his heir, which was granted unanimously. After having solved the problem of succession without any conflict, the “fair-minded Khan” met his end calmly, and to quote Wassāf – “only his good name remained”.<sup>22</sup>

The history of Yüan, *Yüan Shih*, which was compiled by official historians of the Ming Dynasty (in 1370), describes the last hours before Genghis Khan died with a different emphasis, as a series of military orders. Here too Genghis felt that his death was near and because of this he assembled and spoke to his trusted men. However, in this narrative, Genghis gives his combatants orders about their military situation and further strategies. The description of the strategic advice is very detailed. After Genghis Khan had uttered his strategy, he died. In this account, Genghis’ last deeds and sorrows are only concerned with military campaigns, he is depicted as a military genius with knowledge of his own death and of future events.<sup>23</sup>

A final example is a source which is in contrast to those mentioned above in being tendentiously anti-Mongol: in his *Tabaqāt-i Nāsiri* (finished in 1260), Jūzjānī describes the circumstances of Genghis Khan’s death in a compromising way. He describes Genghis Khan as “adept in magic and deception, and some of the devils were his friends”.<sup>24</sup> Jūzjānī writes of a prophecy<sup>25</sup> which was spoken by another ruler named Tingri Khan, who, knowing that Genghis Khan would kill him, sent a message to the latter, saying that he had never done anything against Genghis Khan and that therefore he did not deserve such a death. Tingri prophesied that when he was executed, his blood would flow as white as milk, and Genghis Khan would die within three days. Genghis just laughed at this and put Tingri Khan to death. Then “Chingiz Khān, the accursed, [...] when he saw that the occurrence was actually so, it struck his heart, and his strength forsook him; and, on the third day, his heart broke, and he went to hell”.<sup>26</sup> Before he died he requested that all of Tingri Khan’s people should be slaughtered and that his heir should be Ögedei Khan who indeed then fulfilled the last wish of his father.

Jūzjānī makes clear that Genghis Khan’s invasion of the kingdom of Tingri Khan was “perfidious” and “contrary to the covenant”. It was Genghis who had

---

<sup>22</sup> J. Hammer-Purgstall, ed., *Geschichte Wassafs*. Persisch herausgegeben und deutsch übersetzt von Hammer-Purgstall, I. Band. Wien 1856, 46.

<sup>23</sup> Krause, *Reichsannalen*, fol. 22 a–22b, 40.

<sup>24</sup> H. G. Raverty, ed., *Abu Umar Usman ibn Muhammad al-Minhaj-e-Siraj al Juzjani: Tabakat-i-Nasiri: A General History of the Muhammadan Dynasties of Asia, Including Hindustan, from A.H. 194 (810 A.D.) to A.H. 658 (1260 A.D.) and the Irruption of the Infidel Mughals into Islam*. 2 vols. New-Delhi 1970, 1077. Cf. also *Ibid.*, 954 and n. 8, 1078.

<sup>25</sup> Raverty criticizes this episode as a “childish fable [...] much after the fashion” of Sa-gang Setschen. Cf. Raverty, *Juzjani*, n. 3, 1085.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 1096.

broken an existing agreement and therefore he had to meet his death (as a cursed emperor).<sup>27</sup>

## (2) Forebodings and omens of death

In sources across different cultural backgrounds, we find stories that deal with omens of death, like supernatural beings, which occur before a ruler or an important person is to die. It was believed that kings – in our case Khans – were closer to heaven than ordinary people and that they were under heaven's special protection.<sup>28</sup> This led to the belief that the occurrence of certain natural phenomena was in a causal connection with an important event or person.<sup>29</sup> In the sources, natural phenomena which are more or less random occurrences were interpreted and connected with incidents which happened almost at the same time to human beings. In medieval sources, natural phenomena like earthquakes, solar eclipses and comets signify something; they must make sense as a *conditio sine qua non*.

Based on such beliefs, the sources claim that rulers knew about the time of their death, especially because of auguries. Some stories dealing with misgivings in connection with the death of a person are also handed down regarding Mongol Khans.

### 2.1 Genghis Khan and the unicorn

Again, we have to start with Genghis Khan. The *Yüan Shih* relates that in a campaign against the East (which may have happened in the year 1224) Genghis Khan caught sight of a unicorn.<sup>30</sup> On that account he commanded his army to withdraw, because he believed that this must be an ill omen. The unicorn omen is also told in the seventeenth-century chronicle *Erdeni-yin tobči* by Sagang Sečen.<sup>31</sup> In this later version of the story, the unicorn bows, bending its knees three times, in front of Genghis. The astonished emperor asks himself what this could have meant and comes to the conclusion that his father, the god Tengri, may have sent him a warning. The mythological unicorn appears – according to Chinese tradi-

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Cf. A. Sárközi, "Mandate of Heaven. Heavenly Support of the Mongol Ruler," in B. Kellner-Henkele, ed., *Altaica Berolinensa*. Wiesbaden 1993, 215–221.

<sup>29</sup> E.g. Leila Bargmann, „Der Tod Friedrichs I. im Spiegel der Quellenüberlieferung,“ in: *Concilium medii aevi* 13 (2010), 234: *Die kausale Verknüpfung des Zwischenfalls mit dem Tod des Kaisers erfolgt [...] erst retrospektiv. Die Frage nach der Funktion dieser Vorzeichen führt zu den Grundlagen des Phänomens*. Online: <http://cma.gbv.de/dr,cma,013,2010,a,09.pdf> [28. 02. 2011].

<sup>30</sup> Krause, *Reichsannalen*, fol. 21a, 39.

<sup>31</sup> Sagang Sečen, *Geschichte der Mongolen und ihres Fürstenhauses*. Aus dem Mongolischen übersetzt von I. J. Schmidt. Neu herausgegeben und mit einem Vorwort versehen von W. Heissig. Zürich 1985, 116. The unicorn story is also given in Chinese accounts, where the unicorn is a green colored beast, speaking four foreign languages. Cf. *Ibid.*, n. 48, 469. According to Haenisch, Ghengis Khan never took part in such a military campaign: Haenisch, *Die letzten Feldzüge*, 543.

tion – only when wise and fair kings rule, it is an omen.<sup>32</sup> For example, it is told that a unicorn appeared when Confucius (551–479 BC) was born, and just before his death the unicorn was seen again.<sup>33</sup>

## 2.2 Ögedei Khan and the wolf

We also find omens of the approaching death of Ögedei Khan in the sources. The Persian historian Juvainī narrates that a man came to Ögedei Khan and told him that a wolf fell upon a flock of sheep and killed many of them. The Khan wanted to know where the wolf had gone. At the same time a wolf with its jaws bound was brought to the Court and the Khan bought the wolf in order to set it free, saying that no one would have an advantage or benefit if the wolf were killed.

“We will release this wolf so that he can inform his friends of what has happened and they may leave this region.” When they released the wolf the lion-like hounds of the dog-keepers ran after it and tore it to pieces. Qa’an was angry and ordered the dogs to be put to death for killing the wolf. He entered the *ordu* in a pensive and melancholic state of mind and turning to his ministers and courtiers he said: “I set that wolf free because I felt a weakness in my bowels and I thought that if I saved a living creature from destruction God Almighty would grant that I too should be spared. Since the wolf did not escape from the dogs, neither perhaps shall I come forth from this danger.” A few days later he passed away. Now it is not concealed from the wise and discriminating that kings are snatched up and carried off by God and that they receive divine inspiration.<sup>34</sup>

The same story is told by Rashid al-Dīn in a similar way.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> According to the Chinese “bamboo annals”, the first sighting of it was at the time of Huang-ti. The Chinese unicorn has the body of a deer, the hooves of a horse, the tail of an ox and one single horn. It does not eat other beings and would not even harm the growing grass with its feet. After: H. Mode, *Fabeltiere und Dämonen. Die Welt der phantastischen Wesen*. Leipzig 2005, 177. Cf. also *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 3, Stuttgart; Weimar 1999 (henceforth: *LexMA*), s.v. „Einhorn“, 1741f; *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* 2, Berlin and New York 1987 (henceforth: *HWBdda*), s.v. „Einhorn“, 708–712.

<sup>33</sup> J. Cherry (ed.), *Fabeltiere. Von Drachen, Einhörnern und anderen mythischen Wesen*. Stuttgart 1997, 101.

<sup>34</sup> Boyle, *Juvainī*, 231–233.

<sup>35</sup> Boyle, *Rashīd*, 92–93. The story is also given in Roux, *Histoire*, 301. Both versions of the story as given in Juvainī and Rashīd are – in the translation of John Andrew Boyle – very similar, except for some small details. E.g. Ögedei Khan is quoted in Juvainī as saying: “neither perhaps shall I come forth from this danger”, but Rashīd cites him with: “neither surely shall I come forth from this danger”. Also the last sentence is different, when Juvainī states: “Now it is not concealed from the wise and discriminating that kings are snatched up and carried off by God and that they receive divine inspiration”, Rashīd tells us that “it is not concealed that kings are raised up by divine aid and receive inspirations and so are aware of [future] events”.



This anecdote is interesting on several levels. First, the wolf is a totem of the ancestors of Genghis Khan, as it is told in the *Secret History*.<sup>36</sup> Ögedei is weak and feels the coming of death. In consequence of this knowledge, he tries to save his life through sparing the life of the wolf, which is a creature with a close relationship to heaven. But the wolf gets torn to pieces by the dogs and Ögedei's opportunity which could have saved him is obviously gone. The protection of heaven has left the Khan.

Second, Rashīd al-Dīn and Juvainī write, that they believe – like “the wise and discriminating” men – that signs and “divine inspiration” do exist, as Rashīd says: kings “are aware of [future] events”.<sup>37</sup>

Third, it seems that the sparing of life is regarded as an instrument to cheat one's own death or at least to influence the date of death through extending life. Another example of this belief is given in the *Yüan Shih*, where it is related that Ögedei became ill when he was hunting. Therefore he ordered all his prisoners and slaves to be set free. According to this source, due to this amnesty the Khan's health improved and he was once again able to attend a great hunt. One of his favorites sent him a huge amount of wine, Ögedei Khan was very pleased about it and drank until midnight. He died in the morning.<sup>38</sup>

In another story, Ögedei Khan's life was spared due to the self sacrifice of his brother Tolui (d. 1233) – a story which includes a large political dimension concerning the succession within the different branches of the Genghisid family.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Taube, *Geheime Geschichte*, § 1, 5. See also Roux, *Histoire*, 301; P. Poucha, „Zum Stamm-  
baum Tschingis Chan,“ in J. Schubert and U. Schneider, eds., *Asiatica. Festschrift Friedrich Weller*. Zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet von seinen Freunden, Kollegen und Schülern. Leipzig 1954, 445. On myths of the wolf and the crow in Central Asia, cf. Namu Jila, “Myths and Traditional Beliefs about the Wolf and the Crow in Central Asia. Examples from the Turkic Wu-Sun and the Mongols,” *Asian Folklore Studies*, 65:2 (2006), 161-177. Although for the Qipchaq, cf. P. B. Golden, “Wolves, Dogs and Qipchaq Religion,” in P. Golden, ed., *Nomads and their Neighbours in the Russian Steppe. Turks, Khazars and Qipchaqs*, Variorum Collected Studies Series CS752. Aldershot 2003, 87-93.

<sup>37</sup> Boyle, *Rashīd*, 93.

<sup>38</sup> W. Abramowski, „Die chinesischen Reichsannalen von Ögödei und Güyük. Übersetzung des 2. Kapitels des Yüan-shih,“ in *Zentral Asiatische Studien* 10 (1976) chap. 2, 134. Rashīd al-Dīn also tells us that excessive drinking was the reason of Ögedei's illness. Cf. Boyle, *Rashīd* [*Account of Qa'an's illness and death*], 65-67; On a rumour that Ögedei had been poisoned, see: *Ibid.* 66, n. 239; Gießauf, *Carpini*, chap. VIII, 5, 108 and chap. IX, 36, 119. It is said, that Ögedei died before Güyük could reach him. Cf. Boyle, *Rashīd*, 180.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. G. Humble, “The curiously idealized death of Tolui: a political assessment of the accounts in the *Secret History* of the Mongols and the *Jāmi'ut-Tawārikh*”. Dissertation, University of Leeds 2009; Summary online available: [http://leeds.academia.edu/GeoffHumble/Talks/21708/A\\_Princely\\_sacrifice\\_The\\_Death\\_of\\_Tolui\\_in\\_Imperial](http://leeds.academia.edu/GeoffHumble/Talks/21708/A_Princely_sacrifice_The_Death_of_Tolui_in_Imperial) [27. 02. 2011]; C. R. Bawden, “The supernatural element in sickness and death according to Mongol tradition. Part I,” *Asia Maior* 8:2 (1960), 215-257, and C. R. Bawden, “The supernatural element in sickness and death according to Mongol tradition. Part II,” *Asia Maior* 9:2 (1962), 153-178.

### 2.3 Hülegü Khan and the comet

The Ilkhan Hülegü (1215–1265)<sup>40</sup> was a grandson of Genghis, a son of Tolui and brother of Möngke Khan and Khubilai Khan. He died on February 8, 1265, after feasting and taking a bath, perhaps because of epilepsy, when he was about 48 years old.<sup>41</sup>

Armenian sources which deal with Mongolian history for 1264 refer to the appearance of a huge comet and/or the death of Hülegü and his wife in the following year. For example, Hayton (ca. 1245–after 1316) mentions in his *Flos historiarum terre orientis*, which was written about forty years after Hülegü's death, that after Hülegü had raised an army, he became ill and after fifteen days in bed, he died.<sup>42</sup> However, Grigor of Akner (ca. 1200–1271), who wrote his *History of the Nation of the Archers* between 1241 and 1265, combines the two elements of the appearance of a comet and the death of Hülegü in a new, meaningful way – here, Hülegü immediately understands that the sign applied to him.

“During these days a comet appeared. It first rose in the morning of the Sabbath day of the Feast of the Tabernacle. From day to day the star's rays and beams increased. At first it appeared in the morning, then a little later it came in the hour of the noon meal and then rose. As the days went on, it appeared in the evening, and at the eleventh hour of the day its rays like hair reached from the east into the center of our country. It increased its hairlike rays till it seemed very terrible to all the country, because they never had seen such a terrible portent on the earth. Thus increasing its broad and huge rays it remained until the beginning of the winter months. Then just as it increased so little by little, it decreased, day by day, till all of the rays of its tail were shortened and it appeared no more. Then Hulawu Ğan, when he saw it, knew at once that this star appeared in regard to him [lit. me]. He cast himself on his face and prostrated himself before God, for he was very much frightened when the rays of the star began to lessen. All the world knew that the star's rays extended as far as the horse of Hulawu Ğan had gone and as far as he had conquered the earth. Then it disappeared. Hulawu Ğan lived one more year, then he departed from the world leaving behind him thirty sons. In the same year that Hulawu Ğan died his good wife

---

<sup>40</sup> *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “Hulāgu Khan” (R. Amitai). Online: <http://www.iranica-online.org/articles/hulagu-khan> [28. 02. 2011].

<sup>41</sup> B. Spuler, *Die Mongolen im Iran*, Berlin 1985, 59. Sources are given in *ibid.*, n. 121.

<sup>42</sup> Baum, *Hethum*, 68.

Tawvus Xat'un also passed away. All of the Christians were very much grieved by her death."<sup>43</sup>

Throughout history and in different cultures in most cases the appearance of a comet has been interpreted with misgiving.<sup>44</sup> Not only comets, but also other forebodings (earthquakes, solar eclipses etc.), related to the death of kings are well known in ancient and medieval sources.<sup>45</sup>

The comet which appeared in 1264 is also mentioned in European sources, where it is not linked with the death of the Mongol Khan Hülegü but with the death of another "ruler" – namely Pope Urban IV (d. October 2, 1264). As for the medieval central European sources, the situation is similar to the case of the Armenian sources regarding the comet and the death of Hülegü. Some medieval European sources just mention the death of the pope,<sup>46</sup> or mention both the death of the pope and the appearance of the comet but do not explicitly combine these two events.<sup>47</sup> In other sources, however, the relation between the comet and an important happening, in this case the death of the pope, is obvious. For instance, it is also mentioned that the comet vanished after Urban IV had died.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *History of the Nation of the Archers (the Mongols) by Grigor of Akanc'. Hitherto ascribed to Mayak'ia the Monk.* The Armenian Text with an English Translation and Notes by R. P. Blake and R. N. Frye, Cambridge 1954, 351.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *LexMA*, vol. 5, Stuttgart and Weimar 1999, s.v. "Kometen", 1276f.; *HWBddA*, vol. 5, 1987, s.v. "Komet", 89–170.

<sup>45</sup> A famous comet (*sidus Iulium*) appeared after Caesar's assassination. Cf. Sueton, Caesar, 88. The comet can also be found in *William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar*, 2, 2: [Calpurnia:] "When beggars die there are no comets seen; The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes". Comets also appeared at the death of other Roman emperors: e.g. Augustus: Cassius Dio 56, 29; Claudius: Sueton, Claudius 46; Nero: Tacitus, *Annales* XIV, 22,1: "*Inter quae sidus cometes effulsit, de quo vulgi opinio es, tamquam mutationem regis portendat*"; Vespasian: Cassius Dio 66, 17,2 and Sueton, Vespasian 23, which jokes that the comet with its hairy tale can hardly be an omen for Vespasian, who was bald, therefore it must be a sign for the king of the Parthians who used to wear their hair long. After: *HWBddA*, vol. 5, 1987, s.v. „Komet", 97, n. 53. For the Middle Ages, in which different omens are mentioned, see e.g. the Einhard's biography on Karl the Great (*Einhardi Vita Karoli Magni*) 32. See also the Bayeux Tapestry, where Halley's Comet is shown, which might indicate the imminent death of King Harold (d. 14 October, 1066).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Annales Ianuenses annorum 1249–1264*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores* (henceforth: *MGH SS*) XVIII, 248: "*Urbanus papa IV mense ... obit morte et sepultus fuit ad Perusium.*"

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *Annales Parmenses Maiores*, in: *MGH SS* XVIII, 678: "*Et illo anno [1264] obiit dominus Urbanus papa IV. de mense Septembris. Et eodem anno aparuit in celo una stella longa, habens caudam longham per unam vel duos perticas, que videbatur quasi fumus*"; *Annales Urbeveterani*, in: *MGH SS* XVIII Hannoverae 1963, 270: "*Eodem anno [1264] papa Urbanus recessit de Urbeveteri, et mortuus est in via. Eodem anno apparuit cometa in parte orientali, et duravit mense Iulii, Augusti et Septembris.*"

<sup>48</sup> Notae S. Georgii Mediolanus, in: *MGH SS* XVIII, 389: 8. Kal. Iul. 1264 [24 April, 1264] "*apparuit stella caudata in ahere quasi mortua, que apparuit per duos menses, et infra annum*

## 2.4 Abaqa and the crow

In the case of Hülegü's son, the second Il-khan Abaqa (1234–April 1, 1282)<sup>49</sup> we find an animal symbolizing the approaching death of the emperor, namely a crow.<sup>50</sup> In many cultures, a crow is said to have a close relationship with death, being a messenger of death as well as a collector of souls.<sup>51</sup>

It is said that Il-khan Abaqa was a drunkard, which caused his death.<sup>52</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, who was in the service of Abaqa, describes the situation before Abaqa's demise happened. One day Abaqa was drunk again and in his intoxication he be-

*mortuus est papa [...]*. The story of the comet which causes the death of Urban IV is also given in the famous German fifteenth-century *Weltchronik* by Hartmann Schedel: "Nach der gepurt cristi tausent zwayhundert.lxiii. iar erschine ein mercklicher großer comet. Vber drey monat vom(m) auffgang bis in das mittel des hymels steygende vnd sein stryden gein dem nydergang streckende. v(o)n in (der) nacht darin(en) Vrbanus starb ho\*ret diser comet auff zescheynen". Cited after: Hartmann Schedel, *Weltchronik*. Kolorierte Gesamtausgabe von 1493. Einleitung und Kommentar von Stephan Füssel. Augsburg 2005, CCXIII, verso: The belief that a comet signals the death of a ruler can also be found in Schedel's *Weltchronik* on different occasions, cf. *ibid.* CCXXII, verso – death of Philip IV of France (1314) and CCXXV recto – death of Louis IV, Holy Roman Emperor (1347). In the last case the appearance of the comet also causes famine and an increase in prices; *Die Chronik des Salimbene von Parma*, nach der Ausgabe der MGH bearbeitet von Alfred Doren, 2 Bde. (= *Geschichtsschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit* 93). Leipzig 1914, 272: "Unter allen bedeutenden Sternerscheinungen aber ragte die hervor, die unter Papst Urban IV. sich der ganzen Welt offenbarte. Denn im Jahre, da er starb, erschien, am Fest des heiligen Apollinaris [July 23, 1264], ein Komet am Himmel in Form einer Fackel und währte bis zum Tode des Papstes [October 2, 1264]". In the *Annales Placentini Gibellini* we find – besides the description of the comet – also a prophecy: "Aug. Eodem anno [1264] de mense Augusti aparuit stela versus orientem cum cauda magna et ibat versus occidentem; et oriebatur ipsa stela circa horam matutinam, et duravit bene per tres edomatas, de qua scriptum est, ut infra legitur: Visa fuit stela, designans plurima bella. / Omen erit guere, mors et destrucio terre. / Marte perit Grecus, Ligurum undique cetus. / Regnum mutatur, Sciculus Kalabrusque fugatur, / Francia lectatur [recte: laetatur], demum devicta nectatur [recte: necatur] / Tartarus adveniet, lis Rome maxima fiet. / Tartarus aratur, sic orbis pacificatur." After: *Annales Placentini Gibellini*, A. 1263–1265, in: MGH SS XVIII, 514.

<sup>49</sup> P. Jackson, "Abaqa" in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Online: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/abaqa> [accessed February 28, 2011].

<sup>50</sup> "Ad Tod verkündende Zeichen bei den Türkstämmen": N. Th. Katanoff, „Über die Bestattungsgebräuche bei den Türkstämmen Central- und Ostasiens." *Keleti Szemle* 1 (1900). reprinted in *Indiana University Publications of Uralic and Altaic Studies* 66/1 (1966), 285.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *LexMA*, vol. 7 (1999), 381f. s.v. „Rabe" and *LexMA*, vol. 5, 1464f. s.v. „Krähe"; *HWBddA*, vol. 7, Berlin; Leipzig (1935/36), 427–457, s.v. „Rabe" and *HWBddA*, vol. 5 (1987), Berlin and New York, 352–370, s.v. „Krähe".

<sup>52</sup> B. Spuler, *Geschichte der Islamischen Länder*. Ein Überblick. II. Die Mongolenzeit. Berlin 1948, 30. It is well known that many Mongol Khans consumed a great deal of alcohol, which is also noticed in medieval sources: Cf. e.g. Painter, *Bridia*, § 54, 96; See also: Spuler, *Mongolen im Iran*, 369. Genghis Khan was aware of the problems caused by excessive drinking. P. Ratchnevsky, *Činggis-Khan. Sein Leben und Wirken*. Wiesbaden 1983, 168.

lieved he saw a huge black crow. The Khan ordered his guards to shoot at the crow, but his servants could not even see the bird.<sup>53</sup> The Persian historian Wassāf (fl. 1299–1323) tells us the same story and introduces the bird as the crow of death. In Wassāf's tale the crow even speaks in a poem to the ill Abaqa about the death of a king. The Khan recognizes that the "crow wants his soul" and therefore he gives orders to scare the crow away, but after the crow has vanished, he loses consciousness and dies.<sup>54</sup>

If this story is based on a real occurrence, the appearance of the crow might indicate that Abaqa had a hallucination because of his intoxication, or that he was in a state of *delirium tremens*<sup>55</sup> which is a withdrawal symptom and makes people believe they see not only white mice but also black animals such as black birds.

(3) Modalities of death as the final moral evaluation or, to live and let die – a matter of opinion

The deaths of emperors are often described according to the way they lived their lives. This means that if a ruler was – in the eyes of his biographer – a good and wise emperor, or if someone wished that the king should be known after his death as good ruler and that he had lived in a moral way, then he died in a nice way. On the contrary, an unloved ruler deserved a "bad death".<sup>56</sup>

A good example is the description of the death of Ögedei's son Güyük (1206–April 1248)<sup>57</sup> in the work of Jūzjānī, who, as already mentioned, did not favor the Mongols. He tells us about the death of the third Great Khan in a chapter titled "The decease of Güyük, the accursed". Jūzjānī states that Güyük preferred the religion of Christ and oppressed the Muslims – and therefore he died. He tells us that one day a discussion on the different religions was held before Güyük. An imām spoke about his religion and was then ordered to pray in front of the Khan to prove his religion. Jūzjānī writes:

"When, in the act of prostration, he [the imām] placed his forehead to the ground, some individuals among the infidels, whom Kyuk had introduced and prompted, greatly annoyed that godly Imām,

<sup>53</sup> German translation of Rashīd al-Dīn in: B. Spuler, *Geschichte der Mongolen nach östlichen und europäischen Zeugnissen des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts*. Zürich and Stuttgart 1968, 152.

<sup>54</sup> Hammer-Purgstall, *Wassaf*, 200.

<sup>55</sup> Jackson, "Abaqa".

<sup>56</sup> This was also the case for "normal" people. Cf. A. Borst, *Lebensformen im Mittelalter*. 2. Aufl. Berlin 1999, 126.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Boyle, *Juvainī*, 248–262; Boyle, *Rashīd*, 175–185; P. Jackson, "Güyük Khan", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Online: <<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gyk-khan>> [accessed February 28, 2011]. E. Blochet, "La mort du Khaghan Kouyouk," *Revue de l'orient chrétien* 3:23 (1922–23), 160–171, Also online available: <[http://www.catholica-pedia.net/Documents/Revue-de-l.Orient-chretien/23-1922.1923\\_revue-de-l.orient-ch\\_paris.pdf](http://www.catholica-pedia.net/Documents/Revue-de-l.Orient-chretien/23-1922.1923_revue-de-l.orient-ch_paris.pdf)> [accessed February 27, 2011]; H. Kim, "A reappraisal of Güyük Khan," in R. Amitai and M. Biran, ed., *Mongols, Turks and Others* (Inner Asian Library 1). Leiden and Boston MA, 2005, 331.; Roux, *Histoire*, 321.

and the other Musalmān who had followed him [in praying], [they] knocked their heads with force against the ground, and committed other unbecoming actions towards them, in order that, thereby, the prayers might perhaps be rendered ineffectual. But the godly Imām [...] made no mistake whatever, and the prayers were in no way rendered ineffectual. [...] Almighty God of His perfect power and foe-consuming vengeance that same night inflicted a disease upon Kyuk which, with the knife of death, severed the artery of his existence, so that verily that same night he went to hell, and the Musalmāns were delivered from his tyranny and oppression."<sup>58</sup>

As for the conclusion, Grigor of Akner gives a similar story. He talks about a son of Mōngke Khan which he calls Xul<sup>59</sup> but in his account it is the Christian God who punishes the Muslim. Grigor writes, for the year 1257:

"Then that chieftain, who called himself the brother of God, came into the interior of the country and mercilessly fell upon the miserable Christians. They burned all the wooden crosses wherever they found them erected on the roads and mountains. But nothing whatever satisfied them. Wherever they found monasteries in the land they plundered and oppressed, eating and drinking. They trussed up venerable priests and flogged them mercilessly."<sup>60</sup>

Xul fell ill with gout. An "infidel" Jewish<sup>61</sup> doctor told him that his illness could be cured if he put his foot in the stomachs of red-haired boys but these stomachs had to be opened while the boys were still alive. The Mongols seized thirty Christian boys and killed them in the aforesaid way, but the gout still did not get better. Now Xul realized that he had done great injustice "because of the harm done to the children" and ordered that the Jewish doctor should be "brought before him and disemboweled, and his entrails thrown to the dogs. [...] but Xul himself died an evil death".<sup>62</sup>

Other examples can be found in Grigor's account,<sup>63</sup> and in other sources, as in the stories of Kirakos and Juvainī, where a cruel end due to the punishment of (the Christian or Muslim) God is attributed to the unjust.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Raverty, *Juzjani*, 1163.

<sup>59</sup> Blake and Frye, *Grigor of Akanc'*, 432: Xul is equal to "Qul".

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 327.

<sup>61</sup> This is clearly anti-Semitic but it would go beyond the scope of this paper to discuss anti-Semitic stereotypes and patterns of these sources here.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 331; See also F. W. Cleaves, "A Medical Practice of the Mongols in the Thirteenth Century," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 17:3/4 (Dec. 1954), 428-444, who focuses on the medical practice described in the text.

<sup>63</sup> E.g. see the story of Chormaqan, in Blake and Frye, *Grigor of Akanc'*, 299-301. *Ibid.* 299 mentions also a comet and a solar eclipse.

<sup>64</sup> Bedrosian, *Kirakos*, 44, 260-262. Online: <<http://rbedrosian.com/kg10.htm#44>> [Accessed February 28, 2011]; Boyle, *Juvaini*, 543-544.

*Conclusion*

The deaths of Mongol Khans which have been handed down in the sources are not to be understood as historic facts but primarily as a "message". Here we have to deal with constructions which are statements of political and moral/religious belief. Apart from these manipulations, supernatural elements and literary topoi, like the "deathbed scenes", are testified through sources with different cultural backgrounds.

# *Materials of Yenisei Manichaeism*

NIKOLAY RYBAKOV

*(Petrovsky Academy of Sciences and Arts, Russia)*



The historiography to date limits the appearance of adherents of Manichaeism to the north of the Sayan ridge within the boundaries of the Minusinsk basin. The Finnish expedition of Doctor I. R. Aspelin in 1887 made documentary records of a number of monuments (Podkamen, Oshkole, Ukraine) that bear images of figures in long robes. In the middle of the twentieth century, O. Menchen Helfen, in an article based on these discoveries, identified the figures as the alien priests of a cult, namely Manichaeism, but this theory found no support in the scientific community.<sup>1</sup> The Russian scholar L. R. Kyzlasov refers these mysterious figures to the period of the early Middle Ages - the Tashtyk culture - but he has refrained from any judgments and publications on this point. The Hungarian scholar M. Erdy considers the costume of the characters as typical of shamans belonging to the Central Asian and the Siberian tradition.<sup>2</sup> The epitaph sources of Yenisei writing contain a certain element of solar-lunar character, which is indirectly associated with Manichaean cosmology, but contemporary sources providing no details of this religion.

More recent discoveries of monuments with stone carvings scattered in the landscape of the Iyus steppes additionally support the possible existence of an alien religious tradition in the Kirghiz state. Fieldwork on the outskirts of these steppe sites over the last ten years has brought to light a number of discoveries: the engraved images of mysterious figures dated to the ninth and tenth centuries which bear identity with those recorded by Aspelin have been found. These finds are of satisfactory intactness, in some cases they represent one-assembly structure of reproductions, in others a multilayered palimpsest, and on the whole the quality of their preservation guarantees the criteria of prospective identification. In the petroglyphic images of figures in mantles one can observe three types, differing in details and other specific attributes of dress which characterize their regional, sectarian, or communicatively-time distinction. Here we will consider on-

---

<sup>1</sup> O. Maenchen-Helfen, "Manichaeans in Siberia," *Semitic and Oriental Studies* 16 (1951), 326.

<sup>2</sup> M. Erdy, "Manichaeans, Nestorians or bird-costumed humans in their relations to hunt-type cauldrons in rock carvings of the Yenisei Valley," *Eurasia Studies Yearbook* 68 (1996), 45-95.



ly the first type of images - strangers in long mantles, which we have named "vajra bearers".

After examination of some of the figures, as recorded by the Finnish expedition using digital equipments, it was found that they carry under the arm an object in the form either of a cone, or of a two-part design of roundish outlines (Fig. 1, 1-5).

According to the biography of missionary history in China, "Gao sen Zhoun" (beginning of the sixth century), one of the attributes of the cult practice of Buddhists of the Mahayana school is called "vajra-fly chaser Zhu".<sup>3</sup> In the extensive materials on the tantric Buddhism of Tibet we find eremite staffs known as *khvat-vanga*, or the spherical *vajra*, the discal *vajra*, or a scepter made from human skulls.<sup>4</sup> The staff *khakkhara*, or lamaist *vachir*, is mentioned in monuments in Central Asia (Hara-Hoto).<sup>5</sup> The monk's wand or staff (sansk. *khakkhara*) has supposedly been known since Buddha himself. The main purpose of the staff is to warn all living things around the bearer that he is moving, so as not to accidentally stop someone's chain of rebirth. It is important to emphasize that the monastic staff was widespread in northern Buddhism, covering Tibet, Mongolia, China, and Japan. The staff has withstood the passage of time, yet evolved in appearance. The staff could be longer, for use as a walking stick, or a rod on a short handle which is placed under the armpit.

The monk's staff, or baton, has a short handle (tibet. *khar-gsil*, mong. *dulduy*) in Tibetan Lamaist tradition a stump (Fig. 1, 7) and a metal top in the form of the leaf of the *bodhi* tree, the tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment.

This cult object represents an octal construction of metal arcs with an amulet with a miniature figure of the Buddha Shakya-Muni and many hanging ribbons that bear symbols auspicious for all living beings. The upper part of another type of Tibetan staff (Fig. 1, 8) has the shape of a Buddhist stupa at the top of the fig tree, schematically showing a leaf of the *bodhi* tree (& 509-11 / and MAE). The spire of the stupa in the form of multiple steps could be replaced by other figurative images, such as the form of crossed lightning (sansk. *vajra*).<sup>6</sup> The attribute in the hands of Yenisei personagediffers by the documentary criterion among all mentioned above examples (Fig. 1, 2). He has identity and similarity with the wand of Buddhistic Saint Maudga Lya-yana (Fig. 1). Maudga Lya-yana is one of the main Śākyamuni Buddha's followers. In Buddhistic iconography he is depict-

<sup>3</sup> Hue-Tszao. «Gao Sin Tzuan» *Biographies of worthy monks*. Vol. 2. Saint Petersburg 2005, 153.

<sup>4</sup> Goy-Lotsava Shonnupel, "Dark Blue Annals," *Buddhism History in Tibet. VI-XVth centuries*, tr. Y.N. Rerikha, Saint Petersburg 2001, 139; S.-H. Sartypova, *A cult of goddess-keeper Boldan Lhamo in Tibetan Buddhism*, Moscow 2003, 102-108.

<sup>5</sup> S. M. Kochetova, "Deities of stars in paintings at Hara-Hoto," in *Works of the Dept. of History of Culture and Eastern Arts. The State Hermitage*. Vol. 4. Leningrad 1947, 472-502.

<sup>6</sup> P. Demieville, *Iconography and History. The Twin Pagodas of Zayton. A Study of Later Buddhist Sculpture in China*. Cambridge (1935), Cf. W v 1, E III 14.

ed with trilobite wand (khakhara) in hands. In Zoroastrian (Iranian) cult art the divine scepter of God Zurvan occurs.

These attributes of ritual-eschatological assignment are a peculiar heritage of deities- thunderers in *vajrayana* mythology and rituals, northern Buddhism- Mahayana and Zoroastrism. The American researcher S. Lieu, referring to Manichaeism influence on the art of the Buddhism of Ladakha, wrote: "the symbolical Cross of Light has replaced its natural form with a lightning stroke (*vajra*)".<sup>7</sup> Indirect visual sources find support in Manichaean literature. In Coptic texts, Mani speaks about a staff: "I will dress them in a wisdom armor and righteousness staffs". The gold arrow (scepter) was received by Yima, the Zoroastrian keeper, from Ahura-Mazda. The historical fact of the eastern mission led by Mar-Ammo points to Buddhist adaptation in eastern Iranian and central Asian Manichaeism: Manichaeists have accepted Buddhist forms and contents.<sup>8</sup> The original composition of the Prince Aprin Kora is a collection of Turkish texts modeled as *Budhastotras*, or "Praise to the Buddha", which is an essential part of the texts in the Buddhist-Manichaean literature of Tokharistan. In the text, the following epithets characterize Mani: "sharp *vajra*", "wise, providing knowledge", and "my elephant" (having the force of the Buddha).<sup>9</sup>

The corpus of iconography of the thunderer's cult is supplemented with these images of a thunderous arrow in the natural landscape surroundings of a represented monument (Fig. 1, 6), by external stone-graphic signs. These two-sided cones are an attribute of thunderer's rituals in the spirits study cosmogony system of medieval infidels of the Iyus interfluves. They have identity and similarity of those scepters which are seen under the arms of the figures in long mantles. The crosswise *vajra* form reflects a cult of "space force of gnostic systems of the East and as for a place and time" - the shaman cult of heavenly spirits-patrons that causes a consistency in issues of belief of newcomers and adherents of spirit study faiths of the Iyus steppes.

Thus it is not absolutely clear what tradition the scepter under the arm of this or that character concerns. The following discovery corrects an essence of this question - a monument known as "Four figures" in Barstag (on the left bank of the White Iyus) (Fig. 2). The two or three-layer image represents an archer in pursuit of a deer (of the Tashtyk period) on the bottom layer and four figures in a procession from left to right on the top layer. The person going first is in the full dress of the minister of a cult, in a crown and magnificent bow-shaped headband or braided plait hanging down near a nape; in the area of the armpits is a biconi-

<sup>7</sup> S. N. C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, Naghammadi and Manichaean Studies, Leiden, Boston MA and Cologne 1998, 55.

<sup>8</sup> H. J. Klimkeit, "Selected Studies," in M. Heuser and H. J. Klimkeit *Studies in Manichaean Literature and Art*. Leiden, Boston MA and Cologne 1998, 237; B. A. Litvinsky, "Buddhism and medieval civilization," in *Indian culture and Buddhism. Collection of works in memory of F. I. Shcherbatsky*. Moscow 1972, 150.

<sup>9</sup> H. J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Parables, Hymns and Prayers from Central Asia*. San Francisco 1993, 286.

cal staff; the hands are not seen; around the belt there is an ornament in the form of round suspension brackets on braided threads, at the bottom of the costume, like a dragging tail, is a train. The second figure wears long clothes, is of smaller stature, an adolescent, with a feather in his hair. The third figure is an aged man, in full vestments, but without a staff. The fourth figure finishing the procession is in long attire. Judging by the images in profile and other details of their appearance, the anthropological type of the characters is Aryan, except the fourth, who clearly has the head and figure of a representative of the Turkic type of the surrounding ethnic groups of the uplands of Central Asia. A characteristic detail of the three adult characters is a diadem in the form of a double circle under a crown in the area of the forehead.

Judging by examples of the religious convergence of the two faiths of Buddhism and Manichaeism, the object under the arm of the priest-figure (in the opinion of the author) is a double-ended *vajra*. Others, judging by the similarity of the characters in Oshkol painting, presented above, hypothetically may be related to what we know as round-shaped Buddhist scepters like a sphere, or a disk, or the *vajra* made from human skulls.

So, polytypic wands in the armpits of Yenisei personages “*vajra* wearers” characterize chronologically different periods of small outlandish groups’ coming to Yenisei.

According to the information we possess about the religious rapprochement between the two religions of Buddhism and Manichaeism, the object under the arm of the priest (in the author’s opinion) should be defined as a two-ended *vajra*.

In relation to all four figures, the type of costume of the strangers, in particular, long mantles with trains stretching back, indirectly relates to Chinese culture. Excessively long attire was a fashion at court in the Soui dynasty (sixth-seventh centuries AD),<sup>10</sup> but there are no grounds to relate the attire of the strangers to Chinese fashion alone. “Long clothes” (*uzun ton*) are the long cassocks of Chighil Manichaeists.<sup>11</sup> The long clothes are noticed in an Ephthalite cultural milieu that is known from the story of the Buddhist pilgrim Si-yu-chi (sixth century). He speaks about magnificent female dresses made from expensive fabrics with trains as long as 3 feet and more.<sup>12</sup> In the ninth-century descriptions of Gardīzī there are some details related to the “wide clothes” of inhabitants of the Uygur state with long hollow.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> L. P. Sychev, Traditional embodiment of the Yin-Yan principle in Chinese ritual attire, *The role of traditions in the history and culture of China*. Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Moscow 1972, 144–150; S. V. Pankova, Interpretation of mysterious figures from Khakassia, in *History and culture. The east of Asia*. vol. 2. The Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Science. Novosibirsk 2002, 135–140.

<sup>11</sup> Y. A. Zuev, *Early Turks: history and ideology sketches*. Almaty 2002, 220–222.

<sup>12</sup> S. Beal. *Si-yu-chi. Buddhist Records of the Western World*. London 1906, vol. 1, pp. xc–xci.

<sup>13</sup> V. V. Bartold, *Report about a trip to Central Asia with a scientific purpose 1893–1894*. Saint Petersburg 1897, 116. A. P. Martinez, Gardīzī’s two chapters on the Turks: *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 2 (1982), 136.

The ascetic ideal appearance of the Manichaeic-preacher Syrian-Christian, Persian-Haraanskan pagan traditions and the Buddhist „law tutor“ could be translated in the renewed guise of a missionary at the crossroads of the Silk Road between West, East and India. Language formulas like “Mani-Buddha”; “My Father-Mani-Buddha”, “Buddha Maytreya, Mani Mar the Apostle: he has brought ... salvation ... from just God, the Father of Light”<sup>14</sup> assist in understanding the issues of confessional coordination (albeit temporary) of two doctrines expressed in “sacred language”, and the priestly clothes of Heavenly warriors. The clothes of the Buddha in his “former appearance” as “alive” symbol of the cosmogonic phenomenon between light and darkness, according to Chinese chronicles, were a subject of diplomatic gifts.<sup>15</sup> An important source is an annal from the Chinese chronicles (fifth century AD): “at the end of the reign of the sovereign Vyn-Tschen [453–465] the Kashgar master in year of 465 sent [to the Court] with his envoy the chasuble *Shagya-Moni* which was about 20 feet long.”<sup>16</sup>

From all said above, the chasuble of *Shagya-Moni* actually represents a materialized relic, the universal form not only for a set of diplomatic gifts, but also the imitation of battle and full dress “armour in metaphorical quality of eschatological experiences” - a religious symbol of Manichaeic sectarianism of the second or the third wave on the missionary ways from west to east, and south to north.

Among the four figures in the procession, the second, the adolescent (*Shramanera* - buddh.) has a feather on his head, indicating a condition of elevated spirituality. In all the religions of the East the image of the boy, “the Soul yearning for salvation”, is endowed with the ability to speak with the higher deities, possessing the gift of prediction as he “has received wisdom from the Buddha”.<sup>17</sup> The attribute of a feather on the head, the symbol of the heavenly charisma of the elite, occurred in the central Asian cultural tradition from antiquity until the late Middle Ages.<sup>18</sup> Honorable ceremonial feathers were an emblem of the skilled marksman within the Asian nomadic world of the K k-Turkic people (sixth–eighth centuries) and the ancient Uygur state (ninth–tenth centuries).<sup>19</sup>

Let us note what the Coptic Manichaeic book the “Psalms of Thomas” tells us about tiaras: “the Boat [a crown - NR] has received a palm branch ... he has decorated it and elevated the Host to the Great.” “The palm branch” going down arc-

<sup>14</sup> Klimkeit, “Selected Studies,” 243.

<sup>15</sup> V. V. Bartold, *Works*, Vol. VIII. Moscow 1973, 54–55; A. G. Malyavkin, *The Uygur state in the IX–XII centuries*. Novosibirsk 1983, 238.

<sup>16</sup> N. J. Bichurin (Hyacinph). *Collection of data on the people living in Central Asia in ancient times*. Vols 1 and 2. Moscow and Leningrad 1950, 258.

<sup>17</sup> Klimkeit, “Selected Studies,” 261, 296; J. Tucci, *Religions of Tibet*. Translated from Italian by O. V. Alberil. Saint Petersburg, 2005, 295.

<sup>18</sup> Men-gu-yu-mu-tszu. *Notes about Mongolian nomads camps translated from Chinese*. Edited by P.S. Popova. 1895, 413; A. I. Levshin, *Description of the Kirghiz-Cossack hordes and steppes*. *Ethnographic News*. Part II. Saint Petersburg 1832, 16.

<sup>19</sup> Esin Emel and Beduk Bork. *The iconography of Turkish honorific headgears*. *Proceedings of the IXth Meeting of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference*. Naples 1970, 19, 112–114.

like from under the tiara to a nape, has indirect attitude to a circle of symbols of Mandeaeen-Nasorean (gnostic) religiosity.<sup>20</sup> According to another version we understand arcual attribute, which decorates the head, as a twisted braid coming down from the tiara. Such braids were met in the early Tibetan tradition of Buddhist school of Nyingma and Gelug. The wearing of mantles and wreaths is the immutable act of the formalized demonstration of the Manichaeen behavioral code.

As noticed above, each figure has a round emblem on his forehead. All attempts of researchers in domestic and foreign historiography to relate the phenomenon of the Yenisei "mysterious figures" to the missionary activity of Nestorians or even pagan shamanists, on the evidence now available, have no grounds. The Nestorians, for known reasons, would not put a pagan sign on their foreheads.

They bore crosses as a sign of finding the Christian "tree of the Cross".<sup>21</sup> An equipotential cross is a symbol of the Nestorian Church.<sup>22</sup> Besides, Nestorian priests wore two-layered clothes: a red-and-white short coat over a long green alb, *eibu*.<sup>23</sup>

Round of the Ancient East: the Eye of God, the Word (*Logos*). (In the indirect motives circle of the formally identical emblems there is a known graphical archetypical symbol "a point in a circle" of the Neolithic and Bronze Age that spread almost over the whole south of Eurasia). In the religious-mystical doctrines of Late Antiquity, "the third spiritual eye" [in Buddhism - monosyllabus, the Ohm,<sup>24</sup> the Seed of the Buddha,<sup>25</sup> a space sign on the Buddha,<sup>26</sup> in Manichaeism - the Eye of Zurvan-Mani-Buddha, in Jesus Christ's message - Light (Parthian text, M. 42); in Turkic religiousness as a variant - charisma of good luck -

<sup>20</sup> E. S. Drover, *Hidden Adam. Mandeaeans. History, literature, religion*. Compiled by N. K. Gerasimov. Saint Petersburg 2002, 262.

<sup>21</sup> D. Hvolson, "Preliminary notes about discoveries in the Semirechye region of Syrian gravestone inscriptions," in *Christian monuments in the Semirechye region in print from ZVOIRAO*, Vol. 1. Saint Petersburg 1886, 34; H.B. Pigulevsky, *Byzantium and Iran on a boundary of VI and VII centuries*. Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Moscow and Leningrad 1946, 104-105; S.D. Dzhumagulov *Epigraphs of Kirghizia. 3rd Century*. Frunze 1987, 38-39.

<sup>22</sup> Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, 179.

<sup>23</sup> Zs. Gulaczi, *Mediaeval Manichaeen book art: a codicological study of Iranian and Turkic illuminated book fragments from 8th to 11th-century east Central Asia*. Nag Hammadi and Manichaeen studies, Leiden and Boston MA 2005, 24.

<sup>24</sup> G. Rene, *Symbolism kreyja*. Transl. from the French by T. M. Fadeeva and U. N. Stefanov. Moscow 2004, 264, 300.

<sup>25</sup> V. Chohan. *The selected works*, edited by A. N. Margulan. Alma-Ata 1958, 400.

<sup>26</sup> Esin Emel and Beduk Bork. The iconography of Turkish honorific headgears. *Proceedings of the IXth Meeting of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference*. Naples 1970, 19.

*Qut*<sup>27</sup> met the requirements of transcendental knowledge on a self-knowledge and self-improvement way. Additional examples from Manichaeic literatures: "... and we will strengthen our hand in a prayer and open our eye to your [Jesus - NR] figure",<sup>28</sup> or "... we will follow the Savior, our upper eye, and our ear with which we hear" (a hymn fragment - we would infer). Numerous examples of the propagation of the solar-lunar sign on the foreheads (*tiaras*) of bearers are characteristic of small plastic figures of Greek-Bactrian Kushan and Ancient Sogdian culture.<sup>29</sup> The sign is noted in cult scenes of Pendzhikent painting and round sculpture,<sup>30</sup> in the astrological pantheon of symbols of Central Asia,<sup>31</sup> in the iconography of monuments of Khotan in the form of gold disks on a hat of the Kirghiz prince.<sup>32</sup> In paintings of the "Maya cave" in Kyzyl, the solar-lunar sign crowns the heads of deities.<sup>33</sup>

The formal similarity of a sign in a cultural-historical context and advancement in time does not mean the identification of its variants always follows. However there are no grounds to question this archetype symbol, preserving its magic semantics, apprehended by Manichaeists and put on their tiaras - it is mentioned in Turfan Manichaeic literature as the "Domination Diadem."<sup>34</sup>

The sign of the Domination Diadem (the Eye of Zurvan-Mani-Buddha, "cognition symbol"<sup>35</sup>) was the peculiar form of pass recognized without explanations, in a place and time on all the ways of propagation of Manichaeic sermons within the territories of Middle and Central Asia. The sign, "a circle in a circle", is in the general set of solar-lunar visual sign sources of the Iyus interfluves.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> T. D. Skrynnikova, Mongols' ideas about the ruler sacral position. *Turkic and Mongolian written monuments*. Russian Academy of Sciences. Oriental Studies Institute. Moscow 1992, 80.

<sup>28</sup> Parthian text M.2811: J. P. Asmussen, *Manichaeic Literature. Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings*. Persian Heritage Series, No. 22. Scholars' Facsimiles, Reprints. Delmar, New York 1975, 107.

<sup>29</sup> V. A. Meshkeris, *The Sogdian terracotta*. Edited by T. V. Antonov. Dushanbe 1989, 25; B. Y. Stavisky, *Buddhism Fates in Central Asia*. Moscow 1998, 146.

<sup>30</sup> A. M. Belenitsky, *Monumental art of Pendzhikent. Painting. Sculpture*. Moscow 1973, 19.

<sup>31</sup> S. M. Kochetova, Deities of stars in painting [at] Hara-Hoto, *Works of the Dept. of History of Culture and Eastern Arts*. The State Hermitage. Vol. IV. Leningrad 1947, 476.

<sup>32</sup> Le Cog, *Bilderatlas zum Kunst und Kulturgeschichte Mittelasiens*. Berlin 1925, fig. 69.

<sup>33</sup> M. M. Dyakonov, Pendzhikent and Central Asia paintings, *Painting of Ancient Pendzhikent*. Moscow 1954, 152, fig. 25.

<sup>34</sup> Klimkeit, "Selected Studies," 230.

<sup>35</sup> N. I. Rybakov. "Eye of Zurvana-Mani-Buddha. Following the discoveries of the expedition of I. Aspelin (1887-89)." *Study of a historical and cultural heritage of the people of Southern Siberia*. Gorno-Altai: Akin, 2007, Vol. 5, 121-134.

<sup>36</sup> See N. I. Rybakov, "Sun-moon in Iyus steppes petroglyphs," *World outlook of the population of Southern Siberia and the Central Asia in the historical retrospective*. Barnaul 2008, Vol. II, 60-82; N. I. Rybakov, Procession - a monument of Sogdian-Yenisei cultural-historical interrelations. *World outlook of the population of Southern Siberia and the Central Asia in historical retrospective*, Scientific Works Collection, Barnaul 2009, Issue III, 135-159.

Let's touch upon some special symbolic elements convincingly confirm remained evidences of the orthodox Manichaean church (Fig. 3). The figure on the left (Barstag) is the minister of a cult, the *vajra* bearer, on a fragment of monument interpreted above; the figure on the right is the righteous person (Podkamen - a fragment, materials - NR) in the full vestments of ceremonial attire. Notice that the character does not belong to the group of *vajra* bearers, but his dress is not separable from that of similar image of representatives of a cult in the iconography of monuments of East Turkestan. His vestments include a tiara with a solar-lunar emblem, falling bands, long mantle and other details. Over the mantle the hands are placed on the breast (palms inside), a visual example of the iconography which meets the requirements of the special Manichaean canon: one of three seals - "the seal of hands", an interdiction for the destruction of the bestial world and lust. These two characters, by their external signs alone, do not ascertain the fact of belonging to one and the same Manichaean consortium, but the graphic surroundings in which they are placed reflect a specific uniform factor of Manichaean doctrine: one can observe at the feet of the minister of a cult with the *vajra* the iridescent movement gradually discharging from below upwards, from the earth's surface. At the same time the mantle of righteous man (Podkamen) is shaded from the figure's middle downwards, thickening to the earth's surface.

My preliminary conclusions are the following: Matter, all the substance of the bestial world, continuously combats the forces of light, but the main object of its struggle is the human whose will it tries to paralyze. The light remains imprisoned in the bestial world, going upwards also are definitively cleared of the material. The eschatological destiny of the World Soul depends on the missionary activity of the Elect, who saves both his own soul and Light, contained in it and in the World Soul. The specific iconography of the iridescent movement of light from below upwards meets these requirements of Manichaean doctrine. In the second case the shaded part of a mantle of the righteous man characterizes a specificity of Manichaean dualism (light/darkness) - iconographic corroboration of how the aggressive part of the world, Matter, reflects the following single factor of Manichean dualism: the opposition of heaven *topographia sacra* substrate of the lower world-Darkness (dark matter). This shadowed part of the world is expressed in the language of graphic metaphors: at the feet of a cult follower with a *vajra* (Barstag) from the surface of the earth there are a number of arcs of rising light, gradually more sparse towards the top as it discharges gradually upwards. The robe of the righteous person (Podkamen) is shaded from the middle of the figure downwards, thickening as it gets closer to the ground. In either case, first the aggressiveness of the darkness of the world must be emphasized. The same "negative" iconography is shown in one of the figures in Aspelin's kogo cycle (Fig. 1, 2).

It follows from all the above that the figures in long mantles are Manichaeists of the second or the third wave costumed in hybrid suit, but we do not know what Buddhistic-manichaean sect or sects came to Iuys.

The primary iconographic material we have is represented by the unique sample of stone-graphic art from the milieu of Yenisei petroglyphs. The motif

repertoire, the composite qualities, the stressed hierarchy in a procession of figures, a set of graphic attributes and symbols of "divine participation" are, to certain degree, the cultural-historical import of an alien religious tradition. Involvement and compatibility with Central Asian shamanism, astrology, and magic is a form of the plurality of Manichean syncretism.

As the historical necessity and the convergence of ideologies preaching missionary attire has transformed a few symbolic models of religious dress were formed. Set decorations in the dress of *vajra* bearers and other regulatory and scenic elements in the motifs of the processing figures show combined pagan, Buddhist and Judeo-Christian religious components. It seems to us that the ceremonial vestments of the *vajra* bearers meet the metaphorical qualities of eschatological experiences of preaching ideology, especially Buddhism and Manichaeism. As for Buddhism, the formal elements of the costumed characters ascertain the form of northern *Tokhars-Khotanese* Buddhism developed into Tengriism and shamanism.

The appearance of newcomers dressed in the homiletic clothes of *vajra* bearers with elements of the mixed maintenance characterizes their regional or sectarian difference. The iconographic aspect of polytypic tiaras and elements of an ethnic impurity can speak about a temporarily restored religious community of surrogate image, as the socio-historical factor of compulsory persecutions. (Yenisei-stone-graphic Art does not confirm the coming of Manichaeian people in "pure type").

In this connection the cultural-historical surroundings of the northern Mongolian steppes, as a prospective missionary route to a terminal point on Yenisei, is of importance.

However, *Iyusskaya* (*Yeniseyskaya*) iconography finds only indirect remains in the corpus of the known *turfansko-turkestankoi* art, which as a whole is a unique sample of Kirghiz-Manichaeian-Buddhistic petrographic art. To our knowledge, to date, no visual examples comparable to the Yenisei monuments have been found, which is a problem for interpretation.

From historical sources, we know that Nestorians and Manichaeists were expelled from China by the imperial decree of 845.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, 83 years earlier (761/2) Manichaeian preachers reached the limits of the Uygur state at Bögü-Kagan (759-779) where Manichaeism became the state religion.<sup>38</sup> One of the versions of the Manichaeian sermons on Yenisei beginning is that it was the consequence of the Kirghiz expansion of 840 in the Mongolian steppes, i.e., a compulsory drive of preachers to Iyus as prisoners of war. One should not disregard the fact that the first arrival of Manichaeian preachers at Yenisei could be related to a military campaign of the Uygur ruler Eletmish Bilge-Kagan (747-759) seventy years earlier, in 759, as result of which the ancient Khakass ruler had to recognize

<sup>37</sup> N. A. Aristov, *Notes about ethnic structure of Turkic tribes and nationalities and data about their number*, Zhivaya Starina, Volumes III-IV, 1896, Saint Petersburg 1897, 91.

<sup>38</sup> H. J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Parables, Hymns and Prayers from Central Asia*, San Francisco 1993, 271.



vassalic dependence and to accept a special title belittling its dignity: Bilge (Tun)-Irkin.

The next historical milestone in Manichaean contacts with the Kirghiz, more precisely, their flight to the north, presumably after a possible coup in anti-Manichaean Ordubalik in 779. The next historical mark of the supposed advancement of Manichaeists to the Yenisei steppes, more exactly - their flight, is possibly after the anti-Manichaean revolution in Ordubalyk when the Manichaean faith was forbidden, and was restored only 16 years later in 795.

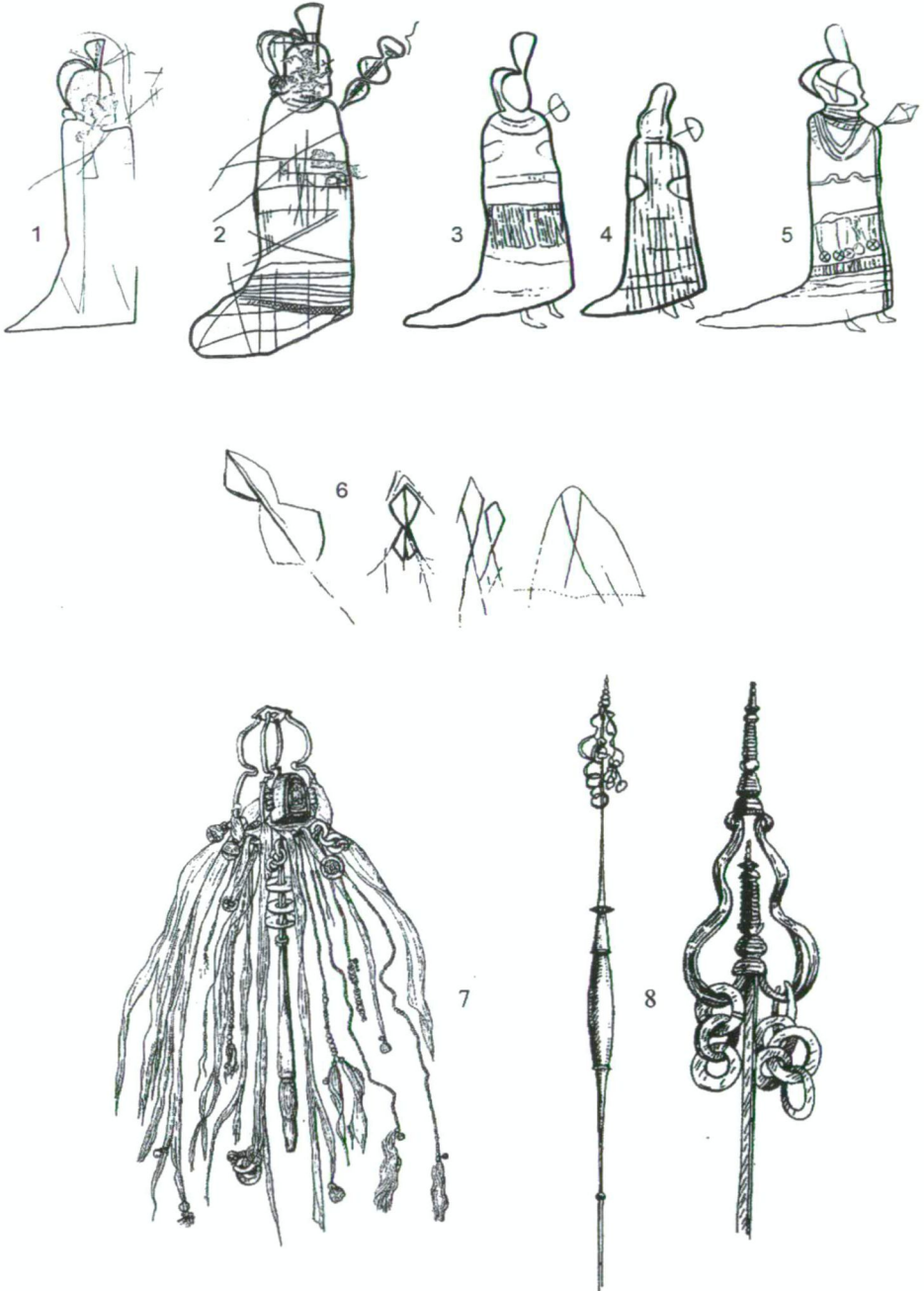


FIGURE 1. *Vajra* bearers. An iconography of the Iyus steppes  
 1 and 2 Figures (Podkamen) on: Appelgren Kivalo N. 1931  
 3-5 Figures of Oshkol painting (reconstruction - N. I. Rybakov)  
 6 Thunderers' arrows, Iyus interfluves (materials - N. I. Rybakov)  
 7 and 8 Staffs. Tantric Buddhism. Tibet (N. L. Zhucovskaya)



FIGURE 2. Four figures (Barstag). Left bank of the White Iyus (materials - N. R.)

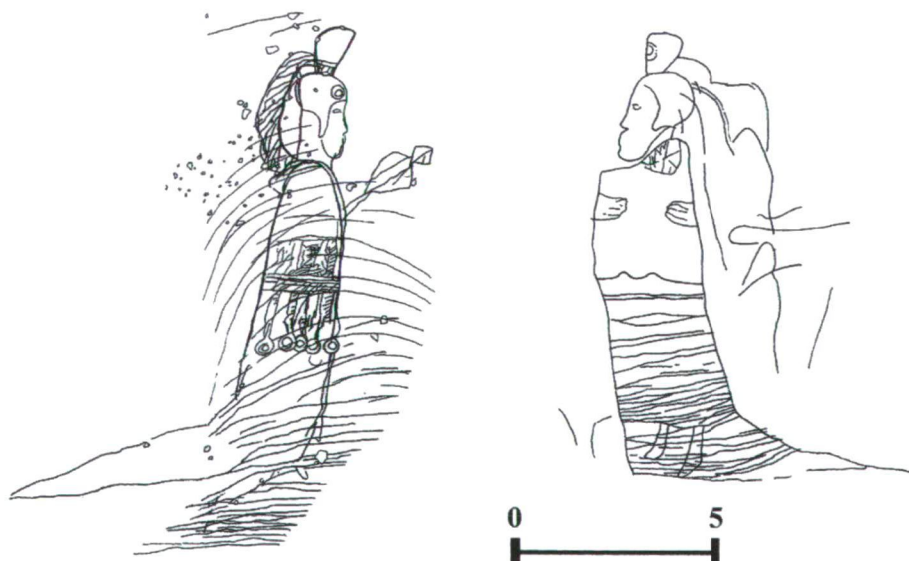


FIGURE 3. The minister of a cult, the *vajra* bearer (Barstag).  
The righteous person (Podkamen, fragment, materials - N. I. Rybakov)

# *Agriculture versus pastoralism in Indo-Aryan prehistory*

GYULA WOJTILLA



The aim of my paper is to throw fresh light on the question of the changing correlation between agriculture and pastoralism at different stages of Indo-Aryan prehistory.

To avoid certain misunderstandings, I want to make plain some concepts on which my whole argumentation is based. First, throughout this paper I use the terms Indo-Europeans, Indo-Iranians and Indo-Aryans for the speakers of these languages and not as names of ethnic groups.

Second, in expounding my views on the subject, I draw mainly on linguistic data and to a lesser extent on archeological evidence. This is because I am a student of historical linguistics and because I hold Denis Sinor's well formulated opinion still valid: "It is impossible to attribute with any degree of certainty any given language to any given prehistoric civilization".<sup>1</sup> More specifically, I keep in mind also the opinion formed by the archeologist Lamberg-Karlovsky, that "the archaeological quest for the identity of the Indo-Iranians remains elusive" and "contemporary methodologies, be they linguistic or archaeological, are virtually non-existent for determining which language a remote archaeological culture spoke".<sup>2</sup>

Thirdly, a body of recent scholarship assumes that the original home of the Indo-Aryans was surely not India, in spite of growing pressure from serious Indian archeologists with a nationalistic bias and their western sympathizers.<sup>3</sup> There is a kind of confusion even in the book of the outstanding Poona archeologist Dhavalikar. On one and the same page he argues for indigenous Aryans in India and acknowledges an original Aryan homeland in Central Asia.<sup>4</sup> In this context I willingly subscribe to R. S. Sharma's opinion. He rightly says that "the scale of linguistic diffusion in India presupposes the presence of large numbers of

---

<sup>1</sup> D. Sinor, "Some thoughts on the Nostratic theory and its historical implications", in *Nostratic: Examining a linguistic macrofamily*, ed. C. Renfrew and D. Nettle, Cambridge 1999, 396.

<sup>2</sup> C. C. Lamberg-Karlovsky, "Archaeology and language. The Indo-Iranians," *Current Anthropology* 43 (2005), 169.

<sup>3</sup> E. F. Bryant, *The quest for the origins of the Vedic culture*. New Delhi 2002, 206.

<sup>4</sup> M. K. Dhavalikar, *The Aryans. Myth and archaeology*. New Delhi 2007, 166.

Indo-Aryan speakers. If invasion and warlike migrations in two or three waves are ruled out, we have to think of intermittent immigrations for centuries" and "it would be a miracle if the Indo-Aryan language spread in India without the arrival of a good many speakers. But what can we do if some archaeologists believe in miracles?"<sup>5</sup> Even the lack of biological criteria for Aryanness maintained by some archeologists and anthropologists is not a definite proof against the arrival of Indo-Aryan speakers. As Sharma acutely remarks it is quite natural that the skeleton remains of a given archeological culture generally reveal a pluralism of types and conclusive evidence for ethnic pluralism. Moreover the comparison of the crania in question was made only with similar findings from Egypt, Anatolia, Mesopotamia and the Iranian plateau, but not with data from Central Asia and Eastern Europe including Russia.<sup>6</sup> Romila Thapar, the leading scholar of ancient Indian history in our time, takes the side of the migration theory.<sup>7</sup> Even the highly critical Hock, who regards all current theories as provisional, concludes that the theory of immigration remains more plausible than that of an Indian homeland, at least until our knowledge of the Indo-European culture and its spread or of the Indus civilization changes considerably.<sup>8</sup>

Fourthly, I follow Witzel's suggestion that the exact place from where the Indo-Aryans entered India and the route they followed is still very much uncertain but that a framework in which this can be conceived can be constructed on the basis of their supposed former settlement, which can be determined with some degree of certainty.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, I briefly dwell upon given archeological cultures which are thought to be connected by serious archeologists with the Indo-Iranians or Indo-Aryans.

Fifthly, the old notion of the sequence of hunting-herding-agriculture in human history is untenable. Mallory and Adams suppose that "the Proto-Indo-Europeans possessed a mixed economy based on livestock and arable agriculture, i.e. had achieved at least a Neolithic mode of subsistence".<sup>10</sup> Together with many scholars I think that true pastoral nomadism is a late development and, in an early historical context, "the herding of livestock in the steppes during the Bronze

---

<sup>5</sup> R. S. Sharma, *Advent of the Aryans in India*. New Delhi 1999, 60.

<sup>6</sup> Sharma, *Advent*, 69.

<sup>7</sup> R. Thapar, *The Penguin history of early India from the origins to AD 1300*. London 2002, 113-115.

<sup>8</sup> H. H. Hock, „Wem gehört die Vergangenheit? Früh- und Vorgeschichte und indische Selbstwahrnehmung“, in „Arier“ und „Dravidien“. *Konstruktionen der Vergangenheit als Grundlage für Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmungen Südaseins*, ed. M. Bergunder and R. P. Das, Halle, 2002, 246.

<sup>9</sup> M. Witzel, *Das alte Indien*. Wiesbaden 2003, 25.

<sup>10</sup> J. P. Mallory and D. Q. Adams, *The Oxford introduction to Proto-Indo-European and the Proto-Indo-European world*. Oxford 2006, 153.

Age qualitatively differs from the mounted pastoral nomadism documented historically and ethnographically for later periods".<sup>11</sup>

Sixthly, the "secondary products revolution" – a concept put forward by Sherratt – produced plough cultivation, a technology which presupposed the use of cattle. At this stage both agriculture and pastoralism were present but pastoralism was rather transhumance than nomadic.<sup>12</sup> My seventh point is that the employment of the horse considerably strengthened the dynamism of the movements of the Indo-Aryans and might well have contributed to their dominance over the pure agriculturists they met on their long journey.

Before tackling the linguistic data a brief survey of archeological cultures which may count as candidates for the early settlements of the Indo-Iranians or the Indo-Aryans would be in order.

Parpola thinks that the language of the Yamnaya culture, which had grown out of the Late and Post-Tripolye culture in the Pontic-Caspian steppes, might have been an early Post-Proto-Indo-European dialect, "the common ancestor of Greek, Armenian and Indo-Iranians."<sup>13</sup>

The great majority of Russian archeologists, first of all Elena Kuzmina, support a northern homeland of the Indo-Iranians, a view shared by Anthony, Mallory, Renfrew and Sherratt.<sup>14</sup> Kuzmina connects Andronovo culture – a blanket term for a variety of steppe Bronze Age cultures that emerged in Central Asia and south Siberia – with Indo-Iranians who had a kind of farming, the character and scale of which is not clear. In recent years there has been great interest in the Sintashta-Arkaim culture in the Chelyabinsk region of the Urals, with some 30 sites, which forms a part of the Andronovo culture. According to Kuzmina, their means of subsistence gave room for "a number of innovations which provided an opportunity for the transition to steppe nomadism," a circumstance that gave an impetus to the migration of Indo-Iranians to the south, ultimately to the territory of the Bactria-Margiana complex.<sup>15</sup> This concept is vigorously challenged by Lamberg-Karlovsky<sup>16</sup> and not accepted by the Russian archeologist Klejn.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Ф. Л. Кол, "Трансформация культуры от мобильных скотоводов к оседлым земледельцам (Бактрийско маргианский археологический комплекс," *Российская Археология* 2005, 71.

<sup>12</sup> A. Sherratt, "Plough and pastoralism", in *Aspects of the past. Studies in honour of David Clarke*, ed I. Hodder, G. Isaac and N. Hammond, Cambridge 1981, 295.

<sup>13</sup> A. Parpola, "Proto-Indo-European speakers of the late Tripolye Culture as the inventors of wheeled vehicles: linguistic and archaeological considerations of the PIE homeland problem", in *Proceedings of the 19th Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, November 2-3, 2007, Journal of Indo-European Studies Monograph Studies* 54, Washington 2008, 44.

<sup>14</sup> E. E. Kuzmina, *Origin of the Indo-Iranians*. Leiden and Boston MA 2007, 304.

<sup>15</sup> Kuzmina, *Origin*, 2007, 156.

<sup>16</sup> Lamberg-Karlovsky, *Archaeology*, 2005, 168.

<sup>17</sup> L. S. Klejn, Indo-Aryans in the steppes, in [http://www.vergl.sprachwissenschaft.phill.uni-wuerzburg.de/tagung2009/Abstracts/Klejn\\_Indo-Aryans%2, 2](http://www.vergl.sprachwissenschaft.phill.uni-wuerzburg.de/tagung2009/Abstracts/Klejn_Indo-Aryans%2, 2). It is a pity that this paper

The Bactria-Margiana complex, first discovered by Sarianidi<sup>18</sup> as a transitory settlement, is maintained by many Russian archaeologists and further by the noted archeologist Kohl,<sup>19</sup> the historian R. S. Sharma<sup>20</sup> and by some philologists like Parpola<sup>21</sup> and Witzel.<sup>22</sup> The staunch opponents of this thesis are Lamberg-Karlovsky<sup>23</sup> and Dhavalikar.<sup>24</sup>

In Greater India, the Gandhara grave culture has been a candidate for a long time. Nevertheless, this thesis rests on slender evidence. It was first established by Dani,<sup>25</sup> then supported by Brentjes,<sup>26</sup> Mallory,<sup>27</sup> Harmatta,<sup>28</sup> R. S. Sharma<sup>29</sup> and Dhavalikar.<sup>30</sup> The chief opponents of this thesis are the American anthropologists Shaffer, Diane A. Lichtenstein<sup>31</sup> and Kennedy.<sup>32</sup>

It has been held for a long time that the vocabulary reconstructed on the basis of the oldest Indo-European linguistic records reflects a dichotomy of an agricultural west and a pastoral, nomadic east.<sup>33</sup> Hirt observed that Indo-Iranian cognates of the western Indo-European terms for the plough, harrow, sowing and

abounds with unsound statements concerning the textual evidence of early Indian culture.

<sup>18</sup> В. И. Сарияниди, „Исследования памятников Дашликского Оазиса.“ *Древнии Бактрия 1* (1976), 71. and *Древние земледельцы Афганистана*, Москва 1977.

<sup>19</sup> Кол, *Трансформация*, 71.

<sup>20</sup> Sharma, *Advent*, 59.

<sup>21</sup> A. Parpola, “Aryan languages, archaeological cultures and Sinkiang: Where did Proto-Iranian come into being and how did it spread?” in *The bronze age and early iron age peoples of Eastern Central Asia*, ed. V. Mair. *Journal of Indo-European Studies Monograph Series* 26, Washington 1998, 124.

<sup>22</sup> M. Witzel, “The home of the Aryans”, <http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~witzel/AryanH>, 8.

<sup>23</sup> Lamberg-Karlovsky, *Archaeology*, 168.

<sup>24</sup> Dhavalikar, *The Aryans*, 7.

<sup>25</sup> A. H. Dani, “Gandhara grave culture and the Aryan problem.” *Journal of Central Asia* 1 (1978), 42–55.

<sup>26</sup> B. Brentjes, “Archäologische zu den Wanderungen der Indoiranier.” *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13 (1986), 237.

<sup>27</sup> J. P. Mallory, *In search of the Indo-Europeans. Language, archaeology and myth*. London 1989, 47.

<sup>28</sup> J. Harmatta, “The emergence of the Indo-Iranians: the Indo-Iranian languages”, in *History of civilizations of Central Asia I. The dawn of civilization: earliest times to 700 B.C.* ed A. H. Dani and A. H. Masson, Paris 1992, 374.

<sup>29</sup> Sharma, *Advent*, 63.

<sup>30</sup> Dhavalikar, *The Aryans*, 22.

<sup>31</sup> J. G. Shaffer and D. A. Lichtenstein, “South Asian archaeology and the myth of Indo-Aryan invasions.” in *The Indo-Aryan controversy: evidence and inference in Indian history*, ed. E. F. Bryant and L. L. Patton, London and New York 2005, 93.

<sup>32</sup> K. A. R. Kennedy, “Have Aryans been identified in the prehistoric skeletal record from South Asia?” in *Indo-Aryans of ancient South Asia. Language, material culture and ethnicity*, ed. G. Erdosy, Berlin and New York 1995, 32–66.

<sup>33</sup> Mallory, *In search of Indo-Europeans*, 120.

reaping were missing.<sup>34</sup> Nehring goes one step further and thinks that the Indo-Iranians forgot agriculture.<sup>35</sup> Brandenstein in his *Die erste indogermanische Wanderung* states that the Indo-Iranians left the early Indo-European community prior to its acquisition of agriculture and prior to its general dissolution. This surmise has since been discredited on purely linguistic grounds.<sup>36</sup> All the same, the existence of very rich terminology concerning stockbreeding in the Rig-Veda, the oldest Indo-Aryan text, and the fact that pastoralists are more capable of following a long migratory route than agriculturists, calls for a special explanation. On the other hand, the connection of the movements of the Indo-Aryans to the east with a dispersal of agriculture, as Renfrew himself admits, meets several obstacles.<sup>37</sup> At any rate, we should keep in mind Kohl's statement that an agriculturist or a stock-breeder as an individual can adapt himself to different conditions and dramatically change his life in a short time.<sup>38</sup>

Reassessing Brandenstein, Masica raised the idea of the atrophy of the agricultural vocabulary shared by the Indo-Iranians and the other Indo-Europeans when the former reached "regions inhospitable or unfit for agriculture", although "this is more difficult to reconcile with the apparent fact of semantic changes in such terms as Greek *agrós*, Latin *ager*- and Sanskrit *ájra*". Refuting Brandenstein and interpreting this lexical difference in the western and eastern Indo-European languages, Kuiper accepts Makkay's concept of a polycentric origin of the Indo-European agricultural knowledge from two or three earlier food producing centers and explains this phenomenon by cultural - and partly also by lexical - differences.<sup>39</sup>

Mallory and Adams are satisfied with the simple statement that Proto-Indo-European *\*h2eg-ro-* is represented in Latin *ager*, Greek *agrós*, Ger. *Acker* which denotes a cultivated field, while Sanskrit *ájra*- generally means 'plain' with no indi-

---

<sup>34</sup> H. Hirt, *Die Indogermanen, ihre Verbreitung, ihre Urheimat und ihre Kultur*. Strassburg 1905-1907, I, 255.

<sup>35</sup> A. Nehring, "Studien zur indogermanischen Kultur und Urheimat." in *Wiener Beiträge IV. Die Indogermanen und Germanenfrage. Neue Wege zu ihrer Lösung*. ed. W. Koppers, Salzburg and Leipzig 1936, 148.

<sup>36</sup> C. P. Masica, "Aryan and non-Aryan elements in North Indian agriculture." in *Aryan and non-Aryan in India* ed. M. M. Deshpande and P. E. Hook, Ann Arbor MI 1979, 54-57. Mallory-Adams, *The Oxford introduction*, 163.

<sup>37</sup> C. Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language. The puzzle of Indo-European origins*, London 1989, 192. Cf. M. Zvelebil and K.V. Zvelebil, "Agricultural tradition and Indo-European dispersals." *Antiquity* 62 (1988), 579.

<sup>38</sup> Ф. Л. Кол, "Модели трансформации культуры: от оседлых земледельцев к скотоводам (Триполье и курганные культуры)", *Российская Археология* 2004, 100.

<sup>39</sup> J. Makkay, "Cultural groups of SE Europe in the neolithic: the PIE homeland problem and the origins of the Proto-Greeks." *Annali Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli* 10 (1988), 125, and F. B. J. Kuiper, *Aryans in the Rigveda*, Amsterdam and Atlanta GA 1991, 15.



cation of agriculture.<sup>40</sup> It is remarkable that the place of accent differs in Greek *agrós* and Sanskrit *ájra-*<sup>41</sup> but this circumstance does not seem to bear on their semantic field. Since the noun derives from the verbal root \*h<sub>2</sub>eǵ- 'to drive'. Nehring postulated many years ago that the original meaning was 'meadow', 'pasturage' and 'road for the cattle', which was lost in the west and which was dug out by the Aryans.<sup>42</sup> This assumption is outdated because it presupposes the precedence of pastoralism to agriculture.

It is noteworthy that the Greek *ágrios*, an adjective which belongs to the same word-group, means 'wild' and 'uncultivated'.<sup>43</sup> As to Sanskrit, we learn from Tatyana Elizarenkova's meticulous study that *ájra-* occurs mostly in plural and only once in the singular in the Rig-Veda and means 'meadow', 'pasturage', 'plain' and once 'valley'.<sup>44</sup> It is the name of a 'real field', in contrast to *kṣétra-* 'field or sphere of activity'.<sup>45</sup> In its broadest sense it means 'field'.<sup>46</sup> The compound *uruájra-* (Rig-Veda X, 27, 9) means an 'extensive field'<sup>47</sup> on which cows eat grass and corn.<sup>48</sup> However, we cannot ignore that *ájra-* can be attested only in the Rig-Veda and does not occur in later Sanskrit texts. A later development seems to be *ajrá-* but it means 'place to run or fight in', 'court'.<sup>49</sup>

In order to elucidate the complex semantic field of the derivatives of the verbal root \*h<sub>2</sub>eǵ-, in the first place, I can mention the term *áśtrā* 'goad', the budge of agriculture, which can equally be used for driving both oxen at ploughing and animals on pasture land.<sup>50</sup> In Hindu mythology it is the budge of the god Pūṣan who rules both agriculture and stockbreeding.<sup>51</sup> It is true, that *uruájra* occurs in the later part of the Rig-Veda when Indo-Aryans entered an environment where agriculture was practiced by non-Aryans too. Nevertheless, this circumstance does not exclude the possibility that they possessed the inherited meaning of the term which was itself ambiguous or included two meanings.

Although the concept of the spread of agriculture combined with the dispersal of Indo-Europeans to the east meets several problems, I do not abandon this idea as a whole. Instead, I propose a combined model which combines the tracing

<sup>40</sup> M. Mayrhofer, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen*, Heidelberg 1986-, 50-52. Cf. Mallory-Adams, *The Oxford introduction*, 163.

<sup>41</sup> T. Kirsch, *Rivelex. Rigveda-Lexikon*. Graz 2006, 80.

<sup>42</sup> A. Nehring, *Studien zur indogermanischen Kultur*, 152.

<sup>43</sup> H. G. Liddel and R. Scott, *A Greek-English lexicon*. Oxford 1973, 15.

<sup>44</sup> Т. Я. Елизаренкова, *Слова и вещи в Ригведе*. Москва 1999, 126-130.

<sup>45</sup> Елизаренкова, *Слова*, 236.

<sup>46</sup> H. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*. 6. Aufl. Wiesbaden 1996, 23.

<sup>47</sup> M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Oxford 1960, 218.

<sup>48</sup> *Der Rig-Veda aus dem Sanskrit ins Deutsche übersetzt von K. F. Geldner*. Cambridge MA 1951, Dritter Teil, 166. Cf. R. T. H. Griffith, *The Hymns of the Rig-Veda*, Delhi 1999, 548.

<sup>49</sup> Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 10.

<sup>50</sup> Gy. Wojtilla, "Óind áštrā f. 'őszőke' vagy/és ostor? [Sanskrit áštrā f. 'goad' or/and 'whip']", in *Cirill és Metód példáját követve... Tanulmányok H. Tóth Imre 70. születésnapjára*, ed. K. Bibok, I. Ferincz and M. Kocsis, Szeged 2002, 589.

<sup>51</sup> H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*. 3. und 4. Auflage, Stuttgart and Berlin 1923, 234.

back of some basic elements of Indo-Aryan agricultural terminology to western Asia and the openness of the Indo-Aryans to receive technical innovations. When they came into contact with agriculturists they borrowed the word for plough, while coining the word for ploughing out of their own traditional set of verbal roots.<sup>52</sup> Such things occur in what is called by Sherratt an "oasis situation", or when the source was a center of agriculture as it is termed by Makkay.

In order to illustrate how this model works, let us make a survey of some basic terms. Sanskrit *kṛṣ-*, Avestan *karš-*, means 'to plough', 'to draw a line' and 'to scratch', and it can be put beside Czech *čarati* 'to draw lines' or Hittite *guls-* 'to scratch', 'to mark', 'to note' which all may go back to PIE *\*k<sup>w</sup>els* 'to make furrows'. This is a fine example of the old, inherited Indo-European agricultural vocabulary of the Indo-Aryans.

The existence of such migratory terms as Sanskrit *godhāma-* 'wheat' or *yava-* 'barley' serve as examples of both stability and change in the agricultural knowledge of the Indo-Aryans.

The cognate forms of *godhūma-* appear in the Greek, Hittite, Iranian and Pamirian languages, then in Sanskrit and Indo-Aryan languages, and even in the Gypsy and found their way into certain Semitic languages such as Ugaritic and Akkadian.<sup>53</sup>

*Yava-* is an Old Indo-Aryan or rather Indo-Iranian word that entered into Finno-Ugrian<sup>54</sup> and probably even the language that existed before the splitting of Finno-Ugrian and Samoyedic.<sup>55</sup> The word means 'grain' and 'barley' in Sanskrit but it also has the meaning 'cereal' in general in certain Indo-European languages.<sup>56</sup> The physical nature of barley adjusts well to the changing environment of the Indo-Aryans or Indo-Iranians in their move from the Near East to India.

Sanskrit *sira-* '(drill) plough', with its long history and semantic development, is a striking example of the way in which Indo-Aryans were able to borrow new technical inventions and give them a name which signifies the basic process for which these tools are used. Following Thieme,<sup>57</sup> I opt for an Indo-European ety-

<sup>52</sup> Gy. Wojtilla, „Notes on Indo-Aryan terms for 'ploughing' and the 'plough'." *The Journal of Indo-European Studies* 14 (1986), 33.

<sup>53</sup> Gy. Wojtilla, „The Sanskrit *godhūma* apropos of a short excursion in Indo-European and Indo-Aryan prehistory." *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 52 (1999), 225-227.

<sup>54</sup> A. J. Joki, *Uralier und Indogermanen*, Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seuran Toimituksia 151, Helsinki 1973, 265.

<sup>55</sup> Gy. Wojtilla, „Terminological studies of selected plant names of the *Kṛṣiparāśara*." *Sri Venkateswara University Oriental Journal, Tirupati* 20 (1977), 118.

<sup>56</sup> M. Gimbutas, „Primary and secondary homeland of the Indo-Europeans. Comments on Gamkrelidze-Ivanov articles." *The Journal of Indo-European Studies* 13 (1985), 186.

<sup>57</sup> P. Thieme, „Die Heimat der indogermanischen Gemeinsprache." *Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Mainz Jahrgang* 1953, No. 11, Wiesbaden 1954, 559-560.

mology of the word.<sup>58</sup> It can be derived from the Proto-Indo-European root *seH(i)-*, originally meaning 'to throw' and later 'to sow'<sup>59</sup>, or 'to draw a direct line'<sup>60</sup> which has its derivatives in Hittite, as well as in Armenian, in Indo-Iranian and also in Czech.<sup>61</sup> This term might originally have denoted a very simple tool, perhaps a dibble. When later Proto-Indo-Aryans came into contact with the Hurrian speakers of Mitanni, they might have become familiar with the drill plough which was well known in Mesopotamia around 2600 BC.<sup>62</sup> Curiously enough, they might also have become familiar with this peculiar tool on their arrival in the Indian subcontinent: the archeological evidence from India makes clear the early use of the drill plough prior to their postulated arrival.<sup>63</sup> It is a fine example of the polycentric origin of agricultural knowledge in the ancient world.

According to Lubotsky, the Indo-Iranian substratum words which might have been borrowed from the language of other peoples when they came into contact with the inhabitants of Central Asian towns bear the testimony of acquiring fresh agricultural knowledge in a changed environment. Sanskrit *phāla-* 'ploughshare', modern Persian *supār-*, Wakhi *spūndr-* etc., which go back to a former *\*(s)p<sup>h</sup>ūra-*, may be such a case, or it may belong to the category of migratory terms.<sup>64</sup> To this, however, it might be objected that, as we have seen, the connection of the Bactria-Margiana complex with the Indo-Aryans is not accepted by some serious archeologists.

The oldest Indo-Aryan text, the Rig-Veda, offers us a snapshot of the economy of the Indo-Aryans on their arrival and early settlement in the Indian subcontinent. Their economy as it is mirrored in the Āgveda looks like a mixed economy in which agriculture was of less importance than stockbreeding. This relatively restricted role of agriculture in the life of the Indo-Aryans might partly have been due to their movements from present day Afghanistan to the fertile plain of the

<sup>58</sup> Gy. Wojtilla, "What can the Rigveda teach us on agriculture?" *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungariae* 56 (2003), 42.

<sup>59</sup> Т. В. Грамкрелидзе – В. В. Иванов, *Индоевропейский язык и индоевропейцы*, Тбилиси 1984, II, 688.

<sup>60</sup> M. Mayrhofer, *Wörterbuch*, 732.

<sup>61</sup> M. Čejka, "Indoeuropäisch-zemědělská terminologie (Indo-European agricultural terminology)." *Sborník prací filozofické fakulty Brněnské univerzity* 27 (1982), 221.

<sup>62</sup> B. Hruška, "Überlegungen zum Pflug und Ackerbau in der altsumerischen Zeit." *Archiv Orientalni* 56 (1988), 142.

<sup>63</sup> A. Steensberg, "Drill-sowing and threshing in Southern India compared with sowing practices in other parts of Asia." *Tools and Tillage* 1:4 (1971), 241–256; Gy. Wojtilla, "The ard-plough in ancient and early medieval India. remarks on its history based on linguistic and archaeological evidence." *Tools and Tillage* 6:2 (1989), 94–95; V. Shinde, "Two unique agricultural implements from Walki," *Tools and Tillage* 6:4 (1991), 210–216.

<sup>64</sup> A. Lubotsky, "Early contacts between Uralic and Indo-European: linguistic and archaeological considerations", in *Papers presented at an international symposium held at the Tvärminne Research Station of the University of Helsinki 8–10 January 1999*, ed. C. Carpelan, A. Parpola and P. Koskikallio, *Suomalais-Ugrilaisen Seuran Toimituksia* 242, Helsinki 2001, 307–308 and 312.

Punjab.<sup>65</sup> During this period cattle trading overshadowed agriculture but the winter cultivation of barley complied "with the sedentary way of life prerequisite to agriculture".<sup>66</sup> However, this way of life together with their famous horse-breeding lent a considerable dynamism to their movements in India which ultimately led to the emergence of a new society where, in Romila Thapar's words "the more established pastoral chiefs laid claim to territories or cultivated land".<sup>67</sup> Once again, they were able to borrow technology and terms denoting various implements from the peoples they met there.

To sum up, Indo-Aryans were never pure pastoralists and in this manner nomads in their long history. On the contrary, pastoralism and agriculture together were always present in their life, yet in changing proportions.

---

<sup>65</sup> Wojtilla, *What can the Rigveda*, 45.

<sup>66</sup> J. Deppert, "East or West - the precedent: the Aryan schism." in *India and the West. Proceedings of a Seminar Dedicated to the Memory of Hermann Goetz*, New Delhi 1983, 61.

<sup>67</sup> Thapar, *The Penguin history of early India*, 113.

# The Kitab-i dedem Qorkut as a source for the cultural history of the Oghuz Turks

TATIANA A. ANIKEEVA

(Institute of Oriental Studies, RAS, Moscow, Russia)



The *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* is the only written epic of the Oghuz Turks. As a whole it reflects the world outlook that was forming among the Oghuz tribes during their migration to the west and in the course of their Islamization. The stories in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* combine pre-Islamic elements, or an ancient Turkic base and some Muslim elements. This can be seen on every fragment of the text of this epoch.

Those elements existed in Turkic literature even before part of the Oghuz tribes came to Asia Minor and have appeared since the early period of their Islamization. Firstly it is necessary to admit that the songs comprising the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* include those elements of the Muslim world outlook that were already under the strong influence of other cultural traditions, mainly Turkic. Additionally we can refer to them the comprehension of human life and death.

This can be seen from the example of different clichés, which came to the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* through other Turkic literary traditions and became *locus communis* in medieval Turkic literature. For example, the metaphor of life as a caravan:

Anlar dahı bu dünyaya geldi geçdi; kervan  
gibi konu göçdü.  
Anları dahı ecel aldı, yer gizledi. Fani dü-  
nya kime kaldı.

They also were born and passed away.  
As the caravan they travelled stopping  
and going on. Taken by death and con-  
ceded by earth, to whom has the world  
been left at last.

According to Kononov, the sources of these metaphors and images are different but most of them come from Muslim theological literature (like *hadith* and moralistic literature).<sup>1</sup> We can see the same metaphor in Abu-l-Ghazi's *Shadjara at-tarakima*:

---

<sup>1</sup> A. N. Kononov, tr. and comm. *Rodoslovnaya turkmen. Sochinenye Abu-l-Ghazi, hana Khivinskogo*. [Genealogy of the Turkmen written by Abu-l-Ghazi, the khan of Khiva] Moscow-Leningrad 1958, 89.

بو دنيا بر رباطغه او خشار آدم فرزندلار كاروانغه  
اوشا لار بري كوجار بري قونار

(the world is like a caravan-saray, and the children of Adam are like a caravan:  
some of them wander and some of them stay for stand)

*Shadjara at-tarakima* 332-334<sup>2</sup>.

The idea of the temporal, lay life contrasted with eternity is not something new for Turkic literature. Almost the same formulations as in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* can be found in the didactic poem *Hibat al-haqayiq* written by Ahmed Yugneki, around the eleventh or twelfth century.

Each one of the twelve stories of the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* finishes with such a formula, where the same idea of the vanity of the transient human life is expressed:

[*Kanı dedügüm Beg erenler; dünya  
benüm deyenler?*]

*Ecel aldı, yer gizledi*

*Fani dünya kime kaldı*

*Gelimlü, gidimlü dünya*

*Son ucu ölümlü dünya*

Where are the hero beys I used to talk  
about -

Those who once claimed the world?

Taken by death and concealed by earth.

To whom has the world been left at last -

The world with its coming and going -

The world that is rounded off by death?

The principle of the rhythmical organization of these eight lines is the same quantity of syllables in each line, comparable to the Turkic poetry tradition which uses the *barmak* metre, based on the equality of syllables. It is also widespread in Turkic folklore and so here it is possible to suppose some quite archaic elements of oral folk poetry in the written epic. At the same time such fragments in which it is possible to find traditional Turkic metrical structures express a specific (specifically Muslim) comprehension of life connected with the idea of *taqdir* as the predetermination of the existing system and customs and the whole of human life and activities. Human life and the world around us are perceived as transient and perishable; death is inevitable. There is a contradiction in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* (especially clearly seen in the example of the so-called blessings of Qorkut - the endings of each of the twelve stories of the epic). On the one hand, the whole idea of the epic is the glorification of heroes of the Oghuz tribes fighting with *kafirs* ('infidels'), on the other hand, nevertheless, the heroic deeds of the *begs* ('lords') of the Oghuz belong to this world, to the temporal existence or *dünya* ('world'). That contradiction is confirmed by the composition and contents of the texts of the blessings: firstly they tell of the vanity of existing and after that there are expressions with meaning of wishing of the constancy of the kin and generations the at the second part of the blessing of Qorkut. So, in that way there lies a distinction, a border between the Islamic comprehension of the world order and the pre-Islamic world reflected in the epic.

The traditional Turkic content of the world outlook in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* is reflected in dreams predicting death and/or disaster. Most of the motives of

<sup>2</sup> Kononov, *Rodoslovnaya turkmen*, 45.

those dreams (for example, the dream of Salur Kazan) have parallels in other Turkic cultures and mantic traditions.<sup>3</sup>

As a whole, the dream motif has a great importance in Turkish and Turkic folklore and, corresponding to that, more than once it has been a subject of research. Köksal considers the dream motif as one of the main, basic motifs of Turkic epic poetry in general, distinguishing the group of definitive motifs of the Turkic epic stories which go back to pre-Islamic times.<sup>4</sup> The dream motif has always been considered to proceed from the role of dreams as an important part of the plot structure. Başgöz has already noticed the connection between the dream motif and shamanist initiation in Turkish folk narrative *hikaye* which is another genre of Turkish folklore.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the dream motif is one of the most important motifs of stories of the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut*, as Gökyay in his research devoted to these epic stories found.<sup>6</sup> In his opinion, the most frequent motif in the Turkic epic tradition and folktales is a dream of the main epic hero who sleeps deeply for seven days. Nevertheless, drawing such wide parallels between different genres of the Turkic folklore, Gökyay does not dwell on the dreams of heroes in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut*; he only notes that probably the dream of Salur Kazan refers to the traditional Turkic shamanist world outlook.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time detailed analysis of fragments of the text of *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* which are united by common themes allows us to mark out pre-Islamic outlines in those epic stories.

The dream of Salur Kazan is interpreted by his brother, Kara Güne:

*Kara Güne aydur: Kardeş, kara bulut dedüğün senün deolettündür; kar ile yağmur dedüğün leşkeründür, saç kaygudur; kan kadadur, kalamısın yorabilmen, Allah hayra yorsun, dedi.*<sup>8</sup>

*Kara Güne said: Brother, what you say about a black cloud has to do with power. Snow and rain from such a cloud would mean troops. Hair represents sorrow, and blood means trouble. I cannot interpret the rest. May Allah interpret it!*

Almost everything in Salur Kazan's dream has bad connotations, according to different Turkic traditions.

---

<sup>3</sup> Many Turkic people have a developed tradition of dream interpretation. Dreams are considered as a way to obtain knowledge about future. Among Turks of southern Siberia dreaming is considered a means of gaining prophetic knowledge and can be close to the shaman's practices. *Traditsionnoe mirovozzreniye turkov Yuzhnoy Sibiri. Znak i ritual.* [Traditional world outlook of the South Siberian Turks] Novosibirsk 1990, (henceforth: TMT), 10.

<sup>4</sup> H. Köksal, *Milli destanlarımız ve türk halk edebiyati*. İstanbul 1985, 26.

<sup>5</sup> I. Başgöz, "Dream motif in Turkish folk stories and shamanistic initiation." in *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature*. Selected essays of İlhan Başgöz, Bloomington 1998.

<sup>6</sup> *Dedem Korkudun Kitabı*. Haz. Orhan Şaik Gökyay. İstanbul 2000, (henceforth: OŞG) cccii.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, cccii.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

For example, there is a *düm kara pusarik* (literal meaning 'absolutely dark fog'). The word *pusarik* mainly has meanings 'very dense fog (like water)', 'cloudy weather', 'mist'.<sup>9</sup> There is a clear connection between turbid, dark water (smoke, fog or mist) and a bad presage for a person who sees that in a dream as a whole. For the Uyghurs (according to their beliefs about dreams and their dream-book) to see in a dream fire with black smoke presages different troubles and also, as they believe, for a person to see himself inside dark storm betokens 'to suffer from a despot'.<sup>10</sup> According to contemporary Turkish beliefs, dirty and turbid water appearing in a dream portends death.<sup>11</sup>

Kara Güne interpreted snow and rain (*kar ile yağmur*) as troops. In the Uyghur dream-book 'to see snow in a dream [means] to go to a war'.<sup>12</sup> Beliefs of the Khakass hold that seeing rain in a dream presages tears.<sup>13</sup> 'The black camel' (*kara deve*) in Salur Kazan's dream also has a threatening meaning. According to the contemporary Turkish beliefs widespread in Anatolia, seeing a camel in a dream foretells death; the same belief can be found among the Sari-Uyghurs.<sup>14</sup> There is in general a large group of motifs that predict death within the Turkish beliefs connected with dreams: besides those connected with trees, fruits and vegetables, there are also different animals (camel), dark water, fog or mist.<sup>15</sup>

Dreams are connected with the mythological system of the ancient Turks. The dream of Salour Kazan is a part of the second story of the *Kitab-i dede Qorkut*, which is considered one of the oldest stories chronologically in the corpus. As has been noticed before, the dream motif itself is quite an archaic element of the epic. The main elements of the dream of Salur Kazan, by their meanings, are connected with the conceptions of dwelling, state and social structure.

The word *\*ordu/orda* (see the phrase, "*Düm kara pusarik ordumun üzerine dökülür gördüm*") etymologically in all Turkic languages has a wide range of meanings but the main ones are 'camp, stand, khan's headquarters'.<sup>16</sup> Sevortyan de-

<sup>9</sup> G. Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth century-Turkish*. Oxford 1972, 374; OŞG, 27.

<sup>10</sup> N. N. Pantusov, *Materialy k izucheniyu narechiya taranchey Iliyskogo okruga*. Vyp. 7. Taranchinski snotolkovare (text i perevod). [Materials to the Studying of the Taranchi Language of the Ili District. Pt. 7. Taranchi dream book (text and translation)] Kazan 1901, 39-40.

<sup>11</sup> S. V. Örnek, *Türk halkbilimi*. Ankara 1977, 209-210.

<sup>12</sup> Pantusov, *Materialy k izucheniyu*, 40.

<sup>13</sup> *Obrazcy narodnoy literatury tyurkskih plemen izdannye W. Radlovym*. Ch. IX. Narechiya uryanhaytsev (soyotov), abakanskih tatar i karagasov. Texty, sobrannyye i perevedennyye N.F. Katanovym. [Folklore of the Turkic people] W. Radloff. Pt. IX. Language of the Uraynkhay, Abakan Tatars and Karagas. Texts collected and translated by N. F. Katanov, Saint Petersburg 1907, 462.

<sup>14</sup> S. E. Malov, *Yazyk zheltyh uyghurov*. Teksty i perevody. [Sary Uyghur Language. Texts and translations] Moscow 1967, 23.

<sup>15</sup> Örnek, *Türk halkbilimi*, 209-210.

<sup>16</sup> *Sravnitelno-istoricheskaya grammatika tyurkskih yazykov*. Lexika. [Comparative historical grammar of Turkic languages. Vocabulary] Moscow 2001 (henceforth: SIGL), 495.



rives the word from the verb *orut-* 'set up camp', and one of its meanings, *ordu* ('army'), connected with that verb has been preserved in the ancient Turkic language, Ottoman, Turkish, Azerbaijani and in the language of the Crimean Tatars,<sup>17</sup> i.e., in the Turkic languages that belong to the Oghuz sub-group; in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut*, *ordu* means 'retinue, escort of *bey*'.<sup>18</sup>

There is one more word-combination or formulaic expression in the dream of Salur Kazan besides *ordu* that means 'nomad camp'. It is *ag ban ev* (*ag ev*) which means 'nomad's dwelling'. In general, quite a frequent word combination in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut*<sup>19</sup> is 'dwelling with a white roof' (*gökden ıldırım ağ ban evüm üzerine şakır gördüm*), which is affected by lightning. The image of the house absolutely destroyed and burned is a sign of disaster and evil omen in the ancient Turkic mantic (fortune-telling) book *İrk Bitig*: "*Uluğ äb örtänmiş, qatynğa täği qalmaq, bökiñä täği qodm(ad)uq, – tir, ança biliñlä: jablaq ol!*"<sup>20</sup> "A big house was burnt down. Nothing remained right to its floors (and) nothing was left to right its corners, it says. Know thus: (The Omen) is bad."<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, *İrk Bitig* connects and unites a quite abstract conception of 'destroying' with the idea of the state: "*Qara jol täñri män synuquñun säpärmän üzüükiñin ulajur män ilig itmiş män...*"<sup>22</sup> "I am the old road god. I fix your broken parts (and) I join together your torn things. I have organized the realm..."<sup>23</sup>

According to the perceptions of the ancient Turks, the whole world and the people who inhabit that world form a state of the Turks, and the *kagan* is considered the governor of the whole world.<sup>24</sup> But, according the same perception of the Orkhon Turks, the breakdown of the world order involves disasters and disturbance in the state's life and in society; rebellion of *begs* is equal to the catastrophe of the universe.<sup>25</sup> The myth about the universal catastrophe (the plot is distinguished by Klyashtorny as a part of a myth-creating circle related to the cosmology of the Turks) in the Orkhon inscriptions is embodied by allusions, in a postulated connection between disorders in the human world and cataclysms in nature and the world around. Every violation of the world order entails disasters in the state. More bad consequences like the death of the state may follow after the rising of the *begs* and people – with this rebellion of *begs* and people comes disaster, when the sky is 'crushing' and the earth is 'yawning'.<sup>26</sup> There is an idea about the

<sup>17</sup> SIGL, 563.

<sup>18</sup> SIGL, 563.

<sup>19</sup> OŞG, 158

<sup>20</sup> S. E. Malov, *Pamyatniki drevneturkskoy pismennosti*. [Monuments of the Ancient Turkic script] Moscow-Leningrad 1951, 86.

<sup>21</sup> T. Tekin, *İrk Bitig: The Book of Omens*. Wiesbaden 1993, 11.

<sup>22</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevneturkskoy*, 90.

<sup>23</sup> Tekin, *İrk Bitig*, 21.

<sup>24</sup> B. Ögel, *Türk mitolojisi (kaynakları ve açıklamaları ile destanlar)*. I cilt. Ankara 1971, 274.

<sup>25</sup> S. G. Klyashtorny, "Mifologicheskiye suzhety v drevneturkskih pamyatnikah." [Mythological Plots in the Ancient Turkic Monuments] *Turkologicheskiy sbornik* 1977, Moscow 1981.

<sup>26</sup> Klyashtorny, "Mifologicheskiye sujety," 123.

end of the world among the Altays: the earth will be burned in fire from inside, water will be full of blood and the sky will be split.<sup>27</sup> Breaking of the social order as a first sign of the end of the world appears in the Teleut and the 'Uryankhay' (i.e., Tuvinian) narratives: "When the end of the lifetime comes, the sky will become firm like iron, the earth will be firm like power (как мощь будет тверда), king will rise against king, nation will rise against nation. Hard stone will be broken. Strong trees will be shattered. All nations will rebel... The father won't know his child, the son won't recognize his father"<sup>28</sup> "Heredity and kinship will be suppressed".<sup>29</sup> The end of the world among all Turkic peoples considered as a crash of the social structure based on kin which is encoded in the culture by means of the definite objects of nature, which have the same function in some fragments of the text of the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut*.<sup>30</sup>

Everything in the dream of Salur Kazan portends something evil: he watches how different disasters befall himself, his home and his people, and the scale of that catastrophe in his dream begin to assume a universal character. Thus the dream of Salur Kazan is full of eschatological motifs that are represented not so much as foretelling the individual's fate and death but mostly as destroying the state<sup>31</sup> and heralding the end of the world.

The image of the wolf in Turkic mythology and among different Turkic traditions is not so simple and is very contradictory<sup>32</sup>. One of its aspects is connected with eschatological motifs as well. According to the astronomical ideas of the an-

<sup>27</sup> M. Uraz, *Türk mitolojisi*. Istanbul 1967, 73.

<sup>28</sup> V. I. Verbitsky, *Altayskiye inorodtsy*. [The Altays]. Moscow 1893, 114.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>30</sup> For details, see, T. A. Anikeeva, *Kinship in the Epic Genres of Turkish Folklore // Kinship in the Altaic World*. Proceedings of the 48<sup>th</sup> International Altaistic Conference. Moscow, 10-15 July 2005. Wiesbaden, 2006. This can be illustrated also by other examples from the text of the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut*: "Your black mountain collapsed; and rose at last! Your rivers stained with blood dried up and seethed at last! Your strong tree withered and turned green at last!..." (III, story of Bamsi-Beyrek, the son of Qan-Bura: *Argab argab kara dağın yıkılmışıdı, yüceli Ahur, Kanlu kanlu suların soğulmuşıdı, çağladı Ahur, Kaba ağacın kurumuşıdı, yeşerdi Ahur* [OŞG, 55]. Burla-hatun, the wife of Kazan, says to her husband: "You, Kazan, collapsed my black mountain; you, Kazan, fell my shady strong tree; taking a knife, you, Kazan, cut the edges of my tent; you, Kazan, killed my only son Uruz" (IV, Song about the captivity of Uruz-bek, the son of Kazan-bek). Those formulae reflect the social situation (in the first example the return of Bamsi Beyrek to his father's *orda* from captivity, and in the second the supposed death of the son).

<sup>31</sup> It is interesting that in Slavic folk tradition the motif of Death is also connected with the motif of destroying a dwelling. The house or dwelling, is perceived as a 'locus of life' (Tolstaya, 2002 – C. M. Tolstaya *Inomirnoe prostranstvo sna // Sny i videniya v narodnoy kulture*. [The other space of a dream // Dreams and visions in a folk-culture]. Moskva 2002, 202) and so its destruction to a not inconsiderable degree portends a death of one of the family members.

<sup>32</sup> The wolf as well as the dog is one of the most important figures in the Turkic mythological system. For more detail, see Ögel, 1971, 42-52.

cient Turks, the constellation of the Lesser Bear (Ursa Minor) is a vehicle (carrriage) drawn by two horses, which are pursued by seven wolves in the harness of the constellation of the Big Bear (Ursa Major). If they catch up with those horses, the order of earth and sky will be disturbed and the end of the world will come.<sup>33</sup> In the *Khakass* beliefs about dreams, the wolf becomes the forerunner of evil, or the devil.<sup>34</sup>

There are some other moments connected with archaic beliefs of the Turks in the dream of Salur Kazan, like the epithet for a dream; ‘kara-kura’ (*kara-kura düş* = *kara kaygulu vakia*) – ‘black ominous dream’. According to the index of the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* that epithet (*karakura*) is found in the epic only once as the epithet to a dream; as a whole expression, ‘kara-kura düş görmek’ means ‘to dream of something terrible, to see a nightmare, to feel hardness while sleeping.’<sup>35</sup> In general, the word *karakura*, as Gökyay mentions, means evil ghost who, according to contemporary Turkish beliefs of Anatolia, comes to a person who is sleeping<sup>36</sup>. In a more detailed form, that belief is expounded in Gordlevsky’s work: ‘*karakura* – is an animal like a cat, and it sits on a man while he is sleeping. He feels hardness, loses [his] voice and can’t turn around, his breath breaks” [Gordlevsky, 1968, p. 308; written down from a native of Ayaş]. It is necessary to read the first *aya*t from the 113 *sura* of the Qur’an in order to make the *karakura* go away, and it is also necessary to put a knife or a piece of iron under one’s pillow to ensure that it not to come at all (ibid.). Contemporary Turkish beliefs retain the echo of the mythological views of the Oghuz; but even if in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* those words have been already become nothing more than just an epithet, probably that vague image reflects some more ancient views.

Dreams in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* keep and render many elements of the traditional Turkic world outlook. It is quite obvious that they may be considered as one of the most archaic parts, where the influence of Islam is the least. The perception of death in the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* is closely connected with the eschatological motives of the ancient Turks’ mythology. According to those myths, the death of the state (of which first of all the causes are internal social conflicts, for example, rebellion of *begs* and people) is described in terms of the end of the whole world. In the *Kitab-i dedem Qorkut* that kind of perception can be seen on the example of the dream of Salur Kazan from the second story (one of the most archaic) of the epos.

---

<sup>33</sup> Ögel, 1971, 50.

<sup>34</sup> Obrazcy, 1907 – *Obrazcy narodnoy literatury tyurkskih plemen izdannye W. Radlovym. Ch. IX. Narechiya uryanhaytsev (soyotov), abakanskih tatar i karagasov. Texty, sobrannye i perevedennye N. F. Katanovym.* [Folklore of the Turkic people Published by W. Radloff. Pt. IX. Language of the Uraynkhay, Abakan Tatars and Karagas. Texts collected and translated by N. F. Katanov]. Sanktpeterburg, 1907, 463.

<sup>35</sup> OŞG, 237.

<sup>36</sup> OŞG, CCCII.

# Germanic populations and Steppe people

An example of the integration of material cultures  
The diffusion of the Stirrup in the eastern Merovingian area

VASCO LA SALVIA  
(Università di Chieti, Italy)



The presence of the stirrup in both the Italian territory and the Alamanno-Bavarian area, that is to say, the very South-Eastern part of the Merovingian area, is an interesting chapter in the relationship between these territories and the Carpathian Basin and in a wider sense, between Europe and the people of the Steppes. The Carpathian Basin, thanks to the Avar conquest had 'acquired' a new territorial unity and a certain socio-economic coherence which lasted until not much after the failed siege of Constantinople in 626.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, traditionally it is believed that the Avars introduced stirrups to Europe, along with other military innovations such as the composite bow and the *Lamellenpanzer*. This implies that the area around Danube, especially its upper parts, played a fundamental role in introducing objects and technologies of Eastern origin to Western Europe.<sup>2</sup>

The traditional historical-archaeological model has always asserted the eastern origin (possibly Chino-Korean) of the stirrup. It is believed that they were imported into Europe through the Avars between the last thirty years of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century. This conclusion is based on scanty but highly significant set of archaeological data. Thus, in the Avar necropolis of Szentendre (Hungary), stirrups and coins of Emperors Justinian (518-527) and Phocas (602-610) were found buried together. However, the dating of the stirrups deposited in Avar graves between the second half of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century has been already challenged by D. Csallány. L. White, on the other hand, emphasized the significance of the Byzantine milieu in introducing the stirrup to Europe. This idea was again taken up and scrutinized by Cs. Bálint. Through a sound revision of archaeological evidence he demonstrated that there are not enough well-dated finds to identify an Inner Asian route by which the stirrup was introduced to Europe via the Avars. Bálint's main contribution was to

---

<sup>1</sup> I. Bona, "Gli Avari. Un popolo dell'Oriente nell'Europa altomedievale," in *Gli Avari. Un popolo d'Europa*, Tavaganacco (Ud), 1995, 18, 29.

<sup>2</sup> I. Bóna, "Neue Nachbarn im Osten. Die Awaren," in H. Dannaheimer and H. Dopsch eds., *Die Bajuwaren. Von Severin zu Tassilo 488-788*. Munich-Salzburg, 1988, 108.

deconstruct what had become an unchallenged paradigm, making it clear that the origin of the stirrup was still not a settled issue.<sup>3</sup> However, the Byzantine hypothesis it is not conclusive as well. In fact, if the Byzantine culture had such a determining impact on neighboring societies (including the Germanic and nomadic ones), one would expect to find stirrups in graves of horsemen (or containing horse fittings) whose grave-goods were heavily influenced by Byzantine fashion and imports. Yet, this is not the case as with, for example, two Lombard Italian graves: the burial of the knight of Castel Trosino and grave No. 5 of Nocera Umbra, both contain grave goods (belts and saddle decorations) of Byzantine, if not precisely of Constantinopolitan provenance; both tombs (dated the first in the late sixth or early seventh century and the other around the year 600) lack stirrups. Moreover, all the earliest finds of stirrups are characterized by extremely complicated/mixed archaeological contexts that do not allow easy identification and differentiation between different cultural influences.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> J. Hampel, *Alterthümer des frühen Mittelalters*, vol. 1, Braunschweig, 1905, 217, 223; I Kovrig, "Contribution au probleme de l'occupation de la Hongrie par les Avars," *Acta Archeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 6 (1955), 175 mentioning graves 121 and 173 from the Avar cemetery of Jutas; and Ead., "Deux tombes avars de Törökbálint," *Acta Archeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 9 (1957), 131-33 for an early seventh century Avar grave with stirrups; more recently, among others see, E. Garam, "Sepolture di cavalli," in *Gli Avari. Un popolo d'Europa*, 146; D. Csallány, *Archäologische Denkmäler der Awarenzeit in Mitteleuropa: Schriftum und Fundorte*. Budapest 1956, 77-220, 240 and Idem, "Grabfunde des Frühawarenzeit," *Folia Archaeologica* 1 (1939), 171; L. White, *Medieval technology and social change*, Oxford 1964, 14-28; Cs. Bálint, "Byzantinisches zur Herkunftsfrage des vielteigen Gürtels," in Cs. Bálint ed., *Kontakte zwischen Iran, Byzanz und der Steppe im 6.-7. Jahrhundert*, *Varia Archaeologica Hungarica* 10 (2000), 99, 101-104, 120-21, 136-38 and notes 117-127; Idem, "Zur Geschichte und Archäologie der osteuropäischen Reiterhirten im Frühmittelalter," in *Reitervölker aus dem Osten. Hunnen + Awaren*. Bad Vöslau 1996, 202-04; Idem, "Über die Datierung der osteuropäischen Steppenfunde des frühen Mittelalters (Schwierigkeiten und Möglichkeiten)," *Mittlungen des archäologische Insitut der Ungarische Akadamie des Wissenschaften* 14 (1985), 137-47; Id., *Die Archäologie der Steppe. Steppenvölker zwischen Wolga und Donau von 6. bis 9. Jahrhunderts*. Vienna 1989; A. D. Bivar, "The stirrup and its origin," *Oriental Art* n.s. 2 (1955), 61-65; A. K. Ambroz, "Stremena i sedla rannego srednevekovja kak khronologicheskij pokazatel' (IV-VIIIvv.)" [Early medieval stirrups and Saddles as chronological indicators, AD fourth-eighth centuries] *Sovjetskaja Arkheologija* 4 (1973), 81-98 and I. L. Kyzlassov, "O proiskhozhdenii stremjan" [On the origin of Stirrup] *Sovjetskaja Arkheologija* 4 (1973), 25-36; M. A. Littauer, "Early stirrups," *Antiquity* 55 (1981), 99-105; J. Werner, "Nomadischen Gürtel bei Persern, Byzantynern und Langobarden," in *Atti del Convegno Internazionale: La Civiltà dei Longobardi in Europa*, 117; W. Pohl, *Die Awaren. Ein Steppenvolk in Mitteleuropa*. Munich 1988, 311-12; I. Bóna, "Gli Avari," 21.

<sup>4</sup> L. Paroli, "The langobardic finds and the archaeology of central Italy," in K. Reynold Brown, D. Kidd and C.T. Little eds., *From Attila to Charlemagne*, New York 2000, 140-152; F. Vallet, "Une tombe de rich cavalier lombard découvert a Castel Trosino," in F. Vallet and M. Kazanski eds., *La noblesse romaine et les chefs barbares du 3e au 7e siècle*, Saint-Germain-en-Laye 1995, 335-49; C. Rupp, "La necropoli longobarda di Nocera

Written pieces of evidence do not help much either. Those are all of Byzantine origin. First of all, they do not allow us to narrow down the time-frame proposed by archeology, i.e. 570/600. Thus, Procopius in his *History of Wars* mentions the new Germanic fashions in armor, as well as military strategy, that penetrated the Roman army, but does not mention the stirrup. The *Strategikon* attributed to Emperor Maurice is the first source which clearly mentions the stirrup and the context leaves the impression that the innovation was an Avar import. Based on the available data, it is still difficult to draw any unanimous conclusion on the origin of the stirrup in Europe. Both theories, proposing the Avar or the Byzantine provenance, heavily rely on indirect proofs and inferences. Most likely, as suggested by B. Genito, the 'invention' of the stirrup in Europe must be considered as the result of a long process of changes in cavalry and warfare, which started in the fourth-fifth centuries and to which, in addition to the Avars, various peoples and cultures, such as Byzantines and Arabs, may have also contributed.<sup>5</sup>

### *Stirrups in Italy*

Stirrups were discovered in the following archaeological contexts in Italy.

1. The necropolis of Borgomasino (Piedmont), a few kilometers away from the early medieval graves of the S. Germano cemetery, reserved for the Lombard aristocracy. The site probably contained more than 100 tombs with rich grave goods -- now, unfortunately, almost completely lost. Here burials of horses to be found along with horse equipment, such as bridles and stirrups. Possibly, some graves contained human and horse bones, as well as iron stirrups jointly. However, the damage or loss of grave goods does not allow precise archaeological reconstructions. Based on the objects found in the cemetery (pottery and coins), some graves may well be attributed to an early phase, pertaining to the first immigrating Lombard generation, while other parts of the necropolis can date from the end of the sixth to the first half of the seventh century.<sup>6</sup>
2. Some 'sporadic' finds in Friuli, that is to say, stray objects are not found in exact funerary or settlement contexts. There is a series of iron stirrups found during excavations for the restoration of the Palazzo del Pretorio in Cividale.

---

*Umbra*," (loc. Il Portone): l'analisi archeologica, in L. Paroli ed, *Umbria Longobarda*, Roma 1997, 36 and *Ead.* "Catalogo," in L. Paroli ed., *Umbria Longobarda*, 119-26.

<sup>5</sup> B. Genito, "Sepolture con cavallo da Vicenne (CB): un rituale nomadico di origine centroasiatica," in S. Gelichi ed., *I Congresso Nazionale di Archeologia Medievale. Auditorium del Centro Studi della Cassa di Risparmio di Pisa (Pisa, 29-31 maggio 1997)*, Florence 1997, 287.

<sup>6</sup> E. Ferrero, "Borgomasino. Sepolcreto barbarico scoperto nell'abitato," *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* (1893): 189; G. Berattino, "I reperti della necropoli a Reihengräber di Borgomasino," *Bollettino di storia e arte canavesana* 7 (1981): 87, 88, 91; P. B. Micheletto-L. Pejrani Baricco, "Archeologia funeraria ed insediativa in Piemonte tra Ve VII secolo", in L. Paroli, ed. *L'Italia centro-settentrionale in età longobarda*, Florence 1997, 307; on the pottery types belonging to the Pannonic phase, see O. Von Hessen, "Tecniche di lavorazione," in G. C. Menis ed., *I Longobardi*, Milan 1990, 209.

These can be considered as direct evidence of Avar raids in Italy at the beginning of the seventh century. These are circular stirrups with oblong eyes, a type dated to the early Avar period. Then, there are graves with horse burials found at Illegio, Visnale dello Iudrio and Cividale which are highly significant. In Cividale stirrups were found in a grave south of the Church of S. Pantaleone. In some of my previous works on this particular subject, I also added Grave n. 43 of the necropolis of S. Mauro among the graves containing stirrups. However, I have mistaken and was misled by my wrong interpretation of a drawing of this grave, which presented a picture of a roundish object that was apparently a stirrup. The grave, however, even without stirrups, still maintains its great importance since it is one of the first burial in Italy presenting clear oriental character (burial of the horse plus horseman), even if the grave goods, such as a shield's umbo, a long sword, a sax, spear heads and bows, are more reminiscent of a general Eastern Merovingian cultural milieu, which in turn shows traces of Roman-Byzantine borrowings. Actually, the points of the bows are typical for the Late Roman *castra* situated along the Friulian *limes*. At the same time, the fittings of the horse bit are comparable to those found in the Alamannic territory, e.g. those from Tomb n. 9 of *Niederstotzingen*. This is an evidence for a direct and very early contact with Southern Alamannic territories. Other important aspects of Grave n. 43 are the presence of iron goods, i.e. a graver and a chisel with an incomplete tip, as well as a Late Antique bronze coin (not identified) and a quadrangular Byzantine weight. Taking into consideration all of these goods together in one grave, one may propose that this was the grave of someone involved in trade and/or an artisan. Moreover, the date of the grave, i.e. the last third of the sixth century means that it belonged to the first generation of migrating Lombards. This grave attests that the Lombard migration in Italy implied both the penetration of Lombard origin tradesmen/artisans and the introduction of precise and 'innovative' burial rites.<sup>7</sup>

3. Two different iron stirrups with *agemina* decorations have been found in Grave no. 86/2 of the early medieval necropolis of La Selvicciola, near Ischia di Castro (Latium, Viterbo County) dated to the middle of the seventh century. The stirrups are similar to such objects found in Hungary. There are traces of at least 100 or more graves, but these have been damaged by agricultural work, ancient robbery and the reuse of the necropolis after a cultic building (a one-nave church) was constructed on the site. The oldest objects from the necropolis are dated to the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century. Besides the *agemina* decoration of the above-mentioned stirrups, other

---

<sup>7</sup> I. Ahumada Silva, "Testimonianze archeologiche avare a Cividale," *Forum Julii* 14 (1990), 63-67; I. Ahumada Silva, "Necropoli longobarde a Cividale ed in Friuli," in *Paolo Diacono ed il Friuli alto medievale*, 339, 355-56; P. Lopreato, "La necropoli di S. Mauro-Cividale," in E. Arslan and M. Buora eds., *L'oro degli Avari*, Milan 2000, 196; I. Ahumada Silva, "Cividale del Friuli. Necropoli di S. Mauro. Tomba 43 di cavallo e cavaliere," in E. Arslan and M. Buora eds., *L'oro degli Avari*, 198-205.

objects that can help us date the Grave no. 86/2 and understand its cultural belonging are a belt buckle with *agemina* decoration, a projectile point and five other elements. The decoration of the belt is similar to another one found in Grave no. 86/11. These decorated objects are comparable to finds from Alamannic-Bavarian territories of the second half of the seventh century. Stylistic correspondences have been confirmed also by X ray analysis on stirrups n. 8/3. The analysis revealed the presence of *agemina* decorations to be placed in the same chronological and productive space as those of belts from graves 86/11 and 86/2. They all point to the middle of the seventh century and the Alamannic-Bavarian territories.<sup>8</sup>

4. A couple of cast bronze stirrups were discovered in Grave n. 41 of the necropolis of Castel Trosino (Marche, County of Ascoli Piceno). The dimensions of this cast bronze stirrups, certainly not suitable for men, demand a special investigation. The closest item from the Italian context is a bronze stirrup from Grave n. 33 of the necropolis of Vicenne. Both finds can be dated to the mid-seventh century. But material outside of Italy, especially Central-Eastern Europe, provides better paragons of comparison. For example, stirrup-like artifacts from the Byzantine settlement of Caričin Grad (Serbia) and Grave no. 1 of the early Avar necropolis of Szegvár-Oromdülő (Hungary) are similar. The couple of stirrup-like objects from Caričin Grad are made of iron, possibly through smithing of a quadrangular iron bar. They do not really resemble the stirrups described in the *Strategikon*. Moreover, the footrest seems far too short and thin to be able to support a mounted male soldier. In Grave no. 1 of the Szegvár-Oromdülő necropolis, a horse was buried together with a human, whose skeleton was attributed to a female. The small stirrup-like artifact from bone came to light together with a little golden cross which could possibly be part of the horse fittings. This bone artifact is only 7 cm long and 4 cm high and it does not appear to be able to sustain a mounting adult male in this case as well, thus confirming the attribution of the grave to a female. There are other rich goods from this grave. These discoveries prove that between the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh centuries different types of footrests for mounting horses existed and not all of them corresponded to the description of the stirrup found in the *Strategikon*. Nor did they fit the typology of stirrups found in Avar and Germanic necropolises of Europe. While the latter

---

<sup>8</sup> M. Incitti, "La necropoli altomedievale della Selvicciola ad Ischia di Castro (VT) ed il territorio castrense in età longobarda," in L. Paroli ed., *L'Italia centro-settentrionale*, 225-33; *Idem*, "La necropoli longobarda della Selvicciola," in E. Herring, R. Whitehouse, J. Wilkins eds., *Papers of the Fourth Conference of Italian Archaeology*, 4, London 1992, 213. The Hungarian items are in N. Fettich, *Das awarenzeitliche Gräberfeld von Pilismarót-Basaharc*, Budapest 1965, 20, pic. 25, nn. 9-10; A. Salamon and I. Erdely, *Das völkerwanderungszeitliche Gräberfeld von Környe*, Budapest 1971, 82 pl. 4, nn. 1-2 and 4-5; 83, pl. 5, nn. 32-33; 84, pl. 6, n. 5; 86, pl. 8, nn. 9-10 and 25-26; 88, pl. 10, n. 22; 93, pl. 15, nn. 20-22; 96, pl. 18, nn. 35-36; 98, pl. 20, nn. 34-35; 100, pl. 22, nn. 12-13; 101, pl. 23, nn. 17, 37, 41; 106, pl. 28, nn. 1-4, 6-7; 107, pl. 29, nn. 3-5; see also, I. Bóna, "Neue Nachbarn im Osten," 113.



evidence pertains to stirrups used mainly by men for military purposes, the objects from Castel Trosino, Caričin Grad and Szegvár-Oromdülő would better fit for supporting feet of women while riding, given their shape and dimensions. This conclusion can lead to a different dating of Grave no. 41 from Castel Trosino, ascribing it to an earlier phase of the necropolis.<sup>9</sup>

5. Several iron and bronze stirrups have been found and at least 10 graves with riders and horses together at the necropolis of Vicenne (Molise, Campobasso County). They are dated to the second half of the seventh century. The cemetery is organised of various groups of tombs around several nuclei. This seems to indicate a nomadic settlement. Usually the rider occupies the southern side of the grave while the horse lies opposite to him with the mouth of the animal turned towards his lord. However, it is difficult to reconstruct any uniformity in the mode of depositing the horse and the horsemen based on archaeological evidence alone.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> L. Paroli, "La necropoli di Castel Trosino: un riesame critico," in L. Paroli ed., *La necropoli longobarda di Castel Trosino. Bizantini e Longobardi nelle Marche*, Milano 1995, 206, 301; G. Lőrinczy, "Vorläufiger Bericht über die Freilegung des Gräberfeldes aus dem 6.-7. Jahrhundert in Szegvár-Oromdülő," *Communications Archaeologicae Hungariae* (1992), 81-124, in particular on tomb 1 see 81-90, 103, 105-09, 110; on the iron stirrups like artifacts from *Caričin Grad* in Serbia see, J. Werner, "Ein byzantinischer Steigbügel aus Caričin Grad," in N. Duval and V. Popovic eds., *Caričin Grad. I, Les basiliques B et J de Caričin Grad*, Rome 1984, 147-48, 150, 153.

<sup>10</sup> V. Ceglia and B. Genito, "La necropoli altomedievale di Vicenne a Campochiaro," in S. Capini and A. Di Niro eds., *Samnium. Archeologia del Molise*, Rome 1991, 329-34 and, in the catalogue of unearthed materials, 354, 358; V. Ceglia, "Campochiaro (CB) località Vicenne. La Necropoli altomedievale," *Bollettino di Archeologia* 5-6 (1990): 213-17; B. Genito, "Archaeology of the early medieval nomads in Italy: the horse-burials in Molise (seventh century) south-central Italy," in Cs. Bálint ed., *Kontakte zwischen Iran, Byzanz und der Steppe*, 229-47; Id., "Sepulture con cavallo da Vicenne (CB)," 286: "Alcuni tratti culturali, in qualche modo riconducibili all'Asia nomadica, sono stati già in passato identificati in Italia centro-settentrionale e meridionale; ma nonostante ciò, molto poco delle relazioni tra la penisola e quel grande movimento migratorio di cui gli antichi nomadi d'Asia sono parte integrante, è stato, mai, archeologicamente messo in evidenza prima della scoperta della necropoli di Vicenne (Campochiaro, Molise). Questa necropoli, infatti rappresenta un *unicum* culturale, ad un tempo "asiatico" e "nomadico" caratterizzato dalla presenza di numerose tombe con cavallo che rimandano ad analoghe forme di sepolture rinvenute proprio tra i popoli nomadi delle steppe Eurasiatiche ... Il seppellimento contemporaneo, nella stessa tomba di un uomo e di un cavallo costituisce un esempio di rituale funerario con una lunga e complessa tradizione storica alle spalle che risale alla cultura dei cavalieri nomadi delle steppe Eurasiatiche. Questo tipo di seppellimento, per la prima volta documentato in Europa meridionale, ma generalmente rinvenuto in Asia centrale e in Europa centro-orientale, costituisce l'aspetto più significativo della necropoli di Vicenne e, all'interno della documentazione archeologica europea esso rappresenta davvero una significativa eccezione ... D'altra parte sulla base delle analisi archeologiche e archeo-zoologiche [S. Bökönyi, "Analisi archeozoologica dello scheletro del cavallo nella necropoli di Vicenne," *Conoscenze* 4 (1988): 69-76 and Id., "Two more horse graves from Vicenne," in *Samnium*,

342-43], queste tombe costituiscono senza alcun dubbio seppellimenti contestuali di un uomo e del suo cavallo, unitari nel tempo e nello spazio; ciò va particolarmente enfatizzato considerando l'estrema varietà tipologica delle numerose fosse con cavalli o parti di essi (con o senza corredo), rinvenute in Europa occidentale dalla Scandinavia alla Germania e databili dall'epoca Merovingia a quell'Ottoniana (V-XI secolo A. D.) [M. Müller Wille, "Pferdegrab und Pferdeopfer im frühen Mittelalter," *Berichten van de Rijksdiens voor het Oudheidkundig Bodenmonderzoek* (1970-71), 119-248; J. Oexle, "Merowingerzeitlichen Pferdebestattungen oder Beigaben?," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien. Jahrbuch des Instituts für Frühmittelalterforschung der Universität Münster* 18 (1981), 122-71; ... „ and 287: "Il fatto che queste staffe di tipologia avarica siano state rinvenute in un contesto archeologico caratterizzato da molti oggetti di corredo di carattere "germanico" piuttosto che costituire un'anomalia rappresentano la conferma piena del fatto che tali oggetti, completamente sconosciuti nel mondo classico sono arrivati in Occidente proprio attraverso il tramite di popoli "diversi" che vivevano in un contesto multi-culturale e multi-etnico." and finally 288: "L'area più occidentale nelle quali le tombe con cavallo sono state rinvenute sono l'Ungheria (Cs. Bálint, "Les tombes a ensevelissement de cheval chez les Hongrois aux IXe-XIe siecles," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 2 (1982), 5-32.), l'ex Cecoslovacchia (A. Točík, *Slawisch-awarisches Gräberfeld in Stúrovo*, Bratislava 1968) e l'ex Jugoslavia dove contesti archeologici con un forte carattere "asiatico" sono stati attribuiti agli Slavi, gli Avari o gli Ungheresi. Dall'Ungheria si possono citare gli esempi di Szekszárd (Gy. Rosner, "A Szekszárd-Bogyiszlói úti avar temető ló és lovas temetkezései," [Burials of horses and horsemen in the Avar necropolis of Szekszárd at Bogyiszló street] *Szekszárdi Béri Balogh Ádám Múzeum Évkönyve* 6-7 (1975-76), 103), Ivancsa [I. Bóna, "Avar lovassir Iváncsáról," [The Avar horseman burial of Iváncsa] *Archaeologiai Értesítő* 97 (1970): 243-63, fig. 1]; dall'Ucraina, vicino alla regione di Nikolaev, quello di Portovoe [A. I. Ajbabin, "Pogrebenie hazarskogo voina," [The grave of Khazar warrior] *Sovjetskaja Arkheologija* 3 (1985): fig. 9] e altri dall'Asia Centrale, dall'Oasi di Tuva [B.B. Obcinnokova, "Pogrebenie drevnetjurskogo voina v central'noj Tuve," [The Grave of an ancient Turkic warrior in central Tuva] *Sovjetskaja Arkheologija*, 3 (1982), Fig. 1; R. Kenk, "Früh- und hochmittelalterliche Gräber von Kudyrge im Altai, Frühmittelalterliche Gräber aus West-Tuva," in *Materialen zur allgemeinen und vergleichenden Archäologie*, Munich: 1982, Fig. 9, 11, 14, 19, 20, 31, 41, 43] e dall'Altai superiore [Ivi, Fig. 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23]. Con questi confronti non si intende, qui, però affermare l'esistenza di una diretta continuità tra le tombe con cavallo dell'Europa dell'Est e l'Asia Centrale da un lato e quelle dell'Italia meridionale dall'altro, né di stabilire precise correlazioni etniche tra gli inumati e i relativi resti archeologici così lontani tra loro. Queste ipotesi di confronto possono per il momento, solo fornire l'evidenza di connessioni tipologiche, strutturali di un rituale con al centro il sacrificio del cavallo che non appartiene al mondo germanico, sebbene un culto di quell'animale è comunque documentato anche tra quelli [C. Balint, "Les tombes a ensevelissement de cheval chez les Hongrois aux IXe-XIe siecles," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 2 (1982), 5-32]. Ritrovare un rituale funerario di tipo centro-asiatico in un contesto germanico, come certamente è quello di Vicenne, è cosa particolarmente significativa, ... Su questa base credo che i tre livelli interpretativi proposti qualche tempo fa per l'analisi dei resti della necropoli di Vicenne, l'asiatico, il germanico ed il locale trova la sua più piena conferma: un contesto multiculturale e multi-etnico non può che essere analizzato e interpretato se non con criteri interpretativi a più livelli." On the variety of horse burials typology see, E. Garam, "Sepulture di cavalli," 144: "la forma più diffusa di sepoltura

6. Other interesting finds come from the locality of Casino Vezzani-Vassarella near Crecchio (Abruzzo, Province of Chieti). These include several weapons and iron horse equipment, as well as four iron stirrups. The goods have been attributed to a Byzantine troop in charge of defending the border with the Lombard Kingdom, i.e. until 580. This attribution is highly questionable on several grounds. First, it is difficult to identify a specific pottery type as a marker of the Byzantine presence in the area. Moreover, the highly composite character of finds from Crecchio does not allow any precise ethnic/cultural and/or chronological attribution. The chronology and typology of the stirrups themselves, together with that of some other artifacts (weapons and iron tools) point to a situation rather far from a 'pure' Byzantine context. At the same time, the objects from Crecchio closely resemble finds from Vicenne with its composite cultural structure mentioned above. It seems more plausible that the artifacts from Crecchio date to the second half of the seventh century.<sup>11</sup>

---

equestre di epoca avara era quella che poneva il cavallo presso il suo proprietario. Il cavallo poteva giacere nella stessa fossa dell'uomo, alla sua destra oppure alla sinistra, a croce davanti ai suoi piedi, oppure coricato longitudinalmente, con lo stesso orientamento dell'uomo oppure con orientamento opposto. Talvolta veniva scavata una fossa distinta per il cavallo nei pressi della tomba dell'uomo. I cavalli con poche eccezioni venivano sepolti completamente bardati;" and for a wide presentation of examples see of I. Kovrig, "Contribution," 164-74.

- <sup>11</sup> A. R. Staffa, "La persistenza di logiche tardoantiche nella difesa dell'Abruzzo dai Longobardi. Reperti inedito da *Castrum Truentinum* e Crecchio," in M. Buora ed., *'Miles Romanus' dal Po al Danubio nel Tardoantico*, Pordenone 2002, 251-72; On this question see, A. Melucco Vaccaro, *I Longobardi*, 150-52; J. Werner, "Italienisches und koptisches Bronzegeschirr des 6. und 7. Jahrhundert nordwärts der Alpen," in *Memnosymon Theodor Wiegand*. Munich 1938, 78. V. La Salvia, "Aspetti dell'economia dell'Italia alto medievale. Artigianato e Commercio fra Longobardi e Bizantini, in O. Merisalo and P. Pajta eds., *Frontiers in the Middle Ages*, Louvain la neuve, 2006, 348-396, *passim*; A. M. Giuntella et alii, "Recenti indagini nella catacomba di Castelvecchio Subequo (Aq)," *Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana* 2.67 (1991) 249-321, especially 301-06; A. M. Giuntella, "Il ducato di Spoleto: persistenze e trasformazioni nell'assetto territoriale (Abruzzo e Sabina)," in *I longobardi dei Ducati di Spoleto e Benevento*, 796-97; On the changes occurring in stirrup typology in the late Early Avar period see, E. Garam, "Sepolture di cavalli," 146: "La forma delle staffe nel bacino dei Carpazi cambiò e dalla fine del VII secolo quando l'occhio delle staffe fu annodato e l'appoggio dritto (che alla fine dell'epoca avarica divenne più largo) rafforzato con coste." See as well P. Tomka, "Il Costume," in *Gli Avari. Un popolo d'Europa*, 84-85 where it is emphasized that the Euroasian nomads always used felt riding boots with smooth soles and that its invention in Europe can be ascribed to the early Avar period since this type of boots would only fit into the roundish rod stirrups. Moreover, he stressed that only after the coming of other nomadic people of Turkic/Mongol origin, around the year AD 670, and the consequent diffusion of stirrups with a rigid rod was it then possible to mount with hard leather sole boots as well. The *harpago* or *lupus* is known from grave 119 at *Castel Troisino* while another one came to light in *Pisa*, see G. C. Meris ed., *I Longobardi*, 188; G. Ciampoltrini, "La falce del guerriero e altri appunti per la Tuscia fra VI e VII secolo,"

The presence of horse burials, unquestionably a tradition of oriental origin, and of funerary contexts influenced by the Avar tradition within Lombard and Alamannic-Bavarian territories make it clear that significant relationships existed between these areas and the Carpathian Basin. Actually, this connection must have played a central role in shaping early medieval tools in Italy. The Avar migration into Central Europe around the end of the 560s, on the one hand, implied a radical reorganization of the political structure, particularly in the Byzantine provinces of the Balkans. On the other hand, this reorganization did not result in any major or disruptive event as far as the local populace of the Carpathian Basin was concerned. There is strong evidence in the archaeological record of the persistence within early Avar Kaganate, of peoples of both Germanic (western or eastern) and provincial (Roman or local) origin. The example of the Keszthely culture demonstrates this point. Apparently, this very situation lasted until the 80s of the seventh century when the arrival of other nomadic tribes from the East led to a crisis in Avar power in the Carpathian Basin.<sup>12</sup>

---

*Archeologia Medievale* 20 (1993), 596-97; C. Giostra, "Catalogo," in Pejrani Baricco ed., *Presenze longobarde a Collegno nell'Alto medioevo*, Turin 2007, 97-109, 111-15, 127-32. For the objects attributed to an earlier phase see, G. C. Menis ed., *I Longobardi*, 46, 188, 426, 444; C. Rupp, "Catalogo," 118; L. Paroli, "La Necropoli di Castel Trosino: un riesame critico", 262.

- <sup>12</sup> On the oriental origin of the fashion of horse burials and of the importance of the horse as a status symbol see, B. Genito, "Materiali e problemi," *Conoscenze* 4 (1988), 56; E. Garam, "Sepulture di cavalli," 143: "Nel primo millennio d.C. cominciò a diffondersi nelle steppe asiatiche l'uso di seppellire con i guerrieri i loro cavalli bardati. Prima dell'arrivo degli Avari tale usanza era un'eccezione nel bacino dei Carpazi;" see also R. Brulet, "La sépulture du roi Childéric à Turnoi et le site funéraire," in F. Vallet and M. Kazanski eds., *La noblesse romaine et les chefs barbares du III au VII siècle*, 314: the distribution map of horse burials in the Merovingian period shows that this mode of interment remained exceptional between the Rhine and Seine, and only began to evolve from the AD 5th century onwards in Thuringia and even later along the Elbe, Rhine and Danube rivers; see as well, M. Müller-Wille, "Pferdgrab und Pferdopfer," im frühen Mittelalter, *Berichten van de Rijkdiens voor het Oudheidkundig Bodenmoderzoek* (1970-71), 122-72; S. Piggott, *Wagon, Chariot and Carriage*. London 1992, 108-109 and especially 112: "When we turn to the horse as a prestige steed, the Scythian world of the fifth century BC on the Central Asian steppe shows a rather different pattern, illustrated by princely *Pazyryk* burials in the Altai. Here we are in a horse-centred nomadic or semi-nomadic world ... where horses indicated status in herds rather than as individuals." B. Genito, "Sepulture con cavallo da Vicenne (CB)," 286-87: "Storicamente l'uso di seppellire cavalli è attestato da Erodoto (IV, 72) per l'epoca scita (V-IV secolo a.C.) e da evidenze archeologiche per l'età del Bronzo e del Ferro, nel Vicino Oriente, in Cina (nel periodo tardo Shang, XIII-XI secolo a.C.) ed in Asia Centrale con la significativa variante della presenza di carri. Per l'epoca medievale il rituale è testimoniato da numerosi autori e da una discreta documentazione archeologica con la deposizione contemporanea di uomo ed animale, variante assente nell'età del ferro. Una delle principali fonti relative a tale rituale si trova nelle note di viaggio di Ibn Fadlan, ambasciatore del califfo Abbaside, Muqtadir, inviato nel IX-X secolo presso il re dei Bulgari del Volga. L'autore nelle sue note ci ha fornito una grande quantità di informazioni stori-

che, geografiche ed etnografiche, inoltre, sulla popolazione dei Khazari, tra le quali anche la descrizione della morte, del seppellimento di un uomo e della pratica rituale di sacrificare contestualmente un cavallo. In tale rituale è evidente che l'uccisione di un cavallo e la sua collocazione in una tomba, consente, all'uomo deceduto di salire simbolicamente al Paradiso. Il rituale descritto da Ibn Fadlan, documentato anche presso i Mongoli ci fornisce l'evidenza anche di un pasto rituale prima che il cavallo sia imbalsamato e ci conferma quanto tali sacrifici fossero diffusi nel mondo dell'est-europeo dell'epoca. Il seppellimento di cavalli insieme agli uomini nelle tombe di periodo alto-medioevale è archeologicamente attestato nel V secolo nella Russia Meridionale e nel Caucaso; gli Avari nel VI-VII secolo lo diffondono in Occidente nelle aree Danubiane e della Tisza, e gli Ungheresi, nel IX/X secolo lo adottano di nuovo nel bacino dei Carpazi. Indipendentemente da ogni attribuzione etnica di quel rituale per cui sono stati di volta in volta proposti popoli come i Saragouri, gli Ouguri, gli Onoguri, i Bulgari, i Finno-ugri, gli Unni, e gli Avari, esso fu, molto probabilmente, introdotto contemporaneamente da diversi popoli in aree diverse. Sebbene la questione appare molto complicata la più gran parte degli studiosi attribuisce l'uso di seppellire i cavalli al ramo occidentale dei su citati popoli di origine turca, e la probabile area originale del rituale alla Siberia di Sud-ovest. I seppellimenti più tardi con cavallo del X-XI secolo nella Russia meridionale e a Sarkel la famosa capitale dello Stato Kazaro sono, invece, attribuibili a nuove ondate di popoli turchi, come i Pecheneghi. Generalmente considerati relativi a credenze religiose, i seppellimenti con cavallo del medio-evo appartengono culturalmente in toto al mondo nomadico eurasiatico, e, sono chiare espressioni della particolare importanza del cavallo nel contesto socio-economico del nomadismo pastorale equestre che col tempo ha determinato lo sviluppo di particolari rituali connessi con il suo sacrificio. Questo rituale richiedeva che il cavaliere portasse con se dopo la morte il cavallo e la sua cavalcatura ed è, così, strettamente riferibile al valore sacro del suo spirito o della forza vitale, capace di sopravvivere attraverso le ossa (cranio e quattro zampe) e la pelle dell'animale, generalmente lasciate intatte nelle tombe. Considerando l'alto costo di un cavallo, sempre maggiore di un bovino, l'uso di seppellire un cavallo completo potrebbe essere stato un privilegio dei livelli più alti della società, là dove la deposizione della sola bardatura potrebbe avere caratterizzato i livelli bassi. On the very subject see as well, A. Azzaroli, *Il cavallo nella Storia antica*. Milan 1975; M. Canard, "La relation du voyage d'Ibn Fadlan chez les Bulgares de la Volga," *Annales de l'Institut d'études Orientales* 16 (1958), 200b, 75, 76, and note n. 136; L. Chi, *Anyang*. Seattle 1977; K. C. Chang, *Shang Civilisation*. New-Haven 1980; Cs. Bálint, "Les tombes a ensevelissement de cheval chez les Hongrois aux IXe-XIe siècles," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 2 (1982), 19ff., 25; K. F. Smirnov, "Arheologicheskie staf' v Trudah Saratovskogo oblastonogo Muzeja kraevedenija," [Archaeological papers in the works of Saratov regional museum] *Sovjetskaja Arkeologija* 4 (1962), 270-73; I. P. Zaseckaja, "Osobennosti pogrebal'nogo obrjada gunnskoj epohi na territorii stepej nizhnego povolzh'ja i severnogo prichernomr'ja," [The specific grave-goods of Hunnic period on the Steppes of the lower Volga basin and northern Black Sea area] *Arheologicheskij Sbornik* 13 (1971), 64-65, 69; B. Genito, "Materiali e problemi," 49. Moreover, *Lamellenpanzer, Spangenfederhelm* and stirrups appear in Lombard graves only after AD 568, therefore precisely from their Italian phase. This moment in their history, represented an occasion to establish new contacts and re-enforce older ones; relative to that see, J. Werner, *Nomadischen Gürtel bei Persern, Byzantinern und Langobarden*, in *Atti del Convegno Internazionale sul tema La Civiltà dei Longobardi in Europa*, Rome, 1974, 119; The long lasting Keszthely cul-

The relationship between the Avar Kaganate and the Eastern Merovingian area remained regular and stable both from a military point of view, often the main one, and commercial exchanges. Therefore, the existence of burials of Western Germanic people and of objects of Eastern Merovingian provenance in Avar territories can be regarded as an indication of connections with Lombard Italy, granted that in the Italian peninsula as well there is plenty of material of Avar and Avar-Byzantine origin.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, artifacts and burials of Western Germanic origin in Avar lands demonstrate that there existed all-inclusive contacts with the populace in the Alamannic-Bavarian area and contacts were not limited to Lombard Italy alone. Such conclusions are gained from the analysis of

---

ture certainly must be connected to the persistence of a *castrum* on the southern shore of Fenékpuszta peninsula on Lake Balaton. The fort flourished between the AD 4th and the middle of the AD seventh centuries. Since it was located close to the frontier of the early Avar Kaganate its population could maintain connections with both the Balkans and northern Italy. At that time, its populace consisted, beside people of provincial origin, of persons of Byzantine origin, possibly prisoners of war captured during Avar raids, Germanic people, beside various craftsmen who would have been attracted there since the strategic and political role of the *castrum* was preserved. From the early 30s of the AD seventh century the situation started changing, especially after the Avar defeat at Constantinople in AD 626 and the subsequent succession war within the Kaganate. Around AD 630, the fort was destroyed and never rebuilt. During this period the Avars finally gained full control of the region and the Christian populace of Keszthely culture remained isolated; concerning this theme see, R. Müller, "La cultura di Keszthely," in *Gli Avari. Un popolo d'Europa*, 165-66 and 167-68. *Idem*, "Die Keszthely-Kultur," in *Reitervölker aus dem Osten*, 265-74; L. Barkóczi, "A sixth century cemetery from Keszthely-Fenékpuszta," *Acta Archeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 20 (1968), 275-311; Gy. László, *Steppenvölker und Germanen. Kunst der Völkerwanderungszeit*. Vienna-Munich 1970, 52-55; F. Daim, "The Avars. Steppe people of Central Europe," *Archaeology* 37.2 (1984), 34-35; W. Menghin, T. Springer and E. Wamers eds., *Germanen, Hunnen und Awaren. Schätze der Völkerwanderungszeit*, Nurnberg 1987, 261; W. Pohl, *Die Awaren*, 55, 89, 92, 308-12; A Kiss, "Germanen im awarenzeitlichen Karpatenbecken," in F. Daim ed., *Awarenforschungen. Studien zur Archäologie der Awaren* 4. Vienna 1992, 36-38; T. Vida, "Merovingische Spathagurte der Awarenzeit," *Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungaricae* (2000), 171-72; P. Stadler, "Das germanisches Substrat: Langobarden, Gepiden und anderen germanische Völkerschaften im frühawarischen Material," in *Reitervölker aus dem Osten*, 281-82; F. Daim, "Archäologie der Awaren," in *Reitervölker aus dem Osten*, 200: "Vor allem in Westungarn spielt die germanische Komponent im awarischen Material eine bedeutende Rolle und manche germanische Verzierungsweisen werden dann im awarischen Kunsthandwerk übernommen und weiterentwickelt. Sicher spielen hier die besiegten Gepiden und zurückgebliebene Langobarden eine wesentliche Rolle."

<sup>13</sup> S. Szádeczky-Kardoss, "Histoire des Avars et leur heritage en Europe," in S. Csernus and K. Korompay eds., *Les Hongrois et l'Europe: conquete et integration*, Paris-Szeged 1999, 150-151, 153, 155, 157; M. Brozzi, "Avari e Longobardi friulani," in *Gli Avari. Un popolo d'Europa*, 57, 58, 58-59, 60 ff.; I. Bóna, "Gli Avari," 28-29; A. Kollautz, "Awaren, Langobarden und Slaven in Noricum und Istrien," *Karinthia* 1 (1965), 619-45; A. Tagliarferri, "Il Friuli e l'Istria nell'Altomedioevo," *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 2/2 (1972), 273-94.

Grave n. 200 in the Avar necropolis of Mezőfalva (for the *agemina* type belt decorations) and other finds in Transylvania, e.g. the Avar necropolises of Bánd, Veresmart, Nagylak (Nadlac) and Baráthegy (Bratej).<sup>14</sup> Among Lombard burials within Avar territory the following can be considered: graves 16, 216, 350, 356, 390 and 760 of Szekszárd-Bogyiszló and the necropolis of Zamárdi. The first burial ground is important because it contained iron stirrups of the very same type as those from Vicenne/Borgomasino. This parallel suggests acquisition *in situ* of this new and fundamental riding tool for those Lombards living in direct contact with the Avars. Moreover, 70% of the early Avar stirrups come from former Lombard Pannonia.<sup>15</sup> The necropolis of Zamárdi is located on the southern shore of Lake Balaton. It was probably the residence of Avar Khan Bajan's successors although the settlement itself has not yet been identified. The excavations conducted on the site demonstrated that it flourished during the seventh century and ended in crisis to follow. Many of the graves were robbed and it has been calculated that the entire number of the burials would have been 5000. An iron-making site with reduction furnaces was also discovered in the same area. The archaeological evidence from the necropolis testifies the existence of long-distance trade connections with the Alamanno-Bavarian zone, Italy and Byzantine territories. Besides imported Byzantine jewelry, there are many other artifacts, such as belt ornaments, horse bits and fittings from Lombard Italy, Bavaria, Alamannia, the Frankish Kingdom or from the Romanised population of the Alps. The overall situation of the finds' structure and their quality in Zamárdi, thus, is a demonstration of the mutual influences between the Avar lands and the nearby territories.<sup>16</sup>

As far as the relationship with Bavaria is concerned, Graves no. 40, 74 and 97 from the Linz-Zizau cemetery, Grave no. 35 from the necropolis of Moss-Burgstall and the burial ground of Budenheim can be mentioned. In the last two necropolises the fashion of horse interments must certainly be considered an oriental import through Avar mediation. The contacts between these two areas greatly intensified during the last 30 years of the seventh century because of the military stability on the frontier. This situation is testified in finds from such Avar necropolises as Záhorska-Bystrica, Sommerein and Zalakomár where belt fittings of Bavarian origin are found together with Avar pottery; in some North Hungarian necropolises, such as Hédervár, Vasasszonyfa, Lukácsháza various long saxes have come to light; and some Lower Austrian cemeteries (at Zwölfaxing, Graves no. 3 and 233) and Münchendorf.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> I. Bóna, "Neue Nachbarn," 111-13.

<sup>15</sup> I. Bóna, "Neue Nachbarn," 111; I. Kovrig, "Contribution," 177.

<sup>16</sup> M. Martin, "Zur Interpretation des langobardischen Gräberfeldes von Várpalota, Komitat Veszprém," *Basler Beiträge zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte* (1976), 194-99; On the necropolis of Zamárdi see E. Bárdos, "La necropoli di Zamárdi," in *Gli Avari. Un popolo d'Europa*, 151, 153, 163; I. Bóna, "Gli Avari," 34; about Szekszárd see G. Rosner, "Das awarenzeitliche Gräberfeld in Szekszárd-Bogyiszlói Straße," *Monumenta Avarorum Archaeologica* 3 (1999), 12, 34, 48, 51, 54-55, 96, 154-56.

<sup>17</sup> I. Bóna, "Neue Nachbarn," 111-114; see also F. Daim, "Die Bayern, die Nachbarn der Awaren westlich der Enns," in *Reitervölker aus dem Osten*, 308-15.

In relation to Avar–Alaman connection, the stirrup imports have been fully investigated by J. Oexle. Moreover, even if the Lombard mediation is emphasized in explaining the diffusion of the stirrups in Alaman regions, the existence of contacts with the region in the upper courses of the Danube are no less significant.<sup>18</sup>

As a comparing area of interest, the archaeological features from the necropolis of Moss-Burgstall in Bavaria and Grave no. 35 in particular are important. It has a quite mixed anthropological composition: northern European types are widely represented among women, but Roman and East European/Mongoloid types are attested as well. The inhumations of Graves no. 35 and 3 represent the latter type. The grave goods of Grave no. 35 yield evidence of typical Germanic weaponry (shield's umbo, long sword, sax) except for the stirrups. Belt decoration, on the other hand, points to an Eastern Merovingian, or more precisely Northern Italian provenance. Yet, Grave no. 35 can be certainly ascribed to a rider of Avar origin who would have been in charge, on behalf of the Bavarian Duke, of controlling the relevant strategic zone around the confluence of the rivers Isar and Danube during the early 30s of the seventh century. This Bavarian burial site displays a number of similarities with the Italian necropolis of Vicenne. In both cemeteries there are common structural features, i.e. horse interments and objects (e.g. stirrups) of clearly Asiatic derivation within a generalized Germanic context. In addition, the presence in Bavaria and Lombard Italy of seventh century necropolises that are quite similar to each other in terms of their 'oriental character' (as shown by horse burials and stirrups) sheds new light on contemporary written sources mentioning the migration and settlement of the 'proto-Bulgarian' peoples in these same areas. Thus, the Bulgarians led by Duke *Alzec/Alcio* and

---

<sup>18</sup> J. Oexle, *Studien zu merowingerzeitlichem Pferdegeschirr am Beispiel der Trensen*, in *Germanische Denkmäler der Völkerwanderungszeit*, Serie A, Band 16. Mainz am Rhein 1992, 82, 99, Kirchheim/Ries, Ostalbkreis, n. 80–81, tab. 38, 142–43; Mühlhausen im Täle, Kreis Göppingen, n. 95, tab. 41, p. 147; Mannheim, unpublished, tb 313, n. 93, tav. 41, 146; Pfahlheim, City of Ellwangen, Ostalbkreis, n. 114, tab. 56, 157–166; Rißtissen, Stadt Ehingen, Alb-Donau Kreis, n. 139–140, tab. 73, 167–68; Wilflingen, Kreis Biberach, n. 172, tab. 85, 175–76; Aschheim, Kreis München, n. 176, tab. 86, 177; Au, Gem. Rehling, Kreis Aichach-Friedberg, n. 177, tab. 86, 177–78; Friedberg, Kreis Aichach-Friedberg, n. 190–191, tabs. 92–93, 182; Geltendorf, Kreis Landsberg/Lech, n. 196, tab. 92, 183; Giesing, Stadt München, n. 198, tab. 93, 183; Künzig, Kr. Deggendorf, n. 203, tab. 95, 184; Ottmaning, near Ainring, Kr. Berchtesgadener Land, n. 218, tab. 99, 188; Regensburg, n. 222, tab. 105, 190; Budenheim, Kr. Mainz-Bingen, n. 267, tab. 123, 203; Flomborn, Kr. Alzey-Worms, n. 272, tab. 125, 204; Staubing, Kr. Kelheim, n. 254, 198; Windecken, Stadt Nidderau, Main-Kinzig Kreis, n. 334, tab. 151, 224; Bremen, Gem. Ense, Kr. Soest, n. 380, tab. 176–77, 240. See as well R. Christlein, *Die Alamannen. Archäologie eines lebendigen Volkes*, Stuttgart, 1991, 66–67 on the cultural stream that from Lombard Italy and from Avar Pannonia reached initially Bavaria and only after Alamannia: as a matter of fact, the Alamans settled in the northern part of their territories or in the mountainous regions of Switzerland kept their oldest ethnic style for a longer period; 75 on the change of riders graves style after 650 AD when stirrup is imported; 76: "Auch bei den Steigtügeln wird deutlich, daß sie eher auf italisch-langobardische denn auf awarische Vermittlung hin zu den Alamannen gelangten."



mentioned by Paul the Deacon in *Historia Langobardorum*; by Fredegar in his *Chronica*; by Theophanes in his *Chronographia* and by Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople in his *Breviarium*, even if they cannot be directly identified with the people buried in the two necropolises do, in fact, represent the manifold cultural and commercial exchanges between these regions. These relationships, therefore, also imply the movement and subsequent settlement of large parts of populations for military and strategic reasons.<sup>19</sup>

To summarize, the Eastern Merovingian area, that is to say the Lombard kingdom, Alamannia and Bavaria, apparently played a highly relevant role in the importation of artifacts and technologies of oriental origin into Western Europe, totally unrelated to the Graeco-Roman heritage. Far from being a simple periphery of the Merovingian world, this zone played an essential mediation role in exchanges with the East, including territories under Byzantine control, between the end of the sixth and the middle of the seventh centuries. The frequency and profoundness of these commercial, cultural and military connections, also implies migration of entire peoples and family kinship between and among Avars, Lombards, Alamans and Bavarians, creating a strong degree of homogeneity in this area. The dynastic bonds between Lombards and Bavarians are too well known to deserve further explanation here. At the same time, it is important to stress that during the seventh century iron artifacts and jewelry consistently passed through Lombard Italy to Bavaria from whence they continued via the Danube and its southern tributary rivers. It is not by chance that all finds of weights and scales are strictly located all along the courses of the Danube, the Rhine and their tributaries. As far as Lombard-Alaman connections are concerned, the conclusions of Graenert are relevant. According to Graenert, contacts between these two peoples were not solely restricted to military or commercial relations but it also included the creation of family links, as possibly mirrored by the presence of 'Lombard' women in Alaman necropolises on both sides of the Alps. This situation may have been supported by an early Lombard migration, already starting at the end of the sixth century, directly from their Pannonian settlements into the most Eastern parts of Alamannia, such as the Lech valley.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> U. Von Freeden, Das Grab, eines awarischen Reiters von Moss-Burgstall, *Bericht der Roemisch-germanischen Kommission* 66 (1985), 7, 8-16, 19-20; Eadem, "Das Frühmittelalterliche Gräberfeld," von Moss-Burgstall, Niederbayern, *Bericht der Roemisch-germanischen Kommission* 68 (1987), 559, 567, 596; in relation to this see H. Ditten, "Protobulgaren und Germanen im 5-7. Jahrhundert," *Bulgarian Historical Review* 3 (1980), 69-73, 75-76; L. Capo ed., *Paolo Diacono. Storia dei Longobardi*, Vicenza 1992, 548-49; N. Christie, Longobard weaponry, and warfare, AD 1-800, *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 2 (1991), 16-17.

<sup>20</sup> On this paragraph's topic see, F. Moosleiter, "Handwerk und Handel," in H. Danaheimer and H. Dopsch eds., *Die Bajuwaren*, 219; I. Bóna, "Neue Nachbarn," 108; H. Steuer, "Handel und Ferbeziehungen," in *Die Alamannen*, Stuttgart, 1997, 391, 400, 408-10, 410-14; V. Babucke, "Nach Osten bis an den Lech," in *Die Alamannen*, 256; I. Stork, "Friedhof und Dorf, Herrendorf und Adelsgrab," in *Die Alamannen*, 295-99, 301; G. Barni, "Alamanni nel territorio lombardo," *Archivio storico lombardo* n.s. 16 (1938), 137,

But besides connections between related Germanic groups, other important relationships included Eastern cultures whose influence was often mediated by the Avars and Byzantines. The different influences from such Eastern contacts permeated Lombard material culture also due to the transfer and integration of portions of such populations within the larger body of the Lombard society. The presents of Norici, Pannonians, proto-Bulgarians and representatives of diverse Germanic groups in Italy since 568 which is recorded in written sources appears to be confirmed by archaeological evidence. In fact, the appearance of the stirrup in Italy and in general in the Eastern Merovingian area, an object that is absolutely outside of classical heritage of these territories but rather point to an East-Central European influence, must be considered as proof of the above-mentioned peoples' presence and influence in this geographical area.

Last but not least, one should remember that stirrups and other types of armor were produced by Avar craftsmen who were able to utilize rather sophisticated methods of production: a rhomboidal iron bar was flattened by hammering thus giving it typically roundish form at the stanchion level. Evidence of the existence of this specialized craftsmanship among Avars comes from Grave n. 166 in the Jutas necropolis and at iron-making sites in Zamárdi and all over the Somogy

---

140, 144-50; G. Graenert, "Langobardinnen in Alamannien. Zur Interpretation mediterranen Sachgutes in südwestdeutschen Frauengräbern," *Germania* 78 (2000), 418, 422-23, 426ss., 431, 432-34; J. Werner, "Fernhandel und Naturalwirtschaft im östlichen Merowingerreich nach archäologischen und numismatischen Zeugnisse," *Bericht des Römisch-germanischen Kommission* 42 (1961), 310 ff.; *Idem*, "Zur Vorbereitung frühgeschichtlicher Metallarbeiten (Werkstatt-Wanderhandwerk-Handel-Familien Verbindung)," *Early Medieval Studies* 1 (1970), 65ff.; H. Schutz, *Tools, weapons and Ornaments I.*, Leiden/Boston/Cologne 2001, 198: "Thus the presence of northern square-based Lombardic fibulas in the Bavarian cemeteries indicates that Lombards may have participated in the tribal genesis of the Bavarians." The homogeneity of many aspects of the eastern Merovingian material culture and the importance of the oriental influences, running along the Danube, is confirmed also by pottery production as noted in O. Von Hessen, "A proposito della produzione di ceramica nel periodo delle migrazioni nell'Europa centrale e meridionale," in *Artigianato e tecnica, sulla società dell'alto medioevo occidentale*. Atti Settimane di Studi del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 17, vol. 2, Spoleto 1971, 757-58: "Vorrei parlare ora di un terzo prototipo di ceramica dell'epoca merovingia, proveniente dalla Germania meridionale e più precisamente dalle zone bajuvariche ed alemanne. Questo prototipo è particolarmente importante per la ceramica longobarda trovata in Italia ... Si tratta ... di bicchieri e di vasi a forma di otre ... Le forma di questo gruppo di recipienti ... non trovano riscontro nella Germania settentrionale. Questo tipo di vasi non è di provenienza occidentale, bensì di origine orientale. La sua diffusione nella Germania meridionale segue più o meno il corso del Danubio. Questi vasi a forma otre ... sono quasi sempre decorati da stampigliature e sono modellati a mano. I loro parenti più prossimi ... formano il gruppo principale della ceramica longobarda in Italia, con la differenza però che quest'ultima, contrariamente a quella proveniente dagli scavi della Germania meridionale, è modellata al tornio. Ma ambedue i gruppi risultano probabilmente dalle stesse influenze orientali."

County (all in Hungary). The necropolis of Jutas is of special interest since it presents a mixed burial context containing skeletons of both Caucasian and Mongoloid human types from a period between the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh centuries. The direct import of this technology of production, besides the objects themselves, into the Eastern Merovingian regions is still difficult to prove because of the scarcity of Italian finds and the lack of archaeometric analysis on these objects. This would be the only way to distinguish regional variations within the same production technology.<sup>21</sup>

The other important necropolis in this respect is, in my opinion, that of Környe. Here, the Polish scholar Piaskowsky conducted several archaeometallurgical analyzes that revealed a general uniformity in the blacksmith manufacturing procedures within the Carpathian Basin and the eastern Merovingian area, a fact also proving the movements of these craftsmen along and among the frontiers between these neighboring regions.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to the archaeological evidence, anthropology (and the resulting bio-archaeological explanation) also stands for a close interaction between Italy and the Carpathian Basin (and the various incoming populace) during the early medieval period and for a consistent migration of alien population. As for Moos-Burgstall, also in the Italian case a mixed anthropological composition is attested with northern European, along with East European/Mongoloid types. Most of the data originate from central-southern Italy. From the necropolis of Vicen- ne/Campochiaro evidence of the sphenoid cranium can be found and the relatively wide flat face of the individual of graves 46 (about 161 cm) resemble typical Central Asian characteristics. In the grave of this man there were found very similar grave-goods and weapons to those of the horsemen of Grave 33, except for a gold ring of this horsemen, which apparently symbolizes the central role of the buried person within the community. The anthropological data from the study of Germanic necropolises of Pannonia, Rugiland and Italy indicate, however, a certain grade of heterogeneity. Kiszely, already, identified in the individuals from the cemeteries of Pannonia and Rugiland at least fifteen frequent typologies and

---

<sup>21</sup> I. Kovrig, "Contribution," 164; I. Bóna, "Neue Nachbarn," 109; I. Bóna, "Gli Avari," 25-26, 37; G. Rhé and N. Fettich, "Jutas und Öskü, zwei Gräberfelder aus der Völkerwanderungszeit," *ΣΚΛΘΙΚΑ* 4 (1931), Tab. IV, Fig. 12-20; J. Gömöri, "Nemeskér-type iron smelting workshops from the time of Onogur colonization of Pannonia. Excavations in Zamárdi," in J. Gömöri ed., *Traditions and Innovations in the early Medieval Iron Production*, Sopron/Somogyfajs 2000, 149-59; *Idem*, "Az avar kori és X-XI századi vaskohászat régészeti emlékei Somogy megyében," [*Archaeometallurgical site of Somogy county during Avar and early Arpadian period*], *Somogy Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei* 14 (2000), 163-218.

<sup>22</sup> J. Piaskowsky, "Metallkundliche Untersuchungen an Eisengegenständen aus dem Gräberfeld von Környe" *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 26 (1974), 117-30, see particularly 120 ff, 123; A. Salamon and A. Cs. Sós, "Pannonia - Fifth to Ninth Centuries," in A. Lengyel and G. T. B. Randan, eds., *The Archaeology of Roman Pannonia*, Budapest 1980, 407-08; A. Salamon and I. Erdély, *Das völkerwanderungszeitliche Gräberfeld von Környe*, Budapest 1971, 55, 57, 66-67.

others derived from interbreeding with other populations, indicating that the Lombard populations showed the same heterogeneity even before their arrival in Italy. Moreover, during the seventh–eighth centuries, the later phase of the Lombard presence in Italy, there had been already a probable crossbreeding between the Lombards and local populations as confirmed by the archaeological data. Therefore, the mixed character observed in the Germanic populations of some European and Italian necropolises (as we have seen for example in Moss-Burgstall) seems to be also present in the necropolis of Vicenne/Campochiaro, with evidence of frequent crossbreeding between local and Central Asian elements. In addition to this, it is worth mentioning also the lesion in the frontal bone of the individual of Grave no. 115 (M, AM), which could refer to a ritual symbolic trepanation, a specific ethnic phenomenon typical of the Steppe peoples. Moreover, six horsemen have been analyzed and on three of them an anomalous lingual wear was found on the anterior maxillary tooth (from Graves no. 16, 66, 109) that does not correspond to that of the mandibular teeth. This feature has been not observed in case of the two young horsemen (Graves no. 155, 141), probably in relation to their age. This type of wear has been described as LSAMAT (Lingual Surface Attrition Maxillary Anterior Teeth) and as the result of progressive attrition of the lingual surface enamel and even dentine over a long period of time through the introduction of an abrasive material between the upper anterior teeth and the tongue. It is interesting to note that this kind of wear is present in only two other males of the necropolis, thus, possibly indicating the use of a particular substance by some horsemen, not available to the rest of the population. This would suggest the presence of particular cultural habits within portion of the population then buried in Vicenne/Campochiaro. As for the anthropological features, all the analyzed samples showed morphometric heterogeneity (also within horsemen and other males), notwithstanding the fact that some individuals present biological characteristics resembling Central Asian typologies. This suggests some crossbreeding between autochthonous, Germanic and Oriental populations, making it difficult, if not impossible, to associate specific cultural elements to a particular 'racial' group. The general feature (i.e. archaeological and anthropological data) of this necropolis, however, presents particular habits and behavior, as the anomalous lingual wear and the burial of horses together with men of Oriental origin, that could suggest a restricted social and/or ethnic group. Moreover, the evidence of many traumatic and violent events detected on the bones, for sure related to martial activities, apparently confirms that this group had probably military duties.<sup>23</sup> At Piano di San Giovanni by Canosa, Herdonia and S. Giusto as well, among the people buried within these sites, it was possible to attest the presence of foreign population with morphometric character of the cranium resembling that of present day Mongolic populace and, thus, pertaining to a skeletal series that is typical for the archeology of the people of the Steppe such as the

---

<sup>23</sup> M. G. Belcastro and F. Facchini, "Anthropological and Cultural Features of a Skeletal Sample of Horsemen from the Medieval Necropolis of Vicenne-Campochiaro (Molise, Italy)," *Coll. Antropol.* 25:2 (2001), especially 395–396, 398–99.

Huns, Avars, and Bulgars. It is noteworthy that, within the same archaeological contexts, the practice of intentional cranial deformation is also well attested, as it was already for the Germanic burial tradition of Central Europe. Therefore, the finding of this kind of anthropological features in Italy, between fifth–seventh century, is certainly connected to the arrival of people of Central Asiatic origin to Europe. This typology is usually individuated by a short and large cranium (*brachicrania*), with a narrow forehead in relationship with the total width of the cranium (*stenometopia*), and characterized by flat front face (*platopia*), the chicks bones projected towards the outside, within which the front tooth result to be spade like shaped and the wormians bones and the oval windows cannot be seen from the external acoustic *meatus*. Naturally, all these characteristics can be, and in fact usually are, gradually mixed within the population, granted the high rate of mutual interbreeding of human species. From the genetic point of view, it was possible to observe considerable differences between the STR sequences analyzed in the present-day inhabitants of the Apulian region and their medieval ancestors. These results may be justified by the fact that, during the early Middle Ages, there were strong gene flaws from the Germanic and Asian peoples (Goths, Lombards, Avars) that may have conditioned the genome of the native populations. In the subsequent centuries, these gene pools may have been diluted, thus strongly altering the genetic status of the Italian population.<sup>24</sup>

### Conclusion

The case of the stirrup indicates that a profound economic and cultural interaction can be observed within the zone encompassed by the eastern Merovingian area and the Carpathian Basin between the end of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century AD. This situation implied a practical movement of goods and peoples, as attested by both archaeological and anthropological pieces of evidence, which resulted in the given period in the almost complete restructuring of economic systems (material culture) and in the partial alteration of autochthonous genomes of local populations (on a regional scale), following the integration (not always peaceful) of different cultures and ethnic groups.

---

<sup>24</sup> S. Sublimi Saponetti, P. Emanuel and Vito Scattarella, "S. Giusto Paleobiologia di un campione scheletrico tardoantico proveniente dal complesso paleocristiano di San Giusto (Lucera, V-VII secolo d.C.)," *Insulae Diomedeeae* 4 (2005), 325–327; N. Di Nunno, S. Sublimi Saponetti, V. Scattarella, P. Emanuel, S. Lonero Baldassarra, G. Volpe and C. Di Nunno, "DNA Extraction. An Anthropologic Aspect of Bone Remains From Sixth- to Seventh-Century AD Bone Remains," *The American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology* 28. 4 (December 2007), 333–340.

# On Some Eastern Parallels of the Development and Consolidation of the Early Hungarian State

MIHÁLY DOBROVITS



The aim of this paper is to investigate the process by which the early Hungarian state came into existence and consolidated itself. We shall focus on the political processes by which the landtaking Hungarian tribes formed a kind of pre-state, or a "state *in statu nascendi*" (I. Vásáry)<sup>1</sup> and then a really early state. We also intend to pay attention to the role of Christianity, first as a legitimating factor of the power of early Árpádians during the pre-statehood era and later in the process of consolidation of the early state. As the western models and parallels of the formation of the early state in Hungary are known well enough not to be dealt with in detail here, we shall focus instead on the eastern parallels of this process. What we intend to examine are the eastern parallels of the christianization and state founding of the once pagan and (semi-)nomadic Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin.

## *The Eurasian historical background in general*

Although ideas such as comparison between the eastern and western types of the early state occurred infrequently in the past, in current historiography such ideas have become more and more popular. The events at the eastern and western edges of the vast territory of *Barbaricum* are not connected merely by migrations and intermediary trade relations,<sup>2</sup> but sometimes they might have structural parallels. Of course it is not always easy to understand such parallelisms in so many different cultural backgrounds, but some key-words, like *sedentary empires*, *barbaric peripheries*, *frontier relations* etc., can help us to see the most important similar tendencies.<sup>3</sup> Of course these tendencies never became rules as, wanting the geo-

---

<sup>1</sup> I. Vásáry, *Nép és ország a türköknél* [People and Country at the Turks]: Társadalmak és államalakulatok. ed. F. Tőkei. Budapest 1983, 206.

<sup>2</sup> As was already demonstrated, e.g. by G. Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient*, Shanghai 1885, and F. J. Teggart, *China and Rome*, New York 1936.

<sup>3</sup> S. Jagchid and V. Symons, *Peace, War, and Trade along the Great Wall: Nomadic-Chinese Interaction through Two Millennia*, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1989; C. I. Beckwith,

graphical space and other opportunities that the steppe zone could provide,<sup>4</sup> the barbarians of the western hemisphere never formed "shadow empires" along the *limes* of the Empire. Such "shadow empires" could exist only in the steppe zone where the geographical circumstances offered enough space for them to exist.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, not all the Inner Asian nomads formed "shadow empires", and not all the early state formations on the periphery of the Chinese civilization (and other peripheries) were nomads; e.g., the early Tibetans or the early Manchu-Tunguz peoples shared many common features with their nomadic neighbors but were never (at least as the main bulk of their population) nomads.

At the westernmost edge of the great steppe zone three peoples tried to establish a kind of shadow-empire, based on the exploitation of their neighbors by methods both peaceful (trade) and aggressive (raids); the European Huns, the vast complex of peoples that one usually calls the Avars, and on a lesser scale the Early or "landtaking" Hungarians. The fourth people we could mention here, the Danube Bulgarians, followed another pattern, namely that of the Germans in western Europe or the remnants Xiongnu and Xianbei in northern China. They occupied a part of the Byzantine Empire and formed their polity on some substrate of the earlier inhabitants, until they finally lost their original culture.<sup>6</sup> Usually all "shadow empires" shared in one of two possible fates: either acculturation with their sedentary neighbors or final disintegration. Final disintegration constituted a special danger in the Carpathian Basin for albeit it always had strong political connections with the western steppe zone its geographical, and particularly hydrological, environment was not apt at all to sustain a long-lasting nomadic way of life.<sup>7</sup>

---

*The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia: A History of the Struggle for Great Power among Tibetans, Turks, Arabs, and Chinese during the Early Middle Ages*, Princeton NJ 1987; P. B. Golden, "Ethnogenesis on the Tribal Zone: The Shaping of the Türks", *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 16 (2009/2009), 73-112, especially 104-106.

<sup>4</sup> I. Zimonyi, "Az eurázsiai steppe nomádjai és szomszédai," [The Eurasian Steppe-zone and its neighbours] *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis de Attila József Nominatae, Acta Historica* 99 (1995), 65-74.

<sup>5</sup> A. M. Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World*, Cambridge 1984; Jagchid and Dymons, *Peace, War, and Trade along the Great Wall*; Th. J. Barfield, "The Hsiung-nu Imperial Confederacy: Organizations and Foreign Policy," *Journal of Asian Studies* 41 (1981), 45-61; Th. J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China, 221 BC to AD 1757*, Cambridge MA and Oxford 1996. For a critical reexamination of Barfield's theory, see M. Drompp, "Imperial State Formation in Inner Asia: The Early Turkic Empires 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Centuries", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 57 (2005), 101-111.

<sup>6</sup> On north China, see: W. Eberhard, *Das Toba Reich Nord-Chinas*, Leiden 1949; W. Eberhard, *Conquerors and Rulers, Social Forces in Medieval China*, Leiden 1974; P. Corradini, "The Barbarian States in North China", *Central Asiatic Journal* 50 (2006), 163-232.

<sup>7</sup> I. Fodor, "Ecology and nomadic migrations," *Chronica. Annual of the Institute of History, University of Szeged* 7-8 (2007-2008), 77-84.

*Conversions and political relations*

Proselytizing religions played a pivotal role in acculturation (and also legitimating) processes even in the Chinese periphery. Buddhism was introduced into China as a state religion by the Toba Wei (386–534), and, according to Wolfram Eberhard, Buddhism became the ideological background of the barbarian dynasties of northern China.<sup>8</sup> Along with northern China we can mention the role of Buddhism amongst the Ruanruan, which might be a part of a wider process of *imitatio imperii*, fully repudiated by their Chinese (or more precisely *Tabγač*) rivals. We have good evidence of such processes in our Chinese sources, mostly the *Weishu* and the *Beishi*, which even mention that the paternal uncle of Anagui had the name Poluomen (521–524) which is the Chinese Buddhist transcription of Brahman.<sup>9</sup> Although the Second Türk Empire refused it, Buddhism was popular in the First Empire, the rulers of which even tried to introduce it as the state religion.<sup>10</sup> Later the Uyghurs accepted Manichaeism as their imperial religion (763). Besides the personal belief of the Uyghur Böğü Qayan (759–779), the Tibetan interest in Buddhism might also play a role in this option. Buddhism flourished in Tibet from 649 onwards, finally being made state religion in 791. In these turbulent years of Chinese history, Tibet supported the An Lushan rebellion, while the Uyghurs fought on behalf of the legitimate Tang dynasty. The short history of Uyghur Manichaeism in the Ötüken/Mongolian empire shows a pattern typical of the barbarian conversion processes.<sup>11</sup> According to a short fragment which was written down later in the Turfan oasis (already in Uyghur script), the traditional Uyghur aristocracy offered a bitter resistance against the introduction of the new religion and its Sogdian representatives, the *electi* (*dindar-lar*).<sup>12</sup> So the new religion was fully dependent on the ruler's support, who even introduced a new decimal sys-

<sup>8</sup> W. Eberhard, *Conquerors and Rulers*, Leiden 1974, 127, 144, 147–150; L. W. Moses, *The Political Role of Mongol Buddhism*, Indiana University, Uralic and Altaic series 133, Bloomington 1977, 20.

<sup>9</sup> B. Csongor, *Kínai források az ázsiai avarokról*, [Chinese Sources on the Asian Avars] Budapest 1993, 39–40, 104.

<sup>10</sup> S. G. Kljaštornij–V. A. Livšic, "The Sogdian Inscription of Bugut Revised," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 26 (1972) 69–102, A. v Gabain, *Buddhistische Türkenmission*, in I. Schubert–U. Schneider (Hrsg.), *Asiatica. Festschrift Friedrich Welters*. Leipzig 1954, 161–173. Chavannes: Jinagupta (528–605 après J.-C.), *T'oung Pao* 6 (1905), 332–356.

<sup>11</sup> On the general patterns of such conversions, see: A. M. Khazanov, "World Religions in the Eurasian Steppes: Some Regularities of Dissemination," in G. Bethlenfalvy, et al. eds. *Altaic Religious Beliefs and Practices*, Budapest 1992, 197–201, A. M. Khazanov, "The Spread of World Religions in the Medieval Nomadic Societies of the Eurasian Steppes," in M. Gervers and W. Schleppe, *Nomadic Diplomacy, Destruction and Religion from the Pacific to the Adriatic*, Toronto 1994, 11–33.

<sup>12</sup> W. Bang and A. von Gabain, *Türkische Turfan-Texte II: Manichaica II*, Sitzungsberichte der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Kl. Berlin 1929, 411–430, especially 414, lines 8–17; on the decimal system introduced in order to control the newly proselytized Uyghurs, see *ibid.*, 418, lines 91–92.



tem, in order to control the obedience to the new religion. At last the tension broke out in open revolt, in which the ruler was killed by one of his relatives, *Tun baya tarqan*, who set himself on the throne.<sup>13</sup> Manichaeism gained in importance again only after 795, when the influential commander-in-chief from the *Ādiz* tribe, who held the title *el ügäsi*, overthrew the young Qaγans of the *Yaylaqar* clan and set himself on the throne. Although he and his successors accepted the clan name *Yaylaqar*, they also turned to Manichaeism for legitimation. The final compromise between the original *Yaylaqar* dynasty and Manichaeism was made only after 861, on being expelled from the *Ötükan* by the *Yenisei Kirghiz*. On the other hand, the Sogdian Manichaean merchants who converted the Uyghurs also gained influential supporters for their religion. After the collapse of the Uyghur Khaganate in Mongolia, both Manichaeism and Buddhism underwent severe persecution in China.

Analyzing the role of Buddhism in early Tibetan kingship, Giuseppe Tucci supposed that this was a way to reestablish the legitimation of the *Yar-lung* kings of Tibet, whose power earlier was blocked by their sacral role in the *Bön* religion.<sup>14</sup>

Long-distance trade relations, acculturation processes, a search for political equilibrium and maybe a struggle for legitimacy equally played an important role in the conversion to Judaism of the *Khazar Khaganate*.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand religious rivalry also existed in the steppe zone.<sup>16</sup>

### *Case study on the landtaking Hungarians*

Visiting the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (908/913/945–959) Bulcsu and Tormás informed him (or most probably his officials<sup>17</sup>) about the legitimation of the dynasty of the *Árpáds*.<sup>18</sup> They told him that this family was chosen by the

<sup>13</sup> The conflict was finally caused by the Sogdian counselors, who recommended that the ruler should take advantage of the state-mourning in China that followed the death of Emperor Daizong and invade China, C. Mackerras, "The Uighurs," in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, ed. D. Sinor, Cambridge 1990, 318.

<sup>14</sup> G. Tucci, "The Secret Characters of the Kings of Ancient Tibet," *East and West* 6 (1955), 197–205.

<sup>15</sup> P. B. Golden, "The Conversion of the Khazars to Judaism," in P. B. Golden, H. Ben-Shammai and A. Róna-Tas, eds. *The World of the Khazars*, HdO VIII, 17, Leiden and Boston MA 2007, 123–162.

<sup>16</sup> Buddhism vs. Manichaeism, Manichaism (Uyghur) vs. Christianity (Kirghiz, Karluk), Buddhism (Uyghur) vs. Islam (Qarakhanids), Judaism (Khazaria) vs. Islam (Volga Bulgarians).

<sup>17</sup> During formal imperial audiences it was a taboo for the emperor to engage in direct communication with his visitors. Later he could grant private audiences to them, as he did to Liutprand of Cremona, cf. A. Toynbee, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his World*, London 1973, 16.

<sup>18</sup> On the eastern background of the landtaking Hungarians, in English, see: D. Sinor, "The Outlines of Hungarian Prehistory," *Journal of World History* 4 (1958), 513–540. Of the long debates concerning this topic in Hungarian historiography one can mention the follow-

Khagan of the Khazars after the unsuccessful marriage of his daughter with Levedi, the former leader of the Magyars in *Levedia*. The emperor was also informed that the Hungarians who were settled in the Carpathian Basin still had contact with those *Savartoi Asphaloi* who did not migrate to the west together with Árpád's Hungarians who originally also had the ethnonym *Savartoi Asphaloi*, but remained in the east, migrating towards Persia.<sup>19</sup> This emphasis on the Khazarian influence seems somehow strange if one takes into account that the Hungarians had not had direct contact with the rulers of Khazaria for more than fifty years, and they also had another version of their legitimation.<sup>20</sup> In this well-known totemistic legend, a special kind of hawk (in Hungarian *turul* ~ Turkic *toyriř* or *toyruř*) appeared in the dream of his pregnant mother and, causing the flow of a river from her womb, foretold the glorious future of her progeny.<sup>21</sup> The cause

---

ing works (a selected bibliography): Gy. Németh, *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*. [The making of the landtaking Hungarians] Budapest 1930; J. Deér, *Pogány magyarság-keresztény magyarság*. [Pagan Hungarians – Christian Hungarians] Budapest 1939; K. Czeglédy, "A magyarság Dél-Oroszországban," [The Hungarians in Southern Rus] in L. Ligeti, ed., *A magyarság őstörténete*. Budapest 1943 (photomechanically reprinted in 1986), 100–122; Gy. Györffy, *Tanulmányok a magyar állam eredetéről. A nemzetségtől a vármegyéig, a törzstől az orszáig. Kurszán és Kurszán vára*. [Studies on the origins of the Hungarian state] Budapest 1959; K. Czeglédy, "A szavárd kérdés Thúry József előtt és után," [The Savard question before and after József Thúry] *Magyar Nyelv* 55 (1959), 373–385; A. Bartha, *A IX-X. századi magyar társadalom*. [The ninth–tenth-century Hungarian society] Budapest 1968; A. Bartha, "Türk-ősmagyar etnogenetikai kérdések," [Türkic–Ancient Hungarian ethnogenetic questions] in F. Tökei, ed. *Nomád társadalmak és államalakulatok. Kőrösi Csoma Kiskönyvtár 18*. Budapest 1983, 67–79; Gy. Kristó, *Levedi törzsszövetségétől Szent István államáig*. [From the tribe alliance of Levedi to the state of Saint Stephen] Budapest, 1980; J. Szűcs, "'Gentilizmus', A barbár etnikai tudat kérdése, (A középkori nemzeti tudat prehistorikuma)," [Gentilism] in J. Szűcs, *A magyar nemzeti tudat kialakulása*, ed. I. Zimonyi, *Magyar Őstörténeti Könyvtár 3*, Szeged 1993, 9–266.

<sup>19</sup> *Constantinus Porphyrogenitus: De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik, trans. R. J. H. Jenkins, (henceforth: DAI), Washington DC 1985, 170–172 (original); 171–173 (translation); K. Czeglédy, "A keleten maradt magyar töredékek," [The Hungarian fragment that remained in the East] in Ligeti, *A magyarság őstörténete*, 173–176.

<sup>20</sup> Czeglédy originally supposed that the Khazarian connection ended with the Árpád's coming to power, Czeglédy, *A magyarság Dél-Oroszországban*, 121; later he changed his mind, cf. K. Czeglédy, "Árpád és Kurszán (az Árpád-ház megalapításához)," [Arpad and Kurszán (to the foundation of the Hungarian state)] in I. Szatmári and F. Ördög, eds., *Paizs Dezső tudományos emlékülés Zalaegerszegen, A Magyar Nyelvtudományi Társaság Kiadványai 140*, Budapest 1975, parallel edition: *Zalai Tükör 1975/II*), 51, 55.

<sup>21</sup> "In the year of Our Lord's incarnation 918, Ügek, who, as we said above, being the kindred of King Magog became a long time later a most noble prince of Scythia, took to wife in Dentumoger the daughter of Eunedubelian, called Emese, from whom he begot a son, who was named Álmos. But he is called Álmos from a divine event, because when she was pregnant a divine vision appeared to his mother in a dream in the form of a falcon that seemed to come to her and impregnate her and made known to her that from her womb a torrent would come forth and from her loins glorious kings be generated, but they would not multiply in their own land. Because a dream is called *álmom*

may be more clear if one understands that Khazaria was not only a real but also a symbolic power. It was one of the four Sons of the Heaven. According to the Middle Iranian tradition, as it was preserved in the *Fārsnāma*, these four rulers were the Emperor of Rome, Iran, the Turks (or later the King of the Khazars) and China.<sup>22</sup> But with its collapse in 965, this symbolic legitimation through the Khazars went into ruins. So the dynasty needed a new source of legitimation.

Hungarian historiography usually connects the conversion of Géza in 973 with the catastrophic defeat in the Lechfeld, in the vicinity of Augsburg, in 955. Of course, the total destruction of an entire army should be a heavy loss and an impressive lesson. But we are still lacking exact argumentation as to how and why it might cause a conversion and a radical change in political orientation eighteen years later. So we may well assume that, along with other facts, including of course the defeat at the Lechfeld, the collapse of the symbolic protecting power must be decisive factor that led towards this step. Taking into account that the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin had contacts with their relatives in the East, who later moved towards the Caucasus,<sup>23</sup> the information about the collapse of Khazaria must have reached Hungary very quickly. Together with Khazaria collapsed the traditional trade relations that connected the landtaking Hungarians with the steppe zone and, through the Khazarians, trade with the

---

in Hungarian language and his birth was predicted in a dream, so he was called Álmos. Or he was called Álmos, that he is holy, because holy kings and dukes were born of his line." *Anonymous, Notary of King Béla: The Deeds of the Hungarians*, edited, translated and annotated by M. Rady and L. Veszprémy, in *Anonymous and Master Roger, Central European Medieval Texts* vol. 5, Budapest and New York 2010, 13–15. For a German translation see: G. Silagi and L. Veszprémy, eds. *Die „Gesta Hungarorum“ des anonymen Notars*. Ungarns Geschichtschreiber Bd. 4, Sigmaringen 1991, 37, 39. For a possible explanation of this text, cf. Szűcs, "Gentilizmus," 129–132. For another Hungarian legend called the "Hunting of the mysterious deer", see Simonis de Kéza: *Gesta Hungarorum*, ed. and trans. L. Veszprémy and F. Schaer. With a study by Jenő Szűcs, *Central European Medieval Texts* [vol. 1], Budapest and New York 1999), 15, 17; for a possible explanation of this text, see Szűcs, "Gentilizmus," 122–129.

<sup>22</sup> "It was one of the rites of the court of Anūšīrvān that he had set up a golden chair on the right side of his throne, and on the left side and behind it he had set up similar golden chairs. And one of these places was for the ruler of China (*malik-i Šīn*), and the other place was for the ruler of Rome (*malik-i Rūm*), the third place was for the ruler of the Khazars (*malik-i Ḥazar*). Should they happen to come to his court, they would sit on these chairs. He set up these three chairs every year and never removed them. And no one dared to sit on them except for these three persons." (our translation) cf. Ibn Al-Balḥī, *Fārsnāma* (eds. G. Le Strange and R. A. Nicholson, London 1921), 97 (later reprints: London 1965, 2008, and Tih-rān 1385 [1997] with the same pagination); Ibn-i Balḥī: *Fārsnāma* (ed. Waḥīd Dāmḡānī, Tih-rān s.a.), 129–130; A. Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sasanides*. Copenhagen 1971, 411–412; P. B. Golden, "Irano-Turcica: The Khazar Sacral Kingship Revisited," *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 60 (2007), 162; for an older Buddhist variant of this tradition, see P. Pelliot, "La théorie des quatre Fils du Ciel", *T'oung Pao*, 2nd series 22 (1923), 97–125.

<sup>23</sup> DAI 172-174 (original); 173-175 (translation).

Middle East.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, the temporary recovery of the Byzantine power in the Balkans could also have played a role in this change of orientation.<sup>25</sup>

These changes happened in accordance with the rules of building (or rebuilding) a monarchy in the steppe zone. Not only were the traditional tribal settlements changed, but there was a radical change in the system of rule. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who seemingly did not deem them real sovereign rulers, mentions a well known triumvirate of the *kende-gyula-karcha* at the top of the landtaking Hungarians. Our Arabic sources also partly confirm this information.<sup>26</sup> Speaking about the power of the last two, the emperor added that they were “judges”. This amendment might be an allusion to the Judges of Israel in the Old Testament, who ruled and governed their tribes before the establishment of the monarchy.<sup>27</sup> Another possibility is that the emperor wanted to emphasize that these rulers of the landtaking Hungarian tribes were merely officials (Old Turkic *buyruq/birurq* > Hungarian *bíró* “judge”?) of the Khazar Khagan.<sup>28</sup> This latter ex-

- 
- <sup>24</sup> М. И. Артамонов, *История хазар*. Санкт-Петербург 2001, 546–550; Golden, “Khazars,” 108; Golden, *Introduction*, 237; K. A. Brooks, *The Jews of Khazaria*. Lanham 2006, 76–79; I. Zimonyi, “A kazárok szerepe Kelet-Európában,” [The role of the Khazars in Eastern Europe] *Magyar Tudomány* (1996/8), 962–957. In the frame of this short article we cannot discuss the name and origin of the Radharite merchants operating this route.
- <sup>25</sup> F. Makk, “A l’ombre de menace byzantine. Le choix politico-religieux du prince Géza,” *Chronica* 1 (2001), 19–29.
- <sup>26</sup> The Islamic sources make no mention of *karcha* at all, and show the internal structure as much more centralized, still mentioning their close connections with the Khazars, cf. Czeglédy, *A magyarság Dél-Oroszországban*, 105–118; Czeglédy, *Árpád és Kurszán*, 46–48; I. Zimonyi, *Muslimische Quellen über die Ungarn vor der Landnahme. Das ungarische Kapitel der Ġaihānī-Tradition*, Studien zur Geschichte Ungarns, Bd. 9, Herne 2006.
- <sup>27</sup> “Marked progress in Hebrew political thought was made during the period of the judges, the transitional stage between a nomadic life based on tribal organization and the beginnings of the national monarchy. The tribal framework still prevailed and the nomadic spirit, so averse to centralized poer and so fond of unlimited political freedom, still possessed the hearts of the Hebrews.” F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy. Origins and Background*. Dumbarton Oaks Studies IX, Washington DC 1966, 1: 281; on the Byzantine *topoi* behind Constantine’s work cf. Czeglédy, *Árpád és Kurszán*, 54–55; on the Carolingian allusions to the Kingdom of Israel in the Old Testament, see Szűcs, “Gentilizmus,” 98 (with further German literature). cf. also J. Dickinson, *The Medieval Conception of Kingship and some of its Limitations, as developed in the Policraticus of John of Salisbury*. *Speculum* 1 (1926), 310.
- <sup>28</sup> M. Dobrovits, “*Buyruq*. Egy ótörök tisztségnév anatómiája,” [Buyruq: The Background of an Old Turkic Title] *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis. Acta Historica* 112 (2002), 49–61. On the connection of the verbal stems Old Turkic *buyur-* ‘to command’ > Hungarian *bír* ‘to have (sg. at sb.’s disposal)’ see: I. Mándoki Kongur, “Two Hungarian verbs of Turkic origin,” *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 33 (1979), 291–295. cf. also A. Róna-Tas-Á. Berta, *West Old Turkic. Turkic Loanwords in Hungarian*. *Turkologica* Bd. 84. Wiesbaden 2011, 130–133.

planation would fit better into the political context of the steppe zone, but still has many details to clear them up.<sup>29</sup>

With Géza the landscape totally changed. His name, or more probably his title, derives from an Old Turkic title of Indian origin – *yabyu/jabyu*.<sup>30</sup> We can mention that the name or title of his brother, Koppány, is also connected with the well known Old Turkic and Avar title *qapqan/qapqan* (*Capcanus*).<sup>31</sup> We do not hear any more about *karcha*, and the *gyula* became the local ruler of the eastern parts of the country. So we can add that, together with their proselytization, the Árpáds accepted the Old Turkic royal titles, some of which later continued their careers as personal names of many important kings of Hungary.<sup>32</sup> Of course this full Turkization of power did not last long. With Saint Stephen a new age of Hungarian history was begun.

---

<sup>29</sup> A. Márton, "Katonai kíséret és az ótörök *bujruk* tisztségnév viszonya a koraközépkori steppén," *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis. Acta Historica* 106 (1998), 39–45.

<sup>30</sup> K. Czeglédy, "Géza nevünk eredete," [The origin of the name Géza] *Magyar Nyelv* 52 (1956), 325–333.

<sup>31</sup> D. Sinor, "Qapqan," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 86:3–4 (1954), 174–184; G. Clauson, "A Note on Qapqan," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 88:1–2 (1956), 73–77.

<sup>32</sup> Together with these titles one could also mention the name/title Béla < *boyla*.

# *The Ethnonyms Turci, Turchi in the Medieval (western) European Latin Sources*

SZABOLCS POLGÁR



The aim of this paper is to summarize the various pieces of information on the ethnonym *Turci* recorded by western authors in the Latin sources. I attempted to put the available data in chronological order and to answer several questions: how the various messages could be interpreted, are they authentic or not, and how the authors had an access to the information? The paper consists of seven parts: 1) the *Turci* as the Central Asian Kök-Türks, 2) the *Turci* of Aethicus Ister, 3) the *Turci* in the Gesta of Adam of Bremen, 4) the *Turci* as the Hungarians, 5) the *Turci* as Khazars, 6) the *Turci* as Saljuqs and Ottoman Turks, 7) the *Turci* on the medieval maps.

## I.

One of the earliest mention of the Turks in Western Europe is the story of the so-called Fredegar chronicle on the origin of the Franks. The chronicle is an important source of the events of the sixth and seventh centuries. It was compiled by one or two authors and it consists of two parts: the first was compiled around 613, the second in 624. The report on the origin of the Franks is in the second book:

“Tradition confirms that there was a third tribe from the same origin, the Turks, and that when the Franks in their travels and many battles crossed over and entered Europe, a group of them settled in the same place, above the bank of the river Danube between the ocean and Thrace. They elected from their midst a king named Torquotus from whom they got their name ‘Turks’. The Franks, (...) since their numbers were diminished by Torquotus, when settled near the Rhine a small band remained.”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Chronicarum quae dicitur Fredegari scholastici libri IV.* ed. B. Krusch, Monumenta Germaniae Historica (=MGH) Script. Rer. Merov., Hannover 1888. English transl. Cf. Ch. I.

And in the third book is a short passage:

“The remaining group of them, who stayed on the bank of the Danube, elected a king from among themselves named Torcoth, after whom they were called ‘Turks’ and after Francio the others were called ‘Franks’.”<sup>2</sup>

The story of course is a fiction, the Troian origin was important for the demonstration of the glory, nimbus of the Franks. The mention of the Turks, however, is unexpected in this story. The name *Torquotus* at first was identified with the ancient name *Torqatus*, but from the end of the nineteenth century another view arose emphasizing that this name refers to the Inner Asian Turks. There was a view that the name is a deformed variant of *Turxanthos* of the Byzantine sources, that is Turk shad, probably Tardu (ruled from 575 to 603). But this interpretation is not precise. Christopher Beckwith suggested that name *Torquotus* is identical with a form *\*Turkwath* (*Turkwač*) that is ‘Turk ruler’.<sup>3</sup> This etymology seems adequate and may confirm the identification of the Turks of the chronicle with the Inner Asian Turks. The localization of these Turks is, nonetheless, problematic. The term ‘ocean’ reminds of an ancient *topos*, the periphery of the *oikumene*, that is the world. Thrace is probably the so-called later Roman *Thracia diocesis*, and the Danube is unambiguous. That is the territory of the settlement of these Turks is the Danube region and the land east of it. But there is a contradiction. The Turks never conquered the middle or lower Danube region. There are two possible interpretations: 1) The *Fredegar* chronicle has preserved that moment, when the Turkic power almost extended to the lower Danube. This situation can be observed in 584 and 585.<sup>4</sup> 2) The other possible interpretation can be connected with the approach of the Turks of the imperial power. By their idea the Avars in the Danube region were their slaves, who escaped from them. Probably the envoys of the Turks spreaded this view abroad, for example in Constantinople. The Frank envoys of king Dagobert could meet Turks in Constantinople. The pieces of information later were deformed in Burgundia, perhaps by the chroniclers themselves. It was not important because the aim of the author was to compile the story of the origin of the Franks. Nevertheless, the name of the Turks got into the western literature and later rooted into it.<sup>5</sup>

---

Beckwith, “The Frankish Name of the King of the Turks,” *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 15 (2006/2007), 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. I. Beckwith, “The Frankish Name,” 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. I. Beckwith, “The Frankish Name,” 8, E. Ewig: *Le mythe troyen et l’histoire des Francs*. in M. Rouche ed. *Clovis: Histoire et mémoire*. Vol. I. Le baptême de Clovis. Paris 1997, 845–847. doubts: M. Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*. Cambridge (MA), 2008, 50; other identifications: op. cit. 49–50. (Huns, Avars, Torcilings [C. Cahen], Proto-Bulghars [N. Wagner]).

<sup>4</sup> S. Szádeczky-Kardoss, *Avarica. Über die Awarengeschichte und ihre Quellen*. Opuscula Byzantina VIII. Szeged 1986.

<sup>5</sup> A. Eckhardt, “La légende de l’origine troyenne des Turcs,” *Körösi Csoma Archivum* 2 (1932), 422–433.

## II.

There are other sources on the Turks from the period prior to the Crusades, in which the identification of the Turks is doubtful. It is an interesting description on the Turks in the *Cosmographia* of the so-called Aethicus Ister. The identity of the author of this work is debated (he was probably Bishop Virgil of Salzburg, and born in Ireland), the date of the compilation is the eighth century. The sources of Aethicus first of all were the classical authors, such as Pomponius Mela, Plinius maior, Iulius Solinus, but he often borrowed not directly, but by the mediation of Isidorus Hispalensis. Aethicus characterized the Turks as wild, ugly barbarians, and they pursue terrible way of life. They were descendants of Gog and Magog.<sup>6</sup> It is interesting that the author wrote on the Scythians, and in this case he used positive phrases. In the last sentence of the work he attributed to himself Scythian origin. The Turks of Aethicus might be identified with the Khazars. Nevertheless, the name *Turci* has a character of collective term: the people of the barbarian world, the nomads of Western Eurasia. It is a difficult question to point out the source for the name *Turci* in the work of Aethicus. The name could be taken from contemporary sources, because in south Germania were direct pieces of information from Eastern Europe.<sup>7</sup> Or it might be Aethicus who borrowed the term *Turcae* of the classical authors, such as Pomponius Mela or Plinius. This name is a deformed variant of the ethnonym *Iurcae*, which is in the form *Iurkai* in the historical work of Herodotus.<sup>8</sup>

## III.

The Turks are included in the work of Adam of Bremen. They are mentioned two times: once in the enumeration of the peoples of the Baltic region.<sup>9</sup> The second time they are in the description of Eastern Europe, the Turks belong to the peoples, living north of the Black sea (that is "Scythians", the author combined the contemporary information with phrases from classical authors). According to Adam, they were in the vicinity of the Rus.<sup>10</sup> These Turks could be identified with the eastern European nomads of the eleventh century, the Pechenegs, Oghuzes

---

<sup>6</sup> *Die Kosmographie des Aethicus*. Hrsg. O. Prinz, München 1993, 119–120. T. Nótári, *A salzburgi historiográfia kezdetei*. Szegedi Középkortörténeti Könyvtár 23. Szeged 2007, 42–49. (in English: *Bavarian Historiography in Early Medieval Salzburg*. Passau 2010.); T. Nótári, "Az univerzum képe Aethicus Ister Cosmographiájában" [The Universe in the Cosmography of Aethicus Ister] *Belvedere* 17/5–6. (2005), 38–52.

<sup>7</sup> E. g. A. V. Nazarenko, "Ob imeni Rus' v nemeckih istočnikah 9–11 vv." *Voprosy Jazykoznanija* 5 (1980), 53–54; A. V. Nazarenko, "Južnonemeckie zemli v evropejskih svjazjah 9–10 vv." *Srednie Veka* 53. Moskva 1990, 134–135.

<sup>8</sup> *Herodotus, The Histories*. Transl., R. Waterfield, notes, C. Dewald, Oxford 1998, 242. J. Marquart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge*. Leipzig 1903, 55.

<sup>9</sup> B. Schmeidler, ed. *Magistri Adam Bremensis gesta hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*. Editio tertia, SRG in usum scholarum. Hannover–Leipzig 1917, 242 (Lib. IV., cap. XIV.).

<sup>10</sup> Schmeidler, *Magistri Adam*, 245 (Lib. IV. schol. 122.).



(Russians called them *Torci*) or the Cumans.<sup>11</sup> But the *Turci* of this passage of Adam in this case seems to be collective term.

#### IV.

The Hungarians called *Turci* in the work titled "Antapodosis" of Liutprand of Cremona in the tenth century.<sup>12</sup> In 949 and 968 he stayed in Constantinople and had trustworthy information on the neighbors of the Byzantine Empire. In the "Antapodosis" he applied the terms of the Byzantine authors. In another source, the south Italian Bari Chronicle mentioned Turks as allies of the Byzantine Emperor Basileios II in 1077. These Turks could be identified with Hungarians.<sup>13</sup> The use of term *Turci* for the Hungarians was a Byzantine influence. In Byzantium the Hungarians were called *Tourki* or *Oungri*. The latter name was well known in the West, in the western sources the Hungarians were mentioned as *Ungari*, *Hungari*, but the name *Turks* in the meaning of Hungarians was not in use in the Latin West, while the western Muslim sources were mentioned the Hungarians as *Turks* in the tenth and eleventh centuries, for example in the works of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb, al-Bakrī, Ibn Hayyān and al-Maqdisī. Moreover, the name Turk of the Hungarians was known in the Muslim East also. The term was use in connection with the Central Asian Turkic speaking tribes as a collective term. In the geographical work compiled by al-Ġaihānī in the first quarter of the tenth century is mentioned the Hungarians (Mağars) as a people from the Turks. This might have related to the geographical location of the Hungarians in the ninth century, that is they came from the territory east of the Volga river, where was the western periphery of the Turks of the Muslim authors. It reflected the view of the Muslim geographers.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Turci* are Torks (i. e. Oghuzes) of the Russian chronicles, E. g. *Drevnjaja Rus' v svete zarubežnyh istočnikov*. T. IV. Sost., per., komment., A. V. Nazarenko, Moskva 2010, 145, note 133.

<sup>12</sup> J. Becker, ed. *Die Werke Liutprandis von Cremona (Liutprandi opera)*. SRG in usum scholarum. Hannover-Leipzig 1915, 38 (Lib. II., 4.), 50 (Lib. II., 26.).

<sup>13</sup> *Annales Baresens*, MGH scriptorum T. V. ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1844, 53. T. Olajos, "Contingent hongrois au service de Byzance en Italie," in *Les hongrois et l'Europe. Conquête et intégration*, ed. S. Csernus – K. Korompay, Paris-Szeged 1999, 227–228. T. Olajos, "Contribution a l'histoire des rapports entre Constantin Monomaque et le roi André Ier," in G. Printzig – M. Salamon, eds. *Byzanz und Ostmitteleuropa 950–1543*. Wiesbaden 1999, 92–93.

<sup>14</sup> I. Zimonyi, "Why were the Hungarians Referred to as Turks in the Early Muslim Sources?" in *Néptörténet, nyelvtörténet. A 70 éves Róna-Tas András köszöntése*, ed. L. Károly – É. Kincses Nagy, Szeged 2001, 206–209. H. Göckenjan – I. Zimonyi, *Orientalische Berichte über die Völker Osteuropas und Zentralasiens im Mittelalter. Die Ġaihānī-Tradition*. Wiesbaden 2001, 67, n. 81.

## V.

The next characteristic presence of the name *Turci* was also in connection with Byzantium. The Turks were mentioned many times in the historical compilation of Landolfus Sagax (Landolfo Sagace), a Langobard historian in the beginning of the eleventh century. The relevant passages were translated or borrowed from Byzantine sources, and these *Turci* were Central Asian Turks or East European Khazars. Their mentions were in connection with the history of the wars between Byzantium and Persia in the sixth–seventh centuries or that of the wars between the Arabs and the Khazars in the eighth century.<sup>15</sup> The source of Landolfus could be the world chronicle of Theophanes Confessor which was translated into Latin in the ninth century by Anastasius Bibliothecarius. In many western chronicles only two short passages have preserved on the wars of the Turks in the middle of the eighth century (for example Ekkehard of Aura, Sigebert of Gembloux, *Annalista Saxo*, *Auctarium Mellicense* etc.).<sup>16</sup> The first passage dealt with the invasion of the Turks in Armenia, while the second reported the battle of the Turks with the Avars. They were probably copied from Landolf's chronicle but the final source was Anastasius Bibliothecarius.<sup>17</sup> He wrote on the invasion of the Turks in the year seven hundred sixty two and on the war between the Turks and the Avars in the year seven hundred sixty four.<sup>18</sup> This work is a translation of the chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. If we throw a glance at the second passage of the original text of Theophanes, it can be noticed that here are not Avars but Arabs.<sup>19</sup> This passage refers to the war between the Khazars and Arabs in Transcaucasia and on this war have preserved a few reports in the works of Muslim and

---

<sup>15</sup> *Landolfus Sagax, Historia miscella*. ed. F. Eyssenhardt, Berlin 1869, 384, 398–402, 441–442, 450, 520, 523, 546, 548–549.

<sup>16</sup> *Ekkehardi chronicon universale*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1844, 160: A. D. 766. *Turci egressi a Caspiis portis, cum Avaribus bellum inierunt, multique ex utrisque perierunt*. *Chronica domini Sigeberti Gemblacensis monachi*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1844, 333: A. D. 762. *Turci a Caspiis portis erumpentes, Armeniam infestant...*; *Annalista Saxo*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1844, 557. *Auctarium Mellicense (Annales Mellicenses)*, MGH scriptorum T. IX. ed. W. Wattenbach, Hannover 1851, 536. *Auctarium Garstense*, MGH scriptorum, T. IX. ed. W. Wattenbach, Hannover 1851, 563.; cf. *Glossar zur frühmittelalterlichen Geschichte im östlichen Europa*. Serie A Lateinische Namen bis 900. Bd III. Hrsg. F. Kampher, R. Stichel, K. Zernack, Red. R. Ernst, D. Wojtecki, Stuttgart 1989, 75–79.

<sup>17</sup> *Landolfus Sagax, Historia*, 546, 548; *Glossar zur frühmittelalterlichen Geschichte*, Lateinische Namen bis 900. ed. J. Ferluga et al., Wiesbaden 1977, 1: 257.

<sup>18</sup> *Anastasio Bibliothecarii historia ecclesiastica*. Rec. I. Bekker, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae. Bonn 1841, 233, 234; *Glossar zur frühmittelalterlichen Geschichte*, 3: 81.

<sup>19</sup> *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History A. D. 284–813*. tr. C. Mango – R. Scott, Oxford 1997, 602 (A. D. 763/764); I. S. Čičurov, ed. *Vizantijskie istoričeskie sočinenija: "Hronografija" Feofana, "Breviarij" Nikifora*. Moskva 1980, 46 (text), 69 (Russian transl.). *Glossar zur frühmittelalterlichen Geschichte*, Serie B Griechische Namen bis 1025. Red. A. A. Katsanakis, G. Weiß, Stuttgart 1988, 284.

Armenian authors also.<sup>20</sup> The phrase of Anastasius “*cum Avaribus*” is mistaken. The identity the Turks with the Khazars is undeniable, because Anastasius wrote in an other passage that „*Turks who called Khazars*”.<sup>21</sup>

## VI.

There are many western sources on the Turks from the period of the Crusades. These Turks were Saljuqs who conquered large territory of the Middle East in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the eastern part of the Caliphate as well as the eastern part of the Byzantine Empire. The Crusades began in 1096 and from this time onwards many pieces of information arrived from the Middle East. The horizon of the West expanded, the information directly accessed the western authors. The descriptions were often based on the memory of eye-witnesses. There are long and detailed reports on the battles and other events. The ethnonym *Turci* is often mentioned with the names *Sarraceni* or *Arabs*.<sup>22</sup> Apart from these reports there are few information on the history of the Saljuqs. One of them is the chronicle of the bishop of Tyros, William of Tyre. The author wrote on the origin of the Saljuqs, according to him they lived in the North and were nomads in the old times. They wandered and reached Persia. This time came to power Saljuq and conquered Persia.<sup>23</sup>

The accumulation of information on the Turks helped the formation of various theories and combinations on the historical role of the Turks. For example, in the chronicle of Sigbert of Gemblaux the Turks was inserted into the peoples of the

<sup>20</sup> E.g., K. Czeglédy, “Khazar Raids in Transcaucasia in A. D. 762-764,” *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 11 (1960), 75-88.

<sup>21</sup> *Glossar zur frühmittelalterlichen Geschichte*, 3: 79: *Turcos ... , quos Chazaros nuncupant...*

<sup>22</sup> E.g., *Annales Sanctae Columbae senonensis*, MGH scriptorum T. I. ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1826, 106. *Annales elnonenses maiores*, MGH scriptorum T. V. ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1844, 13. *Annales blandinienses*, MGH scriptorum T. V. ed. D. L. Bethmann, Hannover 1844, 27. *Ex florentii wigorniensis historia*, MGH scriptorum T. V. 564. *Hugonis Floriacensis*, MGH scriptorum T. IX. ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1851, 392. *Gesta Roberti Wiscardi*, MGH scriptorum T. IX. ed. 265-266, 286-287, 292. *Leonis Marsicani et Petri Diaconi chronica...*, MGH scriptorum T. VII. ed. W. Wattenbach, Hannover 1846, 766-767. *Annalista Saxo*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1844, 727-731, 735, 741. *Ekkehardi chronicon universale*, MGH scriptorum T. VI., 208-209, 212, 216-217, 219-221, 224, 230. *Chronica domini Sigeberti gemblacensis monachi*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. 364-365, 367, *Anselmi gemblacensis continuatio*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. 375. *Auctarium aquicinense*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. 403, 411, 417, 424, 427, 434. *Sigeberti continuatio praemonstratensis*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. 452-455. *Roberti de monte cronica*, MGH scriptorum T. VI., 486, 504. *Cafari annales*, MGH scriptorum T. XVIII., 12, 40-44, 47. *Annales colonienses maximi*, MGH scriptorum T. XVII. Hannover 1861, 761, 785, 790, 793, 799-800, 802. etc.

<sup>23</sup> Guillelmus Tyrensis, *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis*, Lib. I. c. VII. <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/williamtyre/1.html> [Date of access: 4 September 2011] Meserve, *Empires of Islam...* 51-52.

period of the later Roman Empire, with the Gepids, Alans, and Bulgars.<sup>24</sup> The historical way of the Turks was summarized in the world chronicle of Alberic of Trois-Fontaines in the thirteenth century. The important sources on the Turks were included in this story, which were known in the West from the seventh century onwards. According to Alberic in 763 the Turks came to the Caspian Gates, that is, he copied the phrase of Anastasius Bibliothecarius. At the end of this passage Alberic mentioned that from this time there is no mention on the Turks up to 1059. Indeed the history of the Turks continued in this particular year. It is the story of the origin and rise of the Saljuqs, copied from the chronicle of William of Tyre, and a phrase on the Troian origin of the Turks has been inserted into this story. It means that Alberic combined the different pieces of information in which the name *Turci* was presented. Thus the history of the Turks went back to the ancient time (Troia) and ended in the history of the Saljuqs.<sup>25</sup>

There is a chapter on the origin of the (Ottoman) Turks in the works *Asia and Europa* of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini. He refused the Troian origin of the Turks and his theory is based on the information taken from Aethicus Ister. According to Piccolomini the original homeland of the Turks was in the northern part of the *oikumene*, and they moved to the Caspian region and later into Cappadocia and the southern Pontus region.<sup>26</sup>

The sources on the origin of the Turks were combined with the Hungarians and the Huns. There is a passage in the Montecassino Chronicle on the identification of the Turks and Huns (or Hungarians): "...Soliman king of the people Unni who are called Turks."<sup>27</sup> In the *Auctarium Neuburgense* which is based on the chronicle of Otto of Freising and was interpolated in the thirteenth century is a passage on the Turks, who, according to the author, earlier were called Huns and came from the Caspian Gates. They are the western Huns who are called Hungar-

---

<sup>24</sup> *Chronica domini Sigeberti*, MGH scriptorum T. VI. 302. C.f. *Ex Orderici Vitalis historia ecclesiastica*, MGH scriptorum T. XXVI. Hannover 1882, 17. The Turks are mentioned with the Gepids, Vandals, Goths, Huns and Heruls.

<sup>25</sup> *Chronica Alberici monachi Trium Fontium*, MGH scriptorum T. XXIII. ed. P. Scheffer-Boichorst, Hannover 1874, 791–792.

<sup>26</sup> *Aenae Sylvii Piccolominei postea Pii II. Papae Opera Geographica et Historica*. ed. J. M. Süstermann, Helmstedt 1699. 212–214, 231–233; M. Meserve: Medieval Sources for Renaissance Theories on the Origins of the Ottoman Turks. in: B. Guthmüller and W. Kühlmann (eds.): *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance*. Tübingen 2000, 409–436. M. Meserve: From Samarkand to Scythia: Reinventions of Asia in Renaissance Geography and Political Thought. In: *Pius II. El più expeditivo pontifice. Selected Studies on Aeneas Sylvio Piccolomini (1405–1464)* ed. Z. von Mertels–A. Vanderjagt. Leiden 2003, 13–40. On Sylvius Piccolomini and other authors of the Renaissance: E.g. Cf. Enea Sylvio Piccolomini (Pius II) *Orations* 1. *Audivi* May 11, 1436 Text., transl., intr. notes M. von Cotta-Schönberg. Copenhagen 2011, 34–38. <http://halsh.archives-ouvertes.fr/docs/00/68/31/51/PD>

<sup>27</sup> *Chronica monasterii casiniensis*, MGH scriptorum T. XXXIV. ed. H. Hoffmann, Hannover 1980, 478.

ians and Avars.<sup>28</sup> According to a sixteenth century author, Jean Lemaire de Belges, the Turks were the ancestors of the Huns and the Huns of the Hungarians.<sup>29</sup> It is the theory of the ethnic continuity of the Turks, Huns and Hungarians. These theories are typical results of the way of thinking of the medieval authors. From the end of the fourteenth century appeared the Ottoman Turks in the periphery of Europe, and the chroniclers mentioned them *Turci*, *Turchi*, as earlier the Saljuqs.<sup>30</sup>

## VII.

The ethnonym *Turci* appeared on the medieval maps also. There are a few maps: 1) the Anglo-Saxon Map from the eleventh century. In Asia were the peoples of the gryphons, Gog and Magog and the Turks.<sup>31</sup> 2) The Ebstorf Map (thirteenth century). According to the text the Turks who were descendants Gog and Magog, lived in the island of Taraconta, and they are barbarians, and eat children.<sup>32</sup> 3) The Hereford Map (thirteenth century). Here is also mentioned the island Taraconta and the barbarian way of life of the Turks.<sup>33</sup> These pieces of information, that is the origin from Gog and Magog, the island of Taraconta and the negative characteristic are very similar to the description of Aethicus Ister on the Turks. Aethicus also mentioned the name Taraconta. The localization of the island Taraconta is difficult, it was in the Northern ocean and in the text are mentioned other islands. There is a view that this is the Baltic sea and the name Taraconta is a word of a Baltic Finno-Ugrian language (*Tara* is a name of a God in Estonia, and the *konda* is a suffixum, 'The people of the Tara believers').<sup>34</sup> In this case the name *Turci* in the *gesta* of Adam of Bremen could be clear also. The twofold mention of the Turks could be a compilation. On the basis of Aethicus, the Turks were localized in the North on one hand, and from other sources a second group of the Turks, the nomad Turks were localized on the eastern European steppe on the other.

To sum up, the ethnonym *Turci* came into the West in the seventh century and on one hand it referred to various peoples of Central Asia and Eastern Europe:

<sup>28</sup> *Auctarium neuburgense*, SRG T. 45.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Eckhardt, *La légende de l'origine troyenne des Turcs*, 430–431.

<sup>30</sup> E.g., *Annales mellicenses*, MGH scriptorum T. IX. Hannover 1851, 514, 519–520, 522–523, 525, 527, 529, 531–534. *Continuatio monachorum Sancti Petri*, MGH scriptorum T. IX., 841–842.; *Chronicon elwacense*, MGH scriptorum T. X. Hannover 1852, 43–44, 47–48, 50; *Gesta archiepiscoporum magdeburgensium*, MGH scriptores T. XIV. Hannover 1883, 451, 468, 471, 477; *Annales Sancti Victoris massilienses*, MGH scriptorum T. XXV. Hannover 1880, 7.

<sup>31</sup> S. L. Čekin, *Kartografija hristianskogo srednevekov'ja 8–13 vv.* Moskva 1999, 120.

<sup>32</sup> S. L. Čekin, *Kartografija*, 142.

<sup>33</sup> S. L. Čekin, *Kartografija*, 153.

<sup>34</sup> E. g. U. Sutrop, Taarapita, the Great God of the Oeselians. *Folklore* 26, 49–51. <http://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol26/sutrop.pdf>

the Turks, Khazars, Hungarians, perhaps Pechenegs, Oguzes, Cumans, the Saljuq and later Ottoman Turks and became a collective term, the synonym of the barbarians of the periphery of the world and so became part of various theories on the origin of the peoples on the other hand.

# *Scabbard Accessories Found in a Tomb of the Early Migration Period on Pácin–Szenna-hill<sup>1</sup>*

KATALIN NAGY



The site situated on Pácin–Szenna-hill, in Bodroghöz, Northern-Eastern Hungary, was excavated during the construction of an overflow sill which was to prevent floods along the Tisza River (Fig. 1). The construction work started in November 2005, when a tomb was discovered at the depth of 60 cm while removing the ammunition from the surface. The emergency excavation was carried out by István Ringer. The rescue excavation of the site of the size of 12,800 m<sup>2</sup> was led by



FIGURE 1.

---

<sup>1</sup> I would like to express my thanks to Mária Wolf for ceding a right to publishing of the finds, and I would like to express Mária Wolf's, Ágnes B. Tóth's and Valéria Kulcsár's thanks for their advices. In addition I would like to give thanks to László Haraszti for doing of illustration.

Mária Wolf in the period of 2 May–27 July, 2007. During this excavation 41 houses, 38 ovens, 150 pits as well as 16 cremation tombs have been found. The majority of the objects found at the settlement site and the tombs of cremation rites can be dated to the seventh–ninth centuries. Apart from these, there were also objects to be found from the Age of the Arpad Dynasty at the site.<sup>2</sup>

In November 2005, the bomb-disposal squad observed the tomb to be discussed in this paper; they tampered with the iron sword and its scabbard mouth mounts that were buried next to the deceased (the blade of sword was bent almost in a right angle). The outline of the tomb, as a result of the tampering, was only discerned at the depth of 55 cm during the rescue excavation. The irregular,

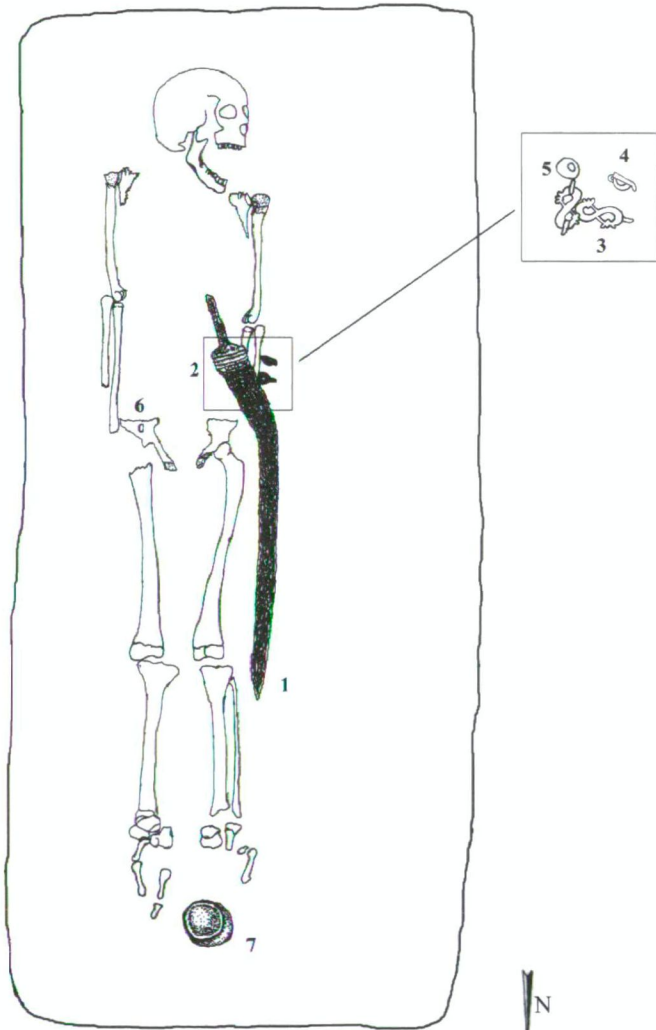


FIGURE 2.

<sup>2</sup> The finds are in the Collection of Archaeology of Herman Ottó Museum.



rectangular grave was 225 cm long 120 cm wide and 60 cm deep. The stretched-out, supine body of South-North orientation was buried with its arms placed tightly next to it and its legs were also placed next to each other very tightly. The artifacts found around the corpse were a long, double-edged iron sword, a silver scabbard mouth, double bronze mounts of a scabbard suspension, a glass sword bead, a silver buckle, a bronze buckle and a small-sized, grey mug (Fig. 2).

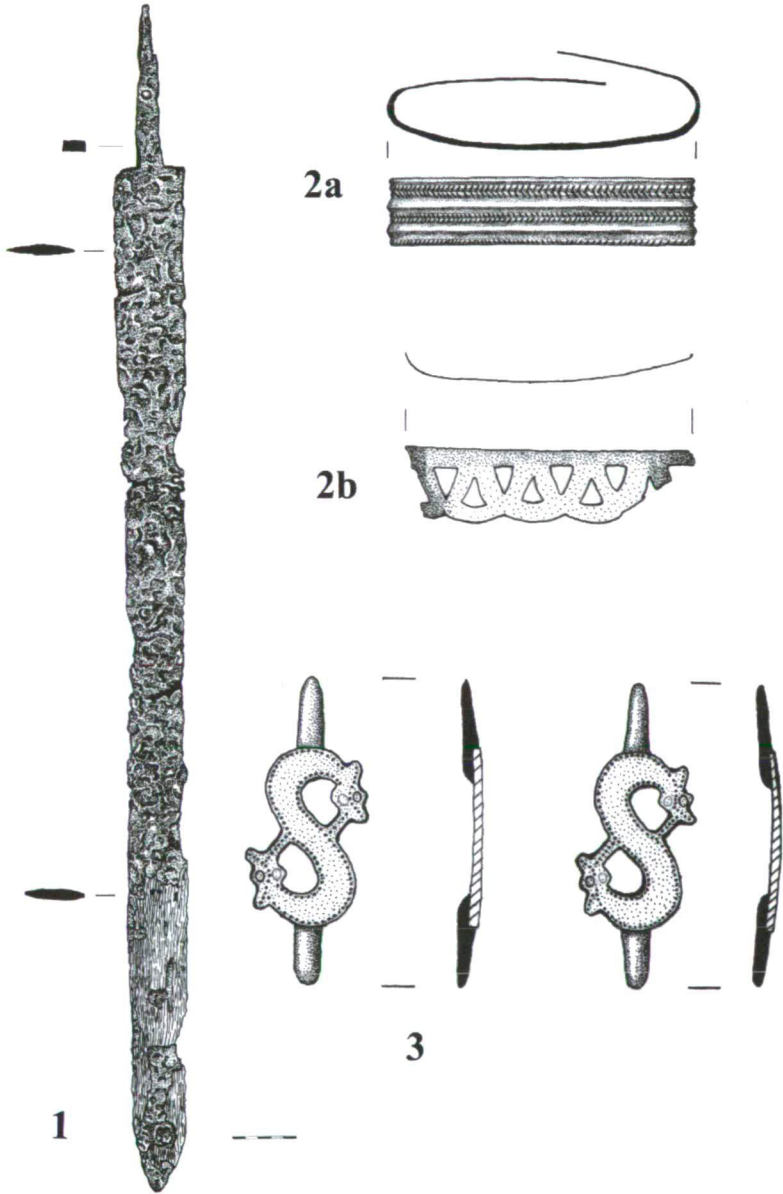
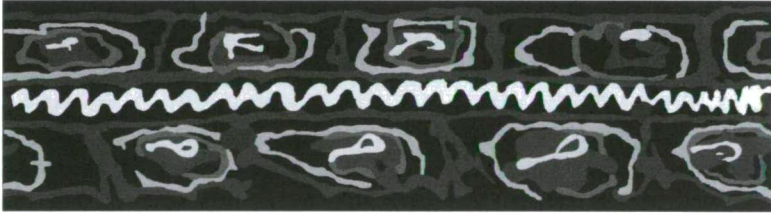
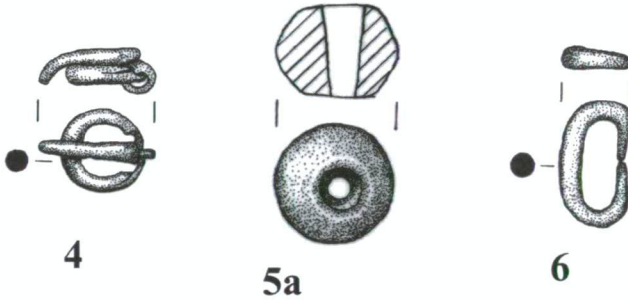
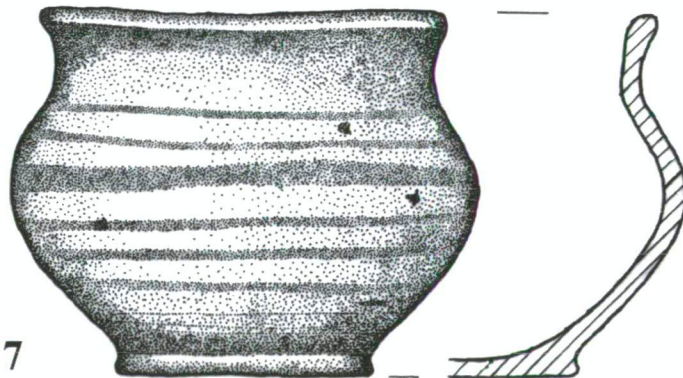


FIGURE 3.

The long, double-edged iron sword lay on the left side of the skeleton, right next to the arm and thigh bones. The stay of the hilt was hammered into one with the blade and there was no cross-guard. On the lower third of the double-edged blade that narrowed gradually, the wooden impression of the scabbard can be seen. The total length of the sword is 93 cm (Fig. 3. 1). The silver scabbard mouth was found on the blade of the iron sword and it consisted of two parts (Fig. 3, 2). The upper part of the silver scabbard mouth entirely covered the crosswise circumference of the scabbard and the ends of the plate were folded onto each other, they were not riveted. Only the front of the upper part of the scabbard mouth is



5b



7

FIGURE 4.

decorated: lengthwise, three parallel wedge-shaped corrugations split the surface into three parts. Between the corrugations, there are three lengthwise ornamentation of herringbone pattern chiselled into the scabbard mouth (Fig. 3, 2a). The lower part of the scabbard mouth was soldered onto the upper part - which did not cover the scabbard all around, it only decorated the front of the scabbard. This lower part is made of silver plate and has an all carved and triangular ornamentation (Fig. 3, 2b). The total width of the scabbard mouth is 2,5 cm. The double bronze mounts of the scabbard suspension can be localized under the upper third of the blade of the sword. The two mountings were placed at right angles to each other in the tomb. The double, cast, bronze mounts of the scabbard suspension are equipped with identical animal heads that lean in opposite directions from a shared central point in an S-shape. A pointillist decoration runs all along the edges of the mounts; the animal heads are meticulously crafted, the lines of the ears, the eyes and the nose can clearly be seen. To this middle part depicting the animals toggles were soldered, which narrowed at the two ends, with the help of which these parts were fixed to the scabbard. The full length of these objects is 6,5 cm and their largest width is 2,2 cm (Fig. 3, 3). A small-sized silver buckle was also found next to the mounts of the scabbard suspension under the upper third of the blade of the sword. The size of the buckle is 1,7×1,7 cm (Fig. 4, 4). The sword bead was found right next to the double mounts of the scabbard suspension. The middle part of the body of the dark blue, biconic, glass bead was decorated with a thread of white rickrack, and a multicolored (red, yellow, white, blue) marbling can be seen on the entire surface of the bead. The height of the bead is 1,9 cm and it is 2,3 cm in diameter (Fig. 4, 5). Above all this, a bronze buckle and a small-sized (Fig. 4, 6), grey mug was found placed at the feet of the body in the tomb (Fig. 4, 7).

During the 2007 rescue excavation of Pácín-Szena-hill, no further skeletal graves were found on the site; despite of this fact, it cannot be stated clearly that it was an isolated burial since the Eastern and the Western sides of the Szena-hill have not been excavated. The South-North orientation of the tomb on Pácín-Szena-hill can be viewed as usual and customary in the Sarmatian territories of the Carpathian Basin.<sup>3</sup> The majority of the tombs of the Tiszadob region<sup>4</sup> - at the

<sup>3</sup> V. Kulcsár, *A kárpát-medencei szarmaták temetkezési szokásai*. [Burial Customs of the Sarmatians in the Carpathian Basin] Múzeumi Füzetek 49. Aszód 1998, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Tiszadob-Sziget (E. Istvánovits, "Das Gräberfeld aus dem 4.-5. Jahrhundert von Tiszadob-Sziget," *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 45 (1993), 139-141); Tiszavalk-Kenderföldek (É. Garam-A. Vaday, "Sarmatische Siedlung und Begräbnisstätte in Tiszavalk," *Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae* (1990), 175-197); Tiszakarád-Inasa (E. Lovász, "Tiszakarád-Inasa," *A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve* 21 (1982), 124; E. Lovász, "Tiszakarád-Inasa," *A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve* 21-23: 1983-1985 (1985), 88; E. Lovász, "A tiszakarádi temető," [The Tiszakarád graveyard] *A Miskolci Herman Ottó Múzeum Közleményei* 24 (1986), 10-11); Mezőszemere-Kismari-fenek (A. Vaday - L. Domboróczki, "Mezőszemere, Kismari-fenek. Spätkaiser-, frühvölkerwanderungszeitliches Gräberfeldsdetail," *Agria* 37 (2001), 8-34); Szihalom-Palmény-Szihalom ("A Váradi, Szihalom-Palmény-tábla. Késő szarmata - kora népván-

Northern edge of the Great Plains – is also of South-North orientation and they can be dated to the late fourth–early fifth centuries. According to Eszter Istvánovits, the population associated with the tombs of the Tiszadob region was probably a newly-immigrated group from the East. Concerning its rituals and assemblage, it reveals an Iranian influence but there are also German aspects to be found.<sup>5</sup> However, during the fifth century, the West-East orientation became dominant one in contrast to the South-North and the North-South ones within the Carpathian Basin.<sup>6</sup> The burial ritual of placing one or two pieces of pottery next to the feet of the deceased is also a typical funerary custom of the tombs of the Tiszadob region as well as the Sarmatian burials of the Carpathian Basin.<sup>7</sup> Just as well, the majority of the burial pits of the tombs of the Tiszadob region are very similar to the tomb of Pácin-Szenna-hill under discussion because they are long and wide.<sup>8</sup> During the rescue excavation, there were no signs of a coffin

---

dorláskori telep és temető a IV.–V. századból,” [Late Sarmatian–early transhumance-age site and graveyard from the fourth–fifth centuries] in *Utak a múltba. Az M3-as autópálya régészeti leletmentései*, ed. P. Raczky, T. Kovács, A. Anders, Budapest 1997, 117), Szihalom–Budaszög (L. Fodor, “Szihalom–Budaszög. Késő szarmata – kora népvándorláskori temető a IV.–V. századból,” [Szihalom–Budaszög. Late Sarmatian–early transhumance-age site and graveyard from the fourth–fifth centuries] in *Utak a múltba. Az M3-as autópálya régészeti leletmentései*, ed. P. Raczky, T. Kovács, A. Anders, Budapest 1997, 121). See also to Tiszadob region: Vaday – Domboróczki, *Mezőszemere, Kismari-fenek*, 110–114.

- <sup>5</sup> E. Istvánovits, “Adatok az Észak-Alföld 4. század végi – 5. század elejei lakosságának etnikai meghatározásához,” [Data to the ethnic reconstruction of the population of the North Plain in the late fourth– early fifth centuries] *A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve – Studia Archaeologica* 4 (1998), 309–311.
- <sup>6</sup> Á. B. Tóth, *Gepidische Siedlungen im Theissgebiet*. Monumenta Germanorum Archaeologica Hungariae 4. Budapest 2006, 287; P. Tomka, “Az árpási 5. századi sír,” [The fifth century grave of Árpás] *Arrabona* 39 (2001), 165, 173; K. Ottományi, “‘Hunkori’ sírok a pátyi temetőben,” [‘Hun-age’ graves in the Páty graveyard] *Archaeológiai Értesítő* 126 (2001), 44–45; M. Nagy, “A hódmezővásárhely-kishomoki gepida temető (elemzés),” [The Hódmezővásárhely–Kishomok Gepid graveyard (an analysis)] *A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve – Studia Archaeologica* 10 (2004), 132; K. Ottományi, “Hunnenzeitliche Gräber in Budakalász und Páty,” *Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae* 2008, 237. There are very few South–North orientation burials in the Gepidic row cemeteries. For example Hódmezővásárhely–Kishomok grave 38. (I. Bóna – M. Nagy, *Gepidische Gräberfelder am Theissgebiet* 1. Monumenta Germanorum Archaeologica Hungariae 1. Budapest 2002, 50–51; Nagy, *A hódmezővásárhely-kishomoki gepida temető (elemzés)*, 132–133); four burials of Viminacium (L. Zotović, “Die gepidische Nekropole bei Viminacium,” *Starinar* 43–44 (1992–1993) (published in 1994), 183).
- <sup>7</sup> Istvánovits, *Adatok az Észak-Alföld 4. század végi – 5. század elejei lakosságának etnikai meghatározásához*, 312; E. Istvánovits, “Néhány gondolat a 4. század végi – 5. század eleji új észak-alföldi leletekről,” [Some thoughts on the new, late fourth-, early fifth-century findings in the North Plain] in *A Kárpát-medence és a steppe*, ed. A. Márton, Magyar Őstörténeti Könyvtár 14, Szeged 2001, 16.
- <sup>8</sup> Istvánovits, *Adatok az Észak-Alföld 4. század végi – 5. század elejei lakosságának etnikai meghatározásához*, 311.

found. Nevertheless, on the basis of the position of the limbs – the arm bones closely placed to the body and the leg bones tightly placed right next to each other – it can be rendered probable that the deceased was covered with matting or linen. In connection with the food and drink providing rituals of the tomb of Pácín-Szenna-hill, we can draw the conclusion only on the basis of the small, grey mug, yet, not even after the levigation of the amount of earth that the mug contained was any trace of food found. The long, double-edged sword and its (scabbard) accessories were not placed where they were generally worn, in the case of the deceased in Pácín-Szenna-hill, instead they were laid down between the left shoulder and the middle of the thighbone. This custom was a frequent phenomenon in the case of the tombs of the fifth–sixth centuries.<sup>9</sup>

The sword of the tomb on Pácín-Szenna-hill can be ranked with the specific type of double-edged, long swords (*spatha*). Swords of similar size without a cross-guard are known from the whole Carpathian Basin, from the fifth–sixth centuries.<sup>10</sup> The upper part of the scabbard mouth of Pácín-Szenna-hill, according to the typology of Wilfried Menghin, can be ranked with the type of Entringen-Sindelfingen. These finds were mostly made of gilded silver or silver and they were decorated with several longitudinal cordoned ornaments.<sup>11</sup> A similar piece (similar to the decoration of the scabbard mouth of Pácín) was found in tomb No. 204 in Finglesham (England), where the space between the longitudinal cordons of the silver plate was decorated with a lineation of short, vertical lines engraved densely next to each other.<sup>12</sup> From the territory of the Carpathian Basin of the early Middle Ages, only a few scabbard mouths are known. Scabbard mouths were only found in territories that were under Gepid control: from Rakovac (Serbia),<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Nagy, *A hódmezővásárhely-kishomoki gepida temető (elemzés)*, 151–152. This incident is noticeable in the burials of the Tiszadob region (Istvánovits, *Adatok az Észak-Alföld 4. század végi – 5. század eleji lakosságának etnikai meghatározásához*, 313).

<sup>10</sup> A. Kiss, “Völkerwanderungszeitliches, germanisches Langschwert von Dunapentele/Dunaújváros,” *Alba Regia* 19 (1981), 145–165; J. Cseh, “Adatok az V–VII. századi gepida emléktárgy egységéhez,” [Data to the unity of the Gepid] *A Szolnok Megyei Múzeumok Évkönyve* 7 (1984–1988) (published in 1990), 38–39; A. Kiss, “Germanen im awarenzeitlichen Karpatenbecken,” in *Awarenforschungen* 2, ed. F. Daim, Wien 1992, 65–66, 97; A. Kiss, *Das awarenzeitlich gepidische Gräberfeld von Kölked-Feketekapu* A. Monographien zur Frühgeschichte und Mittelalterarchäologie 2. Studien zur Archäologie der Awaren 5. Innsbruck 1996, 230; Nagy, *A hódmezővásárhely-kishomoki gepida temető (elemzés)*, 187.

<sup>11</sup> W. Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter. Chronologisch-typologische Untersuchungen zu Langschwertern aus germanischen Gräbern des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* Wissenschaftliche Beibände zum Anzeiger des germanischen Nationalmuseums 1. Nürnberg 1983, 138, 336.

<sup>12</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 222, 336.

<sup>13</sup> D. Csallány, *Archäologische Denkmäler der Gepiden im Mitteldonaubecken (454–589 u. Z.)*. *Archaeologia Hungarica* 38. Budapest 1961, 242; Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 336.

from tomb no. 64 at Szőreg-Téglagyár<sup>14</sup> and from tomb no. 64 at Hódmezővásárhely-Kishomok.<sup>15</sup> Among these finds, the gilded silver specimen of Rakovac bears similar longitudinal cordoned ornamentation as the one of Pácín-Szenna. From the territories of the Carpathian Basin to the West of the Danube, among the sword finds dated to the fifth–sixth centuries, there are only the specimens of Felpéc and Dunapentele/Dunaújváros the scabbard mouths of which are to be mentioned, but they are different from the one of Pácín.<sup>16</sup> The scabbard mouth of the type of Entringen-Sindelfingen is most frequently found in the South-Western Germany of today, some specimens are also known in the Southern part of Scandinavia and the Eastern part of England; its easternmost finding place, however, is Pácín-Szenna. The use of the finds belonging to this type can be dated to the second half of the fifth century and the beginning of the sixth century.<sup>17</sup> Parallels or similarities with the lower part of the scabbard mouth of Pácín-Szenna are not known. Similar decoration, however, is known on piece of harness from Illerup (Denmark).<sup>18</sup>

Wilfried Menghin created two separate groups concerning the double suspension mounts of a scabbard mouth that can be considered a German specificity reflecting Western origin:<sup>19</sup> a specimen with toggles at both ends and the riveted one.<sup>20</sup> The find of Pácín-Szenna belongs to the former one considering these two versions. Menghin further created six types within the group of suspension mounts with toggles, and although, there is not a parallel to be found with the middle part of the finds of Pácín-Szenna, still, considering their material, crafting and ornamentation it is closest to the mounts of the Nydam-Porskaer type. The finds of this type – similarly to the mounts of Pácín – were made of bronze, are flat and their most frequent mode of ornamentation is the pointillist decoration; yet, in contrast to the specimens of Pácín, their middle part was usually made in a geometrical shape. The length of the suspension mounts belonging to this group

<sup>14</sup> Csallány, *Archäologische Denkmäler der Gepiden im Mitteldonaubecken (454–589 u. Z.)*, 161; M. Nagy, Szőreg-Téglagyár, in *Gepidische Gräberfelder im Theissgebiet 2*, ed. I. Bóna, É. Garam, T. Vida, Monumenta Germanorum Archaeologica Hungariae 2, Budapest 2005, 131.

<sup>15</sup> Bóna-Nagy, *Gepidische Gräberfelder am Theissgebiet 1*, 60.

<sup>16</sup> Kiss, *Völkerwanderungszeitliches, germanisches Langschwert von Dunapentele/Dunaújváros*, 148. The scabbard mouth of Felpéc belongs to the type of Högom-Selmeaton, and the scabbard mouth of Dunapentele/Dunaújváros belongs to the type of Samson-Abingdon (Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 138, 333–334).

<sup>17</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 138, 336, 184–222, 11. térkép, W. Menghin, "Schwerter des Goldgriffspathenhorizonts im Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Berlin," *Acta Praehistorica et Archaeologica* 26–27:1994–1995 (1995), 144.

<sup>18</sup> C. Carnap-Bornheim – J. Ilkjær, *Illerup Ådal 7. Die Prachtausrüstungen*. Jutland Archaeological Society Publications 25.7. 1996, Taf. 212.

<sup>19</sup> J. Werner, Zu fränkischen Schwertern des 5. Jahrhunderts, *Germania* 31 (1953), 31; Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 109–111.

<sup>20</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 109–111.

ranges between 6 and 10 cm.<sup>21</sup> The double suspension mounts of a scabbard mouth are considered to be rare findings in the Carpathian Basin. The double suspension mounts were found in the two find places in the Carpathian Basin (Zsitvabesenyő and Epöl). The specimens found in Zsitvabesenyő (Bešeňov, Slovakia) are different from the finds of Pácín concerning their material, their shape as well as their decoration.<sup>22</sup> The specimens found in Epöl-Kőkúti-dűlő I. (Hungary) are similar to the finds of Pácín concerning their material, crafting. But the specimens found in Epöl are different from the finds of Pácín concerning their shape. The finds of Epöl belong to the Nydam-Porskaer type.<sup>23</sup> The suspension mounts found at a site at the Western border of the Carpathian Mountains (Blučina-Cezavy, Czech Republic) also greatly differ from the ones at Pácín-Szena.<sup>24</sup> The mounts of the Nydam-Porskaer type are most frequently excavated in the Southern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula, the Denmark and North-Western Germany; their use can be dated to the fifth century.<sup>25</sup>

The small silver buckle found next to the suspension mounts of the scabbard mouth is of Eastern origin and this type of buckle appeared in the Carpathian Basin with the Hun invasion. This round-shaped, silver buckle with incurved toggle

<sup>21</sup> E. Behmer, *Das zweischneidige Schwert der germanischen Völkerwanderungszeit 1–2*. Stockholm 1939, Table 25. 8., Table 23. 5., Table 28. 7. 8; Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 139, 340–341; Bemmann, *Eine völkerwanderungszeitliche Bestattung aus Epöl, Kom. Esztergom, mit Schwertriemendurchzügen skandinavischer Form*, 220; Wilfried Menghin thought that the forefather of the others double mounts of scabbard suspension belong to the mounts of the Nydam-Porskaer type (Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 111).

<sup>22</sup> T. Kolník, *Römische und germanische Kunst in der Slowakei*. Bratislava 1984, 199, Picture 189; K. Pieta, "Die Völkerwanderungszeit in der Slowakei," in *Germanen, Hunnen und Awaren. Schätze der Völkerwanderungszeit, Die Archäologie des 5. und 6. Jahrhunderts an der mittleren Donau und der östlich-merowingische Reihengräberkreis*. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg 12. Dezember 1987 bis 21. Februar 1988, ed. W. Menghin, T. Springer, E. Wamers, Nürnberg 1987, 404, 415–416; Menghin, "Schwerter des Goldgriffspathenhorizonts im Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Berlin," 165.

<sup>23</sup> J. Bemmann, "Eine völkerwanderungszeitliche Bestattung aus Epöl, Kom. Esztergom, mit Schwertriemendurchzügen skandinavischer Form," in *Miscellanea Romano-Barbarica in honorem septagenarii magistri Ion Ioniță oblata*, ed. V. Mihailescu-Bîrliba, C. Hriban, L. Munteanu, Iași 2006, 217–217; I. Horváth–M. H. Kelemen–I. Toma, *Komárom megye régészeti topográfiaja. Esztergom és a Dorogi járás*. Magyarország Régészeti Topográfiaja 5. Budapest 1979, 74–76.

<sup>24</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 184; T. Tejral, "Mähren im 5. Jahrhundert," in *Germanen, Hunnen und Awaren. Schätze der Völkerwanderungszeit, Die Archäologie des 5. und 6. Jahrhunderts an der mittleren Donau und der östlich-merowingische Reihengräberkreis*. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg 12. Dezember 1987 bis 21. Februar 1988. ed. W. Menghin, T. Springer, E. Wamers, Nürnberg 1987, 354, 362, 374–375; Menghin, *Schwerter des Goldgriffspathenhorizonts im Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Berlin*, 164–165.

<sup>25</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 340, Map 13; Bemmann, *Eine völkerwanderungszeitliche Bestattung aus Epöl, Kom. Esztergom, mit Schwertriemendurchzügen skandinavischer Form*, 220, 224.

can typically be considered a form belonging to the time of the Huns that was not solely worn by the Huns but it was widely-used. Buckles of this type were still used after the end of the Hunnic Empire.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, we can draw conclusions concerning the construction of the scabbard found in the tomb of Pácin-Szena-hill on the basis of: the scabbard mouth, the double suspension mounts, and the wooden impression on the lower third of the blade and the small-sized silver buckle. The suspension mounts were always fastened in pairs under the scabbard mouth, onto the upper third of the scabbard.<sup>27</sup> It can be stated on the basis of Western European parallels that the toggles at both ends of these mounts were inserted through narrow openings between the two layers of the scabbard: the outer cover made of leather while the inner one was made of wood; in addition, its suspension belt was fastened all the way under the middle part of the suspension mounts. Hence, the remaining free space between the two toggles in the middle part provided the maximum possible width of the suspension belt. This made possible only a relatively thin width for the belt (0,5 and 2 cm).<sup>28</sup> Thus, the width of the suspension belt of the suspension mounts of Pácin could not be more than 2,1 cm. However, if the suspension mounts had merely been fastened this way, without riveting, they would have not been able to hold the weapon. Quite probably, the suspension belt was riveted or made into a loop crosswise on the back side of the scabbard in order to relieve the suspension mounts; this way, its main function was to stop the belt of the sword from sliding.<sup>29</sup> The small-sized silver buckle found next to the double suspension mounts, due to its position, probably belonged to the suspension belt, which was pinned down by the suspension mounts, or maybe, it was part of the lower suspension belt of the scabbard.

The use of the sword bead with its Eastern, namely Iranian origin, appeared with the Hunnic Invasion in Central and Western Europe, and even after the end of the Hunnic Empire it was widely-used.<sup>30</sup> Although, on the basis of the find-

---

<sup>26</sup> A. Alföldi, "Leleték a hun korszakból és etnikai szétválasztásuk," *Archaeologia Hungarica* 9 (1932), 61–63; I. Bóna, *A hunok és nagy királyaik*. [The Huns and their great kings] Budapest 1993, 90, Fig. 39; Ottományi, "Hunkori' sírok a pátyi temetőben, 55–57. The buckle of Pácin-Szena-hill belong to the type of II.2/a of Zaszeckaja's typology (И. П. Засецкая, *Культура кочевников южнорусских степей в гуннскую эпоху (конец IV – V. вв.)*. Санкт-Петербург 1994, 87, Figure 19b. 18.

<sup>27</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 102.

<sup>28</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 102–104.

<sup>29</sup> H. Ament, *Fränkische Adelsgräber von Flonheim*. Germanische Denkmäler der Völkerwanderungszeit. Die Fränkischen Altertümer des Rheinlandes 5. Berlin 1970, 57–61; Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 104.

<sup>30</sup> J. Werner, *Beiträge zur Archaeologie des Attila-Reiches*. Die Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaft. Abhandlungen. A Philosophische-philologische und Historische Klasse 38. München 1956, 27; Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 143–144; B. Anke, *Studien zur reiternomadischen Kultur des 4. bis 5. Jahrhunderts* 1–2. Beiträge zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte Mitteleuropas 8. Weissbach 1998, 99–100; B. Anke, "Kulturelle Verbindungen zwischen den Nordpontischen Steppengebieten und Skandinavien in der



circumstances, it is evident that they belonged to the swords, their function and role are not obvious.<sup>31</sup> Beads of this type were made of various kinds of materials; there are known specimens made of amber, rock crystal, chalcedony, glass, cornelian and limestone, as well. During the time of the Hunnic Empire, beads made of glass were rare. However during the early Merovingian period, the glass beads became more frequent type of finds in Western Europe.<sup>32</sup> The double conic shape found in relation to the specimen of Pácín-Szenna either made of glass or of any other material is very rare in the case of beads.<sup>33</sup> Both modes of decoration that are typical in the case of glass sword beads (thread inlay, marbling) can be seen on the bead of Pácín-Szenna. The thread inlay of wavy line or rickrack pattern was very frequent during the early Merovingian period.<sup>34</sup> The greatest amount of specimens of this type of object made of glass originates from England, and similar finds in the present-day North France, Belgium, South-Western Germany and Rhine-Hessen are known.<sup>35</sup> In the Carpathian Basin, however, the use of glass beads as sword beads was still not typical, not even after the end of the Hunnic Empire.<sup>36</sup> Within Europe, the use of glass sword beads was most frequent primar-

---

römischen Kaiser- und Völkerwanderungszeit aufgrund archäologischer Quellen," in *Kontakte zwischen Iran, Byzanz und der Steppe im 6.-7. Jahrhundert*, ed. Cs. Bálint, *Varia Archaeologica* 9, Budapest-Napoli-Roma 2000, 87-97, 88; H. Schwerin von Krosigk, "Über 'Magische Schwertperlen' bei Sarmaten, Alanen und Abchasen," *Prähistorische Zeitschrift* 80:1 (2005), 132.

- <sup>31</sup> Werner, *Beiträge zur Archaeologie des Attila-Reiches*, 31-35; Bóna, *A hunok és nagy királyai*, 165; Anke, *Studien zur reiternomadischen Kultur des 4. bis 5. Jahrhunderts* 1-2, 99-100; С. И. Безуглов, *Воинское позднесарматское погребение близ Азова*, В: *Историко-археологические исследования в Азове и на Нижнем Дону в 1994 г.*, Ред. В. Я. Кияшко, Азов 1997, 135; С. И. Безуглов, *Позднесарматские мечи (по материалам Полонья)*, В: *Сарматы и их соседи на Дону. Материалы и исследования по археологии Дона*, Ред. Ю. К. Гугуев, Ростов-на-Дону 2000, 172.
- <sup>32</sup> Werner, *Beiträge zur Archaeologie des Attila-Reiches*, 35-36; Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 43-144, 355-357.
- <sup>33</sup> For example there are the double conic shape beads in Karden-St. Kastor grave 71. (Germany) (Anke, *Studien zur reiternomadischen Kultur des 4. bis 5. Jahrhunderts* 1-2, 113), and Hammelburg (Germany) (Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 196). The shape of sword beads usually are cylinder, barrel and disk (Werner, *Beiträge zur Archaeologie des Attila-Reiches*, 35-36; Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 143-144, 355-357; Bóna, *A hunok és nagy királyai*, 165).
- <sup>34</sup> V. Evison, *The Dover Ring-sword and Other Sword-rings and Beads*, *Archaeologia or Miscellaneous Tracts relating to Antiquity* 101 (1967), 81-84; Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 142-143; Anke, *Studien zur reiternomadischen Kultur des 4. bis 5. Jahrhunderts* 1-2, 106-107.
- <sup>35</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 143-144, 355-357.
- <sup>36</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, Map 19. In the Gepidic row cemeteries primarily there are limestone beads (Bóna -Nagy, *Gepidische Gräberfelder am Theissgebiet* 1, 213; Nagy, *A hódmezővásárhely-kishomoki gepida temető (elemzés)*, 152, 187; Nagy, *Szöreg-Téglagyár*, 126).

ily in the second half of the fifth century, A.D. and at the beginning of the sixth century.<sup>37</sup>

The ring foot of the small-sized, grey mug of Pácin-Szenna-hill was a frequent phenomenon during the late Sarmatian and Hun Period, however, the use of this type of pottery is not typical from the middle third of the fifth century on.<sup>38</sup>

On the basis of the burial rituals of the tomb excavated on Pácin-Szenna-hill, it can be stated that it bears strong resemblance to the ones in the Tiszadob region (South-North orientation, placing one or two pieces of pottery next to the feet of the deceased, long and wide burial pits). On the assemblage of the tomb in question a double influence can be detected. The round-shaped, silver buckles with incurved toggle as well as the sword beads appeared in the Carpathian Basin with the invasion of the Huns. The silver buckle of the tomb of Pácin can be viewed as typical during the time of the Huns which was widely-used even after the end of the Hunnic Empire. However, the use of glass beads as sword beads became more frequent only after the end of the Hunnic Empire, yet, in the Carpathian Basin, this type of object is not characteristic, not even during this period. In addition, on the scabbard accessories of the double-edged sword, a German, early Merovingian influence can be seen. The silver scabbard mouth adorned by longitudinal cordoned ornaments as well as the double mounts of the scabbard suspension can be dated to the second half of the fifth century. This latter type of object was not a frequent find in the Carpathian Basin. The finds of Zsitvabesenyő (Bešeňov, Slovakia) are entirely different from the find of Pácin concerning its material, its crafting and its ornamentation, as well. The finds of Epöl are similar to the finds of Pácin concerning their material, crafting and ornamentation. The mounts of Epöl belongs to the Nydam-Porskaer type. The double suspension mounts of Pácin-Szenna are closest to the Nydam-Porskaer type. In addition, it can be claimed that the use of the small-sized, ring-footed mug found at the feet of the skeleton is not typical after the middle third of the fifth century. Thus, in spite of the fact that the tomb of Pácin bears strong resemblance to the ones in the Tiszadob region of the late fourth- to early fifth century concerning its burial rituals, on the basis of the assemblage, it can be dated later. Primarily on the basis of the scabbard accessories of the sword (scabbard mouth, double suspension mounts), the tomb of Pácin-Szenna-hill cannot be dated earlier than the end of the middle third of the fifth century.

---

<sup>37</sup> Menghin, *Das Schwert im frühen Mittelalter*, 142-143.

<sup>38</sup> Tóth, *Gepidische Siedlungen im Theissgebiet*, 107.

# *The Origin of the Cumans in the Russian Primary Chronicle\**

SZILVIA KOVÁCS



On various occasions civilized people have found themselves living side by side with peoples at a different level of social and cultural development. In the Middle Ages the members of Christian civilization were accustomed to compare themselves with these barbarian neighbours, whom they viewed with varying degrees of disdain, suspicion and fear. The medievalist Robert Bartlett suggests that, for Latin Christians, the world could be divided into three concentric circles. In the middle was their own world which was familiar. Beyond that there was a second ring, i.e., the barbarian world. That circle included Christian peoples like the Slavic races, who lived on a lower level of cultural, technological and economic development.<sup>1</sup> It is important to mention that there were relations between these two worlds. But in the third ring lay a stranger world, where (in Bartlett's words) "the principles of order dissolve and all our fears, fantasies, and projections become real". That world is full of wonderful, strange and terrible monsters. The writers of this period, who had no direct experience of the outer world, in consequence placed vague geographical names like "India" and "Scythia" in this third ring.<sup>2</sup>

In the second half of the eleventh century there appeared in Eastern Europe a new, unknown people, the Turkic-speaking Cumans. To explain the devastation of the Rus' by this hitherto unknown people, the Russian chroniclers resorted to the Scriptures and to apocalyptic prophecy, notably the seventh-century Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius.<sup>3</sup> The Cumans came from the outermost circle, the alien world of fantasy and terror, to the second ring, the world of barbarism.

---

\* The study was supported by OTKA Grant no. 68762.

<sup>1</sup> According to the medieval English and French writers, the Christian Celts and Slavic people are included in this circle. P. Jackson, "Medieval Christendom's Encounter with the Alien," *Historical Research* 76/186 (November 2001), 347. On the alterations in the concept of barbarian in Middle Ages, see W. R. Jones, "The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13 (1971) 367-407.

<sup>2</sup> R. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales 1146-1223*. Oxford 1982, 174-175.

<sup>3</sup> The Apocalypse was originally attributed to Methodius of Patara, a martyred bishop who died in the early fourth century. It was actually composed in the seventh century. The real author is unknown, but the original was written in Syriac in the wake of the

The origin of the Cumans traditionally has been reconstructed on the basis of the account of the Arabian writer al-Marwazi.<sup>4</sup> However, there is also a passage in the Russian Primary Chronicle with a description of the Cumans' origin.<sup>5</sup> Before analysing that section I will present and discuss those parts of the Russian Primary Chronicle in which there is information about the Cumans' customs,

---

Islamic conquests. It was translated into Greek, Latin and Slavic languages and represented a Byzantine apocalyptic tradition that continued to exercise an important influence on both Western and Eastern Christian thought in the Middle Ages. Moreover in the early nineteenth century many credulous Russian persons looked upon Napoleon as the Antichrist, and sought in his invasion the fulfilment of the prophecies of Methodius. (Н. С. Тихонравов, "Отреченныя книги древней России," in *Сочинения Николая Саввича Тихонравова*. Москва, 1898, 68). The Syriac title of this apocalyptic work was "The Discourse which was composed by the Blessed Mar Methodius, Bishop and Martyr, about the Succession of Kings and about the End Times" (M. Dickens, "Turkâyê: Turkic Peoples in Syriac Literature Prior to the Seljüks". Dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. University of Cambridge, 2008.) The original Syriac text was translated into Greek and Latin in the Middle Ages. From the Greek variants were made the Slavic translations. For the Latin text, see E. Sackur, *Sybillinische Texte und Forschungen*. Halle, 1898, 59-96. The critical edition of the Greek text with the Old Slavic and Russian translation and with a short Latin text may be found in В. М. Истрин, *Откровение Мефодія Патарского и апокрифическія виденія Даниила в византийской и славяно-русской литературах*. Москва, 1897. In the twentieth century Nau was the first to recognize that the Apocalypse was written originally in Syriac (F. Nau, "Révélation et légendes. Méthodius - Clément - Andronicus," *Journal Asiatique* 11:9 (1917), 415-471). Details and some other important information about the work and its writer in Hungarian could be found in M. Kmoskó, *Szír írók a steppe népeiről*. [Syriac writers about the people of the steppe] Magyar Őstörténeti Könyvtár 20, ed. Sz. Felföldi, Budapest 2004, 38-46, 94-96. (Unfortunately the section quoted by the Russian chronicler a propos of the Cumans is not translated in Kmoskó's Hungarian work). Kmoskó's contributions to the study of the Apocalypse are important. He called attention to the complete Syriac text in the Vatican MS, he stated that original language of the work was Syriac and he suggested that the author of the Apocalypse was a Melkite Christian, and his work has Persian origin. M. Kmoskó, "Das Rätsel des Pseudo-Methodius," *Byzantion* 6 (1931) 273-296. On the relationship between the Greek and Old Russian texts and the section in the Russian Primary Chronicle, see: S. H. Cross, "The Earliest Allusion in Slavic Literature to the Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius," *Speculum* 4:3 (1929), 329-339. For the English translation of the Syriac text, see P. J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*. Ed. with an introduction Dorothy de F. Abrahamse, Berkeley CA, Los Angeles and London, 1985, 36-51.

<sup>4</sup> Sharaf al-Zamān Tāhir Marwāzī on China, the Turks and India. Arabic text (circa A.D. 1120) with an English translation and commentary by V. Minorsky. London 1942, 29-30; H. Göckenjan and I. Zimonyi, *Orientalische Berichte über die Völker Osteuropas und Zentralasiens des Mittelalter*. Die Čayhānī-Tradition, Wiesbaden 2001, 244-246.

<sup>5</sup> *Повесть временных лет. По Лаврентьевской летописи 1377 г.* Подготовка текста, перевод, статьи и комментарии Д. С. Лихачева, (henceforth: PVL) Под редак. В. П. Адриановой-Перец. Санкт-Петербург, 2000<sup>3</sup>, 98, 236; *The Russian Primary Chronicle. Laurentian Text*. Trans. and ed. S. H. Cross and O. P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, Cambridge 1953, 184.

their first appearance and first attack, the troubles caused by their raids, and where those problems are explained in an eschatological context. Finally, I will demonstrate that despite the apocalyptic explanations the Cumans did not have any eschatological significance for the writer of the Chronicle. Before anything else, it must be mentioned that the ethnonym *Cuman* was loan-translated into Eastern Slavic as *Polovcy*, so the Cumans appear as *Polovcy* in the Chronicle.

Let us begin with the description of the customs of the Cumans. According to this: "Just so, even in our day, the Polovcians maintain the customs of their ancestors in the shedding of blood and in glorifying themselves for such deeds, as well as in eating every dead or unclean thing, even hamsters and marmots. They marry their mothers-in-law [*i.e.* stepmothers – Sz. K.] and their sisters-in-law, and observe other usages of their ancestors."<sup>6</sup> The passage does not contain much concrete information about the Cumans. In connection with most of pagan, barbaric peoples similar descriptions can be found in contemporary sources. The medieval writers describe the eating habits of pagan, non-Christian people in terms of them eating all kinds of unclean animals. Obviously, these descriptions have biblical antecedents, the prohibition of eating unclean animals appears in the Torah.<sup>7</sup> This section may be based upon the Pseudo-Methodius, who wrote about the unclean peoples shut in the mountain by Alexander the Great: "they ate the vermin of the earth, mice and dogs and kittens".<sup>8</sup> The last sentence of the section mentioned above may refer to levirate marriage customs, but a closer examination of the context shows that this part of the Chronicle is based upon a pagan-Christian opposition.

The chronicler mentions only the fact that the Cumans made their first appearance in the Dnieper region in 1054 or 1055: "In the same year, Bolush advanced with his Polovcians, but Vsevolod made peace with them, and they returned whence they had come".<sup>9</sup> Vsevolod is Vsevolod Yaroslavič, who was prince of Pereyaslavl' at that time (1054–1073). Later he became prince of Černigov (1073–1078) and Grand Prince of Kiev (1078–1093).

The Cumans reappear as invaders on the pages of the Russian Primary Chronicle in the year 1061 when they attack the Rus' for the first time. According to the source, "The Polovcians invaded Rus' to make war for the first time. On February 2, Vsevolod went forth against them. When they met in battle, the Polovcians defeated Vsevolod, but after the combat they retired. This was the first evil done by these pagan and godless foes. Their prince was Iskal."<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> PVL 11, 147; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 58.

<sup>7</sup> Leviticus 11.5; Deuteronomy 14.5.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic*, 49. It should be noted that the meat of the ground-squirrel was consumed in the Ukrainian plain and on the territory of Hungary and Romania. See "Űrgeöntés," in *Magyar néprajzi lexikon*, <http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02115/html/5-1055.html> (accessed February 8, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> PVL 70, 208; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 143.

<sup>10</sup> PVL 71, 208; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 143.

Although the name of the Cumans/Polovcians is not used, in the year 1065 our source mentions barbarian attacks against the land of Rus. Presumably these barbarians were the Cumans. According to the chronicler, who in this passage recounts an episode in the first person, strange events occurred:

*"At the time, there was a portent in the west in the form of an exceedingly large star with bloody rays, which rose out of the west after sunset. It was visible for a week and appeared with no good presage. Much internal strife occurred thereafter, as well as many barbarian incursions into the land of Rus', for this star appeared as if it were made of blood, and therefore portended bloodshed.*

*At this time, a child was cast into Setoml'<sup>11</sup>. [...] it was malformed; indeed, it had its privates upon its face, and for reasons of modesty no further account need be given regarding it.*

*Somewhat before this moment, the sun also suffered alteration, and instead of being bright, became rather like the moon."<sup>12</sup>*

The star, which "appeared as if it were made of blood", the child, who "had its privates upon its face" and the Sun which was like the Moon were portents. We do not know when the historical events recorded in this part of the Chronicle occurred exactly. The "portent in the west", according to Vyssotsky, has "the same appearance of Halley's comet which is associated with the Norman invasion of England" in 1066.<sup>13</sup> The Sun like the Moon refers to a partial solar eclipse that occurred on 19 April 1064.<sup>14</sup> In my opinion, the narrator emphasizes the occurrence of evil with the accumulation of these unfavorable signs, as the chronicler himself wrote: "Such signs are [...] of evil significance, presaging the appearance of war, famine, or death".<sup>15</sup>

The next Cuman campaign to the land of Rus, which occurred in 1068, appears in the Chronicle as an attack that was God's punishment for the sins of the Christians:

---

<sup>11</sup> Setoml' was a small river near Kiev which formerly flowed into the Počajna was. The Počajna is a tributary of the river Dnieper.

<sup>12</sup> PVL 71, 209; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 144.

<sup>13</sup> On the identification of the comet, see A. N. Vyssotsky, "Astronomical Records in the Russian Chronicles from 1000 to 1600 A.D. (as collected by D. O. Sviatsky)," *Historical Notes and Papers* 22 (1949), 33; W. W. Dodd and B. E. Schaefer, "An Introduction to Astronomical Events Recorded in the Russian Chronicles," *The Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada* 9/6 (697) (2002) 236-249. On the astronomical records in the Russian Chronicles, see <http://hbar.phys.msu.ru/gorm/atext/russian.htm>. We have some other written accounts of the appearance of Halley's Comet in A.D. 1066, and in the Bayeux tapestry can be found a pictorial record of the comet.

<sup>14</sup> Vyssotsky, *Astronomical Records*, 7; Dodd and Schaefer, *An Introduction*, 237.

<sup>15</sup> PVL 72, 209; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 145. In order to support his statement the chronicler culled some other portents from Georgius Hamartolus (PVL 72, 209; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 145).

"6576 (1068). A multitude of those nomads known as the Polovcians attacked the land of Rus' [...] but since God had let loose the pagans upon us because of our transgressions, the Russian princess fled and the Polovcians were victorious.

God in his wrath causes foreigners to attack a nation, and then, when its inhabitants are thus crushed by the invaders, they remember God. Intestine strife is incited by the craft of the evil."<sup>16</sup>

The chronicler in this passage quotes from the Bible (Joel, Amos, Isaiah, Malachi and Proverbs) and from the Sermon on Divine Chastisements.<sup>17</sup> With these accounts he tries to warn the Rurikid princes, who fought against each other for power. The explication of these extracts can be read later, whereas after the Rurikids' defeat by the Cuman forces in 1068 at the Battle of the Alta River an uprising took place in Kiev, bringing Vseslav of Polotsk to power.<sup>18</sup>

Hereafter, the Cumans appear more frequently on the pages of the *Chronicle*. Sometimes they raided the land of Rus, but they also supported the Rurikid princes who fought each other. The next interesting information can be read under the year 1092:

"6600 (1092). An extraordinary event occurred at Polotsk. At night there was heard a clatter and groaning in the streets, and *demons ran about like men*. [...] The demons later began to appear on horseback during the day. They were not visible themselves but the hoofs of their horses could be seen. Thus they did injury to the people of Polotsk and the vicinity, so that it was commonly said that ghosts were killing the people of Polotsk. [...] At this time, a *sign appeared in the heavens like a huge circle* in the midst of the sky. There was a drought in this year, so that the earth was burned over, and many pine forests and peat-bogs were consumed. There were many portents in various localities, and incursions of the Polovcians were reported from all quarters."<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, in addition to the Cuman attack, the chronicler reports a number of portents such as the appearance of demons and drought. According to the popular belief of the eastern Slavs, the plague mentioned below in the *Chronicle* is the manifestation of the activities of the diabolic spirits. The drought and the epidem-

<sup>16</sup> PVL 73, 210; Cross and Sherbovitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 146.

<sup>17</sup> This Sermon is attributed to Theodosius (Феодосий Печерский), who was one of the founders of the Kiev Monastery of the Caves (Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 265).

<sup>18</sup> S. Franklin and J. Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus 750-1200*, London and New York 1996, 253; M. Font, *Oroszország, Ukrajna, Rusz. Fejezetek a keleti szlávok történetéből* [Russia, Ukraine, Rus'. Chapters from the history of East Slavic People] Pécs 1995, 46.

<sup>19</sup> PVL 91, 229; Cross and Sherbovitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 173-174.

ic may well have been related.<sup>20</sup> There is another scientific explanation. According to this interpretation the devils that were invisible and injured the peoples and hoofs of their horses “were a broken meteor that scattered many fragments over Polotsk”.<sup>21</sup> The “huge circle in the midst of the sky” could be an atmospheric halo around the sun. There was a guest star reported in the east in Orion on January 8, 1092.<sup>22</sup>

When describing the Cuman invasion in 1093, the chronicler writes about the reason for the raid. The Cuman onslaught was God’s chastisement for the sins of the Christians: “God sent the pagans upon us, not because he held them dear, but to chastise us that we might abstain from evil deeds”.<sup>23</sup> At the same time the chronicler seems to favor the equation of the Cumans with the Ishmaelites for the first time in the Chronicle: “For the malignant sons of Ishmael burned villages and granges, and consumed many churches with fire”.<sup>24</sup> Some observers adopted what might be called a broadly apocalyptic tone.

Special mention must be made of the various types of crisis situations caused by natural hazards that are recorded in the Chronicle. Some of them, for example, the locust invasions, appear in the same years when the Cumans raided the land of Rus, i.e., 1094, 1095 and 1103.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the damage caused by locusts refers figuratively to the Cumans’ devastations,<sup>26</sup> especially because the chronicler did not write about any other locust invasions in the Rus’ lands. The relation between the invasions of the Mongols, who are also named as sons of Ishmael, and the plague of locusts is more conspicuous in the First Novgorod Chronicle.<sup>27</sup>

We can read about the Cumans’ origin under the year 1096, a passage that is very interesting in many respects, not least for being one of the first eschatological visions of Russian literature. In addition to this, it contains some remarkable details in ethnographical and ethnogeneological aspects.<sup>28</sup> In that year occurred

<sup>20</sup> В. Й. Манси́кка, *Религия восточных славян*, Москва, 2005, 104; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 275.

<sup>21</sup> Dodd and Schaefer, *An Introduction*, 238.

<sup>22</sup> Ho Peng Yoke, “Ancient and Medieval Observations of Comets and Novae in Chinese Sources”, *Vistas in Astronomy* 5 (1962) 186.

<sup>23</sup> PVL 93, 231; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 177.

<sup>24</sup> PVL 94, 232; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 178.

<sup>25</sup> PVL 95, 96, 119, 233, 234, 257; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 180, 181, 202.

<sup>26</sup> “On August 26 of the same year, a plague of locusts attacked Rus’, and ate up all the grass and much grain. Such a visitation was unheard of in the early days of Rus’, but in consequence of our sins, our eyes beheld it.” Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 180; PVL 95, 233.

<sup>27</sup> *Новгородская первая летопись, Старшего и младшего изводов*. Москва-Ленинград, 1950, 286; *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016–1471* (Camden Third Series, 25.) Translated from the Russian by R. Michell and N. Forbes, with an Introduction by C. R. Beazley and an Account of the Text by A. A. Shakhmatov, London 1914, 133.

<sup>28</sup> The section is unique as the Biblical and Pseudo-Methodian peoples and scenes were modified by the chroniclers according to the eastern European situation. А. Ю. Карпов, *Эсхатологические ожидания в Киевской Руси в конце XI – начале XII века*. <http://www.portal-slovo.ru/history/35247.php>. [accessed December 10, 2010].



the great Cuman attacks against Pereyeslavl' and Kiev led by Bonyak and Tugorkan. According to the Chronicle, "Bonyak, that godless, mangy thief and bandit" appeared before Kiev, "burned the suburbs about the town" and then attacked the Crypt monastery.<sup>29</sup> The chronicler himself lived through the ransacking of the monastery. This is demonstrated by the events described in the first-person singular.

Let us examine this passage of the Chronicle. There is a larger *excursus*, after the Cumans' attack, on the Cumans' origins. "They came forth from the desert of Yathrib in the northeast. Four races of them issued forth: Torkmens, Pechenegs, Torks, and Polovcians. Methodius relates concerning them that eight nations fled when Gideon massacred them [...] Ishmael begot twelve sons, from whom are descended the Torkmens, the Pechenegs, the Torks, and the Cumans or Polovcians, who came from the desert. After these eight races, at the end of the world, shall come forth the unclean people shut in the mountain by Alexander of Macedon."<sup>30</sup> The desert of Yathrib from where came the seeds of Ishmael is the town of Yathrib, today Medina. The appearance of the descendants of Ishmael is clearly a biblical<sup>31</sup> and Pseudo-Methodian tradition and can be connected to the Cumans. The chronicler enumerates some Turkic people here. Between the sons of Ishmael there are Torkmens. This name rarely appears in the Chronicle, perhaps they are identical with the Seljuks.<sup>32</sup> The Pechenegs need no explication. The Torks are Uzes. Gideon is a hero of the Book of Judges and he delivered Israel from the armies of the Midianites and Amalekites.<sup>33</sup> He was chosen by God to free the people of Israel and condemn their worshipping of idols. The compiler of the Chronicle is citing by memory from the Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius, who is named here. The Turkic people enumerated in this passage (the Pechenegs, the Uzes, the Cumans) were culturally alien and meant danger for the Rus. Among them the last mentioned Cumans caused the most trouble for the Rus' Principalities.

After this passage the chronicler recounts an episode which he says he heard from a man named Gyuryata Rogovich of Novgorod, who told him about the peoples shut up by Alexander the Great. Although the chronicler refers to Gyuryata as the source, this story about the enclosed nations is from the work of Pseudo-Methodius.

Hence this section does not make any real suggestion about the origins of the Cumans. In fact, this excursion can be explained by the exaggerated apocalyptic feeling of the chronicler. That fear could have been generated by several factors. The christianization of the Rus' dates from the year 6496 (A.D. 988), that is, in the

<sup>29</sup> PVL 97, 235; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 182-183.

<sup>30</sup> PVL 98, 236; Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, *Primary*, 184.

<sup>31</sup> Genesis 25, 12-16.

<sup>32</sup> И. В. Николаева, "Семантика «этнических» указаний «Повести временных лет»: образ «чужого»", *Знание. Понимание. Умение* 2010. № 9.

<sup>33</sup> The Ishmaelites are identified with the Midianites of the Old Testament. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic*, 24.

seventh millennium. According to Pseudo-Methodius' Apocalypse, the end of the world will occur in the seventh millennium. The coming of the end of the world was expected in the year 7000 (5508+1492=7000). The eschatological aspect appeared somewhat differently in the Old Russian literature. Namely the apocalyptic expectations were not based on concrete calculations, but different celestial and terrestrial occurrences, astronomical phenomena, drought, famines and wars were interpreted as signs of the second coming of Christ in the Rus' lands. According to the chroniclers of the Rus, the surest sign of the end of the world was the assaults of unknown people. This is in accordance with the conception of the Pseudo-Methodian Apocalypse and with Byzantine tradition. Attacks by unknown peoples have always been interpreted as tokens of the end of the world in medieval Christendom. The Byzantine authors saw the Antichrist and his soldiers at first in Muhammad, the founder of Islam, and in his followers, then in the Saracens (i.e., the Seljuks), the conquerors of the Holy Land. These apocalyptic expectations were somewhat different than in the Byzantine Empire, where the prophecies of Pseudo-Methodius were modified according to the eastern European situation. The desert of Yathrib, the homeland of the Ishmaelites, was moved by the Russian chroniclers from Arabia to the northeast, where the Rus' was located. The sons of Ishmael, who "came forth from the desert of Yathrib" were identified with a people (i.e., the Polovcians) who appeared in the neighborhood of the Rus' in the second half of the eleventh century. Thus the intentions of the chronicler become clear: he quoted the work of Pseudo-Methodius by reason of the Polovcians' attacks in the 1090s. Moreover, the chronicler's fear perhaps was strengthened by the rare concurrence of the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25) with Easter in 1095. Namely, March 25, 1095 was Kyriopascha. Furthermore, according to Alexandrian chronology, the beginning of Creation happened on March 25.<sup>34</sup> In addition, the First Crusade, which also had an apocalyptic premise, contributed to the intensity of the apocalyptic fear of the chronicler.<sup>35</sup> On the way to the Holy Land the crusaders attacked Jewish communities. Consequently the messianic ferment and movements of immigration to the land of Israel among the Jews were amplified in the wake of the Crusades. It is assumed that the persecution of Jews in western Europe and in the Byzantine Empire during the First Crusade led to their migration, among others, to the territory of the Rus. All those

---

<sup>34</sup> The calendar system created by Annianus (fifth century A.D.) represents a mystical coincidence of three main dates of world history: the beginning of Creation, the Incarnation and the Resurrection of Christ. All these events happened, according to the Alexandrian chronology, on 25 March. Byzantine chronicles combine the Byzantine chronology with Alexandrian mystical symbolism. P. Kuzenkov, *How old is the World? The Byzantine Era κατά Ῥωμαίους and its Rivals. in 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies. London, 2006. Communication. I. 2 Theories of Empire.* [http://www.wra1th.plus.com/byzcong/comms/Kuzenkov\\_paper.pdf](http://www.wra1th.plus.com/byzcong/comms/Kuzenkov_paper.pdf). [accessed February 10, 2011]. That combined chronology was presumably known by the Russian chronicles too.

<sup>35</sup> The apocalyptic expectations and fears associated with the First Crusade become more intense because the latter could be connected with a prophecy that the Christians had to win back the Holy Land before the second coming of Christ.

phenomena could be interpreted by the Russian chronicles as the sign of the Antichrist's activity or a foretoken of his actions.<sup>36</sup>

At the same time if we examine the last sentence of the passage it turns out that the Cumans will not cause the end of the world. They will be followed by the peoples shut up by Alexander the Great. Although it is debated whether the sons of Ishmael carry an apocalyptic association,<sup>37</sup> according to the Chronicle, their empire will be followed by the power of the "nations shut up". The rule of the seeds of Ishmael will be put down by the king of the Greeks in the Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius too. The earth will then be at peace. The "Gates of the North" will be opened and the nations shut up by Alexander will come forth after this period of peace. In my opinion, the Polovcians (Cumans) did not carry any apocalyptic significance for the writer of the Chronicle based on our source.

The Chronicle does not tell anything about the end of the world. *Nota bene*, the time of the end of the world is not relevant in the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius, either. Indeed, the Syrian author's work is not intended to predict the end of the world. So, as Kmoskó also claims, the Revelations is only pseudo in this sense. It is not a real apocalyptic work, but a political pamphlet, which encourages indirect resistance (i.e., penitence and the true Christian life) and the fight against pagans.<sup>38</sup> I suggest that for the writer of the Chronicle the Cumans were like the locusts.<sup>39</sup> The plague of the locusts is harmful, but can be lived through. The Cuman attacks, as the plague of the locusts, were occasioned by the Christians' sins because their transgressions and their unrighteousness had increased. According to the chronicler, by repenting and renouncing sin and envy these problems could be resolved.

To conclude, the Cumans belonged to two of the three concentric circles mentioned above. They came from the outermost circle to the second ring, the world of the Rus. The chronicler or chroniclers had first-hand experience of the Cumans. They knew that the Cumans were not Cynocephali or Blemmyae or Monopods, in generally were not monstrous or bestial races. But, when the chronicler describes the Cumans as seeds of Ishmael or when he writes about the Cumans "eating every dead or unclean thing, even hamsters and marmots" - that is the alien world of fantasy and terror.

Finally, I would like to draw the attention to two aspects. Firstly, it is obvious that the chronicler was not motivated by the desire for knowledge when he wrote

---

<sup>36</sup> Карпов, *Эсхатологические*.

<sup>37</sup> Jackson, *Medieval*, 353.

<sup>38</sup> Kmoskó, *Szír írók*, 42-43. The popularity of the Apocalypse was due to its prophecy of eventual Christian victory over the various Oriental barbarians who threatened Christian civilization (Sackur, *Sibyllinische*, 5; Cross, *The Earliest*, 329).

<sup>39</sup> The Russian eschatology is active and optimistic, its intention is the improvement of ordinary people's lives. („Az Orosz Egyház és az orosz állam. Beszélgetés Lepahin Valerijjel.” [The Russian Church and State. An interview with Valery Lepahin] *Aetas* 13:1 (1998), 127-144.

about the origin of the Cumans, but with his knowledge obtained from the Bible and from works of Christian authorities he wanted to demonstrate that the Cumans were sent by God to chastise Christian society. According to him, the incursions of the pagans is a divine punishment. Thus, we can not find anything about the Cumans' origin. Nevertheless, some researchers have tried to include this detail in the explanation of the etymology of *Polovci*.<sup>40</sup> The term *Polovci* does not go back to the Russian word *поле* "field" but to *половый* which means "colorless, pale, pale yellow".<sup>41</sup>

Secondly, it is remarkable that despite the sometimes apocalyptic descriptions of the Cuman attacks, they were not destroyers of the world. The Cumans themselves had no eschatological significance. Reading the section of the Russian chronicle about the Cumans' attacks we cannot feel the fear or panic. (On the contrary, in the western sources about the Hungarians we have: "ab Ungerorum nos defendas iaculis".<sup>42</sup> Not incidentally, the popularity of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius arose from its promise of Christian victory over barbarian invaders. However, although the Cumans were the most dangerous foes to threaten the Rus' prior to the Mongol incursions, the considerations mentioned above confirm that the Cuman attacks were not a real threat to the Rus' state.

---

<sup>40</sup> O. Pritsak: "The Polovcians and Rus", *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 2 (1982), 325–326. Pritsak connects the name *Polovci* with the Slavic word for desert "поле".

<sup>41</sup> М. Фасмер: *Этимологический словарь русского языка* (онлайн версия). <http://www.classes.ru/all-russian/russian-dictionary-Vasmer-term-9957.htm>. [accessed July 13, 2011], 12<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> "Carmina Mutinensia," in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Antiquitates, Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*. III. Berolini, 1896. Recensuit L. Traube, 706.

# *The 'elite plot' in the cemetery of Klin-Yar (Russia)*

The emergence of a hereditary elite in the Early Alanic  
North Caucasus?

HEINRICH HÄRKE (*Reading and Tübingen*) and  
ANDREJ BELINSKIJ (*Stavropol*)



In 1994–1996, an international Anglo-Russian expedition excavated parts of the well-known and regionally important cemetery of Klin-Yar in the Russian North Caucasus. The key aim of the project was the exploration of the relationship between culture change and population change in this multi-period burial site. While we did not lose sight of this aim, a potentially more important result of the expedition was the discovery and excavation of the 'elite plot', a concentration of the richest graves excavated hitherto at Klin-Yar. This paper intends to set out the context, the main findings, and some of the implications of this discovery.

## *The site*

The site of Klin-Yar is located in the chalk and sandstone hills of the northern Caucasus, just west of Kislovodsk in the region (*kraj*) of Stavropol. A narrow, steep-sided sandstone rock (called Paravos) is at the centre of the site, and has produced settlement traces of the Koban Culture and of Early Alanic date (Fig. 1). Further Koban and Alanic settlement areas are located on the upper slopes around the Paravos rock. Extensive burial grounds with Koban, Sarmatian and Alanic graves occupy the lower slopes, mainly on the southern side (cemetery III). Excavations carried out there before 1993 uncovered some 350 graves, most of them belonging to the prehistoric Koban Culture, but also about 100 Sarmatian and Alanic graves.<sup>1</sup> Fieldwork in 1994–1996 in cemeteries III and IV added another 52 graves, with more than 100 individuals.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> В.С. Флёргов, *Аланы Центрального Предкавказья V-VIII вв.: обряд обезвреживания погребенных*. Труды Клин-Ярской экспедиции I. Москва 2000.

<sup>2</sup> H. Härke, A. Belinsky, „Nouvelles fouilles de 1994–1996 dans la nécropole de Klin-Yar,“ in M. Kazanski, V. Soupault, eds., *Les sites archéologiques en Crimée et au Caucase durant l'Antiquité tardive et le haut Moyen Age*. Colloquia Pontica 5. Leiden 2000, 193–

The Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age graves of the Koban Culture almost invariably held single inhumations, with the skeleton deposited crouched on the side (males on the right, females on the left). The graves were shallow rectangular pits, with some cases of stone lining and/or stone covers (Fig. 2). As in the later periods, the body had been deposited fully dressed, with ornaments for females, and tools and weapons for the males; a single pottery vessel was found with all skeletons. The outstanding finds from this phase of the cemetery are two Assyrian helmets which testify to connections south across the Caucasus Mountains, and to the use of symbols of status and prestige in the earliest settled community at this place.<sup>3</sup>

The basic features of the Sarmatian and Alanic burial rite at Klin-Yar comprise dressed inhumation with grave-goods, as in the Koban period, but now the grave construction included underground chambers (catacombs; Fig. 2). Most bodies were laid out in an extended position or slightly flexed. In the Sarmatian phase, the chamber was accessed by a pit or short access corridor (*dromos*) which was in most cases aligned east-west. In some cases, the deposition of a horse 'skin' (i.e. head-and-hooves deposition, with skull and lower leg bones) was observed on, or in, the *dromos*. The entrance from the *dromos* to the chamber was always closed with large stones. As a rule, Sarmatian chambers contained a single body, and double burials were constructed by linking single-burial chambers with a short *dromos*; but double burial within a single chamber started in the Late Sarmatian period. The range of types of grave-goods was limited, with most graves containing pottery vessels, and some beads, brooches and earrings found with females, and weapons and tools found with some males.

Early Alanic grave construction and ritual were similar to the Sarmatian, but more elaborate in all aspects.<sup>4</sup> The catacombs were larger and deeper, and occasionally had additional features such as pits or niches; *dromoi* were longer and predominantly orientated around north-south, with the entrance at the northern end blocked with large stones (Fig. 2). Sacrificial depositions in, or on, the *dromos* became more frequent and varied in the Alanic phase, including horses or horse skins, pottery, less often weapons or parts of horse harness.<sup>5</sup> There was evidence of fire in several *dromoi*, and the entrance to the chamber had usually been closed carefully with stones and with clay smeared around the edges. In the majority of

---

210; A. B. Belinskij, H. Härke, *The Iron Age to early medieval cemetery of Klin-Yar: excavations 1994–96*. Forschungen in Eurasien series. Berlin, forthcoming.

<sup>3</sup> A. Б. Белинский, „К вопросу о времени появления шлемов ассирийского типа на Северном Кавказе.“ *Советская археология* 4 (1990), 190–195.

<sup>4</sup> For parallels, see Г. Е. Афанасьев, А. П. Рунич, *Мокрая Балка 1: Дневник раскопок*. Москва 2001.

<sup>5</sup> H. Härke, A. B. Belinskij, „Trauer, Ahnenkult, Sozialstatus? Überlegungen zur Interpretation der Befunde im Gräberfeld von Klin-Yar (Nordkaukasus, Russland),“ in C. Kümmel, B. Schweizer, U. Veit with M. Augstein, eds., *Körperinszenierung - Objektsammlung - Monumentalisierung: Totenritual und Grabkult in frühen Gesellschaften*. Tübinger Archäologische Taschenbücher 6. Münster, New York, München and Berlin 2008, 417–430.

cases, Alanic catacombs contained more than one body, occasionally up to four. The variety and quantity of grave-goods increased markedly in the Early Alanic period: well-equipped graves produced sets of pottery and other vessels, series of female dress ornaments and accessories (such as bags), weapons, belt sets and boot fittings with males, and horse harness.

The human bones were too badly preserved for the analysis of ancient DNA (which had been one of the original aims of the project), but a detailed anthropological and bone chemistry study of the skeletons has managed to produce an overall picture of the populations of the three phases at Klin-Yar, using the material from the 1994–1996 excavations as well as that from older excavations at this site.<sup>6</sup> According to the anthropological data, the Koban people were a native farming population, with a lifestyle and diet typical of an agricultural economy. The Sarmatians were immigrants at Klin-Yar, but their new male phenotype, combined with a continuity of the Koban female type, suggests that this may have been a male-only immigration. The Sarmatian lifestyle was that of mobile livestock breeders, with a high proportion of meat in their diet. This seems to agree with the absence of Sarmatian settlement traces at Klin-Yar, in contrast to the extensive settlement finds of the Koban and Alanic phases. The skeletal data indicate that the Alans represent a second immigration into the area, with new male and female phenotypes. Their diet contained significantly less meat than that of the Sarmatians, implying a more mixed economy. Stable isotope data obtained as part of a series of radiocarbon dates of Klin-Yar bone material give reason to believe that the Alanic population buried in the cemetery sector IV, north of the Paravos rock, had a geographical origin different from that of the Klin-Yar III population.<sup>7</sup>

### *The elite plot*

A concentration of big and well-furnished catacombs of the Late Sarmatian and Early Alanic phases was found and excavated in the main trench of the 1994–1996 expedition (Fig. 3). It was located in cemetery III, about 300 meters south of the eastern tip of the Paravos rock. With two exceptions, it contains the richest catacombs of these two phases excavated so far at Klin-Yar. The exceptions are a rich Alanic catacomb (234) found before 1994 immediately to the east of our main trench, and a very rich, early Alanic catacomb (389) found after 1996 during rescue excavations about 40 meters east-southeast of the centre of the elite plot. It therefore seems that the elite plot extends somewhat further east and southeast than the main trench of 1994–1996, but we may have found most of the rich catacombs belonging to this socially distinctive cemetery area.

The indicators of elite status at Klin-Yar are all concentrated in this cemetery area (Fig. 3). Status in the Late Sarmatian phase is signalled by iron long swords

<sup>6</sup> Buzhilova et al., in Belinskij–Härke, *The Iron Age to early medieval cemetery of Klin-Yar*.

<sup>7</sup> T. Higham personal communication; cf. also T. Higham, et. al. "Radiocarbon dating, stable isotope analysis, and diet-derived offsets in <sup>14</sup>C ages from the Klin-Yar site, Russian North Caucasus." *Radiocarbon* 52 (2010), 653–670.

(in graves 351A, 361B and 365) and gold earrings. Elite indicators among the Early Alanic grave-goods found in this area are three bronze bowls (out of five so far found at Klin-Yar), four glass vessels (the only ones found at this site) and three Byzantine coins (two *solidi* of Tiberius Mauritius in grave 341, and one *solidus* of Heraclius and sons on a necklace in 363; only one other gold coin had previously been found at Klin-Yar). Other conspicuous grave-goods in the elite plot include five iron long swords (in Alanic graves 357 and 360, in addition to the Sarmatian cases mentioned above) and five iron stirrups (in Alanic graves 341, 360 and 363). The Sarmatian and Alanic graves in this area have also produced an entire series of artificially deformed skulls, supplying a further indication of elite status. There are 14 sacrificial depositions of horse 'skins' and entire horses in, on and next to dromoi in the elite plot; the Alanic catacomb 360 alone has four of them. The man with a deformed skull buried in catacomb 360 (dated to early/mid-seventh century AD) undoubtedly belonged to the top level of Early Alanic society in the North Caucasus. A sword of Central Asian or Avar type, with characteristic P-shaped mounts and a richly gold-decorated sword belt, was lying at his side, a horse harness with silver fittings had been deposited at his feet, and an Iranian glass cup near his head. The latter is an intriguing contrast to the Byzantine coin on the gold necklace in the immediately adjacent catacomb 363. An earlier counterpart of the man in grave 360 is the fifth-century catacomb 389 which had been furnished, among other rich depositions, with a gold-decorated saddle.

The detailed dating of the graves supplied by I. Gavritukin and V. Malashev makes it possible to reconstruct the sequence of grave construction in the elite plot (Table 1). Significantly, all Sarmatian catacombs in this area date to the Late Sarmatian period (phase RZ); they were spread evenly across the area of the plot, but with a concentration of double burials in the southern half. Alanic catacombs then filled up the spaces in between the Sarmatian graves, in the fifth and sixth centuries AD (phase I after Malashev and Gavritukhin) more in the northern half of the plot, and in the seventh century AD (phase III) equally in the northern and southern halves. The absence of graves from phase II is a further indication that some rich graves may be located in unexcavated areas just outside of our main trench. Even so, translating the relative dates into absolute ones, there appear to have been about three catacombs each built in the fifth and sixth centuries, two or three in the early to mid-seventh century, and four in the late seventh to early eighth century.

The overall number of burials from all phases in the elite plot, in relation to the time span they cover, need not imply more than one high-status family, or at the most two families, burying their dead over some 300 to 350 years (or about 12 to 15 generations). By the seventh century, two groups of large and/or rich catacombs can be discerned: a central group with two robbed graves (364 and 368) and two outstandingly rich ones (360 and 363); and a southern group with two strikingly similar, well-equipped catacombs (341 and 345) and one unique, rich 'shaft grave' (352). There is a series of epigenetic (non-metric) skeletal traits linking several individuals in the central and northern parts of the elite plot (359,



363/2, 371/1, 373, and 381/1), confirming the likely existence of a family relationship between the elite members buried here.

The impression of a family pattern is further enhanced by the changing gender pattern of burial from the Late Sarmatian to the Early Alanic periods.<sup>8</sup> Late Sarmatian graves in the elite plot contained single burials; double burials (342, 351 and 361) were constructed by linking two single-burial catacombs with a short *dromos* or an access pit (Fig. 4). In the Early Alanic period, double and multiple burials were in each case deposited in the same chamber. There is clear evidence of re-opening of Alanic catacombs and later deposition of bodies and grave-goods, most obviously so in graves 357 and 363. In some large catacombs with single bodies, there had been space left for later depositions, for example in grave 371 where a woman had been buried with a small child at her feet, leaving half of the chamber free for a later burial. Where two adults had been buried, these were invariably a male and a female. The male body was always at the entrance into the chamber, and the woman away from it, at the far wall; where there was a third body, it was in most cases a juvenile placed between the two adult bodies in their conventional positions. All these observations suggest that the catacombs in the elite plot were used as family or kin-group vaults from the Early Alanic period onwards, but not yet in the Late Sarmatian period.

#### *Implications and conclusions*

The elite plot of cemetery III at Klin-Yar appears to be, so far, a unique phenomenon in the North Caucasus. There do not seem to be any comparable concentrations of the richest graves in other Early Alanic cemeteries of the region,<sup>9</sup> but this may also be an effect of widespread grave-robbing there. In the late sixth/early seventh centuries, the background of the local wealth was probably military service by local Alanic men for the Byzantine Empire or its enemies,<sup>10</sup> and the proximity of the Silk Road, a seventh-century branch of which is thought to have run in the Podkumok valley, past Klin-Yar. The background of the earlier wealth, in the fifth/early sixth centuries, is much harder to fathom and still needs a convincing explanation.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the Klin-Yar elite plot is the continuity from the Late Sarmatian to the Early Alanic period. This is remarkable because the anthropological data suggest an immigration at the beginning of the Alanic period. The continuity of the elite plot implies a stability of social patterns through this immigration phase.

<sup>8</sup> H. Härke with A.B. Belinskij, N. Stoodley, „Die Darstellung von Geschlechtergrenzen im frühmittelalterlichen Grabritual: Normalität oder Problem?“, in W. Pohl, H. Reimitz, eds., *Grenze und Differenz im frühen Mittelalter*. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, Denkschrift 287 = Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 1. Wien 2000, 181-196.

<sup>9</sup> Д. С. Коробов, *Социальная организация алан Северного Кавказа IV-IX вв.* Санкт-Петербург 2003.

<sup>10</sup> S. Savenko, in Belinskij, Härke, *The Iron Age to early medieval cemetery of Klin-Yar*.

The increasing emphasis on family or kin-group burial in the elite plot during the Early Alanic period, and the epigenetic evidence for family relationships may signal the beginnings of a hereditary aristocracy at a time which is considerably earlier than has been assumed so far, quite possibly as early as the fifth century. The existence and the date of the Klin-Yar elite plot may also force us to re-think the emergence of the Alanic state in the North Caucasus and perhaps look for its origins in the seventh century, rather than the currently accepted date of the tenth century.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, the discovery and excavation of the elite plot during the 1994–1996 expeditions has highlighted the importance of Klin-Yar as a key archeological site for early Alanic history in the North Caucasus.

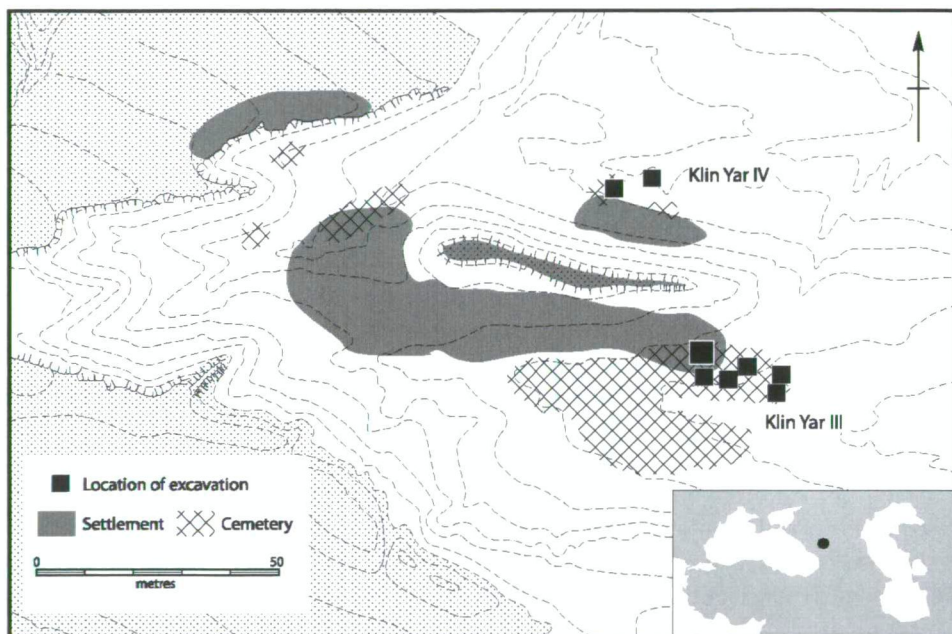


FIGURE 1.  
Map of the Klin-Yar site, with the locations of trenches  
of the 1994–1996 expedition

11D. Korobov, in Belinskij, Härke, *The Iron Age to early medieval cemetery of Klin-Yar*.

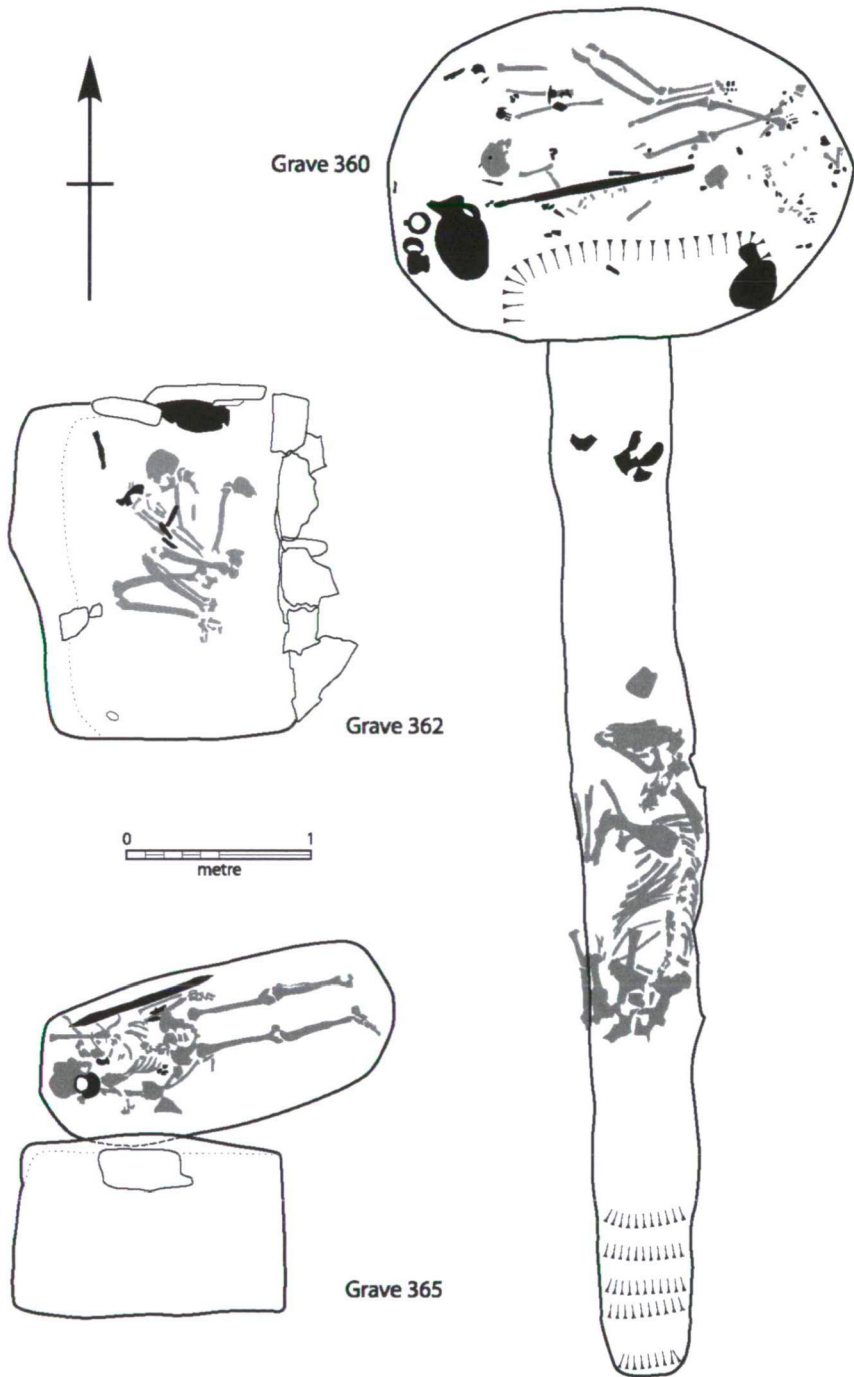


FIGURE 2.  
Grave types of the three periods at Klin-Yar: Koban (grave 362), Sarmatian (365)  
and Alanic (360)

KLIN\_YAR 1994-96  
elite plot

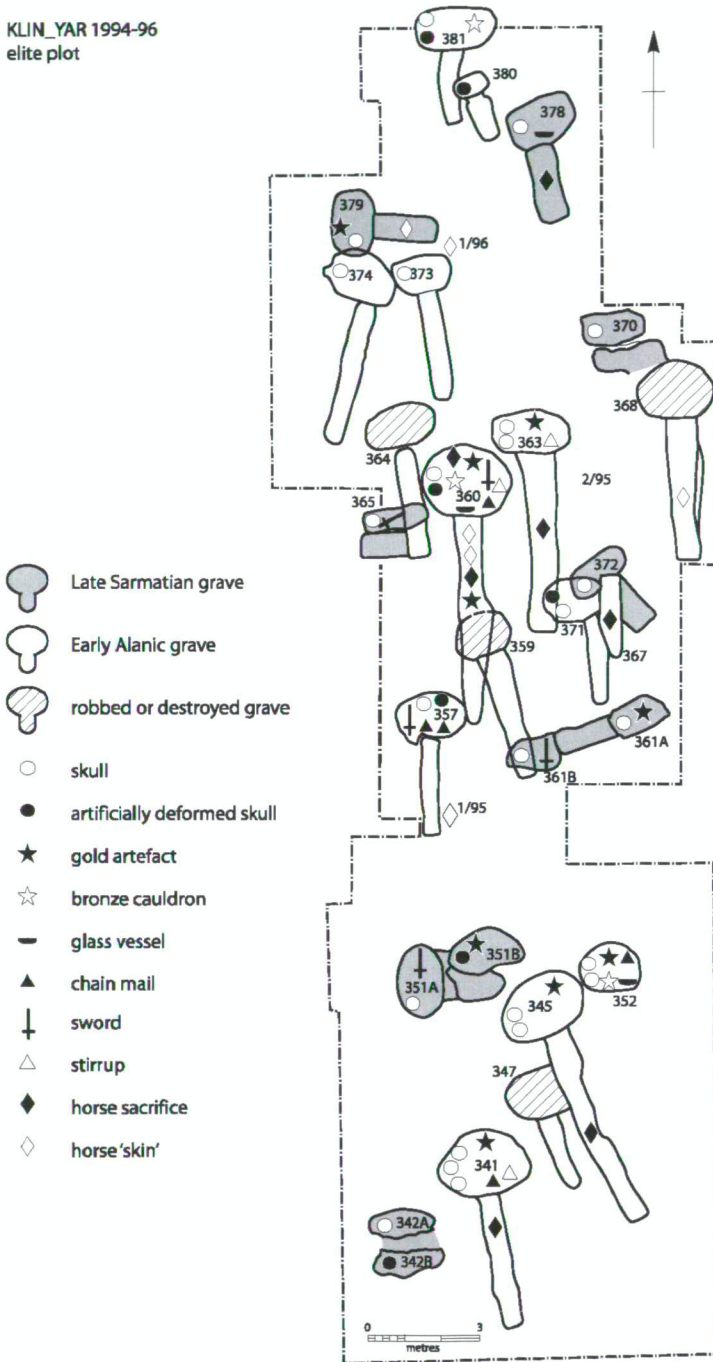


FIGURE 3.

Plan of the elite plot of Klin-Yar III, with Late Sarmatian and Early Alanic graves excavated 1994–1996 (Koban graves omitted)

THE "ELITE PLOT" IN THE CEMETERY OF KLIN-YAR (RUSSIA)

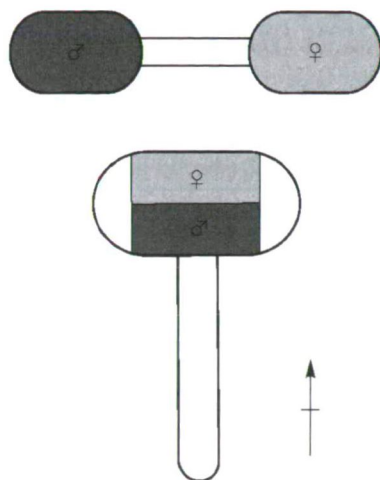


FIGURE 4.  
Pattern of Late Sarmatian (above) and Early Alanic (below)  
'family' burial in the elite plot of Klin-Yar III

TABLE 1.  
 Dates of Sarmatian and Alanic graves in the elite plot of Klin-Yar III  
 (after I. Gavritukhin and V. Malashev)

Grave no.	Phase (absolute date AD)
Grave no. 342	RZ (second half 4 <sup>th</sup> - early 5 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
Grave no. 351A+B	RZ (second half 4 <sup>th</sup> - early 5 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
Grave no. 361A+B	RZ (second half 4 <sup>th</sup> - early 5 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
Grave no. 365	RZ (second half 4 <sup>th</sup> - early 5 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
Grave no. 370	RZ (second half 4 <sup>th</sup> - early 5 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
Grave no. 372	RZ (second half 4 <sup>th</sup> - early 5 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
Grave no. 378	RZ (second half 4 <sup>th</sup> - early 5 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
Grave no. 379	RZ (second half 4 <sup>th</sup> - early 5 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
Grave no. 359	I <sub>6</sub> - I <sub>B</sub> (430/450 - 520/540)
Grave no. 373	I <sub>B</sub> (470/480 - 520/540)
Grave no. 380	I <sub>B</sub> - I <sub>Г</sub> (470/480 - 550/580)
Grave no. 384	I <sub>B</sub> - I <sub>Г</sub> (470/480 - 550/580)
Grave no. 382	I <sub>Г</sub> (c. 500 - 550/580)
Grave no. 357	I <sub>Г</sub> - I <sub>Д</sub> (c. 500 - 580/600)
Grave no. 381	I <sub>Г</sub> - I <sub>Д</sub> (c. 500 - 580/600)
Grave no. 371	I <sub>a</sub> - I <sub>Д</sub> (c. 400 - 580/600)
Grave no. 352	III <sub>a</sub> (620/630 - 670/680)
Grave no. 360	III <sub>a</sub> (620/630 - 670/680)
Grave no. 341	III <sub>6</sub> (c. 650 - 680/720)
Grave no. 345	III <sub>6</sub> (c. 650 - 680/720)
Grave no. 363	III <sub>6</sub> (c. 650 - 680/720)
Grave no. 374	III <sub>6</sub> (c. 650 - 680/720)
Grave no. 368	III <sub>a</sub> - III <sub>B</sub> (620/630 - 730/760)

# *A hypothesis on the etymology of the Old Turkic royal clan name Ašina/Ašinas and the transformation process in the early Abbasid period*

TAKASHI ŌSAWA (Ōsaka, Japan)



## *Preface*

As is well known, there are many hypotheses on the etymology of the name of the royal family of the Old Turks. On this issue, S.G. Klyashtornyi proposed an interesting hypothesis that the Chinese form *Ašina* could originate not from Altaistic words but from Indo-European words such as the Tocharian, Khotan-Saka or Sogdian languages. His theory was based on the following situation: Except the expression 阿史那 *A-ši-na* \**â-sî-nâ* (LMC)<sup>1</sup> from Old Chinese chronicles, such as *Zhoushu-50* and *Suishu-84*, there is no term *Ašina* in the Old Turkic and other sources on the Old Turkic peoples.<sup>2</sup>

Klyashtorny's hypothesis was proposed in 1994, however, as a result of the international joint investigation of 1997 in Mongolia, a new Sogdian form '(')šy-n's [*Ašinas*] was identified, firstly by Yoshida Yutaka and Moriyasu Takao from our *estampazhi* of the Sogdian text of the Bugut inscription (circa AD 586), in Arkhangai province of Mongolia.<sup>3</sup> In their new deciphering of this text, the first lines can be read as follows:

---

<sup>1</sup> B. Karlgren, *Grammata Serica Recensa*, Stockholm 1972: 1m, 975a, 350a.

<sup>2</sup> S. G. Klyashtorny, "The royal clan of the Turks and the problem of Early Turkic-Iranian contacts," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 47:3 (1998), 445-447.

<sup>3</sup> Y. Yoshida and T. Moriyasu, Bugut inscription, ed. T. Moriyasu and A. Ochir, *Provisional Report of Researches on Historical Sites and Inscriptions in Mongolia from 1996 to 1998*, The Society of Central Eurasian Studies, Osaka University, Faculty of Letters, Toyonaka, 1999: 122-125. As is well known, the Sogdian text was read and published by S. G. Klyashtorny and V. A. Livshic in 1969, and was revised in 1972. (Cf. V. A. Livshic and S. G. Klyashtorny, "The Sogdian Inscription Revised," *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 26:1 [1972], 69-102). And as to the new identification of Y. Yoshida on the Ashina reading, it seems that Livshic admits it, as far as I am informed by a Japanese colleague who stayed in Saint Petersburg.

## [Transcription]

Bugut stele-1(left side)

L-1.: rty (m)[wn']k nwm (sn)k' 'wast' ḏ'r-'nt tr-'wkt '(')šy-n's kwtr'tt 'x'šy-wn'k

L-2: 'Y-(K)' +m+++ m(wx)'n x'γ'n y'rwk' 'HY nw''r x'γ'n 'wr-kwp-'r cr-'cw my''

L-3: t'[t](p)['r] (x'γ'n) wsn wy'(r)[nt]

## [Translation]

<B-1: 1-3> Kings of the Turkish Ashinas tribe have established [this] stone of law when \*\*\*Muqan Qaghan's Yaruka-brother (named?) Niwar Qaghan \*\*\*ed for the sake of Urkupar Cracu Magha Tatpar Qaghan.

Subsequently, on the basis of the *estampazhi* that had been conserved in the Faculty of Letters of Kyoto University, Yoshida and Moriyasu could also confirm the Sogdian form from the Sogdian text of the Karabalgasun stele (circa AD 821), also from Arkhangai province, as follows:

"šyn's kwtr wrk' xš'wnh (land of Ashinas tribe of Turks)

This Sogdian form "šyn's can be considered as the parallel expression with the Chinese characters 阿史那 \*'ā-šī-nā (LMC) from the Chinese phrase [阿]史那革命 *Ashina geming* (revolution of A-ši-na) from the same stele.<sup>4</sup>

As far as I can know, Yoshida and Moriyasu's identification of this word is commonly recognized among Turkic philologists and historians such as Golden, Zieme, Erdal, Livshits, Klyashtorny and De la Vaissière. On the contrary, Beckwith doubted Yoshida's reading of *Ašinas* from the Bugut and Karabalgasun steles on the grounds such that some parts of the very Sogdian scripts are not clear in our *estampazhi*, therefore he insisted that this transliteration should be reconsidered. However, he did not propose his own decipherment of this word.<sup>5</sup>

On the basis of this discussion, I would like to analyze the identification of this word from some kinds of sources relating to Old Turkic peoples and propose my

<sup>4</sup> T. Moriyasu and Y. Yoshida, A preliminary report on the recent survey of Archaeological sites and Inscriptions from the Turkic and Uighur period in Mongolia, *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages XIII*, Osaka University, Toyonaka, 1998: 155. On the new researches on the Sogdian text and Chinese text of the Karabalgasun stele, cf. O. Hansen, "Zur sogdhischen Inschrift auf dem dreisprachigen Denkmal von Karabalgasun," *Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne* 44:3 (1930), 3-39; Y. Yoshida, "Karabarugasun no Sogudo ban ni tsuite (Sogdian text of the Karabalgasun inscription in Mongolia from Uighur period)," (in Japanese), *Journal of Southwestern History* [Kyoto University] 28 (1988), 24-52; T. Moriyasu, *World History Reconsidered through the Silk Road* (in Japanese), Osaka University, The 21st Century COE Program Interface Humanities Research Activities 2002-2003, Vol. 3, Toyonaka (Osaka) 2003, 61-62, Fig. 1&2.

<sup>5</sup> C. I. Beckwith, "The Chinese names of Tibetans, Tabghatch, and Turks," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 14 (2005), 5-20.



hypothesis on the issue of the etymology of *Ašinas* / *Ašina* on the basis of our recent survey in Mongolia during 2006–2008.<sup>6</sup>

### 1) *New track on Ašinas in Old Turkic epitaph*

I conducted fieldwork in 1996–1998 and 2006–2011 in Mongolia under the International Joint Expedition between Japan and Mongolia, and as mentioned above, during the first three-year expedition, we were able to take a new *estampazhi* of the Bugut stele. Yoshida found the new reading of *Ašinas*, and then Yoshida Yutaka and Moriyasu Takao surveyed the Karabalgasun inscription and also found the same reading of *Ašinas*. From the fact that this word can be found in the Sogdian texts of the Bugut and Karabalgasun steles, this may be recognized as the Sogdian form, however, it is unknown whether this form is original or not. However, given the *Ašinas* form, the Khotan-Saca *āšseine*, Tocharian *āšna* or Sogdian *xs'yn'k*, that Klyashtorny had proposed as the original form, cannot be recognized, and so we must reconsider another original form.

In this regard, we recently acquired a new source. That is, during the summer seasons of 2006–2008, I visited Old Turkic sites and steles under the second international expedition with the Mongolian archaeological institute. In particular, I researched the Old Turkic site and inscriptions of Khör-Asgat (Ike-Askhete), which consisted of two sarcophagi in the center of this mound and one stele between the eastern sarcophagus and six balbal stones.<sup>7</sup> This site is well known as Ike-Askhete, however, this name is not true from the geographical and natural positional point of view, so the site should be renamed Khör-Asgat, as it is known by native Mongolians.<sup>8</sup> This site was first discovered by a botanical researcher, Levin, a member of the Russian Orkhon Expedition under Radloff while visiting from July 28 to August 7, 1891, and then the Russian ethnographer Yadrintsev visited and investigated on August 29–30, 1891. Yadrintsev made sketches of a three-figure stone board and a general plan of the site and took three *estampazhi* of runic letters of the upper, left and right borders of three-figure board. Later he sent these materials to V. V. Radloff. These sketches and *estampazhi* of three parts of letters are recorded in Radloff's *Atlas* (1892),<sup>9</sup> plates XV and XXVI. In the summer of 1893, Klements visited and took some *estampazhi* of the upper, left, and right borders and two sides of a big stone board that was lying down in the eastern tradition from the site. They are also recorded in Radloff's *Atlas* (1896)

<sup>6</sup> On all the routes and contents of our survey, see: Т. Осава, К. Сүзүки, Р. Мөнхтулга, eds. *Бичээс II, 2006 оноос 2008 оны Монгол улс дахь Түргийн бичээс ба эртний дурсгалыг судлах экспедицийн илтгэл*, Улаанбаатар 2009. (henceforth, Bichees 2).

<sup>7</sup> It is remarkable that six balbal stone were discovered in the east of the site in August 2008. As far as we know, nobody had discovered them at this site until now (Bichees 2: 109–110; Ōsawa 2010: 8). This discovery demonstrates evidently that this site may belong to the second Turkic Kaγanate period with runic texts.

<sup>8</sup> *Монгол Нутаг Дахь Түүх Соёлын Дурсгал*. Улаанбаатар 1999, 125–126, 237–238.

<sup>9</sup> V. V. Radloff, *Atlas Drevnostej Mongolii, Trudy Orkhonskoi Ekspedicii. Atlas der Alterthümer der Mongolei, Arbeiten der Orkhon-Expedition*. Saint Petersburg 1892–1899.

plate LXXXIV, 1-7. As far as we know, all researchers have interpreted these inscriptions based on these *estampazhi* and Radloff's deciphering.<sup>10</sup> Primarily to confirm the runic scripts, we visited this site in August 2006 and took *estampazhi* of all the surfaces on both sides of a sarcophagus that holds the three-figures, bird and the ram-shaped *tamga*, and all surfaces of both sides of the big stone pillars that hold the deer figure on one side and a ram-shaped *tamga* in another side, that were lying down to the east of the mound.

After we returned to Japan, I tried to decipher all the runic parts including the newly found texts in the places between the human figures, so we could read the texts in almost all parts in different ways. Especially relevant to our topic, it is remarkable that the forms of three runic scripts should be <š N š>, and they are entirely different from <T k š> as transliterated by Radloff. I can say that, as to my new identification of these scripts, R. Munkhtulga, Ts. Battulga and C. Alyılmaz also agreed with me, however, at that time it seems that they cannot respond clearly how to read. After my investigation of all the *estampazhi*, I found three runic scripts in five places on these inscriptions.<sup>11</sup> At last I can say that these scripts should be read as *Ašinas* for the Old Turkic royal family name.<sup>12</sup> From this, we can say that the Sogdian form *Ašinas* from the Bugut and Karabalgasun stele is obviously confirmed, therefore Kliyashtorny's hypothesis can no longer be supported.

## 2) *Ašinās from medieval Islamic sources*

Chavannes observed that the personal name of the Turkic general *Ašinās al-Turkī* under the eighth Caliph *Mu'tasim* (reigned AD 833-842) of the Abbasid dynasty, who appears in Arabic sources such as Ṭabarī and Ya'qūbī, has a close relation with 阿史那\**â-sî-nâ* (LMC) of Chinese chronicles<sup>13</sup>. This identification can now be confirmed by the existence of *Ašinas* in Sogdian and Old Turkic inscriptions of the Old Turkic Kaghanate.

<sup>10</sup> V. V. Radloff, *Die alttürkischen Inschriften der Mongolei*. Vol. 3. Saint Petersburg 1895; (Reprint in 2 vols.: Osnabrück 1987): 257-258. Then many philologists and historians such as H. N. Orkun, S. E. Malov, Kliyashtornuyi, Voitov, Ser-Odzhav, L. Bold, M. Dobrovits, N. Bazilkhan and others also basically followed Radloff's reading. Cf. T. Ōsawa, "Revisiting the Khör-Asgat Inscription in Mongolia from the Second Turkic Qaghanate," *Studies on the Inner Asian Languages* 25 (2010), 1-73.

<sup>11</sup> Khör-Asgat-Ia, East-L1; Asgat-Ib, West-L1; Asgat-IIa, West-L4; Asgat-IIb, East-L1 and East-L14. Ōsawa, "Revisiting the Khör-Asgat Inscription": 22-23, 24, 26, 28-29, 50.

<sup>12</sup> On this interpretation and historical significance, Cf. *ibid.*, 50-61.

<sup>13</sup> É. Chavannes, "Notes Additionnelles sur les Tu-Kiue (Turcs) Occidentaux," in *Documents sur Les Tou-Kiue [turcs] Occidentaux*, Saint Petersburg 1903, 20-22, n.2; S. G. Kliyashtorny, *Древнетюркские Рунические Памятники*. Москва 1964, 112, n.169. Cf. Shumizu Kazuhiro, "Atrak and slave soldiers under the Abbasid Dynasty," (in Japanese), *Historical Journal* [Tokyo University] 99:6 (1990), 1-37.

According to Golden,<sup>14</sup> from Islamic sources, we can identify several forms that might correspond with the Turkic royal clan *Ašinas* / *Ašina* as follows:

- (1) *Ašnās* (Ṭabarī).<sup>15</sup>
- (2) *Ašinās* (Ṭabarī).<sup>16</sup>
- (3) *Ānsa* (Ḥudūd al-‘Ālam).<sup>17</sup>
- (4) *Šaba* (Ibn Hurdādhbih).<sup>18</sup>
- (5) *Šāna*, *Šāya* (Al-Mas’ūdī).<sup>19</sup>

From these forms corresponding to *Ašinas* / *Ašina*, the issue seems unresolved because copyists of these sources might have been mistaken and have changed the Arabic script on the point of a comma or other details. But one can rely on the description by Ṭabarī, and it is remarkable that there are two orthographies – *Ašnās* / *Ašinās* – and, according to the note of the editors, the latter *Ašinās* in Ṭabarī is analyzed as a Persian form. In my view, it seems that this analysis has a significance from the viewpoint of the historical root of this word. That is, this Arabic form has common features with the Sogdian form, therefore we can assume that the Arabic form can go back to the Sogdian form in the Middle Iranian, reflecting the intimate contacts between Sogdians and Arabians in the early Medieval period. In my view, the Arabic form of this word indicates that members of the Old Turkic royal family *Ašinas* went to the Khorāsān and western Asian territory from Sogdiana and Tocharistan of the Middle Asian regions, through social and cultural contacts or under the campaigns of the Abbasid dynasties. So, as in Ṭabarī, the resemblance of the Arabic form to the Sogdian form that has no vowel harmony was confirmed. But this form gradually became the omission form *Ašnās*.

However, at present, except Ṭabarī, other forms cannot be identified in Islamic sources whether they directly reflect *Ašinas*/*Ašina* or not.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>14</sup> P. B. Golden, "Irano-Turcica: The Khazar sacral kingship revisited," *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 60:2 (2007) 165, 172, n. 33.

<sup>15</sup> C. E. Bosworth, *The History of al-Ṭabarī, Storm and Stress along the Northern Frontiers of the Ābbāsīde Caliphate*, vol. 33, New York 1991, xv, 12, 98–100, 102–104, 107–109, 111–112, 122, 124–128, 132–133, 178–179, 183, 201, 214.

<sup>16</sup> J. L. Kraemer, *The History of al-Ṭabarī, Incipient Decline*. Vol. 34, New York 1989, xi, 5, 21.

<sup>17</sup> V. Minorsky, *Ḥudūd al-‘Ālam, The Regions of the World*, London 1937; Rev. ed. 1970, 161–162.

<sup>18</sup> Ibn Hurdādhbih, *Kitāb al-Masālik wa'l- Mamālik*. ed. M. J. De Doeje, Leiden 1889, 40.

<sup>19</sup> al-Mas’ūdī, *Murūj ad-Dahab wa Ma’adin al-Jawhar*, ed. Ch. Pellat, 7 vols. Beirut 1996, 1: 155.

<sup>20</sup> Golden also follows Minorsky’s view that the *Ānsa* of *Ḥudūd al-‘Ālam, The Regions of the World* is transformed from the *išan* that means “sacred” in the Khazar Kaghan, and is not the form so it cannot be attested with a kind of *Ašina* (P. Golden, *Khazar Studies: An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*. Budapest 1980, 219–221; T. Tamura, “9–10 seiki ni okeru hazaru no nijyuu ooken,” *Arabu isuramu kenkyuu* 5 (2006) 57, n.6). In other places, however, from indirect circumstances, Golden considers even now that the origin of the Khazar Kaghan could be the Old Turkic royal family *Ašina*.

### 3) *The historical background of the transformation of the Ašinas name from Inner Asia to Western Asia*

As mentioned above, the research into the root of this word requires us to consider the historical background in the early medieval period. First of all, we can say that after the death of the emperor of the Tang dynasty, Taizong, a Turkic leader, *Ašina Helo*, was appointed *totoq* of *Peiting* (Bišbalik) by the Tang dynasty. As the real ruler of the eastern wings, namely the *Tulu* tribes of the Western Turkic Kaghanate, he rose against the Tang dynasty in AD 651 and became *İshbara Baya Kayan*, and enlarged his political influence over the many tribes and oasis countries of the northern steppe of the Tianshan Mountains. In response to this rebellion, the Tang dynasty campaigned against *Ašina Helo* from three directions with the army of the *Ašina* family of the north Huanghu River and the Ordus regions and the Uyghur army of Mongolia under the control of the Tang dynasty. The rebellion was suppressed in 657, and the Tang dynasty appointed a nominal ruler titled *Ilteber* from members of the *Ašina*'s family and strategically governed the regional peoples of the steppe and oasis regions, and central Asia from Mongolia, north Tianshan and Sogdiana to Tocharistan. Thus the political system known as *Ce-fe* can be confirmed during the reign of the Türgish Kaghanate from at least AD 750 years.

At the same time, the Sogdiana and Fergana regions also began to be invaded by Muslim commanders and armies under the Abbasid dynasty. In this regard, we can see from the Sogdian and Chinese texts of the Karabalgasun stele that the Sogdiana people of Fergana were invaded by the Tajik peoples (Muslims) and asked for the sake of the Uyghur peoples of Mongolia, and the latter also went on campaign to help the Tajik peoples and battled with them.<sup>21</sup> On the date of this struggle, unfortunately, because of severe damage to the inscription we have no concrete data. But, according to the description of this stele, it can be dated to the period AD 780–820. From Islamic sources, we can mention several struggles in the second half of the eighth or the first half of the ninth centuries, as indicated by Minorsky.<sup>22</sup> These happened in AD 777, 806, 810 and 821, however, it is not possible to connect them with the events of the Karabalgasun stele. In my view, during these periods, the Old Turkic rulers or the elite people titled *Ašina Ilteber* were captured or bought by Muslim soldiers under the Abbasid dynasty, and were sold by the slave-merchants in the Sogdiana, Fergana or Khorāsān regions.

Thus, many Turkic leaders such as the *Ašina Ilteber* or other elite individuals must have been sold by the Abbasid dynasty through the slave markets of Sogdiana or Fergana, and then they could not help serving the Caliph in Bagdad, and then Samarra, as the military slaves (*Atrak*) known as *kul*, *gulām* and *mamlūk*. And at that time, we can assume that these Turkic leaders of the *Ašina* family took their original family name *Ašinas* as their personal name.

<sup>21</sup> Y. Yoshida, "Karabarugasun hibun no sogudoban ni tsuite," *Journal of Southwestern Asian history* [Kyoto University] 28 (1988), 27–29.

<sup>22</sup> V. Minorsky, "Tamīm ibn Baḥr's Journey to the Uyghurs," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 12:2 (1948), 301–303.

As a result, the personal name *Ašinās* of a commander in chief under the Abbasid dynasty can be traced back to the name of the *Ašinas* family of the Old Turkic Kaghanate.

4) *Etymology of Ašinas / Ašinas from morphological and semantic perspectives*

As for my hypothesis on *Ašina / Ašinas*, we can analyze them from the morphological and semantic points of view.

4.1) *Ašinas / Ašinas from the viewpoint of morphology.*

In my view, the original name of the royal family of the Old Turks can be *ašinas*, as indicated by the Khör-Asgat stele.

But there is no rule on vowel harmony in Iranian languages such as the Sogdian language, so this name can be registered as *ašinas* as shown in the Sogdian language of the Bugut and Karabalgasun steles; and this Sogdian form of the name has been succeeded as *ašnas* or *ašinas* in the Arabic sources such as Ṭabarī. According to the commentary of the translator, as noted above, the latter form may originate from a Persian form.

As to forms such as *Ānsa*, *Šaba*, *Šāna* and *Šāya* in other Islamic sources, however, at present I cannot say whether they have a connection with *Ašina / Ašinas* or not.

On these grounds, a Chinese form *A-ši-na* can be traced back to the Old Turkic form *ašinas*, however, the Sogdian alphabet and language were commonly used amongst the aristocracy in the first Old Turkic Kaghanate, so this form must have been recorded in the same form as the Sogdian form *ašinas* by the editors of the Old Chinese chronicles.

However, in the Old Chinese chronicles, *A-ši-na* is common notation. This may be a shortened form, without the 's' letter from the Sogdian form *ašinas*.

In my view, Chinese editors might avoid using four Chinese characters 阿史那 \**ʼā-sī-nā* (LMC) and one Chinese character that reflects a phonetic /s/, and prefer to express the family name as 阿史那\**ʼā-sī-nā* with three Chinese characters. It is probable that surveyors registered the family name not as *Ašinas* in Sogdian form, but as 阿史那\**ʼā-sī-nā* in Chinese form as a result of the omission of the basic form, that is, the Sogdian form *Ašinas* and the clan name 氏 \**zie*.<sup>23</sup>

Previously, some researchers have attempted to bind this etymology to a characteristic activity of selection of their leaders, such as the Turkic verbal stem *aš-/ašin-* "cross over, jump over"<sup>24</sup> for instance, the branch of a big tree, as shown

<sup>23</sup> Karlgren, *Grammata Serica Recensa*, 867a. According to Pulleyblank, this letter is reconstructed as \**tʃi* (LMC). E. G. Pulleyblank, *Lexicon of Reconstructed Pronunciation in Early Middle Chinese, Late Middle Chinese, and Early Mandarin*. Vancouver 1994, 404.

<sup>24</sup> According to the old Tujue legend of Suishu-84, among the brothers of the mother named *Ašina*, one of the youngest was finally selected as the tribal leader because he could jump highest to a branch of a big tree (ZS-50: 908). From this, on the etymology of this word, Boodberg supposed a hypothesis of a verbal stem *aš- / ašin-* meaning "jumping over" (Boodberg 1936; Cf. Mori 1967, 279, n.4).

in the section on the *Tujue* peoples in *Zhoushu*-50. However, I would like to pay attention to another legend in which the family name of a tribal leader's wife is given as *A-ši-na*. Though it is uncertain that women were selected as tribal leaders among Turkic nomadic peoples in pre-Turkic periods, it is noteworthy that, according to this legend from the Old Chinese chronicles, *A-ši-na* was a term that belonged to female lineages among the *Tujue*, as indicated by Klyashtorny.<sup>25</sup>

In relation to this, the tradition reminds us that in the Xiung-nu period, the ruler's wife was made 關氏 \**ʼât-zie*<sup>26</sup> (LMC) in the surveyed period of *Zhoushu* and *Suishu* (AD 630–640), that is, in the early Tang dynasty. The editors of *Suishu* explain that the Turkic title *katun* contemporarily compared with the old title of the sovereign's wife of the Xiung-nu 關氏 \**ʼât-zie* (LMC).

#### 4.2) Semantic point of view

At present, I cannot tell the original meaning, however I can say that during the first Old Turkic Kaghanate, it was considered to be connected with 關氏 \**ʼât-zie* (LMC) which means "wife of" 單于 \**tân-jiu*:<sup>27</sup>(LMC) < \**tân-giwo* (EMC) in the Xiung-nu (Xwn), and in the surveyed period this word might be regarded as the family name of a *Tujue* tribal woman ancestor of the *Tujue* peoples as shown in *Suishu*-84.

Under such a situation, at the period when *Suishu* was edited, that is, in the early Tang period, the problematic word was connected with 關氏 \**ʼât-zie* (LMC) which means "wife of the ruler" among the royal family of the Xiung-nu (Xwn) tribe, and this might be derived from \**aš* / *eš*, \**azhi* / \**ezhi* < \**ašin* / *ešin*, and \**azhün* / \**ezhin* that were borne by "wife of the ruler", so this can be originally considered as an Altaic kinship term. Shiratori Kurakichi considered this etymology as a Tsungus kinship word *aši*, and proposed the historical process *ači* < *ačun* < \**hatun* < \**khatun* < *katun* among Turkic and Mongolian words as well as \**asun*/\**asi* < \**hasun* < \**khasu* < \**kasun* < \**katsun* among the Tungus words.<sup>28</sup>

The final element *-as* of *Ašinas* might be the plural suffix *-(a)s* in the case of *känjäräs* 'Kangar, Kangli' (KT, E39) which consists of the tribal name *känjär* + plural suffix *-(ä)s* as proposed by Marquart, Melioranskii and others.<sup>29</sup>

This word can be also confirmed in the form *känkäräs* as a former variation in N3 of the Tes inscription (dated AD 750).<sup>30</sup> in Mongolia. And the same plural usage can be confirmed from the case of *-s* of the Old Turkic title *išbara-s* in Old

<sup>25</sup> Klyashtorny, *Древнетюркские Рунические Памятники*. 112.

<sup>26</sup> Karlgren, *Grammata Serica Recensa*, 270a, 867a.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 147a, 97a.

<sup>28</sup> K. Shiratori, "Tookominzokukoo (On the nomad peoples of eastern Asia)," (in Japanese), *Shiratori Kurakichi Zensyuu* 4, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo n. d., 137–138.

<sup>29</sup> Klyashtorny, *Древнетюркские Рунические Памятники*. 164–165.

<sup>30</sup> T. Ōsawa, "Tes Inscription," in T. Moriyasu and A. Ochir, *Provisional Report of Researches on Historical Sites and Inscriptions in Mongolia from 1996 to 1998*, Toganaka 1999, 158–167.

Turkic inscriptions as attested in the runic inscriptions of Terkh (Tariat), W6-7, and Šine-Ušu, S2.

### *Conclusion*

Thus, from the philological and historical points of view, the name of the Old Turkic royal family in Chinese form, *A-ši-na*, may have been translated from the Sogdian form *Ašinas* through the close contact between Turks and Sogdians, and could be pronounced basically as *Ašinas* with vocal harmony in the old Turkic Kaghanate and Uyghur Kaghanate periods.

After the invasion of the Sogdiana and Fergana regions by Tajik peoples, the local rulers, titled *A-ši-na Ilteber*, were captured and taken from there and made to serve the Abbasid dynasty as slave-warriors named *Atrak* in Bagdad and Samarra, and they were registered as *Ašinas* after their original family name.

As to the etymology of *Ašinas*, in my view, according to the old legend, their mother originally had the *A-ši-na* name, so this family name may originate from *\*Aši* of Tungus words and *\*Ači* of Turk-Mongolian words among the Altaic peoples.

# On the Attributes of Heroic Virtue (Valor, Glory, Heroic Name) in Heroic Poetry and Ancient Turk Texts

L. N. ERMOLENKO (*Kemerovo State University, Russia*)



In heroic epic poetry of diverse languages and historical periods one can distinguish a stratum of notions of non-material values that serve as marks of heroic virtue (glory, valor, heroic name). Glory is one of the most ancient epic concepts. A. I. Zaytsev wrote that research in comparative linguistics has reconstructed the motif of "eternal glory" in pre-Indo-European poetry as "the central motif of heroic epos from its earliest forms".<sup>1</sup> The motifs of glory, glorious name and valor occur in the Homeric epos.<sup>2</sup>

In the *Mahabharata* – the most ancient Indian epic – the heroic or greatest valor was often mentioned in connection with the murder of an enemy in battle.<sup>3</sup> The murder of an enemy is the most significant act and merit of a warrior in the *Mahabharata*, thus there are epithets such as "one who overwhelms (destroys) enemy heroes", "destroyer of most selected enemies", "destroyer of enemies", "one who overwhelms the Kshatriyas". Glory is also connected with the military valor. The *Mahabharata* contains the notion that glory is granted in a mortal combat destroying not only body but also sins, the virtuous being taken to heaven.<sup>4</sup> Glory is regarded as resulting from death in battle. Ya. V. Vassilkov and S. L. Neveleva in their commentaries to a translation of *Karnaparva* stress that the following contrast often appears in the *Mahabharata*: "warriors losing their body (*deha*) in battle, acquire glory (*yaśas*) instead".<sup>5</sup> The bodies of those who perished spread "sacred glory to all ten sides of the world",<sup>6</sup> their glory fills "the entire space of the

---

<sup>1</sup> A. I. Zaytsev, "Praindoevropeiskie istoki drevnegrecheskogo eposa," in *Problemy antichnogo istochnikovedeniya*, Moscow–Leningrad 1986, 96.

<sup>2</sup> Zaytsev, "Praindoevropeiskie istoki," 65, 68; I-V. Shtal', *Gomeroovskiy epos. Opyt tekstologicheskogo analiza «Iliady»*. Moscow 1975, 146, 154.

<sup>3</sup> *Mahabharata. Kniga sed'maya. Dronaparva ili kniga o Drone*. Perevod s sanskrita i komentarii V. I. Kal'yanova, Sankt-Peterburg 1993, 9, 141, 210.

<sup>4</sup> *Mahabharata Kniga vos'maya. O Karne (Karnaparva)*. Perevod s sanskrita, predislovie i kommentariy Ya.V. Vassilkova i S. L. Nevelevoy, Moscow 1990, 119.

<sup>5</sup> *Mahabharata* 1990, 255, n.192.

<sup>6</sup> *Mahabharata* 1993, 74.



world".<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, in the *Mahabharata* glory is considered not only as posthumous. Karna states: "Whether I shall sacrifice myself in battle, accomplishing a feat of arms, or otherwise, shall I overpower foes, all the same I shall gain glory ... I shall achieve the greatest glory in the world...!"<sup>8</sup> Sometimes glory is associated only with victory over an enemy. Shalya tells Karna: "If you win, then eternal glory will be yours, If you are overcome, heaven is still ready for you."<sup>9</sup> A characteristic feature of glory is light. Surviving warriors, having vanquished their enemies, are aglow with glory (together with battle heat).<sup>10</sup> The military banner of Arjuna also flames with glory.<sup>11</sup>

In the Iranian epic *Shahnama* glory is also connected with military feats – the murder of an enemy in combat. With hope set on the arrival of Kai-Khosrow, Goodarz urges the warriors: "Keep your bloody burthen – Foes vanquished by you in battles; we shall appear with them before *shah*; and then glory and honor will fall to our share".<sup>12</sup> Hunting on enemy territory is also regarded as a glorious action. Give offers Rostam wishes to enjoy themselves hunting in Afrasiab's domain: "In Turan steppes we shall hunt to our heart content, so that the world will ring with our fame".<sup>13</sup>

The motif of glory is not exclusively an Indo-European phenomenon, it is also noted in some Turkic and Mongolian epics. In the Yakut *Olonho* epos and historical legends the expressions "(high, great, loud) glory" are often mentioned along with "(terrible, glorious, good) name", both of these can be attributes of epic heroes and heroines, their enemies and even of beautiful brides. Heroic name and glory by themselves are expected to frighten foes. Abaasy rebukes Er Sogotokh: "Neither my terrible name, / nor my loud glory fearing, / not frightened by your fate, / you ... arrived here".<sup>14</sup> The glory and name of *Olonho* heroes are so weighty that "even a horse is unable to raise them", "even a bull is unable to move them".<sup>15</sup> The high glory of a hero decreases as he is oppressed by an enemy, suffers damage, defeat and, on the contrary, increases as he wins a victory. The dying Abaasy blesses his enemy: "You won, so let your glory rise".<sup>16</sup> Yakut

<sup>7</sup> *Mahabharata* 1990, 123.

<sup>8</sup> *Mahabharata. Kniga Tret'ya. Lesnaya (Aranyakaparva)*. Perevod s sanskrita, predislovie i kommentariy Ya.V. Vassilkova i S. L. Nevelevoy, Moscow 1987, 574.

<sup>9</sup> *Mahabharata* 1990, 207.

<sup>10</sup> *Mahabharata* 1993, 39.

<sup>11</sup> *Mahabharata* 1990, 232.

<sup>12</sup> *Firdowsi. Shakhname. Tom tretiy. Ot skazaniya o bitve Postema s khakanom China do tsarstvovaniya Lohraspa*. Perevod Ts. B. Banu-Lahuti. Kommentarii A. Azera i Ts.B. Banu-Lahuti. 2-e izdanie, ispravlennoye, Moscow 1994, 318.

<sup>13</sup> *Firdowsi. Shakhname. Tom pervyi. Ot nachala poemy do skazaniya o Sokhrabe*. Izdanie podgotovili Ts. B. Banu-Lahuti, A. Lahuti, A. A. Starikov. 2-e izdanie, ispravlennoye, Moscow 1993, 443.

<sup>14</sup> *Yakutskiy geroicheskiy epos. «Moguchii Er Sogotokh»*. Novosibirsk 1996, 231.

<sup>15</sup> *Stroptiviyi Kulun Kulluustuur. Yakutskoye olonho*. Perevod A. A. Popova i I.V. Pukhova, Moscow 1985, 466; cf. *Yakutskiy geroicheskiy epos*, 95.

<sup>16</sup> *Yakutskiy geroicheskiy epos*, 365; cf. 253, 259.

historical legends reflect the belief that a warrior gives up his high name to the enemy who overcomes him and consigns him to the earth. Tisikaen Byogyo, having become aged, decides: "Now I am aged, nearby no strong man was born deserving to bury my bones. Rather than yield my high name to them [enemies who fled but who can return. – L. E.], allowing them to bury me, I had better grant this honor to myself", – after that he went to a hill of his alas, dug a hole for himself and, having covered himself with earth, buried himself alive this way".<sup>17</sup> In other cases, enemies express to the glorious warriors their intention "to hit ... each other's chest and perform [a] dance of victory ... over the high name".<sup>18</sup> In legends glory is connected not only with the murder of a famous warrior, but also with marrying a beautiful woman.<sup>19</sup> In Buryat epics there occurs a formulaic expression of the greatness of heroic name and glory: "My name is well-known, / My glory is loud!".<sup>20</sup>

The Old Turkic (mainly Orkhon Turkic) runic inscriptions maintain evidence of the concept of "glory" among the Old Turks. The inscription of Tonyukuk runs that he was an companion to the Ilterish in knowledge and in glory (*čab*).<sup>21</sup> But further on it is stated in a more concrete way: "... their [Turkic people. – L. E.] Khagan is a hero (*alp*), and his counsel is a wise man (*bilgä*)".<sup>22</sup> Küli-chor is also said to have become after five battles (Khagan's?) "associate in knowledge (*bilgä*) and in military valour (*čab*) (glory. – L. E.); he was a hero (*alp*) and powerful man (*bögä*)".<sup>23</sup> The inscription in honor of Kül Tegin tells about the name (*at*) and glory (*kü*) of the Turkic people.<sup>24</sup> The inscription in honor of Bilgä Kagan suggests that the Old Turks ascribed the notions of the (well known) name and glory to the Chinese as well: "In the south among Tabgachs their name (*at*) and glory (*kü*) perished".<sup>25</sup> According to the interpretation of I. L. Kyzlasov, an inscription found near the Mugur-Sargol highway tells of the destruction of the glory (*kü*) of a thousand (definitely, enemy) heroes.<sup>26</sup> In the epitaph of Tonyukuk and the Ongin

---

<sup>17</sup> *Istoricheskie predaniya i rassказы yakutov. V dvukh chastyakh. Chast' 1. Izdanie podgotovil G. U. Ergis. Moscow; Leningrad 1960, 222.*

<sup>18</sup> *Istoricheskie predaniya i rassказы yakutov, 256.*

<sup>19</sup> *Istoricheskie predaniya i rassказы yakutov, 221.*

<sup>20</sup> *Buryatskiy geroicheskiy epos «Alamji Mergen molodoy i ego sestritsa Aguy Gohon», Sost. M. I. Tulokhonov. Novosibirsk 1991, 145.*

<sup>21</sup> S. E. Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti. Teksty i issledovaniya. Moscow-Leningrad 1951, 61–65.*

<sup>22</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti, 61–67.*

<sup>23</sup> S. E. Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti Mongolii i Kirgizii. Moscow-Leningrad 1959, 27–29.*

<sup>24</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti, 31–40.*

<sup>25</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti Mongolii i Kirgizii, 17–22.*

<sup>26</sup> I. L. Kyzlasov, "Novye svidetelstva uiguro-khakasskikh vojn IX veka," *Sovetskaya Arheologiya* 3 (1979), 280.

inscription the word "glory" (*kü, külüg*) is used in the expression "glorious (brave) men".<sup>27</sup>

The Yenisei Turkic inscriptions give its due to valor (*erdäm*) or heroic valor (*er erdäm*). And the first monument from the valley of the Chaa-Hol River emphasizes the public status of valor: "My heroic valor (*er erdäm*) I gave up to the service to my state..."<sup>28</sup> In the inscription on Tuvinian stele D a deceased hero declares that his valor pertains not only to his state but also to his khan.<sup>29</sup> In a monument from the valley of the Abakan river, valor (*erdäm*) is mentioned in connection with the khan's reward – promotion in status.<sup>30</sup> For the sake of valor, the heroes of some Yenisei inscriptions set off as ambassadors,<sup>31</sup> their mission occasionally ending in death.<sup>32</sup> They fight for the sake of valor.<sup>33</sup> It is obvious that heroic valor is connected to the murder of an enemy. Uyük-Oorzak inscription 1 reads: "My acquisitions for my people [consist in] in my military valor: I killed fifteen men".<sup>34</sup> It can be compared with the burial mound Bai-Bulun (the second monument): "My heroic valor (*er erdäm*). My belt with forty-two (high ranking) decoration clasps! I killed thirty heroes (*er*) among enemies!"<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, the murder of an enemy is a matter of "state" significance. "To the divine state my benefit is brought: I destroyed nine [enemy] men (*er*)", runs the text of the second monument from Kyzyl Chyraa, the epitaph of Külüg Togan.<sup>36</sup> In other Yenisei texts it is not stated whether the person whose name or title is accompanied with the epithet *külüg* has military merit.<sup>37</sup> In general, the murder of an enemy is made a merit of the deceased as, for instance, in the inscription from the river Oya known as the "monument to a hero (*er*)",<sup>38</sup> or emphasis is placed on the death of a hero in a battle.<sup>39</sup> The monument by the settlement of Ochury tells of the death of a hero allegorically, as the death of his valor.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti*, 63–68; Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti Mongolii i Kirgizii*, 9–11.

<sup>28</sup> S. E. Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*. Teksty i perevody. Moscow–Leningrad 1952, 35–36, 83.

<sup>29</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 100.

<sup>30</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 94–95; cf. Valour "causes" rising: *ibid.* 62–63.

<sup>31</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 57–58.

<sup>32</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 59.

<sup>33</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 79.

<sup>34</sup> Z. B. Chadamba, D. D. Vasilyev, "Tyurkskie runicheskie nadpisi Uyük-Oorzak," *Novye issledovaniya po arkheologii Tuvy i etnogeneze tuvintsev* (1980), 134.

<sup>35</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 97.

<sup>36</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 80.

<sup>37</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 17, 21–23, etc.

<sup>38</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 52, 94–95.

<sup>39</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 26, 55.

<sup>40</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 49.

In some Old Turkic texts there appear combinations of the notions of heroism (*alp*) and valor-bravery (*erdäm*).<sup>41</sup> Both of them are linked with glory. Küli-chor, who “fought Tabgachs so much” is reported to be “... equally glorious for his heroism and bravery”.<sup>42</sup>

Either coupled with words meaning valor (*erdäm*, *er erdäm*) or by itself the “heroic name” or “heroic (manly, courageous) name” (*er ati*) is often mentioned in runic texts. The first monument from the valley of the river Baryk contains the expression *er erdäm ati*.<sup>43</sup> The issue of the monument from the valley of the Ak-Yus river is yet great heroic name (*ulug er ati*).<sup>44</sup> The would-be military leader Kül-tegin received his heroic name (*er ati*) at the age of 10.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, the monument of Hemchik-Chirgaky bears testimony that the deceased, for the sake of acquiring a heroic name (?) committed seven feats in battle overseas.<sup>46</sup> For the purpose of immortalizing a heroic name a posthumous “eternal” monument was constructed, according to the inscription from the valley of the Abakan river.<sup>47</sup>

A heroic man, a warrior himself, is usually called in Old Turkic inscriptions *er*, sometimes *alp er*,<sup>48</sup> or occasionally *bögä*, *bükä*<sup>49</sup> and *batur*.<sup>50</sup> S. G. Klyashtorny considers that the notion *er* (“man-warrior”) was applied to all men in Old Turkic society who had a man’s name (*er ati*).<sup>51</sup> I. L. Kyzlasov supposes that name, *tamga*, bowl and belt were the attributes of the *er*, which he received “during the ceremony of appellation of an adult name” (*er ati*).<sup>52</sup>

The men-warriors of the Old Turkic inscriptions served the *kagan/khan* and the *el*. Klyashtorny writes: “The guarantee of well-being of ‘eternal *el*’ was the *kagan* selected by heaven, and fidelity to the *kagan* of *begs* and ‘all the people’ was declared as the main condition of *el*’s existence”.<sup>53</sup> In these conditions the notions “glory”, “valor” and “heroic name” connected to the idea of benefit of *el* and the *kagan/khan* were to assume official importance. (And it seems these notions did not always bear military sense.) On the other hand, these notions are close to epic

<sup>41</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti Mongolii i Kirgizii*, 27–28; Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 60–61.

<sup>42</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti Mongolii i Kirgizii*, 27–29.

<sup>43</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 21.

<sup>44</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 68.

<sup>45</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti*, 31–40.

<sup>46</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 73.

<sup>47</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 96.

<sup>48</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 53.

<sup>49</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti Mongolii i Kirgizii*, 27–29; Kyzlasov, “Novye svidetelstva uiguro-khakasskikh vojn IX veka,” 280.

<sup>50</sup> Malov, *Yeniseiskaya pismennost' tyurkov*, 56.

<sup>51</sup> S. G. Klyashtorny, D. G. Savinov, *Stepnye imperii drevnei Evrazii*. Sankt-Petersburg 2005, p. 153.

<sup>52</sup> I. L. Kyzlasov, “Runicheskie nadpisi na dvukh poyasnykh nakonechnikakh,” *Drevnosti Altaya. Izvestiya laboratorii arkheologii, Gorno-Altaysk* 6 (2001), 137.

<sup>53</sup> S. G. Klyashtorny, “Obraz kagana v orkhonskikh pamyatnikakh,” *Folia orientalia* 36 (2000), 171.

ones. Researchers have repeatedly paid attention to similar features in both the Old Turkic epitaphs and the heroic poetry of modern Turkic peoples. I. V. Stebleva, who carried out the reconstruction of the poetic form of Orkhon and Yenisei texts, stated:

'Glorification of the past of the Kök Turk people, legendary and epic image of kagans, creation of the hero knight Kül-tegin image typical of that period, testify that Orkhon texts were created under the influence of retinue epic (*druzhinniy epos*), developed in the military leader's environment. In respect of genre they can be regarded as historical heroic poems.'<sup>54</sup>

The authors of papers devoted to revelation of the stylistic and conceptual similarity of epics – of the Altai,<sup>55</sup> Yakut<sup>56</sup> and Turkic peoples of Siberia and Central Asia<sup>57</sup> – and of Orkhon-Yenisei inscriptions are unanimous in recognizing such similarity. At the same time they point out a different folkloric source reflected in the poetics of Old Turkic texts. S. S. Surazakov supposes that "the stylistic source" (for both Orkhon inscriptions and epics) could have been found in "lofty, ... pathetic speech" – a folk genre which emerged in high antiquity and survived up to the present day.<sup>58</sup> P. A. Troyakov considers runic inscriptions to contain "echoes of a specific historical epos" which emerged logically in the process of development of the oral epic tradition.<sup>59</sup> N. E. Petrov, having collated the poetic forms of Olonho and Orkhon inscriptions, comes to the conclusion that both of them were created "within the tradition of ancient heroic epos". The author admits that this tradition might have been of Hun origin.<sup>60</sup>

The ideas of N. E. Petrov on antiquity and continuity of heroic-epical tradition of Turkic peoples seem to me quite reasonable. The conclusion that the tradition of Turkic Mongolian heroic epos dates back to the period of early nomads was drawn earlier by M. P. Gryaznov (1961). He detected analogies to the heroic epic motifs of modern Turkic and Mongolian peoples in representational monuments of Scythian and the Hun-Sarmatian period from South Siberia and Mongolia. Developing M. P. Gryaznov's approach I have tried to prove the existence of a

<sup>54</sup> I. V. Stebleva, "Drevnyaya poeziya," in *Pamyatniki drevnikh tyurkov VI-XII vekov*, Perevod A. Prelovskogo, Stikhotvornaya rekonstruktsiya, nauchnyi perevod, sostavlenie, vstupil' naya stat' ya, komentarii I. V. Steblevoy. Moscow 1993, 8.

<sup>55</sup> S. S. Surazakov, "Skhodnye cherty stilya v orkhonskikh nadpisyakh i epose tyurkoyazychnykh narodov: (Na primere altaiskogo eposa)," in *Tipologiya narodnogo eposa*, Moscow 1975, 5–20.

<sup>56</sup> N. E. Petrov, "O stikhotvornoy forme olonho i eie svyazi s poeziei orkhonskikh tyurkov," *Sovetskaya tyurkologiya* 5 (1979) 41–49.

<sup>57</sup> P. A. Troyakov, "Analogii geroicheskomu eposu tyurkoyazychnykh narodov v orkhono-yeniseiskikh pamyatnikakh," in *Fol'klor i istoricheskaya etnografiya*. Moscow 1983, 74–88.

<sup>58</sup> Surazakov, "Skhodnye cherty stilya v orkhonskikh nadpisyakh," 259

<sup>59</sup> Troyakov, "Analogii geroicheskomu eposu tyurkoyazychnykh narodov," 87.

<sup>60</sup> Petrov, "O stikhotvornoy forme olonho," 49.

centuries-long representational tradition, whose source was found in heroic epics, among ancient and medieval nomads.<sup>61</sup> The evidence of this tradition could be the representations in works of art of such epic motifs as struggle, hunting, feasting (subject constitutive ones) and, more particularly, though universal, those of fury, blood-thirstiness, laceration-combat, etc., significant in the descriptions of an epic hero, his horse and weapons. To prove the existence of certain epic motifs (as well as formulas, metaphors, epithets) at a particular historical period I have also investigated written sources, including Old Turkic inscriptions. As a result, besides analogies to attributes of heroic virtues and, in particular of glory, I have succeeded in revealing in (Orkhon) inscriptions parallels to one of the fundamental motifs of the heroic epics – the motif of fury.<sup>62</sup> For example, the comparison of an army with fire in Old Turkic texts obviously corresponds to the burning metaphor of fury in epics. The inscription of Tonyukuk tells of enemies, the Türgesh people, who “... came *flaming as fire*”.<sup>63</sup> The epitaph devoted to Kül Tegin tells that the army of Türgesh khan came “like *fire and wine*”,<sup>64</sup> while the text of the monument to Bilgä kagan runs as follows: “The army of Türgesh khan approached like *fire and whirlwind*”.<sup>65</sup> The latter two passages reveal associations of military valor with intoxicating drink, and that of fury with the natural element of wind, associations of this kind being widespread in epic poetry.

As a whole, the analogies with heroic epos in runic inscriptions testify, in my opinion, not only to the existence in the public consciousness of categories identical to epic ones, but also to a certain role of the “epic mentality” in forming the official ideology of Old Turkic literate societies.

---

<sup>61</sup> L. N. Ermolenko, *Izobrazitel'nie pamyatniki i epicheskaya traditsiya: po materialam kul'tury drevnikh i srednevekovykh kochevnikov Evrazii*. Tomsk 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Ermolenko, *Izobrazitel'nie pamyatniki*, 101, 222, etc.

<sup>63</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti*, 69

<sup>64</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti*, 41.

<sup>65</sup> Malov, *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pis'mennosti Mongolii i Kirgizii*, 21.

# *Pioneers of Archaeological Research on Nomads in Medieval South Siberia*

S. A. TEPLOUKHOV, S. V. KISELYOV and L. YU. KITOVA  
(Kemerovo State University, Russia)



The archeological monuments of South Siberia (the territory between the middle reach of the Chulym river in the west, the Biryusinsk Plateau in the east and the West and East Sayan Mountains in the south) have attracted researchers' attention for a long time. Research in Siberian archaeology began with the academic expeditions of the eighteenth century; however the beginning of identification of medieval nomadic monuments in South Siberia was marked with the studies by V. V. Radlov in the second half of the nineteenth century. He was the first to translate Orkhon and Yenisei inscriptions and also the first to suggest a general archaeological periodization for burials from the Bronze Age to the mounds of the Yenisei Kirghiz,<sup>1</sup> although it is now considered outdated. A. V. Adrianov made his contribution to studying mounds of the *chaatas* type (*chaatas* - "war-stone", the Khakass local word for clannish cemeteries of the Yenisei Kirghiz).

S. A. Teploukhov made a breakthrough in Siberian archaeological study, starting in the 1920s. He developed the first scientific classification of the archaeological cultures of the Minusinsk basin,<sup>2</sup> which generally retains its scientific significance up to the present. Teploukhov identified a total of thirteen cultural and chronological stages from the Early Bronze Age to the medieval period. To reach a better understanding of the historical situation in the Minusinsk Basin in the medieval period, Teploukhov referred to Chinese chronicles. As a result, the medieval materials in his periodization acquired a relative chronology and ethnic association, and constituted the four final stages of this cultural and chronological scheme.

The tenth cultural stage is represented by mounds of the *chaatas* type. Teploukhov described the surface burial constructions known as *chaatas* as round, low mounds of stone surrounded with big, tall stones. Body burials are rare in these shallow quadrangular holes, more often small calcinated bones were buried. Among the grave goods, high narrow-necked vessels of well washed clay

---

<sup>1</sup> V. V. Radlov, *Iz Sibiri: Stranitsy dnevnika*. Moscow 1989, 410-480.

<sup>2</sup> S. A. Teploukhov, "Drevnie pogrebeniya v Minusinskom krae," *Materially po etnografii*. 3:2 (1927).

with stripes of impressed ornament made on a potter's wheel are distinguished. Teploukhov dated *chaatas* cemeteries to the fifth–seventh centuries AD. He considered that at that period the Kirghiz settled in the Minusinsk region more or less firmly.<sup>3</sup>

Teploukhov connected the beginning of a new, eleventh, stage with the conquest of the Yenisei Kirghiz by the Turks in the seventh century. This stage is characterized by single graves under high stone banks. In the grave found by Teploukhov in a saddleback by the river Tashtyk, there was a burial in an extended position oriented towards the north-west, near it, in the south-west part of the hole, there was a horse skeleton. Grave goods consisted of iron three-bladed arrowheads, iron and bronze buckles with tongue, decorated bone plates from a quiver, iron stirrups, etc. Burying a man together with a horse, a rite typical of nomads, was a new type of archeological monument for the Minusinsk region. Teploukhov suggested that this grave belonged to one of the Altai Turks, who had appeared in that region in the seventh century.<sup>4</sup>

Graves covered with small stone banks and clustered into cemeteries were related by Teploukhov to the twelfth stage. Burials of men both with and without horses were found in the graves. The grave goods are represented with iron and bone buckles, snaps from harnesses or snaffle bits, copper facings for vessels, iron adzes and drabbles, as well as ornaments of Chinese origin. A stone sculpture of that period depicts a man dressed with a belt and holding a vessel in his hands. Teploukhov correlated archeological monuments of the twelfth stage with tumultuous events of the history of South Siberia: the conquest of the Yenisei Kirghiz by the Uyghur in the eighth century and then a new rise of the Kirghiz in the ninth–tenth centuries.<sup>5</sup>

The cemetery of Saragashinskiy descent not far from the village of Bateni belongs to the latter stage (eleventh–twelfth centuries). "In earth holes under slabs, sometimes in the covering of thin boards, there were single skeletons put on their backs". Of all the grave goods Teploukhov specifically noted iron hissing arrowheads and iron drabbles with big rings.<sup>6</sup>

Besides his research in the Minusinsk Basin, Teploukhov also headed the Tuva archaeological expedition in 1926–1927 and 1929. The goal of the expedition was to study monuments in Tuva and establish their cultural and historical periodization. Tuva is situated south of the Sayan mountains, which represent the physical and geographical border between northern and central Asia. Teploukhov believed (especially after his work in P. K. Kozlov's Mongolian expedi-

---

<sup>3</sup> S. A. Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kraja," *Materially po etnografii* 4:2 (1929), 54–55.

<sup>4</sup> Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kraja," 55.

<sup>5</sup> Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kraja," 55.

<sup>6</sup> Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kraja," 58.



tion) that studying monuments of the region was extremely important for a better understanding of the cultural influence of central Asia on northern Asia. According to Teploukhov, the cultures that developed in Tuva over quite a long period of time differed from the cultures of the Minusinsk Basin and were more closely connected economically with the cultures of the Mongolian steppes. He believed that the peoples of the steppe performed the role of middlemen in exchange trade between the civilized southern countries making and selling metal goods and the tribes of the northern Asia forest area who supplied furs.<sup>7</sup>

The classification of Tuvinian burial constructions by Teploukhov was quite provisional and included six groups of burial monuments of the Iron Age. The fifth and sixth groups were related to the medieval period. The fifth group of monuments consisted of graves and holes for sacrifices covered with stone banks and containing rich grave goods, which enabled him to date them to the Tang period (seventh–tenth centuries AD). He dated the final, sixth, group of burials to the seventeenth–eighteenth centuries. Teploukhov found no similar late monuments in the Minusinsk Basin, and their presence in Tuva helped to supplement the classification of metal cultures of the Minusinsk region.<sup>8</sup>

In his papers, Teploukhov proposed a number of interesting concepts, many of which were not completely clear to scholars until recently. Having a considerable training in the natural sciences and being a follower of the paleoethnological approach, he considered it necessary to carry out a complex study of people and the environment in which a social culture developed. According to Teploukhov, it is only by these complex paleoethnological studies in Asia that is possible to solve “such fundamental issues as human origins, movements of peoples, the emergence and spreading of this or that culture and cultural influence, and their alternation”.<sup>9</sup> Nowadays this complex approach to a research phenomenon is promoted as the primary and most promising one.

Besides, in modern Russian science the method of archaeological microdistrict study has become a very popular one. In the 1920s Teploukhov was the first to apply it to studying and systematizing archaeological monuments in South Siberia, having selected for his excavations a site with a territory of 6×12 kilometers, near the village of Bateni in the center of the Minusinsk Basin on the left bank of the Yenisei.

Teploukhov was the first Russian archeologist to propose an ecological approach to archaeological study. He placed great significance on the natural environment within which the archaeological cultures of South Siberia were formed. For instance, Teploukhov believed that the diverse landscape types of the Minusinsk region created a beneficial economic foundation for human society. He

<sup>7</sup> Gosudarstvennyy arkhiv permskoj oblasti, st. 613, list 3, doc. 167, f. 1–2.

<sup>8</sup> «Arkheologicheskaya Tuvinskaya ekspeditsiya (1929 g. Ruk. S.A. Teploukhov),» in *Otchet o deyatel'nosti Akademii Nauk SSSR za 1929 g. Otd. 2. Otchet o nauchnykh komandirovkakh i ekspeditsiyakh*, Leningrad 1930, 14–16.

<sup>9</sup> Teploukhov, “Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kraja,” 41.

regarded this region as a contact zone and considered its study "a key to understanding the ancient cultures of the whole of Northern Asia".<sup>10</sup> The Minusinsk region, in Teploukhov's opinion, possessed very rich raw material resources: "land rich in wild animals and game birds, excellent pastures, fertile soils, ... rich ore mines".<sup>11</sup>

He repeatedly emphasized the determining influence of the geographical environment on historical processes as a whole as well as on the development of ancient and medieval communities in particular.

Firstly, Teploukhov considered that the unusual diversity of the natural environment in the Minusinsk Basin saved the local population from the severe consequences of climate fluctuations. Secondly, he believed that "the mountains and forests were familiar to the local population, while not being an insuperable obstacle for partial immigration of certain elements of culture into the Minusinsk Basin and for relations between the local population and the rest of the world". At the same time he supposed that in the early periods these natural borders were insurmountable for "the mass migration of peoples and for the entire penetration of alien cultures",<sup>12</sup> and that the main movements of tribes started in the period of migration of peoples.<sup>13</sup> Thirdly, he regarded ancient people as part of nature and noted the influence of natural factors on the formation of social stratification. Fourthly, within the context of concepts of anthropological geography, Teploukhov defined the very reasons for migration: "There are reasons to believe that periodic changes in climate conditions of Asia were the reason for migration of peoples".<sup>14</sup>

Teploukhov stated the dependence of the area of habitation of a particular ethnos on the geographical borders of a region. He wrote: "Cultural and general zones also coincide with natural regions viewed in historical perspective. However wide were the fluctuations of ethnic borders in different periods of the life of Northern Siberian and Central Asian peoples, eventually they always stopped at the geographical borders".<sup>15</sup>

Unfortunately, in 1933 Teploukhov was prosecuted for political reasons, his scientific activity was cut off while it was still on the rise, his concepts were forgotten for several decades. After all, Teploukhov's term "cultural and economic zones" (*kul'turno-bytovye zony*) was a forerunner of the modern concept "econom-

---

<sup>10</sup> Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kra-ya," 41-42.

<sup>11</sup> Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kra-ya," 57.

<sup>12</sup> Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kra-ya," 57.

<sup>13</sup> Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kra-ya," 49.

<sup>14</sup> GAPO, st. 613, list 3, doc. 167, f. 2.

<sup>15</sup> Teploukhov, "Opyt klassifikatsii drevnikh metallicheskih kultur Minusinskogo kra-ya," 41-42

ic and cultural types".<sup>16</sup> His ecological approach prompted D. G. Savinov to distinguish "cultural and ecological areas" and to study in full the natural environment and culture of early medieval societies of central Asia and South Siberia.<sup>17</sup>

The next great contribution to studying medieval nomads in South Siberia was made by S.V. Kiselyov. From 1928 to 1940 Kiselyov conducted systematic research in Khakassia and the Minusinsk region as well as in Altai. As a result he multiplied the volume of historical data many times over. Together with his wife and colleague, L. A. Evtyukhova, Kiselyov studied archaeological monuments from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages over twelve field seasons. In the course of his research he found and explored Kirghiz burials, which became fundamental for archaeology: among them the burials at Malye Kopyony and Tes', the Uibatsky *chaatas*, and the Kirghiz settlement near Malye Kopyony. Along with written sources, Kiselyov made use of archaeological sources for historical reconstruction. He was the first to describe the task of studying the class social order and process of state formation among the Yenisei Kirghiz.

His decades-long research allowed Kiselyov to compose a fundamental work, *The Ancient History of South Siberia*, in which archaeological sources complemented and redefined the data from Chinese manuscripts.

In 1934 in Altai, Kiselyov studied Old Turk fences with sculptures in the locality of Kulada on the river Karakol.<sup>18</sup> One of the most wide-scale researches was carried out on the Chuisky high road in 1935.<sup>19</sup> Following S. A. Teploukhov, Kiselyov paid special attention to the natural and climatic conditions of ancient people's lives, and that is why he selected the Kuray steppe for his excavations. Wide-scale work in a valley in the middle reach of the Chuya river was undertaken due to the fact that in this area, rich in natural resources, there were great opportunities for extensive cattle breeding in ancient times and in the Middle Ages. The district was rich in diverse archaeological monuments and in a few locations was cut with ancient irrigation channels. Kiselyov believed that this territory was more closely connected with the south, with the steppes of the higher Chuya, joining with the steppe areas of north-western Mongolia. He considered studying relations between Altai and the central Asian South to be one of the most urgent tasks of Russian archaeology.<sup>20</sup> During one field season, he excavated twenty-three mounds of the "runic script age". The evidence of burial ceremonies and grave goods enabled him to date these monuments back to the Old Turkic period. Besides, Old Turkic stone fences were studied.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> M. G. Levin, N. N. Cheboksarov, "Khozyaistvenno-kul'turnye tipy i istoriko-etnograficheskie oblasti (K postanovke voprosa)," *Sovetskaya etnografiya* 4 (1955), 3-17.

<sup>17</sup> D. G. Savinov, G. V. Dluzhnevskaya, *Ekologiya i kul'tura rannesrednevekovykh obshchestv Tsentral'noy Azii i Yuzhnoy Sibiri*. Saint-Petersburg 2008, 5, 211-225.

<sup>18</sup> S. V. Kiselyov, "Iz rabot Altaiskoy ekspeditsii Gosudarstvennogo istoricheskogo muzeya v 1934 g." *Sovetskaya Etnografiya* 1 (1935), 98.

<sup>19</sup> *Arkhiv Instituta istorii material'noy kultury RAN*, st. 2, list 1, 1935, doc. 161.

<sup>20</sup> GARM Archive, inventory no. 59-43, f. 28.

<sup>21</sup> S. V. Kiselyov, "Nekotorye rezul'taty Sayano-Altayskoy ekspeditsii 1936 g." *Vestnik drevnei istorii* 1 (1936), 282-284; *Idem*, "Kurayskaya step' i Staro-Bardinskiy rayon, 1935

Kiselyov accomplished excavations of Old Turkic mounds near Tuekta. In his opinion, they differed more in the social status of the buried than chronologically. On these grounds, Kiselyov proposed that this differentiation could be correlated to a traditional Old Turkic stratification into noble people, free armed people and the layer of slaves deprived of rights.<sup>22</sup> This model is typical of social concepts of the 1930s, nevertheless it does not detract from virtues of the researcher's works.

The main location of excavations in 1936–1938 was the Uibat *chaatas* cemetery, where Tashtyk and Old Kirghiz burials dominated.<sup>23</sup> His research into one of the late groups of Tashtyk burials enabled Kiselyov to reveal a connection between the Tashtyk and Old Kirghiz cultures:

“... burial ceremony, ... analogies in ceramics and burial constructions with earlier Tashtyk ones make us suppose that burials found by us, being of late Tashtyk period, are dated presumably by the time before the fifth century, and at last we find in them a relation between classical ‘Tashtyk’ and the age of stone mounds, the culture of Turkic tribes named in the Orkhon inscriptions as ‘Kirghiz’.”<sup>24</sup>

Simultaneously with excavating rich Tashtyk burials, wide-scale excavations of large mounds of the Kirghiz nobility were carried out for the first time.<sup>25</sup> Excavation of a significant number of Old Khakass mounds showed that the ceremony and structure of burial construction were the direct continuation of Tashtyk tradition. Kiselyov saw the proof of continuity between magnificent burials of the Tashtyk nobility and Kirghiz graves rich in grave goods as well.<sup>26</sup>

As a result of his investigation of the Uibat *chaatas* cemetery, a vast collection of archaeological material for the least studied period in the history of the Minusinsk region (the first millennium AD) was created. According to Kiselyov, it was in that period that the formation of the Khakass ethnos was taking place. He came to the conclusion that the Tashtyk culture was the foundation for the formation of Old Khakassian (Kirghiz) culture. The results he obtained, on the one hand, enabled Kiselyov to disprove the longstanding paradigm of the isolated character of the development of the Minusinsk region and to draw parallels in the historical development of certain regions (Sayan, Altai, Mongolia), and, on the other hand, supported the thesis of the indigenous character of the majority of Khakass people.

---

god,” in *Arkheologicheskie issledovaniya v RSFSR 1934–1936 gg.* Moscow-Leningrad 1941, 298–304.

<sup>22</sup> S. V. Kiselyov, “Sayano-Altayskaya arkheologicheskaya ekspeditsiya v 1937 g.” *Vestnik drevnei istorii* 2 (1938), 238.

<sup>23</sup> Kiselyov, “Kurayskaya step’ i Staro-Bardinskiy rayon, 1935 god,” 306–308.

<sup>24</sup> S. V. Kiselyov, “Nekotorye rezul’taty Sayano-Altayskoy ekspeditsii 1936 g.” *Vestnik drevnei istorii* 1 (1937), 250.

<sup>25</sup> *Arkhiv Instituta istorii material’noj kultury RAN*, st. 2, list 1, 1936, doc. 255.

<sup>26</sup> S. V. Kiselyov, “Sayano-Altayskaya arkheologicheskaya ekspeditsiya v 1938 g.” *Vestnik drevnei istorii* 3 (1939), 256.

In view of all of the above, it is rather odd to find in modern papers statements like this: "Employment of other scholars' findings by Kiselyov virtually without any changes is quite natural as his work had mainly reviewing and summarizing character".<sup>27</sup>

Kiselyov was the first Russian archaeologist to describe in detail the characteristics of the economy of the Yenisei Kirghiz, which combined various kinds of economic activities: cattle breeding, farming, handicrafts and trading,<sup>28</sup> and thus he showed its complex character. For the first time, through integrating archaeological and historical sources, Kiselyov restored the general picture of the social order and state system of the Kirghiz, under which people were not yet completely dependent on the nobility. Whereas Radlov identified 'el' with the people, Kiselyov believed that *el* was an entity of the steppe nobility headed by the Kirghiz Kagan.<sup>29</sup> Certain sections of his work cover the mental culture of the Kirghiz.<sup>30</sup>

A separate chapter of Kiselyov's monograph *The Ancient History of South Siberia* is devoted to the Altai Turks. The scarcity of written evidence of the Altai Turks of the eighth–tenth centuries increases the significance of the archaeological monuments investigated by Kiselyov. He was the first to distinguish three chronological groups of medieval burial constructions in Altai, and to carry out comparative analysis of material culture of the Orkhon and Altai Turks.<sup>31</sup> In the long run, Kiselyov not only introduced for scientific use new archaeological materials obtained from his excavations, but he also conducted one of the first historical reconstructions of the life of South Siberian medieval nomads.

Thus, both Teploukhov and Kiselyov made significant contributions to the study of medieval nomads. They were the first to systematize archaeological records and thus to create the periodization of medieval monuments. They also conducted the comparative analysis of written and archaeological sources and suggested new approaches to the study of nomadic culture, approaches that are successfully applied by modern researchers.

---

<sup>27</sup> S. A. Vasyutin, P. K. Dashkovskiy, *Sotsialno-politicheskaya organizatsiya kochevnikov Tsentral'noy Azii pozdney drevnosti i rannego srednevekov'ya (otechestvennaya istoriografiya i sovremennyye issledovaniya*. Barnaul 2009, 138.

<sup>28</sup> Kiselyov, *Drevnyaya istoriya Yuzhnoy Sibiri*. Moscow 1951, 568–593.

<sup>29</sup> Kiselyov, *Drevnyaya istoriya Yuzhnoy Sibiri*, 593–596.

<sup>30</sup> Kiselyov, *Drevnyaya istoriya Yuzhnoy Sibiri*, 604–635.

<sup>31</sup> Kiselyov, *Drevnyaya istoriya Yuzhnoy Sibiri*, 488–558.

# *Alans in Khazaria and Khazars in Alania*

On the Nature and Role of North Iranian Elements  
in the Khazar Empire\*

AGUSTI ALEMANY

(*Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain*)



Three hundred years is a long time in steppe history – it is the time that elapsed, for example, between the rise of Genghis Khan and the downfall of the Golden Horde, and also between the consolidation of the Khazar state after the first war with the Arabs and the fall of Bela Vezha to the Rus. However, while the Mongol conquests had an enormous impact on world history and in this way they attracted the attention of contemporary chroniclers of all kinds and origins, the Khazar kingdom was a regional power lying far beyond the frontiers of its sedentary neighbors – over the Black Sea and north of the Caucasus – and for this reason it often looms up in the distance and through the mist of legend because of the lack of eyewitness accounts. Even the more or less trustworthy reports which have come down to us are usually restricted to information about diplomatic relations and warfare; and this is why most often the Khazars appear in the sources as a monolithic entity, in spite of evidence for their heterogeneous composition or origin.

The subject of my paper will be the nature and role of North Iranian elements in the Khazar empire.<sup>2</sup> I must say that I bring no solutions to long-lasting problems and I think that it would be suspicious if I did, given the lack of actual evidence and, at least for now, my limited access to Russian literature. My aim is to call into question some hypotheses, old and new, and the way in which we approach the study of poorly attested periods of Eurasian history.

---

<sup>1</sup> Paper funded by the Catalan research group 2009SGR18 and the Spanish research project FFI2010-18104.

<sup>2</sup> As a justification for this paper, cf. e.g. P. B. Golden, *Khazar Studies. An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 2 vols., Budapest 1980, 93: "one of the most important of the steppe peoples to play a role in North Caucasian and Khazar history were the Alans, a people of Iranian origin"; also his "Cumanica III: Urusoba," in D. Sinor, ed. *Inner Asia: History, Civilization, Languages*, Indiana 1990, 44: "we should not doubt, however, that Iranian nomads remained in the Pontic steppes and formed an important substratum in the Turkic peoples that took shape in Western Eurasia".

First of all, we should ask ourselves: what is an Alan? This ethnic name is scattered throughout the sources for a period of some fifteen centuries, but it is obvious that it cannot stand for the same reality during all of this time. From the scarce evidence we can conjecture that about the beginning of the first millennium AD a confederation of nomadic tribes was formed in the west Eurasian steppes under the sway of a Sarmatian elite, maybe invoking a common “Aryan” origin.<sup>3</sup> The dynamics of nomadic empires, however, suggest that this confederation was probably short-lived; and, in fact, it is unknown for how long the term “Alan” was in use as a self-designation, although it remained as the current exonym for the Iranian-speaking nomads of southern Russia for centuries to come.

According to Ammianus Marcellinus, who wrote towards the end of the fourth century, “the Alans inhabit the measureless wastelands of Scythia and, like the Persians, they have gradually incorporated the bordering peoples, weakened by repeated victories, under their own national name”.<sup>4</sup> This is the only extant record of an Alanic supremacy over the steppe and such an account fits well with our idea of a nomadic empire, but the list of nations conquered by the Alans is disappointing, since it consists of six peoples already known to Herodotus eight centuries before and consequently it is highly suspect as being a literary elaboration instead of a first-hand report:<sup>5</sup>

Ammianus	<i>Neroi</i>	<i>Vidini</i>	<i>Geloni</i>	<i>Agathyrsi</i>	<i>Melan-chlaeni</i>	<i>Anthrophagi</i>
Herodotus	Νευροί	Βουδῖνοι	Γελωνοί	Αγάθυρσοι	Μελάγχλαινοι	Ἀνδροφάγοι

Moreover, we are informed about this Alanic empire shortly before its downfall at the hands of the Huns and, in spite of a plethora of sources detailing the activities of Alan groups in Europe and Africa during the *Völkerwanderung*, there are almost no records about the Alanic tribes which remained in the Pontic steppes from then on.

In his account, Ammianus states that “the Huns, after spreading through the regions of the Alans ... killed and plundered many of them and joined the survivors to themselves after forming an alliance”.<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding this brief report, there is a close similarity between this and later, better-known episodes in steppe politics: here we can suppose a combination of drastic military action and sys-

<sup>3</sup> A hypothesis based on the fact that the kingdom of *Yancai* 奄蔡國 changed its name to *Alan(liao)* 阿蘭(聊) in the first century AD according to *Hou Hanshu* 88 and on the etymology \**allān* < \**aryāna*- (first given by F. C. Andreas in R. Gauthiot, *Essai sur le vocalisme du sogdien*, Paris 1913, iii).

<sup>4</sup> Amm. 31.2.13: *in immensum extentas Scythiae solitudines Halani inhabitant ... paulatimque nationes conterminas crebritate victoriarum attritas ad gentilitatem sui vocabuli traxerunt ut Persae.*

<sup>5</sup> The table is a comparison of Amm. 31.2.14 with Hdt. 4.104-109. In this sense, see J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*, 2nd ed. Ann Arbor 2007, 334-335.

<sup>6</sup> Amm. 31.3.1: *Huni pervasis Halanorum regionibus ... interfectisque multis et spoliatis reliquos sibi concordandi fide pacta iunxerunt.*

tematic redistribution of the vanquished throughout conquered territories and among different military units in order to break tribal loyalties.<sup>7</sup>

However, our sources say nothing in this (or any other) respect and, after the dissolution of the Hun empire, the involvement of the Alans in the Byzantine-Persian wars of the sixth century is the only event shedding some light on their fortunes amidst the rising tide of newcomers like Oghurs, Avars and Türküt. Once more, Menander Protector is the only author claiming that the Alans had become subject to the Türküt towards AD 575, at least according to the boast of Turxanthus (or *Türk-šad*, a title rather than a name).<sup>8</sup> More than a century ago, Kulakovskij already observed that there was no mention of the Alans in Byzantine writers for the whole period from the sixth to the eighth centuries and accordingly concluded: "it is highly probable that this circumstance is in connection with the fact that the Alans were subject to the Khazars by then".<sup>9</sup>

In this context I would like to quote here an inspiring passage by Professor Lars Johanson with which I completely agree. In his opinion,

"the old nomadic complexes were linguistically and ethnically heterogeneous, comprising elements of different origin. The known designations refer to the representative groups of the tribal confederacies, but do not tell us which tribes were included. The ethnic or linguistic affiliation of a constituent tribe is not necessarily identical with that of the leading elite group of the complex. Titles are not limited to specific linguistic groups. Given the heterogeneous composition of the nomadic complexes, it is often impossible to determine with which tribes or under which tribes Turkic-speaking groups appeared in the Caucasus area."<sup>10</sup>

Following this argumentation, it can be assumed that, either by force or agreement, the remnants of the former Alanic *entente* found a place in the new formations which held sway over southern Russia, but by merging with the latter they escaped the attention of the chroniclers, who generally identified steppe empires with their ruling elites. However, Kulakovskij's assertion must be clarified: there is effectively only one Byzantine source for the whole of the seventh and eighth centuries, the Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor, and during this pe-

<sup>7</sup> My inspiration for this passage comes from P. Jackson, "The Mongol Age in Eastern Inner Asia," in N. di Cosmo, A. J. Frank and P. B. Golden, eds. *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia. The Chinggisid Age*, Cambridge 2009, 34. We are faced with different periods, but probably with similar methods.

<sup>8</sup> Men. fr. 19.1 (ed. R. C. Blockley, Cambridge 1985, 176-177) ταύτη τοι καὶ ὑπακούουσιν ἡμῖν καὶ ἐν μοίρα καθεστήκασι δούλου "so they [= Alans and Unigurs] are our subjects and are numbered amongst our slaves".

<sup>9</sup> Ю. Кулаковскій, *Аланы по свидѣніямъ классическихъ и византийскихъ писателей*, Киевъ 1899, 49.

<sup>10</sup> L. Johanson, "On the Roles of Turkic in the Caucasus Area," in Y. Matras, A. McMahon and N. Vincent. *Linguistic Areas. Convergence in Historical and Typological Perspective*. Houndmills 2006, 163.



riod both the struggle with the Arab caliphate and the iconoclast controversy probably left little room for interest in faraway regions if they were not directly concerned with Byzantium. On the other hand, there is no need for an *argumentum ex silentio*, since additional evidence is provided by Eastern sources: for example, (1) a legendary report by the Syriac patriarch Michael the Great on the origin of the Khazars associates them to “the country of the Alans, which is called Barsālia” (*l-atrā d-Alān, d-meṭqrē Barsāliyā*);<sup>11</sup> (2) Muslim sources on the Second Arab-Khazar war often mention the land of the Alans (اللان *al-Lān*) and the Darial pass (باب اللان *Bāb al-Lān* “the Gate of the Alans”) as its theater of operations; and (3) a passage in a letter by the Khazar *khagan* Joseph (a list of peoples) recalls the fact that all the Alans up to the border of \*Abkhazia were tributary to him.<sup>12</sup>

Unfortunately, none of these sources allows us to infer at what time, for how long and to what extent the Alans were subject to the Khazars and this is, of course, a crucial question. Gadlo suggested that “Alania preserved complete independence up to the middle of the seventh century”,<sup>13</sup> while Novosel’cev even argued that the Alans were never a part of the Khazar khaganate, since the sources present them as “an independent political subject, now acting in alliance with the Khazars (more often), now inclining to the side of Byzantium or the Caliphate”.<sup>14</sup> But the latter are very rare cases and the example he gives of an alliance with the Arabs is his own interpretation of a short entry in al-Ṭabarī’s *History* which states that in the year 103/721-2 “the Turks made a raid against al-Lān”, with no further comment.<sup>15</sup>

In fact, as already noted by Kulakovskij, there is an exception to the silence of Byzantine sources as well: Theophanes’ passage on the journey of the *spatharios* Leo (later Emperor Leo III) to Alania (ἐν Ἀλανίᾳ) in order to stir up the Alans (πρὸς τὸ συγκινηῖσαι τοὺς Ἀλανοὺς) against Abasgia, which was held by the Arabs

<sup>11</sup> Michael Syrus (ed. J.-B. Chabot, i-iii, Paris 1899-1910; Vol. 2: 391-392) on Kazarig, eponymous ancestor of the Khazars during the reign of the Byzantine emperor Maurice (582-602); cf. F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, “Michael der Syrer über das erste Auftreten der Bulgaren und Chazaren,” *Byzantion* 28 (1958), 105-118; D. M. Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars*, Princeton 1954, 5, 43.

<sup>12</sup> Khagan Joseph’s letter (ed. П. К. Коковцов, *Еврейско-хазарская переписка в X веке*. Ленинград 1932, 31: כולם נותני מס הם לי ... כולם נותני מס הם לי *wə-kōl ’Alanīm ’ad gabūl ’Afkan ... kōlīm nōtnē mas hēm lī* “all the Alans up to the border of \*Abkhazia ... all of them are tributary to me”; 101-102 “все аланы до границы Аф-кана ... все платят мне дань”; 105, n. 13 אפכאן ’Afkan must be a mistake instead of אפכאז ’Afkaz); cf. S. A. Pletnjowa, *Die Chasaren. Mittelalterliches Reich an Don und Wolga*, Leipzig 1978, 156.

<sup>13</sup> А. В. Гадло, *Этническая история северного Кавказа IV-X вв.* Ленинград 1979, 164.

<sup>14</sup> А. П. Новосельцев, *Хазарское государство и его роль в истории восточной Европы и Кавказа*. Москва 1990, 106.

<sup>15</sup> Al-Ṭabarī (ed. M. J. de Goeje, i-iii, Leiden 1879-1901; 2: 1437) وفيها أغارت الترك على اللان *wā-fihā ’aḡārati ’t-Turk ’ala al-Lān* (not an invasion, in which case the verb فتح *fataha* would be used). Maybe a *casus belli* of the Second Arab-Khazar war (Dunlop, *Jewish Khazars*, 61-62); the terms *Turk* and *Ḥazar* are virtually interchangeable (cf. Golden, *Khazar Studies*, 51-52). I am grateful to Àlex Queraltó Bartrés for his help in this footnote.

(Σαρακηνοί), during the second reign of Justinian II Rhinotmetus (705–711).<sup>16</sup> A certain Itaxes is mentioned during a skirmish against the Abasgians and he is labeled as “lord” (κύριος) of the Alans.<sup>17</sup> The question arises whether Itaxes was a king or just a military chief: while the context, in my opinion, favors the second option and the word κύριος is not a usual word for “king”,<sup>18</sup> Kulakovskij concluded that “the Alans at that time lived under the rule of national *kings* (подъ управлениемъ национальныхъ царей) and took part in international relations quite irrespective of the Khazar khagan”.<sup>19</sup> Maybe Artamonov was closer to the real thing when he spoke here about *chiefs* (вожди) who “operated according to their private interest” and “were ready to join Byzantine service only for a good reward”.<sup>20</sup> In any case, one episode without a clear background and probably associated with an individual group and a concrete time cannot fill all our gaps for two centuries. There is again no clear evidence for an Alanic kingdom in the sources until the ninth century.

Sometimes our lack of information has been replaced by hazardous etymologies with no better results. According to al-Mas’ūdī, the *Arsīya* (الارسية), the standing army of the Khazar *khagan*, were migrants from the region around Khwārazm.<sup>21</sup> Minorsky compared *Arsīya* with the Alan ethnic name *Ās* and the ancient tribe of the *Aorsi*;<sup>22</sup> and Lewicki went further and read the form as \**Orsīya* or \**Ursīya*, linking it to Digor *opc*, Iron *ypc* “white” (maybe “western”).<sup>23</sup> But there is almost no evidence for Transcaspians Alans in the sources,<sup>24</sup> we know nothing more about the Aorsi after the first century AD and there is no additional source

<sup>16</sup> Theoph. 600B-604B (ed. C. de Boor, *BT* i-ii, Lipsiae 1883-1885; 1: 391-393).

<sup>17</sup> Text: τῷ Ἰταξῆ τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτῶν “under their *lord* Itaxes”; according to J. Marquart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge*, Leipzig 1903, 168, the Persian title *bidaxš* “vice-roy”.

<sup>18</sup> Theophanes makes use of κύριος “lord, master, sir” mostly in the formula ὁ κύριος (*sic*) Βουλγαρίας, applied to several Bulgar rulers (Kubrat, Tervel, Pagan, Telerig, Kardam). According to C. Mango and R. Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, Oxford 1997, 547, n. 5, “Theoph. appears to reproduce a contemporary source” on Leo’s Caucasian mission.

<sup>19</sup> Кулаковскій, *Аланы*, 51.

<sup>20</sup> M. И. Артамонов, *История Хазар*, Санкт-Петербург 2002<sup>2</sup> (1962<sup>1</sup>), 363-364.

<sup>21</sup> Al-Mas’ūdī *Murūğ ad-dāḥab* II 10-12 (ed. Ch. Pellat, 5 vols., Beirut 1966-74; §§ 450-452).

<sup>22</sup> V. Minorsky, *A History of Sharvān and Darband in the 10th-11th centuries*. Cambridge 1958, 147, n. 1.

<sup>23</sup> T. Lewicki, “Un peuple iranien peu connu: les \**Arsīya* ou \**Orsīya*,” *Hungaro-Turcica. Studies in Honour of Julius Németh*, Budapest 1976, 31-33 (Polish version: “\**Arsīya* / \**Orsīya* – mało znany lud irański”, *Studia Indo-Iranica*, Kraków 1983, 75-77).

<sup>24</sup> Evidence for Transcaspians Alans is very meager: the Alan raid of AD 72 through Hyrcania against Media (Ios. *Bell. Iud.* 7.244-251) and later Ferdūsī’s “fortress of the Alans” (الانان *Alānān dez*) and al-Bīrūnī’s “tribe of the Alans and *Ās*” (جنس اللان والاس) *gīns al-Lān wa’l-Ās*), both close to the Oxus/Amū Daryā; for brevity, see my *Sources on the Alans. A Critical Compilation*, Leiden 2000, 91-93, 252-253, 348-352.

proving any kind of relation between Alans and *Arsīya*.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, Novosel'cev was probably right when saying that "this is only a hypothesis".<sup>26</sup>

In a similar way, the name of the town Astrakhan was explained by Marquart as coming from *Ās-tarḥan* "the Tarkhan of the Ās", that is to say, the commander of the Alanic troops in the Khazar army,<sup>27</sup> a conjecture followed by Vernadsky,<sup>28</sup> Artamonov<sup>29</sup> and even by Trubačëv as "most likely" in his revised translation of Vasmer's *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*.<sup>30</sup> However, the origin of it all is a Khwārazmian mercenary who commanded the Khazar forces which invaded Transcaucasia in 764, named *Ās-Tarḥān* (استرخان) by al-Ṭabarī, but *Rās-Ṭarḥān* (راس طرخان) by Ya'qūbī and *Řaž T'arxan* (Ṛažd Ṛurḥuulu) by Lewond.<sup>31</sup> And if the name is not all clear, besides we are told surprisingly that this general attacked the Alan country in the neighborhood of Darial.<sup>32</sup> Maybe "Alanic troops attacking Alan territory" could be a nice subject for a *Namengeschichte*, but I think that the reconstruction of history cannot rest entirely upon etymologies, as in this case.

After some three hundred years of silence, we find the first clear mention of an Alan kingdom after the Byzantine-Persian wars in the notice on the journey of the interpreter Sallām to Khazaria after crossing the land ruled by the "king of the Alans" (ملك اللان *malik al-Lān*) under Caliph al-Wāṭiq-billāh (842-47) by the mid-ninth century.<sup>33</sup> The Cambridge Document, speaking from the Khazar side, tells us that "the kingdom of Alan is the strongest and the hardest of all the nations which are around us",<sup>34</sup> and in fact remembers an Alan-Khazar war under King

<sup>25</sup> *Status quaestionis* in Golden, "Cumanica III", 41-43.

<sup>26</sup> Новосельцев, *Хазарское государство*, 120.

<sup>27</sup> J. Marquart, "Ein arabischer Bericht über die arktischen (uralischen) Länder aus dem 10. Jahrhundert," *Ungarische Jahrbücher* 4 (1924), 271.

<sup>28</sup> G. Vernadsky, *The Origins of Russia*, Oxford 1959, 93: "the commander of the Alanic troops [in the Khazar army] was known as the *As-tarkhan*. A detachment of the Alanic army must have been stationed in a fort at the mouth of the Volga. This fort eventually became a city which still stands – Astrakhan".

<sup>29</sup> Артамонов, *История Хазар*, 360: "the Tarkhan of the As (*As-tarxan*) occupied a prominent position in the Khazar state and participated in the Khazar-Arab wars. The fact that Byzantium stirred up the As together with the Ghuzz and Pechenegs against the Khazars shows that the As kept autonomy in the structure of the Khazar kaganate and, not wishing to accept Khazar dominion, at the earliest opportunity they opposed it".

<sup>30</sup> М. Фасмер, *Этимологический словарь русского языка*, i-iv, Москва 1986-1987, Vol. 1: 96, s.v. *Астрахань*: "скорее всего, из тюрк. *As-tarxan* «начальник асов, алан» (в Хазарском каганате), т. е. первоначально, возможно, ставка аланского военачальника".

<sup>31</sup> Sources collected and commented by Golden, *Khazar Studies*, 151-54 sub § 7 *As Tarxan*.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Dunlop, *Jewish Khazars*, 180, n. 43.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn Ḥurdaḡbih 138 (ed. M. J. de Goeje, *Bibliotheca geographorum Arabicorum*, VI, Leiden 1889, 163); also recorded by Ibn Rusta, al-Muqaddasi and many others, cf. H. Göckenjan and I. Zimonyi, *Orientalische Berichte über die Völker Osteuropas und Zentralasien im Mittelalter. Die Ġayḥānī-Tradition*, Wiesbaden 2001, 25-26.

<sup>34</sup> Cambridge Document, fol. 1v, l. 22 מלכות אלן עזה ו קשה מכל האומות אשר סביבותינו *malkūt 'Alan 'azzāh wə-qašāh mi-kōl hā-'ummōt 'ašer sebiḇōtēnū*; cf. N. Golb and O. Pritsak, *Khazarian*

Aaron, which agrees with the fact that, according to Constantinus Porphyrogenitus, the ruler of Alania (ὁ ἐξουσιοκράτωρ Ἀλανίας) could attack the Khazars and plunder the nine regions of Khazaria (τὰ ἐννέα κλίματα τῆς Χαζαρίας) if he thinks preferable the friendship of the Byzantine emperor (μᾶλλον προτιμωτέραν τιθεμένου τὴν φιλίαν τοῦ βασιλέως Ῥωμαίων).<sup>35</sup> A similar statement can be found in al-Mas'ūdī, who says that "the lord of the Alans is mighty, very strong and influential among the kings".<sup>36</sup> All together this suggests a progressive independence from Khazar rule, and the kingdom of Alania was to achieve a certain notoriety at a regional level until the Mongol conquests, which also speaks in favor of the survival of North Iranian elements during the Khazar period.

One difficult question is the division between Alans and As. It has been broadly accepted that the Don forest-steppe variant of the Saltov culture was related to the Alans. Its origin has been generally explained as a penetration of Alans from Ciscaucasia into the Don basin, but its circumstances are controversial: a retreat under Khazar pressure in the seventh century (Ljapuškin), a migration from regions ravaged by the Arab armies in mid-eighth century (Pletněva) or a resettlement by force on the northern border of the khaganate by the Khazar government in the second half of the eighth century (Mixeev) are the main proposed solutions;<sup>37</sup> but all of them are hypotheses and interpretations not supported explicitly by any source. On the other side, Artamonov concluded that the bearers of the Saltov culture probably coincided with the As people and held the destruction of this culture to be a reprisal by the Khazars, who did not hope to keep them under their rule in view of the constant Pecheneg threat.<sup>38</sup> All in all it is highly speculative, especially taking into account that we are told nothing about the geographical location of the As, Asia, Azia or the like during the Khazar period, and that the sources that could link this ethnic name with the Saltov culture, mostly the Old Russian chronicles on the Ясы and maybe Abū'l-Fidā', belong to or deal with a later period.<sup>39</sup>

---

*Hebrew Documents of the Tenth Century*, Ithaca NY and London 1982, 112-113, 134-137. I am grateful to Mariona and Eulalia Vernet for their help with the Hebrew text.

<sup>35</sup> Const. Porph. *De Adm. Imp.* 10-11 (ed. Gy. Moravcsik, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*, Vol. 1. Dumbarton Oaks 1967, 62-65).

<sup>36</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī *Murūğ* II 45 (ed. Pellat, § 480) وصاحب اللان ... ذو منعة وباس شديد وذو سياسة بين الملوك *wa-ṣāhib al-Lān ... dū mana'at wa-bās šadīd wa-ḏū siyāsāt bain al-mulūk*. Cf. Minorsky, *Sharvān and Darband*. 107 "in the tenth century the strongest force in the central part of Northern Caucasus was the Iranian Alāns, who most probably counted a number of Caucasian tribes among their vassals"; Новосельцев, *Хазарское государство*, 105 "Alania (was) the largest North Caucasian political formation of the Early Middle Ages [...] the Alans were the force by means of which the Khazars came out victors in the complex struggle for hegemony in the North Caucasus".

<sup>37</sup> As summarized by С. А. Плетнёва, *Очерки хазарской археологии*, Москва 1999, 24-25.

<sup>38</sup> Артамонов, *История Хазар*, 359-361.

<sup>39</sup> Both the Laurentian and the Hupatian chronicles *sub* 6624 (*Полное Собрание Русских Летописей* I, Санкт-П. 1926-28, 291; II, Санкт-П. 1908, 284), when dealing with Jaropolk's Cuman campaign of 1116, speak of Ясы on the river Don; as for Abū'l-

As a sample of the problems posed by the comparison of sources and archeological records, I would like to summarize briefly some ideas about the division between east and west Alania which I proposed at the Barcelona conference in 2007.

Kovalevskaja,<sup>40</sup> as early as 1958, suggested that “apparent contradictions in written sources regarding both alliances and hostile relations of the Alans with Byzantium were explained by the fact that there were two groups of Alan tribes in the Northern Caucasus, western and eastern, differing in their political sympathies and orientation”. This assertion, followed by Artamonov,<sup>41</sup> was the starting point for further speculation, and two distinct political entities have been conjectured after the division of Alania – like Georgia and Armenia – in the Byzantine and Persian areas of influence. Kuznetsov went further and even suggested that “there is some ground to think that the inner ethnopolitical structure of Alania was historically characterized by a developed dualism, running through the whole history of Alania and reflected in the present-day division into Western-Digor and Eastern-Iron Ossetians”.<sup>42</sup>

АРТАМОНОВ, КОВАЛЕВСКАЯ, КУЗНЕЦОВ	Western Alania = Digor Ossetia Pro-Byzantine	Eastern Alania = Iron Ossetia Pro-Persian
--	--	---

For me, there is enough evidence in sixth-century sources, if not for two political entities, then at least for two groups of tribes that clearly sided with either Byzantium or the Sasanians. However, problems appear when we try to perpetuate this division beyond the sixth century, since we have no further information and the geopolitical map of the Middle East experienced important changes after the period of Islamic expansion. Moreover, any attempt to identify these western and eastern Alans with modern Digor and Iron Ossetians is an oversimplification with no basis in real facts. Looking for a historical parallel, the situation of the peoples of the northern Caucasus, always trapped between Great Powers, reminds me of the role played by the Iroquois and Algonquin Indian nations during the French and Indian War, the North American theater of the eighteenth-century Seven Years War. The present-day Ossetians are the last stage of a much more complex reality and, most probably, continuous strife, high casualties,

---

Fidā' (13th–14th century), he makes a distinction between العلان *al-'Allān*, east of Abkhazia, and, next to them, the “Turkic” الامس *al-Ās* (*Taqwīm al-buldān*, ed. J.T. Reinaud and W. MacGuckin de Slane, Paris 1840, 203). As far as I know, Marquart (*Streifzüge*, 164) was the first to propose that *al-Ās* = steppe Alans and *al-'Allān* = Caucasus Alans.

<sup>40</sup> В. Б. Ковалевская, *Кавказ и Аланы*, Москва 1984, 133.

<sup>41</sup> Артамонов, *История Хазар*, 361: “the Alans consisted of a number of tribes, but basically they were divided in two groups – eastern and western, Iron and Digor”; 363 “in the sixth century the western part of the Alans was closely connected with Abkhazia and through it with Byzantium, while the eastern one generally backed the Iranian side”.

<sup>42</sup> В. Кузнецов, *Очерки истории Алан*, Владикавказ 1992, 92; cf. V. Kouznetsov and I. Lebedynsky, *Les Alains. Cavaliers des steppes, seigneurs du Caucase*. Paris 2005<sup>2</sup>, 143.

slaughters, migrations and/or deportations led to the dissolution of some tribes and the creation of new ones, all in all far-reaching changes of which often no record has survived.

In a similar way, Zuckerman<sup>43</sup> linked the data contained in the seventh-century Armenian Geography *Ašxarhac'oyc'*<sup>44</sup> with later Arabic geographical tradition, concretely Ibn Rusta's account of the existence of four - otherwise unknown - Alan tribes<sup>45</sup> (only the name of the leading tribe, رخساس *D. ḥsās*, has been preserved).<sup>46</sup> This new approach produced a fourfold division into two western groups, *Alank'* and *Aš-Tigor*, the former allies of Justinian, and two eastern, pro-Persian ones, *Dik'or* and *Awsurk'*. Furthermore, my good friend Dima Korobov was able to identify these four groups archeologically in the Upper Kuban, the Kislovodsk basin, Kabardino-Balkaria and the Upper and Middle Sunzha after the results of his research on catacomb cemeteries dated between AD 450 and 740.<sup>47</sup>

ZUCKERMAN ( <i>Ašxarhac'oyc'</i> , Ibn Rusta)	Western, Pro-Byzantine		Eastern, Pro-Persian	
	<sup>1</sup> <i>Alank'</i>	<sup>2</sup> <i>Aš-Tigor</i>	<sup>3</sup> <i>Dik'or</i>	<sup>4</sup> <i>Awsurk'</i>
KOROBOV (catacomb cemeteries)	Upper Kuban	Kislovodsk basin	Kabardino- Balkaria	Upper and Middle Sunzha

A detailed study of the relevant passage in *Ašxarhac'oyc'* will appear in the proceedings of the Barcelona conference.<sup>48</sup> For now, let it suffice to say that this is an obscure source, existing in both a long and a short version, depicting Caucasia,

<sup>43</sup> C. Zuckerman, "Les Alains et les As dans le Haut Moyen Âge," *Nartamongæ. The Journal of Alano-Osetic Studies* 2 (2003), *Nartamongæ. The Journal of Alano-Osetic Studies* 2 [2003] 151: "les <sup>1</sup>Alains et <sup>2</sup>la partie occidentale des Ases digoriens, devenue «un peuple des Alains», composent l'Alanie alliée à l'empire de Justinien. <sup>3</sup>L'autre partie des Ases digoriens et <sup>4</sup>les Ases «tout court» (*\*Awsurk'*) s'allient à l'est avec la Perse" (superscript numbers are mine).

<sup>44</sup> *Ašxarhac'oyc'* Long Recension [LR], ed. A. Soukry, Venice 1881, 26 = Venice Manuscript No. 1245, 40-41, and Short Recension [SR], ed. A. Abrahamyan, Yerevan 1944, 347. English translation and erudite commentary by R. H. Hewsen, *The Geography of Ananias of Širak (Ašxarhac'oyc')*. *The Long and Short Recensions*. Wiesbaden 1992, 55-55A.

<sup>45</sup> Ibn Rusta (ed. M. J. de Goeje, *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, VII, Leiden 1892, 148).

<sup>46</sup> Often corrected to رخساس *\*Ruḥs-Ās* and compared to the ancient *Rhoxolani* (as early as R. Bleichsteiner, "Das Volk der Alanen," *Berichte des Forschungsinstitut für Osten und Orient* 2 (1918), 15, "edle Asen" = Roxolanen). Just a play on names without further evidence like *Arsīya* / *Ās* / *Aorsi*.

<sup>47</sup> D. S. Korobov, "On the areas of the North Caucasus settled by Alanic tribes according to archaeological data and written sources," in *Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans. Iranian-Speaking Nomads of the Eurasian Steppes*, proceedings of a conference held in Barcelona on May 7-10, 2007 (forthcoming).

<sup>48</sup> A. Alemany and I. Arzhantseva, "*Alanica Bilingua: Sources vs. Archaeology. The Case of East and West Alania*," in *Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans* (forthcoming).

according to Hewsens, as it was prior to the mid-seventh century.<sup>49</sup> The text in question is basically a list of peoples, with several variant readings, which makes the geographical setting ambiguous:

(a) the ethnic name of the "Alans" (*Alank'*), for example, is given twice as *Atowank'* "Albanians" (although this is most probably a mistake);

(b) it is not clear if we must read *azg \*Alanac' Aš-Tigor* as "the nation of the Aš-Tigor Alans" or "the nation of the Alans and the Aš-Tigor";

(c) there is no need to see two different groups in the *Aš-Tigor* and the *Dik'or* in the Ardoz country, which could be part of each other (if *Tigor* and *Dik'or* = "Digor");

(d) most important, the fourth group, the *Awsurk'*, is a correction by Eremian instead of the manuscript readings *p'owrk'* (LR) or *ap'owrk'* (SR), with the additional problem of the duplicity *Aš-* in *Aš-Tigor* & *Aws-* /*Ös-* / in *Awsurk'*.

(e) on the other side, the text mentions the *Dowalk'*, generally regarded as the Ossetian *Twaltæ*, but they are not granted the rank of "Alanic tribe" by Zuckerman, although they were probably known to Ibn Rusta and the *Hudūd al-Ālam* as *طولاس Tūlās* or *\*T(u)wal-Ās*.

In short, everything we know about the peoples mentioned in this passage from the *Ašxarhac'oyc'* is nothing but their name, and every attempt to elucidate their real nature is a matter of speculation.

In conclusion, the main problem is to what extent the Khazar empire was a Turkic empire or just an empire ruled by a Turkic elite with a significant presence of North Iranian elements from earlier periods: but this is, of course, an open question. My son, who is three years old, is learning to build his first jigsaw puzzles and sometimes it is difficult to make him understand that pieces do not always fit with each other. In our case, we have a giant jigsaw puzzle of some three hundred years, the whole of the Khazar period, but we must accept that we have been left with only a handful of pieces which often do not match, in spite of the efforts of some scholars.

<sup>49</sup> Hewsens, *The Geography of Ananias of Širak*, 7-15.

# *Khalisen, Kabaren, Khasaren: Stamm oder Stand?*

VIRGIL CIOCÎLTAN  
(Bukarest, Rumania)



Zu den spärlichen Sprachdenkmälern des Khasarenreichs gehören gewiss auch die im Titel des Aufsatzes erwähnten Namen. Ihrer Wichtigkeit wegen als Zeugen einer imponierenden Vergangenheit haben sie sich seit über einem Jahrhundert einer konstanten Aufmerksamkeit der Gelehrten, besonders Turkologen, erfreut. Einigkeit herrscht aber letztendlich nur im Bezug auf ihren hohen Wert als Geschichtsquellen, denn was sie konkret ausgedrückt haben, ist nach wie vor zum größten Teil unklar.

Schuld daran ist m. E. in erster Reihe der zu enge Blickwinkel der etymologischen Betrachtungen, in denen der Beitrag des Arabischen zum Wortschatz der Khasaren unterschätzt wurde. Ausgehend von der unwiderlegbaren Tatsache, dass diese Steppenbewohner einen türkischen Dialekt als Muttersprache gebrauchten, haben Historiker und Linguisten die Urformen und die Urbedeutungen von *khālis*, *kabar*, *khazar* fast ausschließlich in der Familie der ural-altaischen Sprachen gesucht. Dabei übersahen sie, dass trotz des türkischen Volkstums der Khasaren und trotz der hebräisch-kundigen Oberschicht nach ihrer Bekehrung zum Judentum am Ende des 8. Jahrhunderts oder im frühen 9. Jahrhundert, das Arabische seine Position als Hoch- und allem Anschein nach sogar als Amtssprache im Land der (Halb)nomaden behaupten konnte. Die Koransprache verdankte ihre privilegierte Stellung den Muslimen, die nach al-Mas'ūdīs Bericht um die Mitte des 10. Jahrhunderts „das herrschende Element“ der Bevölkerung darstellte und dem mosaischen Khaqan vertragsgemäß das Gros der Streitkräfte zur Verfügung stellte. Die Glaubensfreiheit, die Rechtssicherheit und die geordneten Zustände im Khasarenreich waren auch für andere Muslime, Kaufleute und Handwerker, attraktiv, so dass sie sich besonders in den Handelszentren niederließen. Ihre Beziehungen zu den Glaubensgenossen aus dem benachbarten Kalifat, aus dem ihre Vorfahren einst eingewandert sein sollen, sind sicher stets eng und rege gewesen. Diesem Sachverhalt mussten die Herrscher selbst Rechnung tragen und



sich ebenfalls per Vertrag verpflichten, die muslimischen Soldaten nicht in den Kriegen gegen die Abbasiden einzusetzen.<sup>1</sup>

Es ist naheliegend, dass die Masse der Muslime, die im Khasarenreich zum gehobenen Stand gehörten, dem islamischen Einfluss aus den alten Kulturländern Zentralasiens, des Mittleren und des Vorderen Orients Tür und Tor offen hielten. Ihm unterlagen vermutlich auch die jüdischen Regierenden, die ungeachtet ihrer religiös-kulturellen Prägung und des oft gespannten Verhältnisses zum Kalifat zumindest für die Beschriftung der Silbermünzen die arabische Sprache zuließen: Obwohl diese Geldstücke offensichtlich Nachahmungen der Abbasiden-Dirhams gewesen sind, dienten ihre Aufschriften dazu, auch die Identität des „Landes der Khasaren“ glaubwürdig zu belegen.<sup>2</sup>

Die Ausstrahlung des Kalifats beschränkte sich nicht nur auf das Münzwesen des Nachbarlandes. Im Laufe seiner Entwicklung von einer reinen Nomadengesellschaft zu einem straff zentralisierten Staatsgebilde mit komplexen Strukturen und Funktionen erweiterte sich natürlich auch die Palette der Dienstleistungen. Neben den herkömmlichen sozial-politischen Termini aus dem türkischen Wortschatz, wie z. B. *Khaqan*, *Beg*, *Kendi*, traten neue Lehnwörter hinzu, um den gestiegenen Bedarf zu decken. In dieser Hinsicht ist die Übernahme des wohlbekannten islamischen Richteramtes samt seiner ursprünglichen Benennung aufschlussreich: Die leicht hebräisierte Form des unverkennbar arabischen Begriffs

---

<sup>1</sup> Al-Mas'ūdīs Berichterstattung ist bei weitem die ausführlichste Beschreibung der Lage der Muslime im Khasarenreich: „Die Moslems bilden das herrschende Element im Chazarenreich, denn sie stellen die Leibwache für den König; man nennt sie allgemein *larisijeh* (*Arsija*). Sie stammen aus der Gegend von Choresm und flüchteten wegen der bald nach der Ausbreitung des Islām ausbrechenden Kriege und der Pest zum chazarischen König. Sie sind sehr tapfere Männer und bilden in Kriegszeiten den vornehmsten Rückhalt des Chazarenkönigs. Als sie sich im Lande der Chazaren niederließen, behielten sie sich bestimmte Rechte vor, und zwar folgende: die freie Ausübung ihrer Religion, die Möglichkeit, Moscheen zu errichten und ihre Gebete öffentlich zu verrichten, wie auch das Recht, ihren Vezir stets aus den eigenen Reihen zu wählen. Auch der gegenwärtige Vezir ist Moslem. Sie nennen ihn Ahmed ben Kovaih. Auch bedangen sie sich das Recht aus, dem Kriege fernbleiben zu dürfen, wenn der Chazarenkönig gegen Moslems zu Felde ziehe, und nur an solchen Kriegen teilzunehmen, die er gegen Ungläubige führe. Gegenwärtig sind es etwa 7000 Bogenschützen. Sie tragen einen Panzer, einen Helm und ein „Eisenhemd“ (Kettenpanzer); viele unter ihnen führen Lanzen mit sich und besitzen eine Bewaffnung wie andere Moslems. Auch ihre Richter haben die gleiche Religion. ... Im Chazarenreich gibt es neben den *larisijeh* auch Moslems, die Handel und Gewerbe betreiben. Sie ließen sich nieder, um in den Genuss der dort herrschenden Rechtssicherheit zu kommen. Außer einer großen Moschee, deren Minarett den Palast des Königs überragt, gibt es auch andere kleine Moscheen, an die Schulen angeschlossen sind, wo ihre Kinder den Koran lesen lernen. Wenn diese Moslems sich mit den Christen [zu gemeinsamem Vorgehen] zusammenschlossen, dann besäße der König der Chazaren keine Macht mehr über sie.“ (H. Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker und Grenzwächter im mittelalterlichen Ungarn*. Wiesbaden 1972, S. 47).

<sup>2</sup> D. Ludwig, *Struktur und Gesellschaft des Chazaren-Reiches im Licht der schriftlichen Quellen*. Münster 1982, S. 274.

*Qādi* zeigt, dass das Wort auch in der Sprache der khazarischen Juden tief eingebettet war.<sup>3</sup>

Obwohl die inneren Verhältnisse des Reiches fast gänzlich im Dunkeln liegen, besteht über die soziale Zweiteilung der Bevölkerung kein Zweifel. Das traditionelle Klassenbewusstsein der türkischen Nomaden, das schon in den Orchon-Inschriften belegt ist, erlebte im Staat der Khasaren eine neue Blüte: Um die hierarchische Gliederung der Gesellschaft auszudrücken, reichte der einheimische Farbensymbolismus nicht mehr aus,<sup>4</sup> so dass er durch Importe aus anderen Kulturkreisen ergänzt wurde. Das längst erloschene Königsreich der Juden im Nahen Osten konnte gewiss nicht mehr als Lieferant für ein solches Bedürfnis dienen, auch wenn die Oberhäupter der Khasaren zielbewusst danach trachteten, die mosaische Staatsidentität zu unterstreichen. Bevorzugt durch diese Ohnmacht war wiederum das mächtige und in manchen Bereichen vorbildliche Kalifat. Beispielhaft dafür ist das Schicksal des arabischen Wortes *khālīs* im Khasarenreich und von hier aus in ganz Ost-, Mittel- und Südosteuropa.

### 1. *Khālīs*

Die Deutungsversuche des Wortes *khālīs* und seiner akzeptierten oder vermuteten Derivate sind in zwei unvereinbare Richtungen gegangen.

Die an sich glaubwürdige Aussage Abū Hāmids, dass um die Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts die Muslime in Ungarn aus Khwarezm stammten<sup>5</sup>, wurde mit der seit der Landnahmezeit vielfältig bestätigten Präsenz der Khalisen als Hilfsvolk im Arpadenreich in Verbindung gebracht und daraus die aus formalen Gründen unmögliche Ableitung gefolgert: *Khwarezm* > \**Khvalinz* > *Khvaliz*.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> D. M. Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars*. New York 1954, S. 153, merkt zu den zwei Varianten der Vokabel in der langen und in der kurzen Version des berühmten Antwortschreibens des Königs Joseph auf Schaprut ibn Hasdais Brief folgendes an: „It may be stated in general terms that nothing decisive appears to have been alleged against the factual contents of the Reply of Joseph in its more original form, the Long Version ... We may also draw attention to something more definite than impressions. The forms for the Arabic word *qādi* in the Long Version of the Reply are spelled with *Daleth* and have the Hebrew definite article: *qādi*, *ha-qādi*. In the Short Version, under Arabic influence, we find on the contrary *Tsaddi* with point and the Arabic definite article: *qādi*, *al-qādi*.“

<sup>4</sup> Vgl. Ludwig, *Struktur*, S. 110–112 und weiter unten, S. 170.

<sup>5</sup> *Abū Hāmīd el Granadino y su relación de viaje por tierras eurasiáticas*. Texto árabe, traducción e interpretación por C. E. Dubler, Madrid 1953, S. 27 (arabischer Text) und S. 65 (spanische Übersetzung).

<sup>6</sup> „Chorezmier oder Chalizen (*Chvarizm* > \**Chvalinz* > *Chvaliz*). Dieses iranischsprachige Volk ...“ (H. Göckenjan, „Uralaltaische Jahrbücher“ [N. F.] 18, 2003–4, S. 171); „The army together with the king and his retinue and the so-called pure Khazars“ (*al-hazar al-hullas*, perhaps a corruption of some term for the Qalis/Hālīs/Khwārazmians, lived in the western part of the city, Atil/Itil“ (P. B. Golden, „War and warfare in the pre-Činggid western steppes of Eurasia,“ in N. Di Cosmo, ed., *Warfare in Inner Asian history (500–1800)*. Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002, S. 143); „Abū Hāmīd parle aussi de la présence

Die andere Interpretation hat als Ausgangspunkt die Partizipialform *khālis* (*khullāṣ* im Plural), die in der modernen arabischen Sprache 'rein, lauter, unverfälscht; aufrichtig, wahr, frei' bedeutet.<sup>7</sup> Zieht man auch die anderen semantischen Leistungen der Wurzel *kh-l-ṣ* in Betracht, so kommt der Ursprung der erwähnten Adjektive zum Vorschein: Die guten Eigenschaften sind unverkennbar das Endergebnis einer Auslese.<sup>8</sup> Personen oder Menschengruppen, die die schmückende Beifügung *khāliṣ* kennzeichnet, sind die Erwählten, diejenigen also, die sich von der breiten Masse des Volkes, vom Pöbel, abgesondert haben.<sup>9</sup> Dass diese glücklichen Khasaren sich in ihrer Vorstellungswelt als Gläubige nicht nur sozial, sondern auch als von Gott Erkorene betrachteten, ist wahrscheinlich.<sup>10</sup>

---

de milliers de musulmans en Hongrie, à cette époque, en nomment parmi eux les Ḥwārizmiens qui étaient au service des rois hongrois. Ils apparaissent aussi, dès le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, dans les sources latines qui les appellent Caliz, du nom slave des Ḥwārizmiens Khalis connu de la chronique russe dite de Nestor (XII<sup>e</sup> siècle) ..." (T. Lewicki im Sammelband *L'Occidente e l'Islam nell'Alto Medioevo*, I. Spoleto 1965, S. 519); „Kaliz is the Hungarian name of the Chworezm ..." (I. Décsy, *Eurasian Studies Yearbook* 81 (2009), S. 145); Urheber dieses Irrtums scheint Z. Validi Togan, *Ibn Faḍlān's Reisebericht*, Leipzig 1939, S. 217 und Anm. 2, gewesen zu sein; dagegen bemerkte Dunlop, *History*, S. 94, zu Recht: „Whether Khalis/Khwalis to be connected with Khwārizm (with interchange of l and r), as Zeki Validi thinks ..."

<sup>7</sup> H. Wehr, *Arabisches Wörterbuch für die Schriftsprache der Gegenwart*. Leipzig 1958, S. 229.

<sup>8</sup> Vgl. beispielsweise A. de Biberstein Kazimirski, *Dictionnaire arabe-français*, I. Paris 1860, S. 614: „1. Pur, non mélangé. 2. fig. Pur, sincère. 3. La meilleure et la plus pure partie; quintessence [*ḥalāṣa*: être tout blanc, candide, pur]“.

<sup>9</sup> Vgl. in diesem Sinn al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ, s.v.; eine lateinische Entsprechung ist z. B. „*egregius* (eigentlich aus der Herde, *grex*, auserlesen oder hervorragend) 'auserlesen, vorzüglich, ausgezeichnet, vortrefflich' im Vergleich mit Dingen derselben Gattung“ (H. Menge, *Langenscheidts Großwörterbuch Lateinisch*. Berlin-München-Zürich 1967, s.v.).

<sup>10</sup> Über diesen universalen Trend vgl. R. Firestone, *Who are the Real Chosen People? The Meaning of Chosenness in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*. Woodstock, Vermont 2008, S. VII-VIII: „Being chosen, therefore, would appear to be a special and positive status that places the chosen over and above the non-chosen. If being chosen is generally a good thing, consider being chosen by God. Jews, Christians, and Muslims – all three families of monotheistic religions – claim in one way or another to be God's chosen community. Christian theologians have sometimes referred to God's choosing for special favor as „election“. Whether called chosenness or election, the special nature of that divinely authorized status – its presumed superiority – has been glorified by religious civilisations when in positions of imperial power, and it has sustained religious communities suffering persecutions. It has also made believers uncomfortable at times, especially in places where democracy, equality, and freedom are considered defining categories ... In his 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster used biblical language to support most of his definitions. For his definition of *choose*, he includes, „To elect for eternal happiness; to predestinate to life“. He cites Matthew 22:14, „Many are called but few chosen“, and Mark 13:20, „For his elect's sake, whom he hath chosen“. This is a big jump from choosing between your beige or navy slacks. To be chosen, then, can have a range of meaning from the mundane to the holy, but in all cases it means to be singled out and preferred over others ...“ Vgl. auch A. Koestler, *The Thirte-*

Die erste Bezeichnung eines Teils der Khasaren, die in der Westhälfte der Hauptstadt Ätil neben dem „König“ wohnten, als *al-khazar al-khullaş* kommt zu Beginn des 10. Jahrhunderts in al-Işṭakhrī's geographischem Werk vor, und wurde einige Jahrzehnte später von Ibn Ḥauqal übernommen.<sup>11</sup> Die Sequenz ist mit „die reinen oder eigentlichen Chasaren“<sup>12</sup>, „die echten Chazaren“<sup>13</sup> bzw. mit „purebred Khazars“<sup>14</sup> und „pure Khazars“<sup>15</sup> übersetzt worden.

Die Annahme, dass die *al-khazar al-khullaş* zum gehobenen Stand der Gesellschaft gehörten, untermauern zwei zusätzliche Argumente. Zum einen die Tatsache, dass das mehrdeutige Wort auch die Farbe 'weiß'<sup>16</sup> benennen kann und somit dem türkischen Adjektiv *ak* als sprachliche Marke der Oberschicht<sup>17</sup> ebenbürtig ist; zum anderen, dass Ibn Ḥauqal oder eher einer seiner Kopisten *khālīş* durch *khāşş* 'speziell, distinguiert'<sup>18</sup> ersetzte, ohne den Sinn des Ausdruckes *al-khazar al-khullaş* zu verändern.<sup>19</sup>

Die zitierten Angaben der arabischen Geographen sind keineswegs Zeugnisse, dass *khālīş* im Khasarenreich auch tatsächlich zirkuliert hat: Die Vokabel kann nämlich als bloße Übersetzung des türkischen Eigenschaftswortes *ak* oder eines sinnverwandtes Ausdrucks verstanden werden. Den Beweis, dass das arabische Wort als Selbstbezeichnung im Staat der Khaqane gebraucht wurde, liefert von der geographisch entgegengesetzten Seite die Nestorchronik: Während das Kaspische Meer den Muslimen als Meer der Khasaren bekannt war,<sup>20</sup> nannten die Russen dasselbe Gewässer *море хвалицкое* = „Meer der Khalisen“<sup>21</sup>. Die Bezeich-

---

*enth Tribe. The Khazar Empire and its heritage.* London 1976, S. 65; „... the Khazars too claimed the status of a Chosen Race, who made their own Covenant with the Lord, even though they were not descendent from Abraham's seed.”

<sup>11</sup> *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, hrsg. von M. J. De Goeje, I, S. 222; II, S. 281.

<sup>12</sup> J. Marquart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge.* Leipzig 1903, S. 5, 41, Anm. 2.

<sup>13</sup> H. Göckenjan und I. Zimonyi, *Orientalische Berichte über die Völker Osteuropas im Mittelalter: die Gayhānī-Tradition (Ibn Rusta, Gardizi, Ḥudūd al-'Ālam, al-Bakrī und al-Marwazī).* Wiesbaden 2001, S. 223, Anm. 15.

<sup>14</sup> Dunlop, *History*, S. 93.

<sup>15</sup> Golden, *War*, S. 143.

<sup>16</sup> Dunlop, *History*, S. 94: „Perhaps *al-khullaş* as plural of *khālīş* means actually 'White', cf. *Qāmūs*, s.v.”

<sup>17</sup> Al-Işṭakhrī's Aussagen darüber besprochen: Marquart, *Streifzüge*, S. 42, Anm. 2; Dunlop, *History*, S. 7; Ludwig, *Struktur*, S. 110-112; P. B. Golden, *The Q'azars: their history and language as reflected in the Islamic, Byzantine, Caucasian, Hebrew and old Russian sources.* Ann Arbor, 1983, S. 226.

<sup>18</sup> Vgl. unten, S. 178-179.

<sup>19</sup> Dunlop, *History*, S. 93: „... it may be noted that in the Chester Beatty ms. of Işṭakhrī (K) *al-Khazar al-khaşş* 'the Khazar upper class' is read and may conceivably be right, while Ibn Ḥauqal, 1st ed., has *khāşşah* for *khālīşah* (Ibn Ḥauqal, 2nd ed., is different).”

<sup>20</sup> Vgl. D. M. Dunlop, „Baḥr al-Khazar,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., I, S. 931; Göckenjan-Zimonyi, *Berichte*, S. 57.

<sup>21</sup> *Povest' vremennykh let*, hrsg. von D. S. Lihačev. Moskau-Leningrad 1950, I, S. 12, 207.

nung ist ein klarer Hinweis darauf, dass die Zahl jener, die sie sich als Khalisen vorstellten, beträchtlich gewesen ist.<sup>22</sup>

Das Prestige der Khalisenklasse muss auch außerhalb des Steppenreichs beeindruckend gewesen sein. Die Petschenegen, die mit den Khasaren oft auf Kriegsfuß standen, haben die Statusbezeichnung für eigene Zwecke übernommen. Ein arabischer Bericht hat die Pluralform *khawālis*, die die genannte Völkerschaft gebrauchte, festgehalten,<sup>23</sup> während Anna Komnena das Wort im Singular lautlich getreu wiedergab, aber dessen Sinn verkannte: Im Ausdruck „Tatos, genannt auch Khalis (*Χαλις*)“, der sich auf einen Petschenegenhäuptling am unteren Lauf der Donau bezieht,<sup>24</sup> hat sie offensichtlich den zweiten Terminus ebenfalls als Eigenname verstanden.

Das arabische Wanderwort hat aber erwartungsgemäß die meisten Spuren im ungarischen Königreich hinterlassen. Der Beitrag der Khasaren zur Landnahme, zur Gründung und zur funktionsfähigen Aufrechterhaltung des Staates der Magyaren in Mitteleuropa ist sicher entscheidend gewesen.<sup>25</sup> Die in der Urheimat gesammelte Erfahrung im Militärwesen, in der Verwaltung und im Handel befähigte die Eliten aus dem Osten, gleichgültig ob Muslime oder Juden, den ungarischen Königen auch nach deren Christianisierung bis zum Erlöschen der Arpadendynastie am Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts überaus kompetente Dienste zu leisten. Die Goldene Bulle, die Andreas II. 1222 erließ, erwähnt die wirtschaftlichen Schlüsselpositionen, die sie im Staat zum Nachteil des ungarischen Adels innehatten: Kammergrafen (*comites camere*), Münzer (*monetarii*), Pächter der Salzgruben (*salinarii*) und Zöllner (*tributarii*).<sup>26</sup> Eine Urkunde, die Koloman im Jahre 1111 erstellen ließ, ist besonders aufschlussreich für die Stellung der Khalisen im wirtschaftlichen Leben des Staates: Sie haben sich als Treuhänder des königlichen Vermögens dermaßen bekannt gemacht, dass ihr Name im Ungarischen das Amt selbst bezeichnete: *institores regii fisci, quos hungarice caliz vocant*.<sup>27</sup> Das gleiche Wort erfuhr unter den polnischen Juden einen ähnlichen Bedeutungswandel: *hules* war aber dort der Soldat.<sup>28</sup>

Im Laufe seiner Geschichte außerhalb des arabischen Sprachraums musste sich die Vokabel auch lautlich und grammatikalisch den Bedingungen auf fremdem Boden anpassen. Merkwürdig ist die schon zur Zeit des Khasarenreichs gut

<sup>22</sup> Vgl. Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 46: „... [die] Bezeichnung verrät, dass die Chalizen in großer Zahl am Nordrand des Meeres siedelten und innerhalb der sehr heterogen zusammengesetzten Bevölkerung des Chazarenreiches ein nicht unbedeutendes Element darstellten“.

<sup>23</sup> Marqwart, *Streifzüge*, S. 73.

<sup>24</sup> Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, II, *Sprachreste der Türkvölker in den byzantinischen Quellen*. Berlin 1958, S. 302.

<sup>25</sup> Ausführliche Übersicht bei Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 44–89.

<sup>26</sup> Ebenda, S. 61.

<sup>27</sup> Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 66.

<sup>28</sup> Göckenjan-Zimonyi, *Berichte*, S. 223, Anm. 15. Die berufliche Konnotation, die von den Namen der Berufstätigen stammt, ist keine seltene Erscheinung im Mittelalter: Die Beispiele, die Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 66–67, anführt, können vermehrt werden.

belegte Pluralform *khawāliṣ* im Arabischen, *Хвалуци* im Russischen und *Χωάλης* im Mittelgriechischen,<sup>29</sup> denn sie ist im arabischen Wortschatz nicht bezeugt. Vermutlich sind diese Prägungen, denen offensichtlich dieselbe *kh-l-s*-Wurzel zugrunde liegt, eine Schöpfung der hebräischkundigen Juden.<sup>30</sup> Die mehr oder weniger klaren Spuren, die die zeitweiligen Nachbarn auf den so mannigfaltigen Namenformen der Khalisen hinterlassen haben, können jetzt nicht im Einzelnen behandelt werden.<sup>31</sup> Hier sei lediglich erwähnt, dass die lange und formal oft stark schwankende Reihe der Khalisenbezeichnungen in ungarischen Urkunden und Ortsnamen der Arpadenzeit (*caliz, de genere Kadarkaluz, generatio Kalez, Kálózfá, Kalász, Kaluz, Caluzutu* usw.)<sup>32</sup> eine Konstante aufweist: der Übergang des frikativen Gaumenkonsonanten *kh-* am Anfang des arabischen Wortes zur okklusiven Aussprache *k-*. Wann und wo, im ungarischen oder eher im türkischen Mund diese Lautverschiebung stattgefunden hat, ist schwer auszumachen.

## 2. *Kabar*

Unvergleichlich seltener als die Khalisen in den Quellen erwähnt und vielleicht deswegen viel rätselhafter sind die in der Fachliteratur genannten Kabaren oder Kavaren.

Ihr Kronzeuge ist Konstantinos Porphyrogenetus: „Die sogenannte Kabaren waren von Stamm der Chazaren. Es geschah nun, daß sie einen Aufstand gegen ihre Herrschaft machten, und als es zum Stammeskrieg kam, blieb ihre ursprüngliche Herrschaft überlegen. Einige der Aufständischen wurden erschlagen, andere entflohen, kamen zu den Türken und ließen sich mit ihnen im Land der Petschenegen nieder; sie schlossen Freundschaft miteinander und wurden (von der Türken) Kabaren genannt. Daher lehrten sie diese Türken auch die Sprache der Chazaren, und bis heute verwenden sie eben diese Sprache, sie verwenden aber auch die andere Sprache der Türken. Da sie sich aber in den Kriegen als die stärksten und tapfersten der acht Stämme erwiesen und Anführer im Krieg wa-

<sup>29</sup> Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, II, S. 338, 347.

<sup>30</sup> Göckenjan-Zimonyi, *Berichte*, S. 223, Anm. 15: „*al-hawāliṣ*, Pl. des Singulars *hāliṣa*. Der gewöhnliche Pl. der Partizipialform *hāliṣ* lautet bei al-Iṣṭahri (*Bibliotheca Geographorum Araborum* I, S. 222) und bei Ibn Hauqal (*Bibliotheca Geographorum Araborum* II, S. 281) *hulṣ*; der Ausdruck *al-hazaru-l-hullas* bedeutet nach ihrer Erklärung „die echten Chazaren“. Bergl versuchte den Namen *Χαλισσοι* aus dem hebräischen 'Soldat' herzuleiten, was die polnischen Juden im Sing. als *hūlez*, im Plural dagegen als *halizem* aussprechen. So viel scheint sicher, dass die Pluralform *hawāliṣ* (ein Sing. *\*hāliṣ* vorausgesetzt) den Regeln der arabischen Grammatik nicht entspricht und eine Variante bildet, die möglicherweise aus dem hebräischen *\*hāluṣ* (statt *\*hālūs*) entstanden ist.“

<sup>31</sup> Über die Beiträge der Slawen und der Rumänen zur Neugestaltung des Namens ist ein Aufsatz in Vorbereitung.

<sup>32</sup> Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 58–59. In einigen Fällen sind die Effekte der ungarischen oder türkischen Vokalharmonie sowie der Dissimilation der frühtürkischen Lehnwörter im Ungarischen (vgl. unten, Anm. 36, das Gombocz-Gesetz) erkennbar.

ren, wurden sie als führende Stämme auserwählt. Es gibt einen Archon bei ihnen, nämlich bei den drei Stämmen der Kabaren, und den gibt es bis heute.“<sup>33</sup>

Der Abschnitt gehört gewiss und berechtigt zu den berühmtesten und meist besprochenen Textfragmenten der mittelalterlichen Universalgeschichte. Den Nimbus verdankt das Bruchstück nicht bloß dem Ansehen des kaiserlichen Verfassers, sondern vielmehr seinem einmaligen historischen Inhalt, denn er erhellt zugleich einen Wendepunkt im Dasein des Khasarenstaates sowie den Beginn der frühen Schicksale ihrer magyarischen Verbündeten. Im Kern der Geschehnisse befinden sich die enigmatischen Kabaren/Kavaren, deren Identität nicht einwandfrei geklärt ist.

Verhängnisvoll für die Deutung des Namens ist eben die Aura der zitierten Stelle gewesen, denn sie hat andere Zeugen und Zeugnisse vollkommen überschattet und sie aus der etymologischen Debatte ausgegrenzt. Mehr noch: Der Sinn des so allein stehenden Namens der Kabaren/Kavaren wurde forciert aus dem Kontext der Erzählung abgelesen und als „die Aufständischen“ verstanden, wonach die Suche nach einer passenden Wurzel in den Sprachen und Mundarten der Türkvölker folgte. Die Resultate sind entweder linguistisch verfehlt oder logisch kaum glaubwürdig.<sup>34</sup>

Sobald man aber die ebenfalls von byzantinischen Autoren verzeichneten Varianten des Namens, die in der zweiten Silbe statt *-a-* (*Κάβαροι*) *-ει-* (*Καβαίρων*) bzw.

<sup>33</sup> Deutsche Übersetzung bei Die Byzantiner und ihre Nachbarn. Die *De administrando imperio* genannte Lehrschrift des Kaisers Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos für seinen Sohn Romanos. Übersetzt, eingeleitet und erklärt von K. Belke, P. Soustal, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 19. Wien 1995, S. 192–193.; vgl. *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De administrando imperio*, Greek text edited by Gy. Moravcsik, English translation by R. J. H. Jenkins. Washington 1967, S. 174 (griechischer Text), S. 175 (englische Übersetzung).

<sup>34</sup> Vgl. Golden, *Q'azars*, S. 224, 256: „Németh offers the following etymology: „If we should examine the original meaning of the Turkic *Qabar* we will find, as Vámbéry already noted, that the original meaning of this name was ‘those who revolt’, ‘rebel’. Connected with this are the Ottoman, Noğay adjectives *qaba* ‘thick’, ‘plump’, ‘stout’, ‘swollen’ etc. Furthermore, (there are) Ottoman *qabar* ‘blister’, ‘boil’, ‘furuncle’ originally meaning ‘rising up’, ‘swelling up’, Qazan, Čağatay etc. *qabar-* ‘rise up’, ‘swell up’, ‘puff up’, Ottoman *qabarjiq* (from *qabar*), ‘boil’, ‘furuncle’, ‘blister’ and finally Uyğur, Čağatay etc. *qop-* also a verb meaning ‘rise up’, which, in Čağatay, also has the meaning ‘arise’, ‘revolt.’ ... *Qabar* cannot be an aorist form of the verb *qabar* as this would have to be *qabarur/qabarr*. *Qabar*, as an aorist could only come from a verb *qab-* which does not exist in Turkic. ... Golden *Káβaroi* should, in my opinion, be connected with *qop-*. \**Qobar* ‘those who tear themselves off, break away’ = the ‘Rebels’. Given the evidence presented above, I do not think that *Káβaroi* can be connected with the *yowār* of the Volga Bulğar inscriptions [= Pritsak-These]. *Qabars* are descended from the tribe of the *Q'azars*.“; P. Pelliot, « Quelque noms turcs d'hommes et de peuples finissant en ‘ar’, » in *Oeuvres posthumes de Paul Pelliot*, Vol. II, Paris 1950, S. 206–207: „Je suis d'accord avec le principe d'une étymologie turque, mais ne crois pas que les étymologies proposées [Németh: ‘touffu’, ‘gros’; ‘se lever’, ‘se monter’, ‘se soulever’] puissent être retenues telles quelles“ und schlägt *qap-* ‘enlever, voler’ vor.

-ή- (Καβήρων) aufweisen,<sup>35</sup> in Betracht zieht, verschwindet jedwelche Möglichkeit ihrer Ableitung von einem türkischen Wort mit der Endung *-ar*. Die zur Diskussion nicht zugelassenen Versionen der gleichen Vokabel zeigen den Weg, den wahrscheinlich auch *khāliṣ* gleichzeitig zurückgelegt hat, zu ihrer gemeinsamen Herkunft aus dem arabischen Wortschatz. Durch die getreue Wiedergabe des zweiten Vokals *-i-* (in einem Fall auch dessen Dehnung!) stehen sie natürlich dem arabischen Original *kabīr* 'groß'<sup>36</sup> näher als *Kabar/Kavar*, bei dem der Übergang *-i-* zu *-a-* sich unschwer durch die türkische Vokalharmonie erklären lässt. Eine weitere Veränderung von *Kabar/Kavar* durch die schon erwähnte Dissimilation des ersten Selbstlautes<sup>37</sup> enthüllt die in Ungarn angelangte Namensform in lateinischer Fassung *Cowar(is)*<sup>38</sup>, die auch in einigen Ortsnamen erstarrt ist<sup>39</sup>. Wann, wo und wer den Übergang der arabischen Plosive *-b-* zur Frikative *-v-* verursacht hat, kann nicht mit Sicherheit festgestellt werden.<sup>40</sup>

Dass aber „der Große“ und „die Großen“ immer und überall als mehr oder weniger institutionalisierte Bezeichnungen der Mitglieder der Oberschicht ge-

<sup>35</sup> Auf den Spuren anderer Orientalisten hat Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, II, S. 144, zwar zögernd die Formen *Κάβαροι* (Konstantinos Poephyrogennetos) und *Κάβειροι*, *Καβήρων* (Joseph Genesisos, Theophanes continuatus, Joannes Skylitzes, Nikephoros Bryennios, Suidas) doch unter ein Dach gebracht; vgl. auch Golden, *Q'azar*, S. 222.

<sup>36</sup> Wehr, *Wörterbuch*, s.v.

<sup>37</sup> Vgl. Z. Gombocz, *Die bulgarisch-türkischen Lehnwörter in der ungarischen Sprache*. Helsinki 1912, S. 142: „In einigen zwei- und dreisilbigen Wörtern entspricht dem türk. *a* der ersten Silbe ung. *o*: a) *kobak* (*kabak*) < \**kabak*, osm. *Kabak*; b) ung. *bojtorján* (*baytoryan* Schl.) < \**baltyryan*, vgl. kas. *baltyryan* ung. *boszorkány* (*baszorkán*) < \**basyrkan*, zu *bas-*, ung. *kolokány* (daneben auch *kalokány*) < \**kalakam* od. \**karakan*, s. das Wörterverzeichnis; ung. *oroszlán* < \**aryslan*, vgl. tschuw. *aroslán*, osm. *arslan*. In den angeführten Fällen haben wir es gewiss mit einer späteren 'Dissimilation' zu tun. Es wurde schon wiederholt (s. Melich... usw.) darauf hingewiesen, dass das *a* der Stammsilbe unter dem Einfluss des langen *á*-Vokals der letzten (zweiten od. dritten) Silbe in verschiedenen Teilen des ungarischen Sprachgebietes (bes. in Westungarn und bei den Szeklern) regelmäßig in *o* übergegangen ist: also 1. *a-á* > *o-á*; *a-a-á* > *a-o-á* > *o-o-á*."

<sup>38</sup> In den Admonter Annalen wurde unter dem Jahr 881 vermerkt: *Primum bellum cum Ungaris ad Weniam. Secundum bellum cum Cowaris ad Culmite* (E. Klebel, „Eine neu aufgefundene Salzburger Geschichtsquelle,“ *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Salzburger Landeskunde* 61 (1921), S. 37; K. Schöneman, „Neue Nachrichten über die Ungarn der Landnahmezeit,“ *Ungarische Jahrbücher* 2 (1922), S. 221-222; Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 36).

<sup>39</sup> Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 43: „Die eine Siedlung, *Kovár* (ursprünglich *Kuar*) liegt an der Ostgrenze des Komitats Hont, etwa sechs Kilometer westlich von Balassa-Gyarmat, an der Donau ... Eine weitere Ortschaft, deren slowakische Namensformen *Kovarc*, *Kovarce*, *Kovarci* und *Kovarovce* auf die Anwesenheit *kavarischer* Bewohner hindeutet, liegt an der Neutra."

<sup>40</sup> Ein schwacher Hinweis, dass der Lautwandel sich in der Sprache der Juden vollzogen hat, bieten vielleicht die Wörter *Ghevir* 'notable, rich man' im Polen-Idisch (A. N. Poliak zitiert von Koestler, *Tribe*, S. 173) und *Kaviory*, die Namen der ältesten jüdischen Friedhöfe in Krakau und Sandomierz, in denen traditionsgemäßen Gerüchten zufolge *Kavaro-Khasaren* beerdigt waren (ebenda, S. 145-146).



dient haben, ist eine Gewissheit.<sup>41</sup> Ebenso zweifellos ist die Anwesenheit des Begriffes in der streng hierarchisch gebauten, auf Gedeih und Verderb angewiesenen Gemeinschaft der Khasaren und Magyaren: In Pannonien, wo sie einige Jahrhunderte florierte, tauchen die *maiores*, gleichgültig ob *natu* oder *dignitate*, in den Kanzleiurkunden der Arpadianer fortwährend auf.<sup>42</sup> Der Ausdruck kommt im orientalischen Gewand in dem renommierten hebräisch redigierten Brief der khasarischen Juden aus Kiev im 10. oder 11. Jahrhundert vor: Unter den Unterzeichneten befindet sich auch *Gwstt' bar Kybr Kōhēn Simson*<sup>43</sup>. Die auf den ersten Blick auffallende Ähnlichkeit der Vokabel, *Kiābar* vokalisiert, mit dem Namen der Kabaren hat den Kommentator bewogen, sie – korrekt – als ein und dieselbe Bezeichnung zu betrachten, aber auch verleitet, sie als Stammesbenennung zu interpretieren.<sup>44</sup> In diesem Zusammenhang muss vorerst bemerkt werden, dass *Kybr* nicht den Vater Simson näher bestimmt, wie der Exeget behauptet, sondern das nächstliegende Substantiv *Kōhēn* 'Priester'<sup>45</sup>. Die Charakterisierung des geistlichen Amtes durch Stammeszugehörigkeit ist jedoch zumindest bizarr, wenn nicht ganz ausgeschlossen. Sieht man hingegen in der hebräischen Beifügung *Kybr* das arabische Adjektiv *kabīr* verborgen, lautet die Übersetzung des Ganzen fast banal: „Gwstt', Sohn des großen Priesters Simson“.

Die Hauptschuld für das Missverständnis in der modernen Forschung trägt kein anderer als Kaiser Konstantin, der sich im Bezug auf die Identität der *Kάβαροι* selbst getäuscht hat. Im fernen Konstantinopol, mehr als hundert Jahre nach den dramatischen Ereignissen in der Steppe und in Unkenntnis der orientalischen Sprachen, die die Bewohner des Khasarenreiches benützten, beging er genau denselben Fehler wie zwei Jahrhunderte später die byzantinische Prinzessin Anna Komnena, die *Χαλῆς* nicht als Rangbezeichnung des Petschenegen-

<sup>41</sup> Siehe P. Spranger, „Der Große. Untersuchungen zur Entstehung des historischen Beinamens in der Antike,“ *Saeculum* 9, (1958), S. 22–58.

<sup>42</sup> Vgl. *The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, I, Tr. and ed. J. M. Bak, Gy. Bónis, J. R. Sweeney. Bakersfield 1989; Gy. Györffy, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft der Ungarn um die Jahrtausendwende*. Wien 1983, S. 110: „Hinsichtlich der Schichtung der ungarischen Gesellschaft ist es lehrreich, einen Blick auf die Steppenreiche zu werfen, in deren Rahmen sich auch das halbnomadische Ungarntum formte. In den alttürkischen Inschriften spricht der Khagan über seine Untertanen im allgemeinen mit der Formel die „Begen und das Volk“; das militärische Gefolge des Khagans, die „Bujruken“, bildeten die Militärschicht, und zu ihnen gesellten sich als vierte Schicht die gefangenen Sklaven. Ähnlich gliedert Čajhānī (um 870) die chazarische Gesellschaft: „Die Vornehmen und Großen“ entsprechen den türkischen Begen und Würdenträger, die „Reiter“ neben den türkischen Bujruken den Söldnern des Khagans und dem militärischen Gefolge der Vornehmen. Unter ihnen stehen das halbnomadische Gemeinvolk und der als Ware vermittelte Sklave.“

<sup>43</sup> N. Golb and O. Pritsak, *Khazarian Hebrew documents of the Tenth Century*. Ithaca-London 1982, S. 15.

<sup>44</sup> O. Pritsak ebenda, S. 39: „Gostaṭā's father is designated by the name of the tribal group, *Kiābar*, which held full power in the Khazarian khaganate until the twenties or thirties of the ninth century, when a revolution by the Khasars proper put a limit on it.“

<sup>45</sup> Ebenda, S. 27: „Aaronide priest“.

häuptling Tatos, sondern als sein zweiten Personennamen verstand: Der Purpurgeborene hat nämlich gleichfalls geglaubt, dass *Κάβαροι* ein Eigenname ist, der einige Khasarenstämme benennt. Hätte er das Wort richtig als Gattungsname erkannt, wäre der Inhalt seines Berichtes auch ein anderer gewesen: Es war nicht eine Erhebung der Kabaren/Kavaren-Stämme gegen das Staatsoberhaupt, sondern ein Aufstand der Großen des Reiches, was der Episode eine ganz andere Dimension verleiht. Diese Deutung rückt auch das Verhältnis der rebellierten Oberschicht des Khasarenstaates zu den Alliierten unter ein stärkeres Licht: Sie unterstützt die Aussage des Kaisers über die Vorrangstellung der Aufständischen den verbündeten Ungarn gegenüber. Dass an dem Wirken der Arpadendynastie in Pannonien die Elite des Khasarenreiches, sowohl Muslime als auch Juden,<sup>46</sup> teilgenommen hat, kann nun ebenfalls ohne Vorbehalt behauptet werden.

### 3. *Khasar*

Trotz der vielen Deutungsversuche, die sich im Laufe der Zeit angehäuft haben, ist die Herkunft Volksnamens der Khasaren<sup>47</sup> heute genau so umstritten wie zu Beginn der langwierigen Diskussion.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Vgl. Göckenjan-Zimonyi, *Berichte*, S. 223, Anm. 15: „Nach Kinnamos dienten um 1150 *Χαλισηοι* im ungarischen Heer als Krieger, „die nach mosaïschen, aber nicht in jeder Hinsicht unvermischt reinen mosaïschen Gesetzen“ lebten ... Andere Chalizen, die 1165 in byzantinische Gefangenschaft gerieten, waren, so Kinnamos, „von ganz anderer Religion [als die Ungarn] ... denn sie folgten dem Glaubensbekenntnis der Perser [Islam]“.“ König Andreas II. versprach in der schon zitierten Goldene Bulle (Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 61) die *Hysmahelite* [= Muslime] *et Judei* aus den öffentlichen Ämtern zu beseitigen.

<sup>47</sup> Die üblichsten Formen sind in schriftlichen Quellen: arabisch *Khazar*, persisch *Khasar*, griechisch *Χάζαροι*, armenisch *H'azirk'*, russisch *Хазары*, *Хозары*, *Казары*, *Козары*, *Кочары*, lateinisch *Chazari*, *Chaziri* und in Ungarn *Cozar*; Ortsnamen in Ungarn: *Kazár*, *Kozár*, *Kozárd*, *Kozárom*, *Nagykozár*, *Rác-Kozár*; in Polen und in der Ukraine: *Kozarzewek*, *Kozara*, *Kozarzew*; vgl. Dunlop, *History*, S. 4; Golden, *Q'azars*, passim und Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker*, S. 35–88.

<sup>48</sup> Eine kurze Übersicht der herangezogenen Argumente und Gegenargumente ist für den Verlauf der Debatte aufschlussreich: Golden, *Qazar*, S. 197, 207–210: „Both Németh, *Honfoglaló*, S. 238 and Gombocz, *Lehnwörter*, 198 had advanced the etymology *Q'azar* = aorist form of the verb *q'az-qaz* 'erren', 'vagabonder' (cf. Radloff II/1 ... 'herumirren') ... Németh classifies the ethnonym *Q'azar* as part of that family of Turkic names the meanings of which point to events in the history of the people, especially those names which connote the idea of 'flight' and 'wandering' ... *sabar*, *qazaq*, *yazar*, *qačar*. [S. 205:] Another problem that might be raised in regard to the Németh-Gombocz thesis is that of the aorist in *-ar/-är*. As is known, the aorist form of the Turkic verb in *Q'azar* times (i. e. the period of Ancient Turkic, the sixth to tenth centuries) is almost always formed with the suffix *-r*, *-ur/-ür* ... P. Pelliot, in his article „Quelques noms turcs d'hommes et de peuples finissant en *-ar*“, S. 207–224, proposed another etymology for *Q'azar*. After giving a brief criticism of the Németh-Gombocz thesis (he argues that *qaz-* is a much less frequently found form than *küz-* 2) Németh's Qumuq *qaz-* may be a dialectical form of *qač-* 'to flee' 3) *qaz-* may really be *küz-* but „heard accidentally as

a velar"), Pelliot suggests an etymology of the ethnonym Q'azar from *Qasar* (which he views as a Turkic loanword in Medieval Mongol designating a species of ferocious dog „... probablement a l'origine un chien venant de chez Khazar"). He postulates a dual pronunciation of *Khazar/Qasar-Khasar* among the Q'azars themselves ... The *Xasir* of the *Ecclesiastical History* attributed to Zacharias Rhetor is probably a garbled form, as Marquart first noted (Streifz. 356, 491), of *Akatziroi* or *Xotziroi*, stemming: originally from a Greek source ... We have reviewed, thus, the more serious attempts at an acceptable etymology of the ethnonym Q'azar. Pelliot's assertions cannot be proven. The Németh-Gombocz thesis is a far better working hypothesis, though it too has its weak points. In its defence, one might cite Mas'ūdi's notice that *Xazar* is Persian and its Turkic equivalent is *Sabir*. Perhaps, in a very garbled fashion, Mas'ūdi (of whom Marquart, Streifz. XXXV, wrote: „Man darf daher seine Worte nicht auf die Goldwage legen") has pointed to the semantic similarity of *Sabir* and Q'azar both meaning 'Nomad', 'Wanderer' an appellation very suited to these early tribes."

Dunlop, *History*, S. 3–4: „It is usually said that it is a participial form from the Turkish verbal stem *qaz*, 'to wander' or 'nomadize', so that Khazar='nomad', [So Zajączkowski, *Problem językowy Chazarów*, Breslau Society of Sciences, 1946, §2, citing Gombocz, Németh, and Rásonyi, and again in his *Ze studiów nad zagadnieniem chazar skim*, Polish Academy, Crakow 1947]. Zeki Validi passes over the definition in silence (*Ibn Faḍlān*, 225), and O. Pritsak in his review of the *Studiów* („Der Islam" B. 29, 101) proposes as an alternative that *qazar* (Khazar) 'ein Kollektiv zu *qazan*', promising an etymology of *qazan* elsewhere] and this may be provisionally accepted. ... As already said, the explanation Khazar= nomad is perhaps to be accepted. Yet Pelliot has pointed to the difficulties involved [*Noms turcs*, 207–224 (special article on Khazar)] (the Turkish verb *qazmak* always in the sense of to 'to hollow out', not 'to wander', etc.) and refers to the suggestion of J. Deny ... that the name Khazar might be explainable by \*Quz-er, \*Quz-är, \*Quzar or \*Qozar from *quz* 'side of a mountain exposed to the north' plus *eri*, *er*, in the sense of 'People of the North'. In favor of Deny's suggestion, it may be said (a) that no satisfactory explanation of the 'o/u' vowel in some forms of the name has yet been given, and (b) that in ancient Armenian and Georgian the Khazar Khakan is repeatedly referred to as the 'King of the North' and Khazaria as the 'Land of the North', which could be a rendering of the native name. But the forms in the Khazar Correspondence, presumably Kazar, Kazari, are on this view difficult to account for, and the Cambridge Document, also written in Hebrew offers Qazar (hardly Quzar)."

G. Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung älterer neupersischer Geschichtsquellen, vor allem der Mongolen- und Timuridenzeit*, III, Wiesbaden 1967, S. 464–465: „Eine sichere Etymologie für das Wort [meint W. Barthold] existiere noch nicht. Vgl. auch Pelliot ... der zur Geschichte des Wortes auf Minorsky verweist. Eine etymologische Verbindung mit čag. *qāzmaq* 'errer' lehnt er ab, da dieses wohl erst aus *qazaq* rückerschlossen sei, auch kum. *qaz-* 'herumschweifen' (Németh) sei eher eine velare Variante von *kāz-*. ... Gänzlich unwahrscheinlich ist schließlich Pelliot's Versuch, *qazaq* < *qačaq* 'Flüchtling' ... zu erklären, aus einem Dialekt, wo schon früh -c- > -z- geworden sei (so erklärt er auch den Namen der Chasaren!). ... Die Ableitung *qazaq* 'Unabhängiger' (der sich von anderen getrennt hat) aus *qaz-* 'fliehen' scheint uns keineswegs widerlegt."

Die etymologischen Vorschläge klaffen weit auseinander, obwohl sie eine gemeinsame Ausgangsbasis haben: die türkische Wurzel *kaz-*, die gar nicht existiert!<sup>49</sup>

Abgesehen davon, haben die Turkologen eine bedeutende phonetische Tatsache außer Acht gelassen: Die wichtigsten zeitgenössischen Zeugen, d. h. die benachbarten Araber, Perser, Byzantiner, Armenier und zum Teil Russen haben nämlich den Anfangslaut der ethnischen Bezeichnung frikativ ausgesprochen (*kh-* mit den jeweiligen Nuancen), nicht anders als die Selbstbezeichnung in Münzaufschriften lautet.<sup>50</sup> Die Einstimmigkeit auf einem so breiten Spektrum beruht sicher nicht auf gegenseitiger Beeinflussung: Sie spiegelt unweigerlich die Originalfassung der Vokabel wider, so wie sie bei ihren türkischen Trägern im Umlauf gewesen sein muss. Diese Annahme ist auch deshalb zwingend, weil eine eventuelle Urform *kazar* zweifellos tale quale aufgenommen wäre, denn in allen Sprachen der vorher Erwähnten ist der plosive Laut *k* vorhanden. Erst in der Endstation Ungarn setzt sich die *k*-Artikulation ausnahmslos durch.<sup>51</sup> Der Wandel *kh-* > *k-* in *Khazar* > ungarisch *Kozár* verfügt glücklicherweise über eine haargenaue Entsprechung, in der die ursprüngliche *kh*-Form keinem Zweifel unterliegt: Das arabische Wort *khāliṣ* kommt in Mitteleuropa ausschließlich in *k*-Varianten (*caliz*, *kaluz* usw.) vor.<sup>52</sup>

Die Gemeinsamkeiten der zwei historisch eng verflochtenen Vokabeln hören damit nicht auf. Sobald man aber die *kh*-Form als etymologischen Ausgangspunkt für *Khazar* voraussetzt, verlieren die „türkischen Etymologien“ den Halt und die Ableitung des Wortes aus einer arabischen Wurzel rückt in den Bereich des Möglichen.<sup>53</sup> Die Vokabel, die sich nicht nur phonetisch, sondern auch inhalt-

---

<sup>49</sup> Vgl. Á. Berta and A. Róna-Tas, „Old Turkic loan words in Hungarian. Overview and samples,” *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 55 (2002), 1–3, S. 47: „Even more dangerous was what the opponents of Vámbéry called ironically the „neologisms”, Turkic words created by Vámbéry. One of these non-existent „ghost words” misled even some well-known scholars. In his work on the Chagatai language Vámbéry gave an item as *qazmaq* with the meaning ‘graben, herumirren, herumstreifen; creuser, error’. To the well-known verb *qaz-* ‘to dig, to dig out’ he added a non existing homophone word. This was derived from Turkic *az-* ‘to go astray’. Vámbéry observed that in some cases there do exist doublets with and without initial *k-* in Turkic and simply created the verb *qaz-* ‘to go astray’ from the existing *az-*. The ghost word was then incorporated into the Chagatai dictionary of Pavet de Courteille (1870) and from it the word began its history in the scholarly literature. Among others the ethonyms *Khazak* and *Khazar* were derived from this ghost-word.” Unter Berücksichtigung dieser Feststellung bietet eine ausführliche Besprechung des ganzen Fragenkomplexes A. Róna-Tas, „A *kazár népnévről*,” *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények* 84 (1982), S. 349–380 und derselbe, „Újabb adatok a *kazár népnév történetéhez*,” *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények* 85 (1983), S. 126–133.

<sup>50</sup> Vgl. oben Anm. 32 und Ludwig, *Struktur*, S. 274.

<sup>51</sup> Vgl. ebenda.

<sup>52</sup> Vgl. oben. S. 172.

<sup>53</sup> Róna-Tas, „A *kazár népnévről*,” S. 380, bespricht das Problem der Anfangslaute und meint zusammenfassend: „... the relation of the forms with *H* and *Q*’. Golden suppo-

lich aufdrängt, ist *khāṣṣa*, die (mit Artikel determiniert) die Oberklasse bezeichnet.<sup>54</sup> Mit 'amma 'Menge, breite Masse, Volk' bildet sie schon seit Muḥammads Zeit ein festes Paar,<sup>55</sup> das der türkischen *ak/kara*-Zweiteilung der Gesellschaft vollkommen entspricht. Die Endung auf *-r* ist allerdings ein Überbleibsel des türkischen Wortes *er* 'Mann, Mensch', das als zweites Glied in nominalen Zusammensetzungen keine Seltenheit ist.<sup>56</sup> Die Kombination \**khāṣṣa-er*, verschmolzen in *Khasar*,<sup>57</sup> dann *Khazar*, bedeutet folglich nach dem Muster einer bereits vorgeschlagenen Lösung 'people of the upper class'.<sup>58</sup>

Ohne türkisches Anhängsel und substantiviert scheint *khāṣṣ* 'speziell, Spezial-, besonder, distinguiert'<sup>59</sup> den Khasaren auch geläufig gewesen zu sein: Ibn Faḍlān nennt *khz* den Vorsteher der islamischen Gemeinde in der Hauptstat an der Wolgamündung, er selbst ein Muslim, den al-Mas'ūdī als *wazīr* bezeichnet; die bulgarischen Informanten, die den emphatischen Doppelkonsonanten sowie die Dehnung des Vokals sicher nicht aussprechen konnten, haben das arabische Wort

---

sed here an aspirated Turkic *q-*. The author [= A. Róna-Tas] argues that the forms with *h-* do not or do not necessarily reflect any common Turkic pronunciation or the spoken Khazar idiom. The forms with *h-* reflect Middle Iranian, most probably Sogdian pronunciation independently of the origin of the name, while the forms with *q-* reflect the Turkic pronunciation directly taken over by Slavs and Hungarians."

<sup>54</sup> Wehr, *Wörterbuch*, S. 217: „*hāṣṣa* Pl. *ḥawāṣṣ* ausschließliches Eigentum; privater Besitz, Reservat; Besonderheit, Eigenheit, Eigentümlichkeit, Eigenschaft; innerer Gehalt; führende Persönlichkeiten, vornehme Leute; *al-ḥāṣṣa* die Vornehmen, die höhere Klasse, die Gebildeten." Vgl. oben Anm. 19 und Ludwig, *Struktur*, S. 103, 158.

<sup>55</sup> B. Lewis, *Le langage politique de l'Islam*. Paris 1988, S. 104: „Le plus habituel des nombreux couples de mots marquant la différence entre les couches supérieures et inférieures de la société est *khāṣṣa* et 'amma, qui peuvent se traduire littéralement par le « spécial » et le « général ». Le premier de ces termes correspond à ce qui, à divers époques, a été connue en Occident et ailleurs, comme l'élite, l'establishment, la nomenklatura; le second englobe le rest de la population."; vgl. J.-O. Blichfeldt, "Khāṣṣa and 'amma. On Slogans, Concepts and Social Settings in Islamic History," *Orientalia Suecana* 38–39 (1989–1990), S. 14–20; M. A. J. Beg, „Al-Khāṣṣa wa'l-'Āmma," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v.; Laura Sitaru, Gândirea politică arabă. Concepte-cheie între tradiție și inovație [Das politische Denken der Araber. Grundbegriffe zwischen Tradition und Innovation]. Iași 2009, S. 63.

<sup>56</sup> M. T. Houtsma zitiert von Gy. Németh, *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*. Budapest 1991, S. 58: „*türükéri* 'ein Türke', *ruméri* 'ein Grieche', *š(a)r(q)(e)ri* 'ein Orientale', *ağaçeri* 'ein Mensch von den Bäumen', *uçeri* 'ein Mensch von den Grenzgebieten.'"; als Bestandteil des Volksnamens *Khazar* wurde es auch erahnt: „... the suggestion of J. Deny that the name Khazar might be explainable by \**Quz-er*, \**Quz-är*, \**Quzar* or *Qozar*, from *quz* 'side of a mountain exposed to the north' plus *eri*, *er*, in the sense of 'People of the North'." (Dunlop, *History*, S. 4).

<sup>57</sup> Belege bei Róna-Tas, „*A kazár népmérvöl*“, S. 374–376, mit der Schlussfolgerung S. 380: „... the earliest and Turkic forms are with *-s-* and not with *-z-*."

<sup>58</sup> Ebenda.

<sup>59</sup> Wehr, *Wörterbuch*, s.v.

wahrscheinlich derart entstellt, dass der Reisende es gar nicht mehr erkannte und sich begnügte, das Gehörte als fremde Vokabel zu registrieren.<sup>60</sup>

Die Umwandlung einer Bezeichnung für den gehobenen Stand in einen Volksnamen ist in der Antike und im Mittelalter nicht ungewöhnlich und entspringt dem allgemeinen Wunsch, Mitglied eines Herrenvolkes oder -stammes zu sein, besonders um durch eine solche Identität den Fremden zu imponieren. Im Laufe der Zeit kann die ursprüngliche Bedeutung des Gattungsnamens in Vergessenheit geraten, was freilich seine Existenz als Eigenname, der als rein ethnische Bezeichnung dient, nicht beeinträchtigt. *Khazar* scheint diese Metamorphose früh erlebt zu haben, denn die arabische Vokabel hatte von Anfang an geringe Chancen, im fremdsprachigem Milieu lange verstanden zu sein, zumal sie durch die Kombination mit dem türkischen Element auch für die Arabischkundigen schwer erkennbar geworden war.

### Fazit

Die Antwort auf die im Titel des Aufsatzes gestellte Frage ist eindeutig:

- 1) Die besprochenen Wörter sind sinnverwandt und haben ursprünglich den gehobenen Stand bezeichnet.
- 2) *Khalis*, *Kabar* und teilweise *Khasar* sind arabische Lehnwörter im Khasarenreich gewesen.
- 3) Ihre Übernahme als Lehnwörter durch die Nomaden der eurasischen Steppe kann nicht vor der Verbreitung des Islams in Persien und Zentralasien in der zweiten Hälfte des 7. Jahrhunderts stattgefunden haben.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> Validi Togan, *Ibn Faqlān*, S. 102.

<sup>61</sup> Falls diese Schlussfolgerungen richtig sind, erscheinen die auf jeden Fall unsicheren Belege der besprochenen Namen in den schriftlichen Zeugnissen der vorislamischer Zeit noch fragwürdiger; vgl. beispielsweise Göckenjan-Zimonyi, *Berichte*, S. 223, Anm. 15: „Das Wort *ḥālīs* erinnert an die von Kinnamos erwähnten *Χαλισιοι* ... Bei den hier genannten Chalizen, die schon in der syrischen Kirchengeschichte des Zacharias Rhetor im 6. Jahrhundert als *kvls* erwähnt werden, ... handelt es sich um jüdische und muslimische Chorezmier, die sich seit dem 8. Jahrhundert, u. a. im Chazarenreich, später auch in Ungarn und im Byzantinischen Reich niederließen und im gesamten östlichen Europa als Kaufleute und Soldaten von erheblicher Bedeutung waren.“ Ähnlich verfrühte Auslegungen bei Dunlop, *History*, S. 4 ff. und Ludwig, *Struktur*, S. 24–68.

# *Ancient Khakasses and the Permian Cis-Urals*

A. M. BELAVIN and N. B. KRYLASOVA  
(Perm, Russia)



The ancient Khakass state, which in the ninth–thirteenth centuries united peoples of the Sayan-Altai plateau from Irtysh to Baikal, has left a significant trace in the history of Eurasia. This state is represented by an expressive and easily determinable complex of Askiz archeological culture. According to some researchers, this culture was developed by the direct ancestors of the Khakass people.

The wide distribution of iron items of a specific form, often decorated by incrustation and appliqué of silver, copper and occasionally gold, constitutes the characteristic feature of Askiz antiquities. These items were used as decorations for horse harnesses and the equestrian warrior's outfit and are usually united by a common design. These objects are so distinctive that they can be identified easily among the complexes of traditional decorations of other cultures.

By the last decade of the twentieth century Askiz antiquities were identified in the materials of medieval archeological cultures across a vast territory of Eurasia – from the Irtysh region to the Danube region. In the Permian Cis-Urals Askiz objects are represented in the materials of the archeological complex of the sites of ancient settlements at Telyachiy Brod, Rozhdestvenskoye, Kylasovskoye, Gorodischenskoye and Salomatovskoe and at the Plotnikovskiy burial ground. Thus the problem of interaction of ancient Khakasses with eastern Europe also involves the region of the Permian Cis-Urals.

As a result of long-term interaction with the representatives of Askiz culture, a specific line of adornments came into being in Volga Bulgaria – imitations of Askiz iron objects but made of bronze.<sup>1</sup> These imitations together with the genuine Askiz iron objects are also represented among the antiquities of the Cis-Urals.

Askiz objects are widely represented in the materials of the Rozhdestvenskoye archeological complex on the Obva River in the Karagai District of the Perm Region. This complex can be identified as the medieval city of Afkula, mentioned in Arabic and Persian sources.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> К. А. Руденко, *Тюркский мир и Волго-Камье в XI-XIV вв.* Казань 2001.

<sup>2</sup> А. М. Белавин, Н. Б. Крыласова, *Древняя Афкула: археологический комплекс у с. Рождественск.* Пермь 2008, 603 с.

In the materials of the Rozhdestvenskoye archeological complex more than 60 Askiz objects have been discovered. In the collection of belt and harness sets of the Rozhdestvenskoye ancient settlement, Askiz objects make up 11 percent of items.

These Askiz objects are represented by iron belt buckles, both whole and fragmentary, and by cover plates, a hook, a pendant and details of a saddle.

The iron belt buckles are represented by frame-like buckles, fragments of shield-like buckles, and details of pivot-hinged buckles (Fig. 1.1).

Shield-like buckles were used both in everyday costumes and in horse harnesses. They are widely spread among the antiquities of southern Siberia and include items produced by Askiz masters.

The shields of *pivot-hinged buckles* are especially interesting. They are ornamented by such decorative details as waists, cross cuts, elements concave on the sides, and copper incrustations. Claw-ended shields are characteristic of a range of other objects of Bulgarian origin. Most of these buckles can be attributed to the objects of the Kama Bulgaria "askizoid" type. By the end of the twelfth century pivot-hinged buckles were out of fashion.

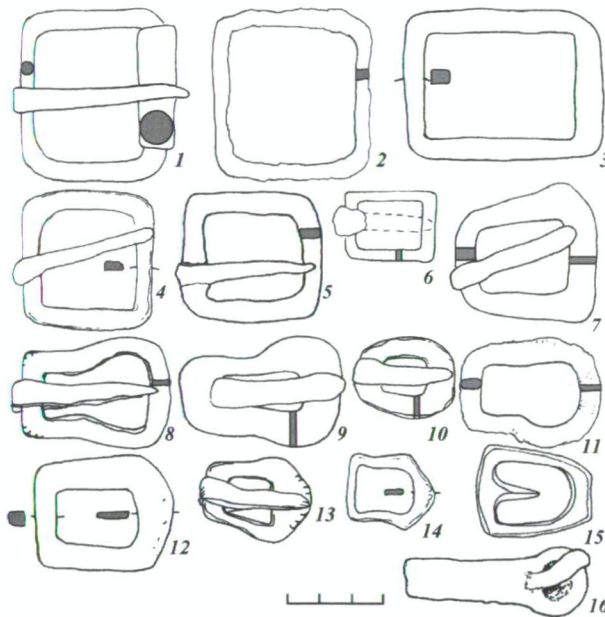


FIGURE 1.1  
Iron belt buckles

Belt covers are represented by rectangular and square covers, decorated by circular ornament, copper incrustation and waists.

Some of the covers with a rectangular section are squeezed on the sides in the middle, with claw-shaped ends and a ring in the base – these are distribution blocks of the horse harness belt. Distribution blocks of similar form have been



discovered in the monuments of Askiz culture and of Bulgaria of the tenth-twelfth centuries.

A large wide belt cover with a decorative waist, clear division of the decorative field and a ring was also discovered. Such covers were probably used for the triple joining of the belt in a light bridle of the era. Similar covers were also found in the Askiz culture from the end of the tenth to the twelfth centuries;<sup>3</sup>

“Eyeglass”-shaped belt covers with round ends, with a prominent center and loop, were used in the bridle set in combination with hooks. According to the majority of researchers of Askiz antiquities, belt covers of this kind are specific to Volga Bulgaria, but are also spread among Askiz antiquities, where, according to I. L. Kyzlasov, they are considered to be a form, “reflecting the influence of the West”.

In addition, several metal-plate covers with slots for joint pins are represented in the materials of the Rozhdestvenskoye archeological complex. Among these covers there were rectangular items with figured ends, and an oval-shaped one like a four-petal rosette with an eye for a ring pendant. Direct analogues for the rosette covers with rings could be found in the complexes of the Oglakhtinsk era of the Malinovsk period of Askiz culture. In the Permian Cis-Urals a belt set with rectangular, oval and rosette-shaped covers and with a pivot-hinged buckle, the shield of which is decorated by an openwork lattice ornament, was found in the Plotnikovskiy burial ground. Radiocarbon tests attribute the site to a date from the thirteenth to the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Hooks are represented by big, rectangular items with figured “waists” and a joint ring. The passage to the hole for the ring is decorated in the form of the head of an animal (Fig. 1.2).

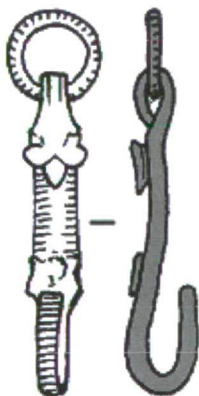


FIGURE 1.2  
hook

An iron *on-belt holder* with a figured loop is original. We suppose that such a holder could have been used to mount the quiver hook or an axe. Traces of cop-

<sup>3</sup> И. Л. Кызласов, „Аскизская культура,” САИ, вып. ЕЗ-18. Moscow 1983, с. 33.

per incrustation on the complex-figured convex surface of the holder show that it belongs to the Askiz type.

S-shaped metal washers, met in the construction of quivers of nomads, are of specific interest.

The collection also includes an iron triangular item, reminiscent of the basis for headdress plumes, which are found in southern Siberia (Fig. 2.1).

A very original object which was found in the Permian Cis-Urals is a hook for saddle belts and for lacing (Fig. 2:2). Exact analogues are known among Askiz antiquities and findings of the Zolotarevskiy complex, in Novgorod, Novogrudka, and the Slobodka settlement, where, according to I. L. Kyzlasov, they indicate the presence of Askiz equestrians.

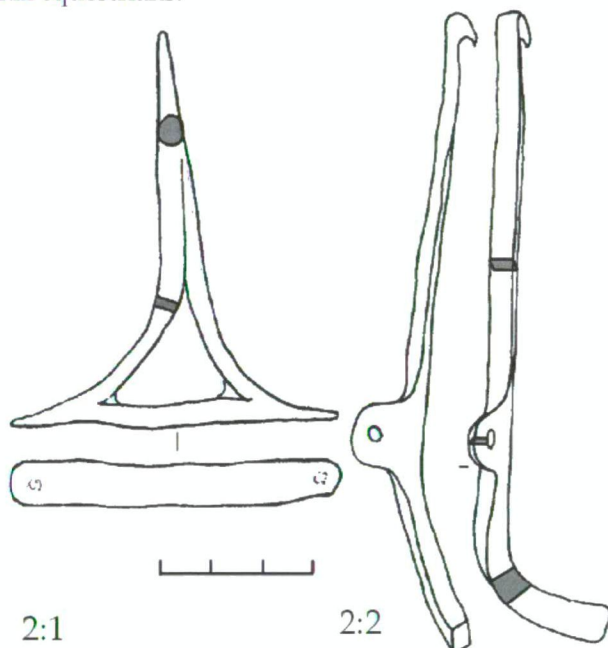


FIGURE 2.1, 2.2

Apart from the details of the belt sets and items of horse equipment, everyday life items adopted from the ancient Khakassess were also found on the territory of the Permian Cis-Urals. In particular, these are two-pronged forks. In general, this type of cutlery was used by the peoples of Europe rather late in history. Forks are found among the Khakass materials of the twelfth-fourteenth centuries. In the Permian Cis-Urals such forks have been discovered in the Kudymkar site and the Gorodischenskoe settlement, those from the latter site having well preserved bone handles. In 2008–2010 fragments of two more forks were found on the site of the Rozhdestvenskoye settlement.

In 2010 a weight and an ingot were found on the site of the Rozhdestvenskoye settlement. Tests performed by the chemistry laboratory of the Perm State Pedagogical University show that these objects were made of tin with insignificant

traces of admixtures. It is known that one of the main suppliers of tin to eastern Europe was Altai. These ingots could be raw materials for bronze casting and jewelry production, which, according to the evidence of numerous finds, was developed in the Rozhdestvenskoye settlement. According to V. A. Vinnichuk, such ingots could have been used as a means of payment. He also mentions that ingots are often found in places associated with many Askiz objects.

Thus, the range of finds of Askiz type in the materials of the Cis-Urals is quite substantial. The majority of the objects could have been used as items of trade. But the presence of Askiz iron items, ornamented by incrustation, and a hook for lacing, which was indispensable equipment for an Askiz equestrian, make us think that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries Khakasses could have visited the Rozhdestvenskoye settlement as members of trade caravans or on their own trade or military and diplomatic missions. "Kasaba Afkula" might have been the place that was visited by Askiz warriors and merchants in the course of their expeditions along the trade routes of eastern Europe in the pre-Mongolian period. Maybe these equestrians were guarding Bulgarian trade caravans to Rus, to the land of Visu, to the land of Chulman, to Siberia and Central Asia. Most of the Askiz finds were discovered in excavations on the edge of the riverside steep, which shows that there might have been an "Askiz homestead" on the territory of this settlement.

# Cumans and Russians (1055–1240)

ELMETWALI TAMIM\*  
(Alexandria University, Egypt)



Of the various appellations for this large tribal union, in this chapter I will use the form *Cumans* to avoid confusion. It is the name most commonly found in the Greek and Latin sources. However, the same tribal union also appears as the *Kipchaks* القفجاق (meaning steppe/desert (people)<sup>1</sup>, with variants like *Khifshākh* < *Khifchākh* خفجاق، خفشاخ،<sup>2</sup>) in the Muslim sources, The Arabic author al-Marwazī (writing about 1120) however referred to them as *Qun*,<sup>3</sup> which corresponds to the Hungarian name for the Cumans, *Kun*.<sup>4</sup> They appear to have called themselves Kipchaks, which meant that they came from the Kipchak, a Turkish name applied vaguely to the great north-western steppe of Asia, now known as the Kirghiz steppe.<sup>5</sup> The name *Polovtsy* (*Polovcian*) (yellowish, sallow) appears in Russian

---

\* Lecturer of Medieval History, Faculty of Education in Damanhour, Alexandria University, Egypt.

<sup>1</sup> al-Kāshgharī (Maḥmūd ibn Ḥussayn ibn Muḥammad), *Dīwān lughat al-Turk*, (Ankara, 1990), 20; P. B. Golden, "The peoples of the south Russian steppes," *Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, ed. D. Sinor, Cambridge 1994), 277; O. Pritsak, "The Polovcians and Rus," *Archivum Eurasiae medii aevi* 2 (1982), 321–322, n.3. For the etymology, see, Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 325–327.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Khurdadhbih (Abu'l-Kāsim Obaidallah ibn Abdallah), *Kitāb Al-Masalik Wa'l-Mamalik*, Arabic text edited by M. J. De Goeje, Leiden 1889, 31 (henceforth: Ibn Khurdadhbih); *Hudūd al-'Ālam, The Regions of the World. A Persian Geography, 372 A.H./982 A.D.*, translated and explained by V. Minorsky, with a preface by V.V. Barthold (1930) translated from the Russian (Oxford, 1937), 101 (hereafter *Hudūd*); Abū-l-Fidā' ('Imad Ad-Din Isma'il bin 'Umar bin Kathir), *Taqwīm al-buldān*, Arabic text edited by Reinaud and de Slane (Paris, 1840), 206; Ibn al-Fakih al-Hamadhānī, *Kitāb Al-Boldān*, Arabic text ed. M. J. De Goeje, Leiden 1885, 329; Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 321–322, n.3.

<sup>3</sup> V. Minorsky, *Sharaf al-Zaman Tahir Marwazi on China, the Turks and India: Arabic Text* (circa AD 1120) with an English translation and commentary, London 1942, 18 (henceforth: *Marwazi*); I. Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars, Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185–1365*, Cambridge 2005, 5. For the etymology, see, Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 328–331.

<sup>4</sup> A. Bruce Boswell, "The Kipchak Turks," *Slavonic Review*, 6, No. 16 (June, 1927), 70 (hereafter Boswell, *Kipchak*).

<sup>5</sup> Boswell, *Kipchak*, 7.

sources.<sup>6</sup> The corresponding terms in western languages are; *Pallidi*, *Falones*, *Valani*, *Valwen*, etc. This group of names has no correspondence in Muslim literature.<sup>7</sup> Another name under which the *Kipchaks* were known in the Byzantine empire is *Kóμavoι*<sup>8</sup> and in western Europe as *Comani*, *Commani*,<sup>9</sup> which is also found in Idrīsī, who (perhaps quoting from a European source) calls the *Kipchaks* القمانيين and their land القمانية (al-Qumāniyīn).<sup>10</sup>

The origin of the word *Kipchaks*, in my opinion, is the name of the ancestor of this tribe. This is suggested by the names of the Turkish state in the Islamic world, like Ottoman, and perhaps supports what was written by Gardīzī, about the origin of the seven tribes of Kimāk, including the *Kipchaks*, as the names of the seven princes who came to the region.<sup>11</sup>

The precise relationship of the Cumans to the Kipchaks is unclear, although we are relatively well informed about the latter. They appear in the eighth-century Moyun Chur inscription as the *Turk-Qibchaq* who were part of the Turkic state for fifty years. In all likelihood, they were in the Altai region during the period of the Turkic Kaghanate. Subsequent to the collapse of the Turkic state, they became part of the *Kimāk* tribal union and with it advanced, or had already progressed, to the Irtysh, Ishim and Tobol river areas (south-western Siberia) in the ninth and tenth centuries.<sup>12</sup> It is here that they first come into the view of the Islamic geographers. Ibn Khurdādhbih, writing in the ninth century but with earlier materials as sources, indicates that they already held an autonomous position within the Kimek confederation.<sup>13</sup> Iṣṭakhri gives the Kimāks as neighbors of the Guz, and separated from them by a river,<sup>14</sup> which would appear from the descrip-

<sup>6</sup> *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, ed. and trans. S. H. Cross and O. P. Sherbowitz, Cambridge MA, 1953, 58, 62, 143; *The Chronicle of Novgorod, 1016–1147*, translated from Russian by Robert Michell and Nevill Forbes, with an introduction by C. Raymond Beazley, and an account of the text by A. A. Shakhmatov, London 1914, 4; Boswell, *Kipchak*, 70. For the etymology, see, Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 326–328.

<sup>7</sup> Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 323–324; *Hudud*, 315. For the etymology, see, Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 331.

<sup>8</sup> The name first occurs in the Byzantine literature in the work of Michael Attaleiates (c.1079–1080). See, Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, English translation by E. R. A. Sewter, Harmondsworth 1969, 222; Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* I–II, Leiden 1983, 167–168; Vásáry, *Cumans*, 5; Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 322. For the etymology, see, Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 328–331.

<sup>9</sup> Friar Giovanni di Piano Carpini, *The story of the Mongols whom we call the Tartars*, translated with an introduction by Erik Hildinger, Boston MA, 1996, 81.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Idrīsī, (Abu Abd Allah Muḥammad), *Kitab nuzhat al-mushtaḡ fi'khtiraḡ al-'afaḡ*, Beirut 1989, 428–429; Vásáry, *Cumans*, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Gardīzī (Abū Sa'īd 'Abdu'l Ḥayy b. aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk), *Kitāb Zaynu'l-Akḥbār*, translated from Persian to Arabic by A. Elsaed Zedan, Cairo, 1982), 437 (hereafter Gardīzī).

<sup>12</sup> Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 336; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 278.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibn Khurdādhbih*, 31; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 278.

<sup>14</sup> "...The river Atel rises near the Kirghiz, and flows between the Kimak and the Guz, forming the boundary between them." Iṣṭakhri (Abu Ishāk al-Fārisī al-Istakhri), *Viae Regnorum (masaalik al-mamaalik)*, Arabic text Edited by M. J. De Goeje (Brill, 1927), 222; C. A. Macartney, *The Magyars in the ninth century*, Cambridge 1930, 24, n.2.

tion to be the Kama, but a confusion with the Irtysh seems probable.<sup>15</sup> The Kipchaks are given in Gardīzī's report on the Turkish nations as one of the seven tribes of the Kimāk (the fifth tribe), who were living on the Irtysh, to the north of the Pechenegs.<sup>16</sup> The tenth-century *Hudūd al-'Ālam*, although indicating that they are a clan and have separated from the Kimāk, notes that "their king is [appointed] on behalf of the Kimāk", and put them to the north of Pechenegs.<sup>17</sup>

The Kipchaks in the ninth century were living as the westernmost of the Siberian Turks on the Irtysh river, their western frontier probably reaching almost as far as the Ural mountains.<sup>18</sup>

The Kipchak-Kimāks began to encroach on *Uz* (or *Oguz*) tribes (called *Torki* in the Russian sources)<sup>19</sup> grazing lands to their south during the ninth and tenth centuries. On the basis of Marvazī's text<sup>20</sup> we may claim that the Kipchaks and Cumans were originally two separate peoples. The Cumans must have lived to the east of the large bend of the Huanghe. The Kitans spread their dominions to include this territory at the end of the tenth century, and the Kitan expansion must have expelled a large number of tribes from their former habitations. The Cumans, or Cuns, must have reached the territory of the Kipchak tribal confederacy in southwestern Siberia and the Kazak steppe round the middle of the eleventh century. The historical process is obscure, and essential data are lacking, but the final result is indisputable: two Turkic confederacies, the Kipchak and the Cuman, had merged by the twelfth century. A cultural and political intermingling took place, and from the middle or end of the twelfth century it is impossible to detect any difference between the numerous appellations applied to the same tribal confederacy. Though they were originally the names of different components of the confederacy, by that time these appellations (*Kipchak*, *Cuman*

---

<sup>15</sup> Macartney, *Magyars*, 24.

<sup>16</sup> *Gardīzī*, 437; Macartney, *Magyars*, 24.

<sup>17</sup> *Hudūd*, 101; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 278.

<sup>18</sup> Macartney, *Magyars*, 24, 28.

<sup>19</sup> *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 96.

The *Uz* tribes had been concentrated in the Syr Darya-Aral Sea steppes and adjacent areas. The *Torks* (of Turkish extraction like the Pechenegs) are identical with the *Uzes* of the Byzantine historians. At the end of the ninth century, the *Torks* were on the upper Don, east of the Pechenegs. For the *Uzes*, see, Golden, *Russian steppes*, 275-277.

<sup>20</sup> "To them [the Turks] (also) belong the *Qūn*; these came from the land of *Qitāy*, fearing the *Qitā-khan*. They [were] Nestorian Christians, and had migrated from their habitat, being pressed for pastures. Of their numbers [is? or was?] \**Ākinji b. \*Qoçqar* (?) the *Khwārezmshāh*. The *Qūn* were followed [or pursued] by a people called the *Qāy*, who, being more numerous and stronger than they, drove them out of these [new?] pasture lands. They then moved on to the territory of the *Shāri*, and the *Shāri* migrated to the land of the *Türkmāns*, who in their turn shifted to the eastern parts of the *Ghuzz* country. The *Ghuzz* Turks then moved to the territory of the *Bajanak*, near the shores of the Armenian (?) sea." *Marvazī*, 29-30; For a detailed analysis of this passage, see *Marvazī*, 95-104.

and its various translations) became interchangeable: they denoted the whole confederacy irrespective of the origin of the name.<sup>21</sup>

The territory of this Kipchak-Cuman realm, consisting of loosely connected tribal units, was called *Dašt-i Qipčaq* (the Kipchak steppes) by the Muslim historiographers and geographers, *Zemlja Poloveckaja* (Polovcian Land) or *Pole Poloveckoe* (Polovcian Plain) by the Russians, and *Cumania* in the Latin sources. Naturally enough, *Dašt-i Qipčaq* or *Cumania* was not known to the various sources in precise terms, but as a *pars pro toto*; the Muslim sources meant the eastern parts of *Dašt-i Qipčaq*, while the Russian and Western sources had the western parts of *Cumania* in mind. Depending on their region and their time, different sources each used their own word to denote different sections of the vast Cuman territory.<sup>22</sup>

The Kipchak people did not possess a state but formed five large tribal zones along the rivers where they lived: (1) the Central Asian-Kazakhstan region, as far as Talas; (2) the Volga-Ural region; (3) the Don region; (4) the Dnieper region; and (5) the Danube region.<sup>23</sup> Further subdivisions may be seen in the terms “White” and “Black” *Cumania* used by al-Idrīsī<sup>24</sup> and Simon of Keza.<sup>25</sup> “White *Cumania*” may have denoted the Dniester-Dnieper region while “Black *Cumania*” was perhaps located on the Severskij Donets.<sup>26</sup>

The Russians distinguished between “Wild” and “Non-Wild” Cumans, the latter being those tribes or units with which they had close political ties and some degree of cooperation.<sup>27</sup> The “Wild” Cumans occur for the first time in the Kievan chronicle in 1146; they consisted of four tribal groups, two to each wing. Their nomadic habitats are known to us only through some indirect references.<sup>28</sup>

In the twelfth century and at the beginning of the thirteenth, the Kipchak-Cuman confederacy occupied an immense area stretching from the middle reaches of the Irtysh as far as the Lower Danube. This vast territory was never politically united by a strong central power before the advent of the Mongol conquerors in 1241. There existed no Kipchak or Cuman empire, but different Cuman groups under independent rulers, or khans, who acted on their own initiative,

<sup>21</sup> Vásáry, *Cumans*, 6; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 279–280; Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 336–338.

<sup>22</sup> Vásáry, *Cumans*, 7; Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 340–341.

<sup>23</sup> Golden, *Russian steppes*, 280; Dimitri Korobeinikov, “A broken mirror: The Kıpçak world in the thirteenth century,” in *The Other Europe in the Middle Ages, Avars, Bulgars, Khazars, and Cumans*, ed. F. Curta, Leiden–Boston 2008, 381.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Idrīsī, 428–429. The Arab Geographer al-Idrīsī located White and Black *Cumania* by the northern and eastern shores of the Black Sea respectively.

<sup>25</sup> Simon of Keza, *The Deeds of the Hungarians*, ed. and trans. by L. Veszprémy and F. Schaer, with a study by J. Szűcs, Budapest, 1999, 33.

<sup>26</sup> Golden, *Russian steppes*, 280.

<sup>27</sup> For more details about ‘Non-Wild’ Cumans, see Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 374–375.

<sup>28</sup> For more details about ‘Wild’ Cumans, see Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 375–376.

meddling in the political life of the surrounding areas such as the Russian principalities, Byzantium in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Khwarezm.<sup>29</sup>

The absence of a strong, centralized authority is evident in the Cumans history. The late twelfth-century Jewish traveler, Petahia of Ratisbon, who journeyed through Cumania, noted that they "have no king, only princes and noble families".<sup>30</sup>

As devastating as some of their raids were, we see very little in the way of attempts to conquer and possess the lands of sedentary populations. The mutual and frequent raiding that sometimes led to full-scale war was largely attributable to the conflict between two very different economic systems. The Eastern Slavs sought to bring more and more land under cultivation, including steppe areas, while the nomads looked upon local raiding as an integral part of their economy. After their takeover of the steppe zone, we cannot point to any major Cuman seizures, particularly in settled regions.<sup>31</sup>

The political relations between Russians and Cumans went through two phases. The first phase extended from the arrival of the Cumans on the steppes of the Black Sea in 1054/5 to the death of Vladimir Monomakh in 1125; while the second phase extended from that date until their fall together under the sovereignty of the Mongols in 1240. During the first phase the Russian princes took a defensive stance in the face of attacks by the Cumans. Armed resistance proved inadequate, so the senior prince Sviatopolk II (1093–1113) dabbled with diplomacy instead and in 1094 married the daughter of Tugorkan, a Cuman khan. Towards the end of this phase the Russian princes went on the offensive to stop Cuman attacks on the Russian territories by attacking their strongholds in the steppes. The aim was deep penetration, a campaign far into the steppes to weaken the Cumans in their own homelands. It resulted in the great campaigns of 1103 and 1111, which saved Russia from the Cumans for sixty years.

The account of these great expeditions in the Chronicle is scanty in detail, and the additional evidence given in Vladimir's *Pouchenie* (Instruction) is confused in its chronology. Both campaigns were conducted jointly by Svyatopolk of Kiev, David of Chernigov, and Vladimir of Pereyaslavl with their sons. The expedition of 1103 was the first of a series of effective counter-offensives into the steppes, which reached as far as the Cuman encampments on the Donetsk and the Don. At a place called Suten the main force of the Cumans was encountered, and a great victory was gained by the Russians in which twenty khans were killed (including

---

<sup>29</sup> T. S. Noonan, "Rus', Pechenegs and Polovtsy: Economic interaction along the steppe frontier in the pre-Mongol," *Russian History* 19 (1992), 305–306; Vásáry, *Cumans*, 7; Boswell, *Kipchak*, 72.

<sup>30</sup> *The Travels of Rabbi Petachia of Ratisbon*, ed. and tr. by A. Benisch, London 1856, 5; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 280.

<sup>31</sup> Noonan, *Polovtsy*, 303–304; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 281; Boswell, *Kipchak*, 72–73.



the redoubtable Altunopa),<sup>32</sup> masses of sheep, horses, camels and slaves were captured, and numbers of Torks and Pechenegs came over to the Russian side.<sup>33</sup> In 1111 the advance into the steppe was not made down the Dnieper, but by an easterly route crossing the Sula, Psel and Vorskla. Several towns were captured in the Don region, the Don itself was crossed, and finally on March 27, on the Salnitsa, a great victory was gained by the Russians.<sup>34</sup> In 1116 Vladimir sent his son Yaropolk on a further expedition to the Don, where he occupied several towns and whence he brought back as wife a beautiful Alan princess.<sup>35</sup>

If the details of those campaigns are scanty and their topography vague, their results are obvious. The Cuman power was broken. Most of their khans were killed, captured or driven into exile. Bonyak the Scabby seems to have escaped, though his brother was killed. Neither he nor Sharukan are heard of again. Ayepak fled to the Bulgars on the Volga, where he was poisoned. The Russian borders were safe for half a century. From the time of Bonyak until the days of Konchak few raids disturbed the peace of southern Russia, though frequent use was made of the nomads in internecine feuds. During the reign of Vladimir Monomakh (1113–1125) and his two sons (1113–1139), scarcely a single violation of the frontier is recorded. Another important result of the Russian victories was that practically all the Uz (Torks) and Pechenegs left the Cuman steppes and transferred their allegiance to Russia. They took up their abode not only in the steppes south of the Ros and the Sula, but further inside Russian territory, between the Ros and the Stugna, in certain parts of Chernigov, and all over the principality of Pereyasavl'. Besides the Uz, Pechenegs and Berendians, we hear of Kayepichi, Kovuye and Turpeye. But in the usual Turkish fashion these petty tribes soon became merged in a new federation of Turks, who took the name of Karakalpaks or Blackcaps. Occupying a great part of the Russian marches, the Karakalpaks provided an admirable screen for Russia against the Cumans.<sup>36</sup>

It should be noticed that the victories of the Russian princes led to no extension of Russian territory, they limited themselves to the consolidation of the frontiers. The settlements on the Ros and Sula were restored and cities like Yuriev flourished once more, but no permanent occupation of southern territory was made, such as had resulted from the victories of Svyatoslav I Igorevich (964–972). In fact such an important city as Tmutarakan was not recovered. The Cumans, forced to relinquish their hold on the northern belt of grassland, were driven to dwell nearer the Black Sea coast. They proceeded to strengthen their hold on

<sup>32</sup> "Urusoba, Kchiiy, Arslanapa, Kitanopa, Kuman, Asup, Kurtek, Chenegrepa, Sur'bar', they slew Altunopa and his followers and many other princes. Beldyuz' was taken captive." See, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 201.

<sup>33</sup> *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 200–202; *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 7; Boswell, *Kipchak*, 74; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 282.

<sup>34</sup> *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 191–193; *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 8; Boswell, *Kipchak*, 74.

<sup>35</sup> *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisei* (henceforth: PSRL), II, col. 204; *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 214; Boswell, *Kipchak*, 74–75

<sup>36</sup> *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 202; Boswell, *Kipchak*, 75; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 282; S. Franklin and J. Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus 750–1200*, London 1996, 274, 326.

Crimea and on the steppes of the Kuban and the Kuma, and turned for booty and adventure to the wealthy lands of the Caucasus.<sup>37</sup>

The second phase of the political relations between the Cumans and the Russians, which lasted nearly 120 years (1116–1236), was characterized by the eruption of outright conflict, on a large scale, between the Russians and Cumans. The Cumans turned to alliances with the Russian principalities, on the one hand, or, on the other hand, intervened in conflicts between the Russian princes which broke out between them because of the inheritance system, especially that of the throne of Kiev.

The greatest confrontations occurred after the death of Yaropolk Vladimirovich (1132–1139), who had attempted to arrange for his nephew to be his successor and had thereby aroused objections from his own younger brother Yuri Dolgoruky, the prince of Rostov-Suzdal. As a result of the discord among the heirs of Monomakh, Vsevolod Olgovich of Chernigov was able to take the Kievan throne (1139–1146) and regain a place in the Kievan succession cycle for his dynastic branch. After his death, the contest between Yuri Dolgoruky and his nephews resumed. It persisted until 1154, when Yuri, with the help of Cumans headed by Sevinch (d. 1151), finally ascended to the Kievan throne (1155–1157) and restored the traditional order of succession.<sup>38</sup>

By the late 1160s, Cuman raids, large and small, had become annual in Russia. The horsemen from the mouth of the river Dniepr and from along the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov raided Pereiaslavl and the River Ros region south of Kiev.<sup>39</sup> The tribes living in the Donets and the Don basin pillaged, in the main, the Ol'govichi domains in the Zadesen'e and Posem'e regions.<sup>40</sup>

Additional entries in the Russian Chronicle under 1166 show that the nomads were intensifying their raids on Russia. On seeing how the Ol'govichi were living in strife, the Cumans raided caravans traveling by river and by land from the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov regions. Rostislav Mistislavich (1159–1167) of Kiev therefore sent troops to defend the caravans as they traveled along the Dniepr rapids<sup>41</sup> and summoned the princes of Russia to join him against the Cumans. Mstislav's decision to lead an all-Russians campaign against the nomads shows that their raids had intensified. After their victory, the men of Russia set free the

---

<sup>37</sup> Boswell, *Kipchak*, 77.

<sup>38</sup> PSRL, II, cols. 325–331; Martin Dimnik, *The dynasty of Chernigov, 1146–1246*. Cambridge 2003, 73–75; J. Martin, "Kievan Rus," in *Encyclopedia of Russian History*, ed. J. R. Millar, New York 2004, 753; Golden, *Russian Seppes*, 282; M. Dimnik, "The Rus' principalities (1125–1246)," in *Cambridge History of Russia*, Vol. I, *From Early Rus' to 1689*, ed. M. Perrie, Cambridge 2006, 105.

<sup>39</sup> Kobyak was a khan of the Lukomorskie Cumans, who probably lived at the mouth of the river Dniepr and along the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 111, n. 18; 202, n. 357; Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 365–366.

<sup>40</sup> Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 352–3; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 160, n. 218.

<sup>41</sup> PSRL, II, col. 526; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 111–112.

captive Christians and seized much booty. The princes returned home on Easter Day, March 31.<sup>42</sup>

An even more destructive conflict broke out after the death of Rostislav Mistislavich.<sup>43</sup> When Mstislav Izyaslavich, the prince of Volynia and a member of the next generation, attempted to seize the Kievan throne (1167–1169), a coalition of princes opposed him, led by Andrei Bogolyubsky, the son of Yuri Dolgoruky and a Cuman princess. It represented the senior generation of eligible princes, but also included the sons of the late Rostislav and the princes of Chernigov. The conflict culminated in 1169, when Andrei's forces evicted Mstislav Izyaslavich from Kiev, forcing him to flee to Volynia and sacked the city.<sup>44</sup> Andrei's brother, Gleb of Pereyaslavl, became prince of Kiev (1169–1171).<sup>45</sup> Historians are not agreed on Andrei's objective in attacking Kiev or on the significance of its capture on March 8. Some claim that his aim was to recover the Kievan throne for the rightful Monomashichi claimants because Kiev was the capital of the land. Others, however, argue that Andrei attempted to subordinate it to Vladimir and that its capture signaled its decline.<sup>46</sup>

Later, the Chernigov princes, warring with Kiev and Suzdal', attempted to use the aid of Konchek, located in the Donets-Don region.<sup>47</sup> The Chernigovian-Cuman army suffered a disastrous defeat in 1181; Eltut, Konchek's brother, died in battle and two of his sons were taken captive. Igor Svyatoslavich and Konchek, however, escaped by boat to Chernigov.<sup>48</sup> These alliances were short-lived for, in 1184, Russian forces defeated a large Cuman army. The booty that they seized included 7,000 Cuman captives, sixteen of their khans including Osoluk Burchevich, Kobyak with two of his sons, large herds of animals, goods that the nomads had plundered, and Christians whom the Cumans had taken captive.<sup>49</sup> Konchek's

---

<sup>42</sup> PSRL, II, cols. 538–40; *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 26; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 114–115; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 108; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 28.

<sup>43</sup> After his death, the Mstislavichi split into two dynasties: the one in Volynia descended from Iziaslav who had made that region his family possession, and the one in Smolensk descended from Rostislav. See, Dimnik, *The Rus'*, 108.

<sup>44</sup> For an analysis and translation of the relevant chronicle passages, see J. Pelenski, "The Sack of Kiev of 1169: Its Significance for the Succession to Kievan Rus'," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 1 (1989), 303–16.

<sup>45</sup> PSRL, II, cols. 544–6; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 115–18; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 108; Martin, *Kievan Rus*, 753, Golden, *Russian steppes*, 282.

<sup>46</sup> Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 118; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 110–11. Historians do not agree whether or not Kiev lost its pre-eminence in Russia after Andrei's alliance sacked it. For the discussions, see Franklin, *Emergence*, 323–324.

<sup>47</sup> Khan Konchak lived until the beginning of the thirteenth century. He unified many of the Cuman tribes and, around 1184, seemingly achieved the peak of his power. His tribesmen lived in the basin of the river Donets. Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 122, n. 72.

<sup>48</sup> PSRL, II, cols. 621–623; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 150; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 113–114; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 282.

<sup>49</sup> PSRL, II, cols. 630–633; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 160–161; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 115; Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 353; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 282–283.

attempted counter-stroke in 1185 ended in negotiations.<sup>50</sup> It was in this context that the 1185 campaign, quite minor in scale, of Prince Igor Sviatoslavich of Novgorod-Seversk, took place. Igor rode against the Cuman camps located in the upper reaches of the river Donets. These tribes posed the greatest threat to the Seversk towns in the Posem'ë, so that the onus of keeping these nomads at bay fell on the cadet branch.<sup>51</sup> Some historians are of the opinion that Igor planned his campaign to be executed quickly without a major military encounter on the frontiers of the Cuman steppe. Others suggest that his aim was also to establish safe passage for merchants along the trade routes.<sup>52</sup> The Russian princes, however, suffered a catastrophic defeat in the Donets river basin at the river Kayala. Igor and many of the Russian princes were captured and others were killed. This defeat became the subject of the most famous epic poem of Russia, *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*, which accurately reflects the state of Cuman-Russian relations, both military and cultural.<sup>53</sup>

After taking the Seversk princes captive, the Cumans challenged Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich (1173–1194) and Ryurik Rostislavich (the *duumviri*)<sup>54</sup> to come and rescue their compatriots from the Cuman camps, but if they preferred, the Cumans would come to Russia and set their tribesmen free.<sup>55</sup> The Cumans assembled their entire nation to march against Russia. But the khans argued; Khan Koza<sup>56</sup> advocated a safe and ruthless course: to raid the towns of the defeated Seversk princes along the river Seym, where only widows and orphans remained. Konchak, however, proposed attacking the princes on the Kievan side because they had defeated Khan Kobyak. Konchak's friendship with Igor and the consideration that his daughter was betrothed to Igor's son must have also persuaded him to reject Koza's plan. Because the khans obstinately stuck to their views, they split their tribe into two.<sup>57</sup> We may assume that after failing to launch a full scale

---

<sup>50</sup> *PSRL*, II, cols. 634–636; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 162–163.

<sup>51</sup> Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 167.

<sup>52</sup> Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 168, n. 248.

<sup>53</sup> *PSRL*, II, cols. 637–644; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 169–172; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 115; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 283; Franklin, *Emergence*, 367.

<sup>54</sup> Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich's relationship with Ryurik Rostislavich was unique. At first, the two were rivals for Kiev, but in 1181, they agreed to a *modus vivendi* by forming a partnership to rule Kiev and the Kievan land. No such arrangement had existed before them or would exist after them. Granted, princes had exercised dual rule in the past: Oleg and his brother David had shared control of Chernigov; the Davidovichi, Vladimir and Izyaslav, seemingly ruled Chernigov together; and later Izyaslav Mstislavich and his uncle Vyacheslav Vladimirovich were co-rulers of Kiev. These arrangements, however, were made between princes of the same dynasty, whereas Svyatoslav and Ryurik belonged to rival dynasties. Their partnership, therefore, signified a high-water mark in the collaboration between the Olegovichi and the Rostislavichi. Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 385.

<sup>55</sup> *PSRL*, I, cols. 397–399; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 173–176.

<sup>56</sup> He was evidently Koza Sotanovich, Dimnik, *Chernigov* 112, n.21.

<sup>57</sup> Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 177–178.

attack on Kiev following Igor's defeat, Konchak resorted to directing lightning strikes against the *duumviri*. At the same time, Koza and his allies, it would seem, increased their incursions into the Chernigov lands. Neither the *duumviri* nor the Cumans gained the upper hand in their military encounters.

In 1193, Ryurik had concluded peace with the Lukomorskie Cumans.<sup>58</sup> Consequently, in the summer, Svyatoslav suggested that the *duumviri* negotiate peace with all the Cumans, especially the Burchevichi.<sup>59</sup> In addition to securing peace for the people of Russia, however, Svyatoslav probably had a personal desire to end the Cuman raids. He was some seventy years of age and he must have found participating on campaigns ever more difficult.<sup>60</sup> Svyatoslav's stated desire to negotiate peace with all the Cumans is misleading. It is unlikely that the Burchevichi represented all the tribes east of the Dniepr since Konchak and Koza were not invited to the negotiations. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Svyatoslav singled out Osoluk and Izay of the Burchevichi. Evidently, he believed them to be the most troublesome along the Dniepr. It would seem, therefore, that the Burchevichi and the Lukomortsy were the tribes against whom Svyatoslav and Ryurik had been waging their campaigns in the Dniepr region. Svyatoslav wished to conclude peace with them because they were of the greatest danger to the *duumviri*. He evidently did not propose negotiating a pact with the nomads in the Donets basin against whom Igor was waging war.<sup>61</sup> Osoluk and Izay, however, never intended to conclude peace.

Despite his valiant efforts, Svyatoslav failed to defeat the enemy or to negotiate a lasting peace. He died in 1194 during the last week of July and was succeeded, according to their agreement, by Riurik Rostislavich (1194-1208).<sup>62</sup>

After Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich died in Kiev in 1194, Ryurik Rostislavich, with the backing of the dynasties of Smolensk and Suzdalia, sought to secure for the Rostislavichi the sole right of succession to Kiev. Because he failed to deprive the Ol'govichi of their right to supremacy in Russia, the princes of both dynasties remained claimants to Kiev. By the beginning of the thirteenth century, princely seniority in the dynasty of Chernigov had passed to the senior branch of Ol'govichi. This constituted the four youngest sons of Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich - Vladimir, Oleg, Vsevolod, Gleb, and Mstislav - who were all eligible to occupy the office of senior prince. Ryurik could also expect them to make a bid for Kiev where they had the right to sit on the throne of their father.<sup>63</sup>

In 1199 Roman Mstislavich of Vladimir in Volynia hastily seized the town of Galich after the death of Vladimir Yaroslavich in 1198 and soon after began wreaking havoc on domains belonging to Ryurik of Kiev and other princes. In

<sup>58</sup> These tribesmen probably lived at the mouth of the river Dniepr and along the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 202, n. 357.

<sup>59</sup> The Burchevichi lived along the east bank of the Dniepr. Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 202, n. 358.

<sup>60</sup> Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 202.

<sup>61</sup> Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 202-203.

<sup>62</sup> *PSRL*, II, col. 680; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 205-210; Idem, *The Rus'*, 116.

<sup>63</sup> Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 241.

1201, therefore, Rurik summoned the Ol'govichi to campaign against Roman. The latter evicted Rurik from Kiev and gave it to his cousin Ingvar' Yaroslavich of Lutsk, whose father had ruled the town.<sup>64</sup>

On January 2, 1203, Rurik and the Ol'govichi captured Kiev. He therewith avenged himself against the Kievans for opening the gates to Roman.<sup>65</sup> The entire Cumans land also participated in the slaughter. The chronicler identifies two khans; Konchak and Daniil Kobryakovich.<sup>66</sup> Rurik undoubtedly summoned the khan from the Donets basin. Rurik would have called the Lukomortsy from the right bank since he had used them as auxiliaries in the past.<sup>67</sup> Although he would capture Kiev later on several more occasions, his sack of the town is of special significance. The chronicler claims it was the most horrendous devastation that Kiev had experienced since the Christianization of Russia.<sup>68</sup>

In 1204 Svyatoslavich of Chernigov died and was succeeded by his brother Vsevolod "the Red" (Chermnyi). Some time in the summer of 1207, Vsevolod assembled his brothers, his nephews, the Cumans, and the Svyatopolchichi of Turov and Pinsk. His plan was to deprive Rurik of Kiev. The latter fled to Vruchiy even before the Ol'govichi reached Kiev and the Kievans opened their gates.<sup>69</sup> After that, the town changed hands between them on several occasions while Vsevolod and Rurik employed Cumans in their battles against each other. In 1208 Rurik died and Vsevolod the Red (1208-1212) finally occupied Kiev uncontested.<sup>70</sup>

The confusing and ever-changing pattern of raids and counter-raids indicates that both the Cumans and the Russians were rarely if ever able to gain the internal unity needed to deal a fatal blow. Wherever these developments might have led, they were cut short by the appearance of the Mongols.

In the spring of 1223, the Tatars (Mongols) arrived on the frontiers of Russia and supplanted the Cumans as a military power.<sup>71</sup> According to the Novgorod

<sup>64</sup> PSRL, I, cols. 417-18; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 241-242; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 117.

Roman himself was not a rightful claimant, even though he was of Mstislav's line, because he belonged to a younger generation than Rurik and Vsevolod Big Nest.

<sup>65</sup> PSRL, I, col. 418; *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 43; Dimnik, *The Rus'*, 117.

<sup>66</sup> *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 43; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 243. Daniil, perhaps one of the two sons of Khan Kobryak, therefore brought tribesmen from the east bank of the Dniepr. Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 243.

<sup>67</sup> Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 243.

<sup>68</sup> PSRL, I, col. 418; *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 43; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 243-245; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 117.

<sup>69</sup> PSRL, I, col. 429; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 259-60; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 118.

<sup>70</sup> PSRL, I, cols. 432-5; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 262-3; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 119.

<sup>71</sup> During the middle of the twelfth century, the Tatars defeated the neighboring tribe of Mongols and became one of the leading tribes in Mongolia. Since the future emperor Chingis Khan was born to a Mongol tribe, all the tribes became known as the Mongols after he united them. In western Europe, the term Tatars (in the form Tartars) was used generically to identify all the Mongol invaders, but the inhabitants of Russia kept the name Tatars (*Tatary*). For a detailed explanation, see G. Vernadsky, *The Mongols and*

account, Khan Kotyan, the father-in-law of Mstislav Udaloy, came to Galich bearing gifts of “horses and camels and buffaloes and girls” for his son-in-law and the other princes of Russia, hoping to persuade them to help the Cumans against the Tatars.<sup>72</sup> On receiving this news, Mstislav Romanovich (1212–1223) summoned the princes of Russia to Kiev where they agreed to confront the new enemy on foreign soil. Their forces included contingents from Kiev, Smolensk, Chernigov, Galicia, Volynia and probably Turov. Vladimir-Suzdal, Riazan, Polotsk and Novgorod sent no men. The princes of Russia set out against the Tatars in April. At the Varangian Island (that is, Zarub) on the right bank of the Dniepr, the Cumans joined them. There they met Tatar envoys who attempted to convince the Russians that the Cumans were their common enemies. The princes refused to believe them and killed the envoys. The Tatars allegedly sent a second delegation repeating their peaceful intent. On this occasion, the princes let the envoys depart.<sup>73</sup> After the troops set out, Mstislav the Bold quarreled with his cousin Mstislav of Kiev. Their disagreement was responsible, in part, for the annihilation of their forces on May 31 at the River Kalka.<sup>74</sup>

The Cumans were less fortunate – the Tatars destroyed them as a military power. After that, they no longer posed a serious threat to Russia. On the few occasions when the chroniclers mention the Cumans again, they are allies of the princes. For example, under the years 1225 and 1228 Khan Kotyan is mentioned,<sup>75</sup> and, in 1235, the Cumans came to help the princes.<sup>76</sup> Mongol efforts against the Cumans were renewed in 1229–1230 and in 1237 the Mongols invaded Russia and the south Russian steppes.<sup>77</sup>

Those princes and khans who fought together, and whose children intermarried, were also bound together by the goods and revenues each derived from local frontier markets and trans-steppe trade. Economic interaction was thus an integral part of the overall relationship between the Cumans and the Russians.<sup>78</sup>

Some Cuman elements under Khan Koten (Kotian) fled to Hungary in 1238–1239, where other Cuman groups had earlier settled.<sup>79</sup> Already in the 1150s the

*Russia*, New Haven 1953, 11–12. Concerning the Tatar conquests before coming to Russia, see J. Fennell, *The Crisis of Medieval Russia 1200–1304*, London and New York 1983, 63–64.

<sup>72</sup> *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 64–5; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 292, n. 182; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 120.

<sup>73</sup> *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 65; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 293, n. 187; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 120.

<sup>74</sup> PSRL, II, cols. 740–745; *The Chronicle of Novgorod*, 65–66; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 293–298; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 120; Golden, *Russian steppes*, 283; Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 372–373. The river Kalka was probably a tributary of the Kalmius that flows into the Sea of Azov west of the Don. Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 295, n. 191.

<sup>75</sup> PSRL, II, cols. 746, 753; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 298, n. 213.

<sup>76</sup> PSRL, II, cols. 772–774; *Chronicle of Novgorod*, 80; Dimnik, *Chernigov*, 298, n. 213; *Idem*, *The Rus'*, 122.

<sup>77</sup> Golden, *Russian steppes*, 283.

<sup>78</sup> For more analysis about the trade relations between the Cumans and Russians and the role of the Cumans in Russian trade, see, Noonan, *Polovtsy*, 308–326.

<sup>79</sup> Golden, *Russian steppes*, 283–284; Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 373.

Cumans had begun to resettle in Bulgaria. There they led the Wallachian-Bulgarian insurrection against Byzantium which led to the formation of a second Bulgarian kingdom with three Cuman dynasties; Asën (1185-1280), Terter-oba (1280-1323) and Šišman (1323-1396).<sup>80</sup>

The mass of Cumans, however, did not flee. The Tatars, taking advantage of the fragmentation of power that had been the dominant feature of Cuman political life, incorporated them into their empire. The large number of Cuman tribesmen thus brought into the Golden Horde gave it an overwhelmingly Turkic coloration. The land, as Islamic authors noted, had prevailed over the conquerors.<sup>81</sup>

The Cumans were responsible for the "orientalization" of the Slavic population of the Kievan Russian commonwealth. Contrary to the impression one gets from the Chronicles, that the Cuman danger was the basic problem of Russian history between 1055 and 1240, the objective historian will have to stress that there was no such Cuman danger at all. The Cumans never aimed to occupy even a part of a frontier Russian principality, such as the Pereyaslav land. If they penetrated into the interior of Russia, it happened because they were in alliance with one branch of the Rurikids against another.<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 373. For more details about the role of Cumans in the foundation of the second Bulgarian state, see, Vásáry, *Cumans*, 13-56.

<sup>81</sup> Golden, *Russian steppes*, 284.

<sup>82</sup> Pritsak, *Polovcians*, 380.



# Die Frauen der Khane in der Goldenen Horde und in ihren Nachfolgestaaten

MÁRIA IVANICS\*



Die Rolle der Frauen in der Politik wird auch von Orientalisten seit langem untersucht. Viel wurde bereits über die Regentinnen der Mongolen<sup>1</sup> oder über die Rolle der Frauen der Osmanen in der Regierung des Reiches geschrieben.<sup>2</sup> Weniger Aufmerksamkeit wurde den Frauen in den Nachfolgestaaten des Mongolischen Reiches gewidmet, obwohl sie bezüglich ihrer Selbstständigkeit und ihres Einflusses den vorher genannten in nichts nachstanden. Diese Frauengestalten sind einerseits aus den Darstellungen der europäischen Missionaren und arabischen Reisenden, die die Goldene Horde aufsuchten, bekannt, andererseits blieben auch interne Quellen erhalten: wie z. B. Briefe der Gemahlinnen der Khanen

---

\* MTA-SZTE Turkologische Forschungsgruppe.

<sup>1</sup> Bertold Spuler war einer der Ersten, der den Gemahlinnen der Dschingisiden eigene Kapitel in seinen Büchern über die Goldenen Horde und den Ilchaniden widmete. B. Spuler, *Die Goldene Horde. Die Mongolen in Rußland; 1223–1502*. Wiesbaden 1965. B. Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran. Politik, Verwaltung und Kultur der Ilchanzeit 1220–1350*. Leiden 1985. J. Miyawaki-Okada, "The Role of Women in the Imperial Succession of the Nomadic Empire," in *The Role of Women in the Altaic World*, Permanent International Altaistic Conference 44th Meeting, Walberberg, 26–31 August 2001. V. Veit, ed. *Asiatische Forschungen* Bd. 152. Wiesbaden 2007, 143–150. J. D. Ryan, „Christian Wives of Mongol Khans: Tartar Queens and Missionary Expectations in Asia,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 8:3 (1998), 411–421. M. Rossabi, Kubilai Khan and the Women in his family *Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*. ed. W. Bauer, Wiesbaden 1979, 153–180. H. Seruys, „Two Remarkable Women in Mongolia: the third Lady Erketü Qatun and Dayičing-beyiji,” *Asia Major* n.s. 19:2 (1975), 191–245. N. Durak, „Çingizli Hatunları I. Sorgaktani Beki” [Die Gemahlinnen der Dschingisiden I. *Sorgaktani Beki*] *Turkish Studies* 3 (2008), 251–258. (<http://turkishstudies.net/sayilar/sayi7/20%20DURAK%20Neslihan.pdf>). N. Dalkesen, *Gender Roles and Women's Status in Central Asia and Anatolia between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries*. Diss. Hacetepe Üniversitesi (<http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12608663/index.pdf>).

<sup>2</sup> M. Ç. Uluçay, *Harem*. Ankara 1972. M. Ç. Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*. [Die Frauen und Tochter des Padishah's] Ankara 1985. A. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı'da Harem*. [Der Harem bei den Osmanen] İstanbul 1995. L. P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*. Oxford 1993.

und der weiblichen Mitgliedern der einzelnen Dynastien an fremde Herrscher.<sup>3</sup> Eine Reihe von Informationen ist in den Berichten enthalten, die von den ägyptischen Mameluken-Sultanen an die Khane der Goldenen Horde geschickten Gesandten, sowie den Diplomaten der Moskauer Großfürsten geschrieben wurden. Die ersten waren Verbündete, die Letzteren Vasallen der Goldenen Horde.

### *Die Titulatur der weiblichen Angehörigen der mongolischen Herrscherhäuser*

In den Primärquellen wird immer auch ein Titel neben den weiblichen Namen angeführt, meistens das Wort *hātūn*, das uns schon aus alttürkischen Zeiten bekannt ist, und aus dem Iranischen, noch genauer aus dem Sogdischen stammt.<sup>4</sup> So wurden auch die Ehefrauen der Khane von den zur Goldenen Horde entsandten mamlukischen Gesandten genannt.<sup>5</sup> Unter den verschiedenen Titeln gibt es einige, die nur von Frauen, andere aber von Frauen und Männer gleichfalls getragen werden konnten. Zu den Letzteren gehört die Bezeichnung *beg* und der sich seit dem 16. Jahrhundert verbreitende Titel *sultān*. In einigen Fällen ist es ganz eindeutig, dass es sich nur um eine Frau handeln kann, so z. B. bei Fatma-Sultan. Fehlen aber weitere Hinweise, so können wir nur raten, ob hinter dem Namen *Şirin-Beg* oder *Nur-Sultan* ein Mann oder eine Frau steht.<sup>6</sup>

In den türkischen Quellen sind die weitergebildeten weiblichen Formen der Wörter *hān* und *beg* am meisten verbreitet. *hānča/hāniš/hānım* sind die Titel der Ehefrauen der Khane, während *hāni/hānike* für die Töchter und Schwester derselben verwendet werden. *Beg/begi/bike/begim/biyim* bezeichnen ebenfalls die Frau des Herrschers, wobei *bikeč* für dessen Konkubinen steht. Unter dem Titel wird

<sup>3</sup> Sie werden in den Archiven von Moskau, Stockholm, Kopenhagen, Warschau, Wien und Budapest aufbewahrt. Einige davon wurden veröffentlicht. E. Święcicka, „The Diplomatic Letters by Crimean Keräy Ladies to the Swedish Royal House“ *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 55:1 (2002) 57–91. J. Matuz, *Krimitatarische Urkunden im Reichsarchiv zu Kopenhagen, mit historisch-diplomatischen und sprachlichen Untersuchungen*. Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, Bd. 37. Freiburg im Breisgau 1976.

<sup>4</sup> G. Clauson Sir, *An Etymological Dictionary of pre-thirteenth-century Turkish*. Oxford 1972, 602–603.

<sup>5</sup> Die Berichte der Gesandtschaften wurden von V. G. Tizengauzen herausgegeben. *Sbornik materialov odnosjaščisja k istorii Zolotoj Ordy. Izvolečenijsja iz arabskih sočinenij*. Tom. I. Quellensammlung zur Geschichte der Goldenen Horde. Auszüge aus den arabischen Quellen, Sankt Petersburg 1884. V. G. Tizengauzen, *Sbornik materialov odnosjaščisja k istorii Zolotoj Ordy. Izvolečenijsja iz persidskih sočinenij*, Tom. II. Quellensammlung zur Geschichte der Goldenen Horde. Auszüge aus den persischen Quellen, Moskva-Leningrad 1941.

<sup>6</sup> *Şirin-Beg* war zuerst die Frau von Ahmed Giray, später wurde sie im Sinne des Levirats mit Saadet Giray, dem jüngeren Bruder von Ahmed, verheiratet. *Nur-Sultan* war die Hauptgemahlin des Khans Mengli Giray I. (1476–1514). I. V. Zaytsev, „The Structure of the Giray Dynasty (15–16 century): Matrimonial and Kinship Relations of the Crimean khans“ *Kinship in the Altaic world: Proceedings of the 48th Permanent International Altaistic Conference*, ed. E. V. Bojkova & R. B. Rybakov, Moscow 10–15 July, 2005. Wiesbaden 2006, 341–351.

die Rangfolge mit Attributen angeführt, so ist *ulu hānt* die erste Gattin, *ulu bikeč* die erste Konkubine und *ana biyim* der Titel der Mutter des Khans.<sup>7</sup>

### Ehepolitik

Die mongolischen Großkhane wählten ihre Frauen aus den mit ihnen verbündeten oder von ihnen unterworfenen Sippen. Wie bekannt, stammte Börte, die Hauptgemahlin von Dschingis Khan aus der Sippe der Onggirat.<sup>8</sup> Auch Orda, der erstgeborene Sohn Dschotschi wählte von ihnen seine Gattin.<sup>9</sup> Aber Törege-ne, die Ehefrau des Großkhans Ögödei (1229–1241), stammte schon von der Sippe Uhat Merkit, Sorgaktani-beki, die Frau von Toluy, von der der Kereiten, und Ogulgaimisch, die Frau des Großkhans Güyük (1246–1248), von der der Merkiten.<sup>10</sup> Nur die mongolischen Großkhane der Yüan Dynastie folgten dem Beispiel von Dschingis Khan und nahmen ihre Frauen ausschließlich aus der Sippe Onggirat zur Gattin.<sup>11</sup>

Die Dschingisiden der Goldenen Horde bevorzugten die Töchter einiger bestimmter vornehmerer Sippen, wie die der Kongraten, der Mangiten (Nogaien), Schirinen und Sidschiuten. Die Ehefrau von Tokta Khan (1291–1312) stammte von den Kongraten,<sup>12</sup> wie auch die Mutter von Toktamisch Khan.<sup>13</sup> Von Taydula, der Hauptgemahlin von Özbek Khan (1312–1342), vermutete man zwar, dass sie eine Kongratin sei, da sie diese Sippe unterstützte, doch ist es wahrscheinlicher, dass sie nicht von ihnen stammte. Es kann nämlich kein Zufall sein, dass alle Quellen über die Herkunft der bedeutendsten Frauengestalt der Goldenen Horde schweigen. Der einzige Grund hierfür mag die Tatsache sein, dass Taydula nicht von einer vornehmen, sondern vielleicht von einer zu dieser Zeit seine Bedeutung vorüberwiegend verlorenen Sippe, den Kiptschaken abstammte. Darauf verweist nur eine einzige Quelle, die in Berlin verwahrte, bis jetzt unveröffentlichte Dschingis-name.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Eine Reihe von Beispielen sind in der russisch-krimtatarischen diplomatischen Korrespondenz zu finden, in der neuen Ausgabe von V. V. Velyaminov-Zernov, *Kırım Yurtına ve ol taraflarğa dair bolgan yarlıqlar ve hatlar*. Kırım Hanlığı Tarihine Dair kaynaklar. ST. Petersburg, 1864. ed. A. Melek Özyetgin–Ilyas Kamalov, Ankara 2009.

<sup>8</sup> M. Taube, *Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen. Herkunft, Leben, Aufstieg Dschingis Khans*. München 2005, § 63–66.

<sup>9</sup> *Rashiduddin Fazlullah Jami 'u't-tawarikh. Compendium of Chronicles. A History of the Mongols I–III. Sources of Translated and annotated by W. M. Thackston. Oriental Languages & Literatures 45. Ed. By Şinasi Tekin & Gönül Alpay Tekin. Centrtal Asiatic Sources IV. Published at the Department of the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University. 1998–1999, 348.*

<sup>10</sup> *Rashiduddin Fazlullah Jami 'u't-tawarikh*. 1998–1999, 53, 381, 389.

<sup>11</sup> *Rashiduddin Fazlullah Jami 'u't-tawarikh*. 1998–1999, 86. Rossabi 1979.

<sup>12</sup> B. D. Grekov–A. Ju. Jakubovskij, *Zolotaja orda i ee padenie*. Moskva–Leningrad 1950, 100.

<sup>13</sup> Nach einer persischen Quelle hieß sie Kudan Kunček. Tizengauzen Bd. II. 1941, per.137/ru.132.

<sup>14</sup> *Jānibek hānning iki hātūni bar idi. Birisi Ās qizi Qara Şaş, Qibşaq qizi Taydulī*. 'Dschanibek Khan hatte zwei Gattinnen. Die eine war ein Mädchen aus der Sippe As, Qara Şaş

Die Krimkhane wählten ihre Ehefrauen Jahrhunderte lang aus den Reihen der Mangiten bzw. der Şirin, einer Sippe, welche zeitgleich zur Gründung des Khanats aufstieg.<sup>15</sup> Es ist bemerkenswert, dass unter den einzelnen Dynastien der Dschingisiden keine Vermählungen zustande gekommen waren.

Die Dschingisiden der Goldenen Horde verheirateten ihre Töchter nur selten an fremde Herrscher, und auch sie selbst heirateten Frauen aus der Ferne nur ausnahmsweise. Nogai, der am Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts am Balkan ein von der Goldenen Horde unabhängiges aber kurzlebiges Khanat gründete, nahm Euphrosyne Palaiologina, die illegitime Tochter des byzantinischen Kaisers Michael VIII. Palaiologos (1259–1282), zur Frau.<sup>16</sup> Auch Özbeğ Khan heiratete eine illegitime Tochter des byzantinischen Kaisers Andronikos III. Palaiologos (1328–1341), wodurch der Kaiser die Einstellung der tatarischen Streifzüge am Balkan erhoffte. Ihr muslimischer Name sollte Bayalun sein.<sup>17</sup> Özbeğ Khan besiegelte die Allianz zwischen der Goldenen Horde und dem ägyptischen Mamluk-Sultanat gegen die Ilhaniden von Persien durch die Vermählung von Tolunbay, einer Großenkelin von Dschotschi Khan (gest. 1227), an den Mamluk-Sultan Malik al-Nāsir (1293–1341).<sup>18</sup> Zu Eheschließungen mit der Dynastie der Osmanen kam es ausschließlich Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts, zu einer Zeit, als die Krimtataren eine aktive Rolle in den Thronkämpfen der osmanischen Thronfolger spielten. So wurde Ayşe, die Tochter von Mengli Giray I. mit Mehmed, dem Sohn von Sultan Bayezid II. (1481–1512) und *Sandschakbeg* in Kefe (Caffa/Feodosija ukr.) vermählt. Nach dem Tod von Mehmed heiratete sie Selim, der spätere Sultan Selim (1512–

---

(‘Schwarzes Haar’), die andere eine aus der Sippe Kiptschak, Tayduli. *Historia Dschingischani* Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. Preuss. Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung. Signatur: Diez A quart 137. fol. 12v. In der Quelle tritt Taydula als Frau von Dschanibek Khan auf, obwohl sie in Wahrheit seine Mutter war. Die turksprachige Kiptschaken bildeten im 11. Jahrhundert ein selbstständiges Ethnie. Infolge der mongolischen Eroberung löste sich aber ihre gesellschaftliche Struktur auf, aus einem Ethnie wurden sie zu einer Sippe und wurden vollständig in das Mongolische Reich eingegliedert. Die Kiptschaken erlangten erst im 15. Jahrhundert im Krimkhanat wieder Bedeutung und erhoben sich in den Schicht des s.g. *qaraçi bey's* (*ruling tribes*). U. Schamiloglu, “The Qaraçi Beys of the Later Golden Horde: Notes on the Organization of the Mongol World Empire,” *Archivum Eurasiae medii aevi*. 4 (1984), 283–297.

<sup>15</sup> M. Ivanics, „Die Şirin. Abstammung und Aufstieg einer Sippe in der Steppe,“ D. Klein, (ed.), *The Crimean Khanate between East and West. 15–18th Century*. Forschungen zur ost-europäischen Geschichte 78. Wiesbaden 2012, 27–44.

<sup>16</sup> Eine andere illegitime Tochter des Kaisers, Maria Palaiologina wurde vom Ilchaniden Abaqa Khan von Persien geheiratet. I. Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans 1185–1365*. Cambridge 2005, 79.

<sup>17</sup> Mihail-Dimitri Sturdza, *Dictionnaire historique et Généalogique des grandes familles de Grèce, d’Albanie et de Constantinople*. Paris 1983, 373. Andronikos andere drei Töchter waren Ehefrauen des osmanischen Sultans Orhan Gazi (1326–1359). <http://fmg.ac/Projects/MedLands/BYZANTIUM%2012611453.htm#PalaiologinaMUzbekKhan>

<sup>18</sup> Die Beschreibung der Verhandlungen über die Eheschließung ist beim arabischen Autoren Ibn Duqmāq und Al-Maqrīzī zu finden. Tizengauzen/Ibn Duqmāq 1884, ar. 320/ru. 326, Tizengauzen/Al-Maqrīzī 1884, ar. 425/ru. 439.

1520). Selims Tochter dagegen wurde mit dem Saadet Giray, dem späteren Khan der Krim (1524–1532) vermählt.<sup>19</sup>

Über die Heiratspolitik der Khane können durch die Analyse der Abstammung der vier Frauen von Özbek Khan besonders aufschlussreiche Folgerungen gezogen werden. Unter den vier Hauptgemahlinnen stand im Range Taytuğlı/Taydula-*hātūn* vorne, die aus gewissen Gründen anatomischer Art die Lieblingsfrau von Özbek war.<sup>20</sup> Während der Zeremonien war ihr Platz direkt zum Rechten des Khans. Wenn wir aus dem Titel des Vaters der zweiten Frau, Kabak-*hātūn*, der Tochter von Nagatay Emir ausgehen, war diese Heirat womöglich der Garant der Loyalität der Gefolgsleute des Khans (*nöker*). Auch sie nahm zu Rechten des Khans Platz. Links saß die dritte Frau, Bayalun-*hātūn*, die oben erwähnte illegitime Tochter des byzantinischen Kaisers, Andronikos III. Palaiologos. Die vierte Ehefrau, Ordudscha-*hātūn*, Tochter von Isa beg aus der Sippe Kiyat, stärkte den Bund zwischen dem Herrscher und der Sippenaristokratie. Der Vater von Ordudscha, Isa beg, der eine Hauptrolle in der Thronbesteigung von Özbek spielte, bekam wiederum des Khans Tochter, Itkütschüdschük zur Ehefrau.<sup>21</sup>

### *Levirat in der Goldenen Horde*

Nach dem Ableben eines Khans kamen dessen Gemahlinnen im Sinne des Levirats in die Familie des nächsten Khans, meistens in die des Bruders des Verstorbenen. In höheren Kreisen der Gesellschaft hatte das Levirat weniger wirtschaftliche, sondern eher politische Hintergründe. Es diente nämlich zur Legitimation des Herrschers. Besonders typisch ist das Schicksal von Nur Sultan, die Tochter des Beglerbegs der Goldenen Horde. Sie wurde 1466 mit Halil, dem Khan von Kasan vermählt, und nach dessen Tode nahm sie Ibrahim, der Bruder von Halil zur Frau. Mit Ibrahim Khan (1467–1479) hatte sie zwei Söhne, Muhammed Emin und Abdullatif, die als Schützlinge Moskaus auf dem Thron von Kasan saßen. Nach dem sie wieder Witwe wurde, heiratete sie Mengli Giray (1478–1514), der Khan der Krim. Im Zustandekommen dieser Heirat spielte offensichtlich die Tatsache eine Rolle, dass zu dieser Zeit die moskaueindliche Fraktion den Khan in Kasan stellte, wobei Mengli Giray eine russenfreundliche Politik betrieb und ein Verbündeter des Großfürsten Ivan III. (1462–1505) war.<sup>22</sup>

Ein besonders seltsamer Fall des Levirats ist das Schicksal der schon erwähnten illegitimen byzantinischen Kaisertochter, Bayalun-*hātūn*. Ihr erster Gatte, Togrul/Togrildscha war der Bruder von Tokta, des Khans der Goldenen Horde (1291–1312). Tokta ließ all seine Gebrüder und auch seine Söhne – außer El-Basar

<sup>19</sup> Zaytsev The Structure of the Giray Dynasty, 341.

<sup>20</sup> I. Zimonyi, "Ibn Baṭṭūṭa on the First Wife of Özbek Khan," *Central Asiatic Journal* 49 (2005), 303–309.

<sup>21</sup> Tizengauzen/Ibn Baṭṭūṭa 1884, 290, 293–295

<sup>22</sup> V. D. Smirnov, *Krymskoe Hanstvo pod verhovenstvom Otomanskoj Porty*. [Das Krimkhanat unter osmanischer Herrschaft] Bd. I. Sankt Petersburg 1887, Bd. II. Odessa, 1889. Reprint, Moskva 2005.

- ermorden, damit sein Lieblingssohn nach seinem Tode den Thron besteigen könne. Die zur Witwe gewordene Bayalun-*hatūn* wurde nun zur Frau Toktas. Da aber El-Basar noch zu Toktas Lebzeiten starb, war außer dem schwer kranken Tokta keiner mehr von Batus Nachkommen am Leben. Erst jetzt gestand ihm Bayalun-*hātūn*, dass sie Togrildscha einen Sohn, Özbek genannt, gebar, den sie noch rechtzeitig zu den Tscherkessen retten konnte. Tokta ließ ihn herbeiholen, aber als Özbek ankam, war der Khan schon Tod. Die schon zum zweiten Mal zur Witwe gewordene Bayalun kam nun in den Harem ihres eigenen leiblichen Sohnes. Da Özbek Khan Muslime war, hätte er gemäß der Scharia seine Mutter nicht zur Gattin nehmen dürfen. Eine Mutter-Sohn Ehe wird aber nicht nur vom Islam, sondern auch vom Gewohnheitsrecht der Nomaden verboten. Bevor wir annehmen würden, dass sich Ibn Baṭṭūṭa geirrt hat, und Bayalun nicht als Gattin, sondern als Mutter des Khans in den Harem von Özbek ankam, lohnt es sich die Erläuterung von Ibn Duqmāq, dem Geschichtsschreiber des Mamluken-Sultans in Betracht zu ziehen. Nach der Erklärung von Ibn Duqmāq konnte Özbek deshalb Bayalun zur Gattin nehmen, weil sein Vater, Togrildscha als Heide starb, und deswegen die Ehe nach der Scharia als ungültig galt.<sup>23</sup> Die Mutter-Sohn Ehe kam tatsächlich zustande. Die schwangere Bayalun kehrte in der Begleitung von Ibn Baṭṭūṭa zu ihrem Vater nach Byzanz zurück.<sup>24</sup>

#### *Das wirtschaftliche Potential der Hauptgemahlinnen*

Die Hauptgemahlinnen der Khane verfügten über beträchtliche Einkommen, welche ihre Unabhängigkeit und ihren Einfluss auf die Politik sicherte. Ihre Einnahmen kamen von Steuern, die die Khane ihnen überließen, von Geschenken, von dem Tribut der russischen Fürsten und polnisch-litauischen Königen sowie von selbstständigen wirtschaftlichen Tätigkeiten. Nehmen wir ein Beispiel aus dem 13. Jahrhundert. In dieser Zeit zahlte die Hälfte der sechzehn Tausend Steuerzahlern der Stadt Buhara den jeweiligen Großkhan Steuern, fünftausend an Batu Khan, die Steuereinnahmen von den restlichen dreitausend Einwohnern bereicherten die Mutter des Ilhaniden Hülegü Khan.<sup>25</sup> Eine unbenannte Frau (Nur Sultan?) von Mengli Giray verfügte über die Zolleinnahmen, die nach dem Warenhandel des Basars von Beṣterek eingetrieben wurden.<sup>26</sup> Tokta Khan schenkte Bayalun-*hatun* für die obenerwähnte Gute Nachricht von einem *tümen* ein Volk von zwei Tausend Mann (*iki ming tümen el*).<sup>27</sup> In den sogenannten *tiyiš-defter*, in

<sup>23</sup> Tizengauzen/Ibn Duqmāq 1884, ar. 316/ru. 323–324.

<sup>24</sup> Tizengauzen/Ibn Baṭṭūṭa 1884, 302–305.

<sup>25</sup> Tizengauzen/Waṣṣāf 1941, 81–82.

<sup>26</sup> M. V. Fehner, *Togovlja Russkogo Gosudarstva so stranami Vostoka v XVI veke*. [Handel zwischen Moskovien und den östlichen Ländern im 16. Jahrhundert] Moskva 1956, 25.

<sup>27</sup> *Tümen* bedeutet Zehntausendschaft. Sie wurden unabhängig von der Stammeszugehörigkeit aufgebaut, und bildeten militärische, aber auch administrative Einheiten. Ötämiš Hâjî, *Čingiz-nāma*. Introduction, Annotated Translation, Transcription and Critical Text by Takushi Kawaguchi, Hiroyuki Nagamine. Supervision: Mutsumi Sugahara. *Studia Culturae Islamicae* No. 94. Tokyo 2008, 81.



denen der in die Krim geschickte russische Tribut ausführlich festgelegt wurde, wurde aufgezählt, wie viele Felle von unterschiedlicher Qualität der Mutter, den vier Frauen und den vier Konkubinen, manchmal auch den Schwestern oder sogar Töchtern des Khans zustanden.<sup>28</sup> Abgesehen von dem Teil des Tributs verehrten die russischen Gesandten die einflussreichen Gattinnen der Khane auch mit Geschenken.<sup>29</sup>

Die Zahl der wirtschaftlich unabhängigen Frauen durfte in der Goldenen Horde sicherlich nicht all zu hoch gewesen sein. Eine typische Vertreterin von ihnen ist Taydula, die schon oft erwähnte Hauptgemahlin von Özbeğ Khan. 1332 wurden ihr die Zolleinkünfte nach den Waren der christlichen Schiffe, welche den Hafen von Azaq (Asow/Azov Ru.) anliefen, zugewiesen. Am Schwarzen Meer war Azaq die einzige Koloniestadt der Republik Venedig, in der reger Handel abgewickelt wurde.<sup>30</sup> Hier kreuzten sich die Handelswege der Karawane aus Astrachan und derer, die aus Persien durch Derbent nach Norden zogen. Taydula war berechtigt einen Teil der Zolleinkünfte nach allen, den Hafen von Azaq anlaufenden christlichen Handelsschiffen abzuschöpfen, und durch ihre eigenen Zolleinnehmer eintreiben zu lassen.<sup>31</sup> Während der Regierungsjahren von Özbeğ Khan war der Importzoll 3%, das nach dem Regierungsantritt seines Sohnes Dchanibek Khan (1342–1357) auf 5% erhöht wurde. Über die Höhe ihrer Einkünfte können wir uns anhand eines Befehls ein Bild machen, mit dem sie vom Khan Berdibeg angewiesen wurde, einen bestimmten (leider nicht gezeigten) Teil von ihren Zolleinnahmen – je Schiff 3 Somm, also 561,6 Gramm Silber oder 13,5 Golddukat – für die Ausrüstung des Zolleinnehmers des Khans zu überlassen. Taydula war also finanziell an einem störungsfreien Seehandel am Schwarzen Meer interessiert. Als die Handelsleute von Venedig ihre Rivalen, die aus der Horde kommenden muslimischen Händler angriffen und einen Schaden von 4.000 Somm, also 748,8 kg Silber oder 18.000 Golddukat verursachten, verlangte der Khan der Goldenen Horde, Berdibeg vom Dogen Venedigs Schadenersatz. Die Republik zahlte auch, stand aber mit 2.330 Somm, also 10.485 Golddukat immer noch in Schulden. Um die Situation zu verbessern, zahlte Taydula statt der venezianischen Handelskolonie Azaq 550 Somm (2475 Golddukat) aus ihrer eigenen Schatzkammer, also ein Fünftel der noch ausstehenden Schuld. Seitens Taydula war dies selbstverständlich keine Wohltat. Erstens stärkte sie damit nach außen ihr Bild als die Christen beschützende Khansgemahlin, zweitens sta-

---

<sup>28</sup> M. Ivanics, „Entstehung und Quellenwert der krimtatarischen *tiiyş defters*.“ *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 47 (1994) 1–2, 105–112.

<sup>29</sup> A. M. Nekrasov, „Ženšiny hanskogo doma Gireev v XV–XVI vv.“ <http://www.portalcredo.ru/site/index.php?act=lib&id=1785> 30. 11. 2011.

<sup>30</sup> M. Berindei-G. Veinstein, „La Tana-Azaq de la présence italienne à l’emprise ottomane (fin XIIIe–XVIe siècle),“ *Turcica* 8:2 (1976), 110–200.

<sup>31</sup> Der Fall von Taydula mit den venezianischen Handelsleuten wird nach der Kapitel VI. des Buches A. P. Grigor’ev – V. P. Grigor’ev, *Kollekcija zolotoordynskih dokumentov XIV veka iz Venecii* (Sammlung der in Venedig aufbewahrten Dokumente der Goldenen Horde aus dem 14. Jahrhundert) zusammengefasst. Sankt Petersburg 2002. 122–167.

bilisierte sie dadurch ihre Lage in der Horde in der Hoffnung ihre Ausgaben bald von der venezianischen Regierung eintreiben zu können.

### *Das Einflusspektrum der Frauen in der Politik*

Wie im Mongolischen Reich, als auch in der Goldenen Horde versahen die Frauen nach dem Tode des Herrschers öfters auch die Aufgaben einer Regentin des Reiches. Die bekannteste Regentin, die kasantatarische Süyümbike übernahm für ihren zweijährigen Sohn die Führung des Khanats in den schwersten Zeiten, kurz vor dem russischen Angriff, zwischen 1549-1551.<sup>32</sup> Es ist auch wohl bekannt, dass die Gemahlinnen der Khane mit der Hilfe ihrer einflussreichen Machtgruppierungen die Thronbesteigungschancen ihrer Söhne im großen Maße beeinflussen konnten. Sie mischten sich aber auch in die Thronkämpfe der Dynastien der Dschingisiden ein. Boraqšin-*hatün*, die Witwe von Toğan, eines Bruders von Batu Khan, schickte im Jahr 1257 den Toluiden Hülegü Pfeile ohne Feder und einen Kaftan ohne Gürtel. Damit wollte sie ihm mitteilen, dass die Goldene Horde keinen Herrscher hat, und er kommen möge, um den Thron des Sarais zu besteigen.<sup>33</sup> Als die Linie von Batu 1359 ausstarb, berief Taydula die Schibaniden auf den Thron der Goldenen Horde und ließ drei von ihnen, Hizir, Keldibeg und Bazarcı zum Khan erheben lassen. Beide Frauen zahlten für ihre eigenwilligen Taten mit ihrem Leben.<sup>34</sup>

Al-'Umari, der Beamtete der mamlukischer Kanzlei des 14. Jahrhunderts, in seinem Buch über das Mongolische Reich berichtet, dass in der Goldenen Horde „die Fürstinnen greifen mit in die Regierungsgeschäfte ein und erlassen anstatt des Khans Befehle; ähnlich also wie (im Iraq und Persien); sogar in noch größerem Umfang. [...] Ich kenne zahlreiche Schriftstücke von Khanen der Goldenen Horde aus der Zeit Barka's und seiner Nachfolger mit (Wendungen) wie: *Fürstinnen und Emire stimmen überein*.“<sup>35</sup> In russischen und italienischen Überlieferungen sind einige solche Dokumente von Taydula erhalten geblieben, die an den Dogen von Venedig und an den russischen Metropoliten gerichtet waren. In diesem Fall fingen die Dokumente mit der Formel: „*ex voluntate Dschanibek, Taydula begim sözüüm*“ an. Das heißt, dass die Urkunden im Auftrage des Khans, doch im eigenen Namen ausfertigt wurden.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> M. G. Hudjakov, *Očerki Istorii Kazanskogo Xanstva*. Kazan' 1923, 117.

<sup>33</sup> Tizengauzen/An-Nuvejri 1884 ar. 130/ru. 150.

<sup>34</sup> Taydula wurde an einem Schlitten (in einer anderen Version auf einem Wagen) festgebunden, vor dem ein noch nicht zugereitetes Pferd eingespannt wurde. Nachdem dem Pferd ein Hieb versetzt wurde, rannte es fort, und zerstörte dabei den Schlitten, wobei auch Taydula getötet wurde. Ötämiš Hāji 2008, 88, 93-94.

<sup>35</sup> K. Lech, *Das Mongolische Weltreich. Al-'Umari's Darstellung der mongolischen Reiche in seinem Werk Masālik al-absār fi mamālik al-amṣār*. Mit Paraphrase und Kommentar herausgegeben von Klaus Lech. Asiatische Forschungen, Band 22. Wiesbaden 1968, 136.

<sup>36</sup> I. Vásáry, *Az Arany Horda kancelláriája*. [Die Kanzlei der Goldenen Horde] Budapest 1987. Grigor'ev-Grigor'ev 2002. A. P. Grigor'ev, *Sbornik hanskikh jarlikov russkim metropo-*



Auch auf dem Gebiet der diplomatischen Beziehungen waren die weiblichen Familienmitglieder der Khane präsent, sogar aktiv. Die nach Bahtschissarai entsandten russischen oder polnisch-litauischen Gesandten wurden von den einflussreichsten weiblichen Mitgliedern der Khansfamilie in persönlichen Audienzen empfangen. (Dieses Recht wurde ihnen 1564 zum ersten Mal verweigert.) Anhand der Quellen lässt sich feststellen, dass im diplomatischen Verkehr ab dem 16. Jahrhundert, – womöglich auf osmanischem Einfluss – die *anabiyim*, die Mutter des Khans schrittweise die Rolle der ersten Gemahlin in den internationalen Beziehungen übernimmt. Der Titel *anabiyim* taucht zum ersten Mal im Jahr 1525 in den russischen Dokumenten auf. Die *anabiyim* stand im Rang über die Gemahlinnen des Khans. Wie dies auch von Nekrasov vor kurzem erwiesen wurde, verlor der Rang *anabiyim* zu Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts die ursprüngliche Bedeutung von „Mutter des Herrschers“ und bezeichnete einen selbstständigen Status. Dieser bedeutete nicht unbedingt die Mutter, viel eher die Vertraute des Herrschers, also eine Person, welche großen Einfluss auf den Khan hatte. Bei Gazi II. Giray Khan (1588–1607) hatte seine älteste Schwester, Kutlu-Sultan den Titel *anabiyim* inne, und der Khan bat in allen Angelegenheiten um ihren Rat.<sup>37</sup>

Die weiblichen Familienmitglieder der Khane korrespondierten selbständig mit fremden Herrschern. Sandte der Khan eine Gesandtschaft, war in dieser die Mutter, die erste Gemahlin, gegebenenfalls die Schwester oder Tochter des Khans durch eigene Repräsentanten vertreten. Zum größten Teil hatten die Vertreter der weiblichen Angehörigen der Dynastie nur Briefe protokollarischen Inhalts dabei, durch die die Aufrechterhaltung der freundschaftlichen Beziehungen gesichert wurde. In den russischen, polnischen, schwedischen, ungarischen und Wiener Archiven sind zahlreiche solche Briefe erhalten geblieben.<sup>38</sup>

Im Allgemeinen waren die Frauen in den Familien der Khane auch im religiösen Bereich gebildet, lasen den Koran,<sup>39</sup> Da in der türkischen Welt das Pilgern des Herrschers nach Mekka als eine elegante Weise des Abdankens von der weltlichen Macht galt, gingen statt den Khanen regelmäßig ihre Frauen oder ihre Mütter auf Pilgerreise, um den religiösen Vorschriften Folge zu leisten.<sup>40</sup> Sie fungier-

---

*litam*. [Sammlung des *yarliks* der Khanen der Goldenen Horde an den russischen Metropolitent] Sankt Petersburg 2004.

<sup>37</sup> Nekrasov, *Ženshiny hanskogo doma Gireev*.

<sup>38</sup> Siehe Anm. 3. Im Archiv zu Warschau gibt es zwischen den Dokumenten bezüglich der Tataren fast zwei Dutzend Briefe aus den Jahren 1572 und 1574, die von den Frauen der Giray-Dynastie dem polnischen König geschickt wurden. Archiwum Glowne Akt Dawnych, Dz. Tatarski, Karton 60, 63, 65. Nekrasov, *Ženshiny hanskogo doma Gireev*.

<sup>39</sup> So z. B. als Ibn Baṭṭūṭa die zweite Frau von Özbek aufsuchte, lies sie gerade den Koran Tizengauzen/Ibn Baṭṭūṭa 1884, 294.

<sup>40</sup> „819 (1416/17) kam die Frau von Edigü, des Herrschers von Dascht[-i Kiptschak], in Damaskus an. Die *ḥātūn* trug dort die Bitte vor, die Pilgerreise absolvieren zu dürfen.“ Tizengauzen/Askalāni 1884: ar.451/ru.454. Nur-Devlet schenkte Iwan III. das Pferd, auf dem sie nach Mekka reiste. Zitiert von Nekrasov, *Ženshiny hanskogo doma Gireev*.

ten oft auch als Mäzen religiöser oder weltlicher Werken.<sup>41</sup> Ihr breitgefächertes Tätigkeitsfeld bezeugt, dass die Frauenrollen in den Nachfolgestaaten des Mongolischen Reiches auch unter dem Einfluss des Islams bis zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts eher den Traditionen der Steppe entsprachen.<sup>42</sup> Erst danach wurde ihre Selbständigkeit, ihr politischer Wirkungskreis immer mehr eingeengt und ihr Lebensbereich auf den Harem eingeschränkt.

---

<sup>41</sup> Im Jahre 1561 verwendete die Tochter von Sahib Giray Khan, eine bedeutende Summe, um die Geschichte der Herrschaft ihres ermordeten Vaters schreiben zu lassen. T. Gökbilgin, *Tarih-i Şahib Giray hân* Ankara 1973, 147.

<sup>42</sup> V. V. Bartol'd „Pervonačalnyj islam i ženšina“ *Sočinenija*. Tom. VI. Moskva 1966, 641-644.

## *General Information for Authors of Chronica*

In order to ensure conformity of style within each volume and to facilitate the editorial process, authors are asked to submit their manuscripts according to the guidelines which appear below.

The Editorial Board only accepts papers submitted in major languages. It is the duty of the Editorial Board to make the papers proof-read by native proof-readers.

Provide two printed copies of your paper and a machine-readable copy (on disc or CD-ROM or via e-mail) preferably prepared in MSWord or WordPerfect. The word-processor and version used should be stipulated. Be sure to indicate the file name under which your text is stored on disc at the end of the printed copy.

Use A4 paper (210×297 mm). 12 point font-size, double-space and use one inch (2,54 cm) margins all around for editorial amendments and eventual corrections. If possible, use Times New Roman font-face, in other cases, submit the True Type font set in electronic format. Use minimal text-formatting (cursive), hyphenation should be switched off. Paragraphs are headed by Tabs, not spaces!

Prepare footnotes not endnotes. Notes are to be placed at the bottom of page with continuous numbering formatted the same way as the main text.

For the style of references consult the present volume of CHRONICA. The translation of references published in non-major languages should be provided in square-shape brackets.

All recognized abbreviations are accepted, however, best avoided unless they are well known and serve a useful purpose. Abbreviations should be in conformance to the language of the paper or should be given in Latin.

Gazetteer: Toponyms should be in conformance with the language of the paper: e. g. Vienna or Wien; Nuremberg or Nürnberg. Different present-day names should be provided in brackets.: e. g. Spalato (Split).

Quotations: Double quotes, except for quotations within quotations (single quotes). For omissions, use: [...]. Quotations exceeding 5 lines should be indented.

Illustrations (maps, diagrams, figures) can only be reproduced in black and white and should be submitted in (both electronic and printed) final format. Captions, legends and other additions should be submitted separately indicating the proper place in the text. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to reprint material from the copyright holder.

Manuscripts and all correspondence concerning editorial matters should be addressed to Chronica, Institute of History, University of Szeged, 2 Egyetem u., H-6722 Szeged, Hungary; [chronica@primus.arts.u-szeged.hu](mailto:chronica@primus.arts.u-szeged.hu)

ISSN 1588 2039



9 771588 203008



1 1