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TURKS AND WOLVES

BY
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The name of Prof. Martti Räsänen is honoured wherever Turcologists meet to discuss their problems. It was a privilege to be invited to contribute to his Anniversary Volume, and it is with great pleasure that I dedicate to the master this study of one the more obscure of these problems, which has not yet received the attention that it deserves.

Books about the earliest history of the Turks customarily contain the statement that there was a kind of primaeval affinity between Turks and wolves, that the Turks traced their ancestry back to a she-wolf, and that their earliest battle standards were golden wolves' heads on poles. All this is interpreted as indicating that the primitive Turks had totemic beliefs and that the wolf was their totem.¹

The oddest thing about this statement is that there is nothing to support it in early Turkish literature (using that term in the widest possible sense); it rests entirely on foreign evidence and on one comparatively late text which I shall discuss below. Before discussing the foreign evidence, let me first summarize the references to wolves in early Turkish literature. There are two words for »wolf» in the Turkish languages, the earliest known forms of which are *bōri:* and *kurt*. (These words are entirely different from the Mongolian word for »wolf» the earliest known form of which, in the 13th century *Secret*

¹ See, for example, R. Grousset, *L'Empire des Steppes*, Paris, 1939, p. 125, and Liu, *op.cit.* below, p. 460.

History of the Mongols, was *čino*. It is clear that, as in the case of some other animals, including one or two domesticated ones, the Turks and Mongols were acquainted with wolves before they became acquainted with one another.)

Böri: can be traced right back to the earliest surviving continuous texts in a Turkish language, datable to first half of the 8th century A.D. It is a basic word, in the sense that it cannot be analysed as a combination of a monosyllabic root and a suffix. With some phonetic variations it is still the only native word for »wolf» in all modern Turkish languages except those of the South Western group (Azerbaijani, Osmanli/ Republican Turkish and Türkmen). *Kurt* is traceable back to the 11th century. Kāšğarī¹, I,342 says that *kurt* meant »worm» in all the Turkish languages, but that the Oğuz (whose language was the ancestor of the modern languages of the South Western group) also called »wolf» *kurt*. This position still continues; *kurt* means »worm» in all modern Turkish languages, and in Azerbaijani and Osmanli/ Republican Turkish it means both »wolf» and »worm», and *böri*: is unknown. Türkmen is slightly eccentric; it has both *ğurd* and *bö:ri* for »wolf» and for »worm» uses *ğurçuk*, the diminutive of *ğurd*. The use of the same word for »wolf» and »worm» does not suggest a very respectful attitude to wolves; if you believed that there was a she-wolf at the top of your family tree, you would not like to have her mistaken for a worm.

There is one possible explanation, if one accepts the wolf totem theory, but I mention it only with the reservation that it seems to me preposterous. As I shall show below, the foreign evidence relates only to one Turkish-speaking tribe, the Türkü. The Türkü and the Oğuz were often at daggers drawn; Élderiş Kağan's first campaign after he revived the Eastern Türkü Empire in the last quarter of the 7th century was against the Oğuz. It could be argued that this so

¹ Maḥmūd al-Kāšğarī's *Dīwān Luğātī'l-Turk*, written in the third quarter of the 11th century, is by far the most important authority on the early Turkish languages. References to it in this paper are to Besim Atalay's Turkish translation, published by the Türk Dil Kurumu in three volumes 1939—41.

infuriated the Oğuz that they took to calling their enemy's wolf totem »worm». But I do not believe that they did.

The earliest occurrence of *böri*: is in the Orkhon inscriptions¹ (*I East 12*; *II East II*) where Bilge Kağan, recounting the rise to power of his father Élteriş Kağan says that, when the news spread of his revolt against the Chinese with seventeen followers, others joined him and he collected an army of seventy men; »because Heaven gave him strength, his army was like a wolf and his enemies like sheep». The metaphor is a common one for which parallels could be assembled from many other literatures and does not suggest any real affinity between Turks and wolves.

Chronologically the next occurrence of *böri*: seems to be in the *Irak Bitig*², a document of perhaps the 8th or 9th century obviously compiled in a pagan Turkish milieu, although the surviving manuscript has a Manichaean context. The word occurs in paragraph 27 from which a sentence seems to have been omitted (there are several other similar mistakes in this manuscript). It reads: — »A rich man's sheep took fright and ran away. They encountered a wolf. The wolf's mouth began to water. (Omission?) It (or they) was (or were) safe and sound. Know that this is a good omen.» There are several other animal stories like this in the *Irak Bitig*, and the fact that the omen was a good one suggests that it was the sheep that got away. In any event the wolf was clearly the villain of the piece, an undignified role for a putative ancestor.

¹ The most convenient edition of these and other inscriptions and documents in the »Runic» script is H. N. Orkun, *Eski Türk Yazuları* published by the Türk Dil Kurumu in four volumes 1936—41. The funerary inscriptions of Kül Tegin and Bilge Kağan are contained in the first volume and are here quoted as *I* and *II* respectively followed by the side and line. The inscription of Toñukuk, which is some years earlier than these, is quoted as *Toñ.* followed by the line. Prof. Aalto's edition of this inscription in *J.S.F.O.* 60 is much superior to Orkun's.

² A book of divination published several times, see my paper *Notes on the »Irak Bitig*, *Ural-Altischer Jahrbücher* XXXIII, 3—4. The language of this text is Türkü, the same as that of the Orkhon inscriptions.

Böri: also occurs in the Tuvan (Yenisei) inscriptions.¹ In the last line of *Malov No 11*, dated by Kyzlasov to the end of the 10th century, the deceased says, »I killed seven wolves. I did not kill a leopard or a fallow deer(?)». The word also occurs in the first line of *Malov No. 12*, a fragmentary inscription of the mid-9th(?) century which reads: — *Çoçuk(?) Böri: Saḡun*, obviously a proper name. There is nothing unusual or significant about the names of animals appearing in Turkish proper names. It was a very common phenomenon; for example in the list of proper names in the Houtsma manuscript,² which records a mid-13th century Kıpçak dialect, bird, bull, camel stallion, falcon, foal, lion and wolf all appear as elements in proper names, usually qualified by a colour adjective, black, grey, white etc., as well as minerals like iron and stone.

There are two references to *böri*: in Turkish translations of Manichaean scriptures³, in both of which the wolf is the villain of the piece. In *M.I.*, page 8, one of a series of illustrations of the changes brought about by rebirth is: — »just as a lamb or calf, when reborn as a lion- or wolf-cub, destroys its own herd of cattle or sheep». The same illustration, somewhat shortened, occurs in *M.I.*, page 18. It can very reasonably be argued that the Manichaean scriptures are no evidence of primitive pagan Turkish beliefs, but they are at any rate negative evidence to the extent that if you are setting out to convert people to your own religious beliefs, you do not deliberately

¹ The most convenient edition, superior to that in Orkun op.cit. Vol. III, is S. Ye. Malov, *Yeniseyskaya Pis'mennost' Tyurkov*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1952. The dating of most of these inscriptions has recently been determined by archaeological evidence in L.P. Kyzlasov, *Novaya Datirovka Pamyatnikov Yeniseyskoy Pis'mennosti*, Sovetskaya Arkheologiya, 1960, part 3. The language of these inscriptions is believed to be Old Kirgiz.

² M. Th. Houtsma, *Ein Türkisch-Arabisches Glossar*, Leiden, 1894.

³ These texts have been published in a number of monographs. The one quoted here, *M.I.*, is A von Le Coq's *Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho, I*, A.K.P.A.W., Berlin 1912. The actual texts quoted are in the Uyğur-A language, a language distinguished from standard Uyğur only by some eccentric vocalizations. They are not earlier than mid-8th century and might be up to a century and a half later.

insult their ancestors. The lion-cub would have served as an illustration without any need to bring in the wolf-cub.

I have noted only one occurrence of *bōri*: in a Turkish Buddhist text; there may of course be more. The list of «evil beings» (*yavlak tmlıǵlar*) in the *Sekiz Yükmek Sūtra*¹ comprises «leopards, Siberian panthers, and wolves». Here again it can be argued that a Buddhist text is no evidence of Turkish beliefs, and against that, that a deliberate insult to wolves could have been avoided, if that was thought necessary or advisable, simply by omitting the word.

In the Uyğur medical texts², the remedies include various parts and secretions (gall, bones, tongue etc.) of the wolf as well as other animals, goats, dogs, mice, pigs, hares etc. and even human beings. The prescriptions are of course foreign, but clearly there was no Turkish tabu on killing wolves, which is normal when an animal is a totem.

The Turks who spoke the Xākānī language recorded by Kāşğarī were mainly Moslems, but some of the poems, proverbs and sayings quoted by him may well go back to the pagan period; it is therefore worth examining the references, nearly a dozen, to wolves in his *Dīwān*. Three merely refer to the wolf's proclivity for howling; most of the rest refer to the wolf as a beast of prey; one, *III 219*, is an extract from a poem about a man going out wolf-shooting. There is only one passage in which the wolf appears in a relatively favourable light. In *I 429* it is said that Turkish women, after the birth of a child, were in the habit of asking their midwives, «Is it a fox or a wolf?» that is a girl or boy, the implication being that a girl would be as flattering and cunning as a fox and a boy as brave as a wolf.

¹ *Türkische Turfantexte VI*, S.P.A.W., Berlin, 1934, line 116; this text is in standard Uyğur with some traces of Uyğur-A and can probably be dated to the 8th or 9th century.

² The chief collection of these texts is in G. R. Rachmati, *Zur Heilkunde der Uiguren I and II*, S.P.A.W., Berlin, 1930 and 1932. Others will be found in *Türkische Turfantexte VII and VIII*. These texts are all in standard Uyğur and were no doubt translated from other languages, «Tokharian» or some form of Sanskrit. The dates of the Turkish translations might be anything from the 8th to, say, the 10th centuries.

In the *Kutadğū: Bilig*¹ the only references to wolves which I have noted are in passages describing a golden age in which the wolf and lamb are on friendly terms (*verses 449 and 1040*). The idea, like so much in the *Kutadğū: Bilig*, no doubt came from a Moslem source.

I have not been able to find any references to animal head standards in early Turkish literature. There are two old Turkish words for »standard», both going back to the 8th century, the earliest known forms being *badrak* (*bayrak* in most modern languages) and *tu:ğ*. They must originally have had slightly different meanings. *Badrak* seems always to have meant a »flag or pennant on a pole». In some contexts *tu:ğ* could hardly have meant more than »a flag pole». In a translation of a Sanskrit *dhāraṇī*² there is an instruction that you must have this *dhāraṇī* written on a scroll and stuck *tu:ğ uçınta* »on the top of a flagpole». But generally *tu:ğ* had a rather broader meaning, perhaps »a visible sign of the presence of royalty.» According to Kāṣṅarī, *III 127*, *tu:ğ* meant both »a drum which is beaten in the presence of the king» and »a standard consisting of a flag of brocade or orange silk fastened to a pole». In his day this standard was the symbol of an individual province or unit of government, and accordingly a king ruling more than one province had more than one standard, but however many provinces a king ruled he could not have than nine standards. Kāṣṅarī says nothing of the practice of the Oğuz tribes, but we know a good deal about the practice in the Ottoman Empire, which has been conveniently summarized in H.A.R. Gibb and H. Bowen *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part 1, Oxford University Press, 1950, page 139. In Osmanli Turkish there are three words for »standard», *bayrak* (according to Redhouse used normally for foreign flags), *sancak* a word which is apparently peculiar to Osmanli, and *tu:ğ*. *Sancak* seems

¹ A didactic poem written in Xākānī by Yusuf Xaṣṣ Ḥācib of Balasagun and finished in A.D. 1070; critical edition by R.R. Arat published by the Türk Dil Kurumu in 1947.

² Published in F.W.K. Muller, *Uigurica II*, A.K.P.A.W., Berlin, 1910. The text begins on p. 27 and the passage quoted is in p. 38, line 77.

to have meant an ordinary »flag», and was also used to mean »a province» that is the area governed by a provincial governor entitled to one flag. But the standard of the Beys or Emirs was a horse-tail suspended from a pole and surmounted by a golden ball, which was called a *tu:ğ*. A Sancakbeyi had the right to one *tu:ğ*, a Beylerbeyi to two, a Vezir to three (hence the expression »a Pasha of three tails») and the Grand Vezir to five. The Sultan himself would parade on campaign with as many as nine (See Encyclopaedia of Islam, s.v. Tugh).

The word *tu:ğ* was an early loan word in Mongolian. In the 13th Century *Secret History of the Mongols* *tu:ğ* meant »a standard consisting of a yak's tail». The Mongols no doubt borrowed the idea of using standards, as well as the word itself, from the Turks. This seems to show that the Turks (probably the Tatar) who were in contact with the Mongols in the 12th century in eastern Outer Mongolia also used animal tails as standards. If so, the Karakhanid practice of using brocade or silk standards was no doubt borrowed from the Chinese, who had used such standards from a very early date.

The whole subject of standards is a rather specialized one on which I am very ill-informed. It is obvious that as soon as battles became organized affairs standards were needed to indicate the location of the leader, and it is likely that standards were invented independently in different places at different dates. I hope that some archaeologist or art historian will produce a comprehensive study of the subject, but *prima facie* the practice of putting a statuette on a pole to serve as a standard was more western than eastern. The ancient Egyptians were using such animal statuettes as »nome standards» far back in the 3rd millennium B.C. and every school boy knows that the Roman legionary standard was an eagle on a pole. So if some Turks really were using gold wolves' heads on poles as standards in the 6th or 7th century it is likely that they got this idea as well as many others (including the idea of an alphabetical script) from the west, and naturally the Chinese would have thought it odd.

There ought surely to be some connection between standards and *tamğas*. *Tamğas* were basically animal brands, for which some simple

geometrical figure was obviously the most convenient shape, but they were also put on tomb-stones. The *tamğas* on the Tuvan tomb-stones are all geometrical in character.¹ So too is the *tamğa*, if it is in fact a *tamğa*, on the inscription of Toñukuk; it looks more like the *ansa* on a Roman *tabula ansata*, but it is difficult to see how the practice of putting an inscription on a *tabula ansata* could have found its way from the Roman Empire to Outer Mongolia, unless this too was perhaps another idea borrowed from the west. Exceptionally the funerary inscription of Kül Tégin and the Ongin inscription are headed by *tamğas* in the form of the silhouette of a mountain goat in profile. The first at least is a memorial to a member of the Eastern Tŭrkŭ royal house; it is surely extraordinary that if that royal house used a wolf's head as a standard it did not also use it as a *tamğa*, and that if it used a mountain goat as a *tamğa* it should not also have used it as a standard, assuming that that kind of standard was in vogue.

I now turn to the foreign evidence, which, so far as I am aware, is only Chinese. One point must be made immediately; it has in fact already been made by L.N. Gumilyov in his article *Tri Ischeznuvshikh Naroda* in *Strany i Narody Vostoka*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1961. This evidence does not relate to the Turkish-speaking peoples as whole, but to one Turkish-speaking tribe, not the oldest regarding which we have information but admittedly the eponymous tribe of the whole group, the Tŭrkŭ. The Chinese of the 7th century, when this evidence was recorded, knew a number of Turkish-speaking tribes, and knew that some of these tribes spoke the same, or nearly the same, language, but they never regarded them as an ethnical unit; they regarded them as separate and unrelated tribes, as different from one another as, say, Saxons and Swedes. And that is, after all, the way in which these tribes regarded themselves. In the Shine-usu inscription², the memorial to the founder of the first Uyğur dynasty, the Tŭrkŭ are mentioned solely as enemies, for example, *North 10*,

¹ See the illustrations in Kyzlasov, *op.cit.* in note 5.

² Orkun, *op.cit.*, Vol. I pages 163 ff.

»from that time onwards the Türkü people ceased to exist». Incidentally it is interesting to note that in two of the four references to this people they are described as the *üç tuğlğ Türkü bodun* »the Türkü people with the three standards (or provinces?)».

The earliest Chinese references to the Türkü and their affinity for wolves are contained in three Chinese dynastic histories, the *Chou Shu* finished in about A.D. 629, the *Sui Shu* finished some 20 years later, and the *Pei Shih* finished in A.D. 659. Hitherto the translations of the relevant passages used by scholars have been those contained in Stanislas Julien, *Documents historiques sur les Tou-kioue (Turcs)*, Journal Asiatique, 1854, and in O. Yakinf, *Istoriya o Narodakh obitavshikh v Sredney Azii v drevniya vremena*, St. Petersburg, 1851 (republished by the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1950, as N. Ya. Bichurin, *Sobranie svedeniy o Narodakh* etc.), but these have now been superseded by those contained in Liu Mau-tsai, *Die Chinesischen Nachrichten zur Geschichte der Ost-Türken (T'u-küe)*, Wiesbaden, 1958. The passages which interest us in these three histories are to a large extent identical; there is in fact reason to suppose that the original chapter on the Türkü in the *Chou Shu* was lost at an early date and replaced by a copy of the parallel chapter in the *Pei Shih*.¹ All these chapters were compiled from earlier texts which are lost; what is uncertain is whether they were put together by the author of the *Chou Shu* (or the *Pei Shih* if that is the original chapter) or whether he lifted them *en bloc* from some earlier text now lost.

In any event, whether we assume that this material was collected some time before A.D. 629 or only shortly before A.D. 659, it was collected at a date when the Türkü were still in full vigour, and the Chinese authors were, or at any rate could be, in direct touch with them. Indeed at least one of the informants knew enough of the Türkü language to know that *böri:* meant »wolf» in it. Immediately after the statement in Chapter 50 of the *Chou Shu* that the Türkü carried golden wolves' heads on their standards comes the state-

¹ Liu, *op.cit.*, pages 473 ff..

ment¹ that the Kağan's bodyguard (?; S. Julien »les satellites de leurs rois», Bichurin »telokhraniteli», Liu »Gardeoffiziere») were called *fu-li*, »Ancient Chinese» (Karlgren) *b'ü-ljĭ*², »Middle Chinese» (Pulleyblank)³ *b'ü-ljĕ* and that *fu-li* means »wolf». There is no trace of any such meaning as »bodyguard» for *bōri*: in any Turkish authority and I suggest that these officers, whatever they were (»bodyguard» is more a Chinese than a Turkish concept, Julien's translation sounds the most plausible in a Turkish context) were in fact called not *bōri*: but *boyla*:. To a Chinese with an imperfect command of the language, who found it difficult to distinguish between *l* and the unfamiliar sound *r*, the two words would have sounded very much alike, and *boyla*: would suit the context very well. In *Türkü* itself the word occurs only as a component in two proper names, *Toñukuk Boyla*: *Bağa*: *Tarkan*, Toñukuk's full name and title in his own inscription, line 6 and in *II South 14*, and the person commemorated in the Suci inscription⁴ *Boyla*: *Kuluğ Yarğan*, the *buyruk* of *Kuluğ Bağa*: *Tarkan Óge*:. In Proto-Bulgar, however, *boyla* was the title of a high official of whose functions a good deal is known.⁵ The word became a loan word in Old Church Slavonic and Middle Greek, in the latter it was more or less synonymous with another loan word, Latin *comes* »count».

All the other references to wolves in connection with the *Türkü* occur in passages relating to their ethnogenesis. It is clear that there was great uncertainty on this subject in 7th century Chinese circles. The name *Türkü* first became known in the middle of the 6th century as the name of a tribe which appeared out of the blue and destroyed first the Juan-juan and then the Hephthalites and within a few years created an »empire» which extended from what is now eastern Outer

¹ Liu, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

² B. Karlgren, *Grammata Serica*, Stockholm, 1940, Nos. 136 k., 23 f.

³ E.G. Pulleyblank, *The Consonantal System of Old Chinese*, Asia Major, New Series IX, 1.

⁴ Orkun, *op.cit.*, Vol. I p. 156.

⁵ O. Pritsak, *Die Bulgarische Fürstenliste und die Sprache der Protobulgaren*, Wiesbaden, 1955, p. 40 etc.

Mongolia far into what is now the Soviet Union. Obviously the Chinese were greatly interested in the origin of this dynamic people; equally obviously they found no simple answer to the problem, and the *Chou Shu* and *Sui Shu* both contain two completely contradictory stories, one common to both. The only plausible story is that at the beginning of Chapter 84 of the *Sui Shu* ¹ »The ancestors of the Türkü were mixed barbarians (Hu) of P'ing-liang (in Kansu). They (i.e. their chiefs) had the family name A-shih-na. When Emperor T'ai-wu-ti of the Northern Wei destroyed the Tsü-kü (a Hsiung-nu clan which set up and ruled the Northern Liang state in Kansu from A.D. 397 to 439) the A-shih-na fled with 500 families to the Juan-juan, and lived from generation to generation on the southern slopes of the Altai mountains where they occupied themselves with iron-working.» The text then apparently lapses into phantasy and goes on, »The Altai mountain looks like a helmet; the people called a helmet *t'u-küe* and so called themselves by this name». There is no known Turkish word for »helmet» which even faintly resembles *türkü*; it is possible that there was some such word for »helmet» in some other language spoken in that area at that time, perhaps Indo-European or Uralian; if anyone can throw any light on this it should be our Finnish colleagues. The early Turkish word for »helmet» was *yışık*; some modern languages use such words as *tulğa*, which seem at first sight to provide the necessary parallel, but they are not real Turkish words, they are merely corruptions of the Mongolian word for »helmet» *duğulğa* which is noted as early as the 14th Century and soon afterwards became a loan word in Turkish, the earliest forms so far traced being *dawulğa/dawluğa/tawulğa/tawluğa* in 15th Century Çağatay ² and *tuğulğa/twulğa* in 15th Century Osmanli.³

This passage does not occur in the *Chou Shu*, which starts ⁴ with the second story in the *Sui Shu* which can be summarized as follows. The

¹ Liu, *op.cit.*, p. 40.

² Muḥammad Mahdī Xān, *Sanglax*, E.J.W. Gibb Memorial, New Series XX, London, 1960, facsimile folios 165 v. 28 and 224 v. 27.

³ *Tanıklariyle Tarama Sözlüğü*, Istanbul, 1943 ff., I 700; III 685.

⁴ Liu, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

Türkü were a separate tribe of the Hsiung-nu with the family name of A-shih-na, which was exterminated by a neighbouring tribe except for one boy aged 10 who was left lying with his feet cut off. He was befriended by a she-wolf who bore him ten children. The family moved through a pass into an upland plain entirely surrounded by mountains north of Turfan. Each child married a foreign woman and took a clan name, one of these being A-shih-na. After several generations the whole tribe emerged again into the world and became servants of the Juan-juan. The stories about iron-working and the helmet follow here in the *Chou Shu*; in the *Sui Shu*, where they have been told already, they are replaced by a story that a flag ornamented with a wolf's head was set up before the ruler's tent so that they should not forget their wolfish origin.

The second story in the *Chou Shu* can be summarized as follows. The ancestors of the Türkü came from the So country (a very indefinite term) north of the Hsiung-nu. The paramount chief was Apang-pu who had 17 (in another version 70) brothers. One, whose mother was a she-wolf, was called I-chih-ni-shih-tu. The whole family except this brother was exterminated. He had magical powers and could control the wind and rain. He married two wives and had four sons. One of these, called Türkü, had ten wives whose children took clan names after their mothers. One of the youngest of these, called A-shih-na, was only the son of a concubine, but when Türkü died he was made paramount chief because he could jump higher into a tree than any of his brothers. The text then becomes serious history with an account of contacts between the Chinese and Türkü from A.D. 545 onwards. The story already quoted about wolves' head standards, slightly different from that in the *Sui Shu*, comes some paragraphs later in an account of Türkü customs which follows the narrative of events in A.D. 553.

As the author of the *Chou Shu* points out, one common feature of the two stories is the she-wolf, but there are also two other common features of the greatest significance. The first is that there are said to have been ten Türkü clans or tribes of which A-shih-na was the royal clan. Now it is perfectly clear from other Chinese authorities

and the Türkü records themselves that it was not the Türkü people as a whole, but the Western Türkü, that were made up of ten tribes. There are in the Orkhon inscriptions half a dozen references¹ to *On Ok* »the Ten Arrows» (there is no reason to suppose that in addition to *ok* »arrow» there was another word *ok* or *uk* meaning »tribe»; this is not the only metaphorical meaning of *ok*) and it is clear that this means the Western Türkü, who in the time of the restored Eastern Türkü Empire in the early 8th century were regarded not so much as kinsmen as a hostile people who had to be subjugated. Thus we can narrow down the scope of these ethnogenetical legends still further and regard them as relating solely to the Western Türkü. This is confirmed by the fact that in the first legend the cradle of the race is defined as »north of Turfan», that is in the Western Türkü area.

The second common feature of the two legends is that it is nowhere stated that they were obtained from the Türkü themselves; they might equally have been stories put about by their enemies, like Jordanes' story that the European Huns were offspring of the unhallowed union of »certain witches called in the Gothic language *Haliurunnae*» and some evil spirits wandering about in the Schythian desert.²² There is nothing unusual about ascribing an animal ancestry to your enemies. Both in the English- and in the Russian-speaking world (I cannot speak with personal knowledge of others) an enraged member of the proletariat is liable to describe his adversary as the offspring of a female dog. I do not of course state confidently that the Türkü's ancestral she-wolf is merely a piece of vulgar abuse put about by their enemies, but this is a possibility that cannot be ignored. Neither can the possibility be ignored that both legends are garbled reminiscences of the fact that some ancestress of the Western Türkü royal family had »she-wolf» as a proper name. I have already pointed out that many Turkish proper names contain the name of an animal. No-one would have been more surprised than a 13th century Kıpçak if, when he told you that his father was Ak Bars, you had taken him to mean literally that his father was a white leopard.

¹ *I East 19, II East 16; Toñ. lines 19, 30, 33, 42, 43.*

It is sometimes suggested that these legends about the Türkü are paralleled by Mongolian ethnogenetical legends. In the family tree of Chinggis Khan as set out in the *Secret History of the Mongols*¹ the first generation (Chinggis himself was in the 23rd) were Börte Činō and Qu'ai Maral »Blue grey wolf« and »Grey maral-deer« but it is not impossible that these too should be taken as proper names and not as literal statements of supposed fact. In any event the sex of the wolf is different and the Turks and Mongols were entirely different peoples with no common prehistory, so that the comparison has no real validity.

It is at any rate possible that these really were genuine Western Türkü legends, but, on the whole, legends of animal ancestors seem to be found more among forest-dwelling peoples like the primitive Mongols than steppe-dwelling peoples like the primitive Turks. (The Türkü do not seem to have been settled in the Altai mountains for more than about a hundred years). Similarly the idea of making skill in jumping up trees a test of suitability for kingship is not characteristic of the steppes where trees are rare.

Finally I come to the only native Turkish document of any antiquity which has a good deal to say about wolves, the so-called *Oğuz Name* edited by W. Bang and G. T. Rachmati in *Die Legende von Oghuz Qaghan*, S.P.A.W., Berlin, 1932. Nothing is known of the date at which, or the place where this manuscript, which is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, was written. It is the only almost complete manuscript of this work, but some such text must have survived in Persia until the 18th century, since there is a brief quotation from it in the *Sanglax* which was written in A.D. 1759.³ The text cannot be older than the 13th century, since the vocabulary contains many Mongolian loan words (as well as some Persian ones), and the manuscript is written not, as is usually said, in the genuine Uyğur script, but in the variety of that script adopted, traditionally

¹ E. A. Thompson, *A History of Attila and the Huns*, Oxford, 1948, p. 19.

² P. Pelliot, *Histoire Secrète des Mongols*, Paris, 1949, p. 121.

³ *Op.cit.* in note 21, p. 12.

by Chinggis Khan, as the Mongolian Official Alphabet. Indeed it is a very odd specimen even of that script; the only other Turkish specimen of the script (there may be some Mongolian ones) which is even approximately like it is that of the word *bitig* scribbled on folio 30r. of the Codex Cumanicus. There are also in it a number of purely Mongolian spellings of good Turkish words, *ta'am* for *ta:m*, *ka'ar* for *ka:r* and the like. An expert examination of the paper on which it is written might provide dating evidence. Subject to that, my own view for what it is worth, which is admittedly very little, is that it was probably written in the 13th or 14th century by a wandering *baxşı*, that is a professional scribe of the Mongolian Official Alphabet, for the chief of some pagan Türkmen tribe living in the vicinity of the Caspian or Aral Sea in the dialect current in that area. The whole atmosphere and contents of the document prove that it must be an Oğuz document, and the fact that the word for »wolf» is *bōri*: suggests that it must be Türkmen, since that is the only modern Oğuz language in which *bōri*: is still in current use.

Before discussing the actual references to wolves in this document it is necessary to consider its precise nature. In the first place it is, I believe, the only known pagan *Oğuz Name*; the other formal *Oğuz Names* and less formal statements (in Kāṣṣgari, Rashid ed-Din etc.) regarding the Oğuz tribes all start with the statement that Oğuz was the son of Turk, the son of Japhet, the son of Noah, or some similar genealogy, and have a strong Moslem flavour. It is also, I believe, the only *Oğuz name* which speaks of Oğuz Kağan. In Kāṣṣgari Oğuz is merely the name of a tribe; in Rashid ed-Din it is the name of a man, but he is not described as Oğuz Kağan. This document is incomplete at both ends, but not much is missing at the beginning, since Oğuz Kağan is born in line 4. He grew up very quickly (*lines 5 to 19*) and his first exploit (*lines 20 to 49*) was to kill a monster whose name seems to be a corruption of a Sanskrit word for »rhinoceros»; the picture of it in line 49 is not in fact wildly unlike a rhinoceros. He met (*lines 50 to 88*) two young women of exceptional beauty and had three children by each of them. He then (*lines 89 to 102*) gave a feast and recited a poem, which I shall discuss later, and

(*lines 103 to 114*) despatched messages in every direction demanding the submission of the rulers in each area. In the east (*lines 115 to 123*) Altun Kağan, who has been plausibly identified as the ruler of the Chin (»gold») kingdom in northern China, submitted to him. He then (*lines 124 to 171*) attacked Urum Kağan to the west. The word obviously represents »Rome», that is Byzantium, but the details of the campaign with battles on the Volga, show that the reference is merely to the Byzantine possessions in southern Russia. He then (*lines 172 to 201*) turned against Urum Kağan's brother Urus Beg, that is obviously Kievan Rus, and this ruler's son submitted to him. He then (*lines 202 to 263*) turned east again, re-crossed the Volga, passed through some high snowy mountains and came to the country of the Curçet. Curçen (the singular form) was the name of the Tungus tribe which founded and ruled the Chin kingdom, and this section seems to be a doublet of lines 115 to 123. The Curçet Kağan (*lines 264 to 288*) resisted him but was conquered. He then (*lines 289 to 295*) conquered India, Tangut, and Syria (Şa'am, i.e. Şām), and (*lines 296 to 309*) invaded and conquered a country called Barkan(?), which can be identified as Egypt since its ruler was called Masar (Mişr). Then (*lines 310 to end*) follows the familiar story of the golden bow and the three silver arrows, told to explain the origin of the division of the Oğuz into three Buzuk and three Üç Ok tribes.

While parts of the story and the grotesque pseudoetymologies, like Saklab (Slav) from *saklap* »protecting», have an authentic Turkish flavour it would be ingenuous to suppose that any one sincerely believed that the Oğuz really conquered all the countries mentioned. The Selcuks came nearer to it than anyone else, at any rate in the south, Syria and Egypt, but it was Chinggis Khan who sent messages to foreign rulers ordering them to submit, and the Mongols who conquered southern Russia, Kievan Rus, the Tangut and the Curçen. It seems to me that the most reasonable explanation of this peculiar text is that some enthusiastic Türkmen nationalist got hold of a Mongolian legend of some kind and had it translated into Turkish substituting Oğuz Kagan for Chinggis and his successors and adding some specifically Turkish matter, but retaining a good deal of the

vocabulary and flavour of the Mongolian original. It seems reasonable to suppose that the references to wolves are part of the Mongolian material which was preserved.

There are references to a number of animals in this text; those to wolves can be summarized as follows. In the description of the baby Oğuz Kağan (lines 12 ff.) it is said that he had »legs like a bull, a waist like a wolf's, shoulders like a sable's and a chest like a bear's.» The poem which Oğuz Kağan recited at his feast was as follows: —

Men senlerge boldum kağan
Alalm ya takı kalkan
Tamğa bolsun bizge buyan
Kök böri bolsunğıl uran
Temür cidalar bol orman
Av yerde yürüsün kulan
Takı taluy takı müren
Kün tuğ bolğıl kök kori'an

»I have become your kağan, let us take bow and shield. Let our *tamğa* be virtue, our war-cry »blue-grey wolf«. Let the iron spears be a forest, let the wild ass roam the hunting grounds. Seas and rivers. Let the sun be (our) standard and the sky (our) camp.» The transcription is purely tentative, owing to the deficiencies of the script; if the text really is Türkmen, »and« was no doubt *dakı* not *takı*. The most interesting thing about this poem is the eight rhyming words. Only one is a Turkish word not used in Mongolian, *orman* »forest«, incidentally a purely Western word unknown in the earlier Eastern dialects, which used *yış* or *arığ* for »forest«. Of the rest two, *uran* and *müren*, are pure Mongolian, the other five whatever their ultimate origin (*buyan* is the Sanskrit word *punya*), are Turkish words used as loan words in Mongolian. *Uran* »war-cry« is particularly significant. I do not know of any native Turkish word for »war cry«, or any reference to war-cries in early Turkish literature; this seems to be the opposite case to that of *tu:ğ*, a Mongolian word and habit borrowed by some Turks. There seems to me to be a very good chance that this poem is a translation of a piece of Mongolian poetry, in

which case the »blue-grey wolf» is easily explained; it is just the Bōrte Činō referred to above.

All the other references are to a »male wolf with blue-grey hair and a blue-grey mane» who came into Oğuz Kağan's tent one day in a mysterious ray of light (*lines 139 ff.*) and led his army first against Urum and later eastwards against the Curçen. The mysterious ray of light is very reminiscent of the mysterious ray of light in which the shining yellow man came into Alan-goa's tent¹, became the father of the three sons, one of them Chinggis Khan's ancestor, that she had after she became a widow, and then crept out again »like a yellow dog». The two campaigns mentioned were specifically Mongolian not true Oğuz ones, and it looks as if here again we have a Mongolian, not a Turkish legend, and the male wolf was either Bōrte Činō, or the shining yellow man in his dog-like shape.

Looking at the picture as a whole it seems to me that the case for regarding the Turkish-speaking peoples as a group with a totemic past is not proved and is, on the whole, improbable. The stories told in the early Chinese authorities and the Oğuz Name are essentially different and the latter cannot have been derived from the former. A Mongolian origin for it is much more probable.

The connection between the Western Türkü and wolves seems to me to rest on very shaky foundations, two ethnogenetical legends which may not be native to them, and may rest on mistaking a proper name for a statement of supposed fact, a Türkü title of high office which may be no more than a false etymology, and the story about the wolf's head standard. The last may well be the crucial test. The obvious place to look for royal standards is in royal graves; they have in fact been found in royal graves as far apart as Sutton Hoo in England and Ur of the Chaldees. Unhappily the graves of the Western Türkü rulers have never been located, and, so far as I know, the rich graves in this area which have so far been excavated cannot plausibly be connected with rulers of that dynasty. That is not of course conclusive; if the wolf really was venerated by the Western

¹ Pelliot *op.cit.*, p. 123.

Türkü, some evidence of this fact might be found in humbler graves or other archaeological remains. Soviet archaeologists have carried out extensive excavations and reconnaissances in the areas at one time occupied by the Western Türkü and found quantities of objects both of this and of earlier and later periods. I have examined rather superficially a number of their publications¹, and the position seems to be that while there are numerous representations of animals of various kinds, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, eagles, stags, goats, »Scythian beasts» and so on, the wolf does not appear in the repertory. I may well have overlooked some crucial evidence; if so, I hope that our Soviet colleagues will correct me. But at the present time there does not seem to be any archaeological evidence of an affinity between the Western Türkü, or their predecessors or successors in their area, and wolves.

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POSTSCRIPT

Since this paper was completed I have found another reference² to the use of metal standards by Turkish peoples. The 8th century Armenian historian Gevond (Levond) states that among the loot captured by Sa'id ibn Amr from the Khazars in A. D. 726 after a battle in the Mugan Steppe in what is now Soviet Azerbaijan was »a standard in the form of a copper figure». Its nature is not specified

¹ A. N. Bernshtam, *Trudy Semirecheskoy Arkeologicheskoy Ekspeditsii; Chuyuskaya Dolina* (M. I. A. 14) Moscow-Leningrad, 1950; ditto, *Istoriko-Arkeologicheskie Ocherki Tsentral'nogo Tyan-shanya i Pamiro-Alay* (M. I. A. XXVI) Moscow-Leningrad 1951; P. N. Kozhemyako, *Rannesrednovеkovye Goroda i Poseleniya Chuyskoy Doliny*, Frunze, 1959; P. L. Kyzlasov, *Arkheologicheskie Issledovaniya na Gorodishche Ak-beshim 1953—4* (Trudy Kirgizskoy Arkheologo-etnograficheskoy Ekspeditsii A.N., S.S.S.R. II, Moscow, 1959) and various articles in *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*.

² M. I. Artamonov, *Istoriya Khazar*, Leningrad, 1962, page 215.

but Artamonov plausibly suggests that it may have been a »dragon» (that is, what British archaeologists call a »Scythian beast»). He suggests this because in a report¹ on the visit of a mission from the king of Caucasian Albania to Alp Élteber, the ruler of what is described as »the kingdom of the Huns» on the Caspian littoral north of Derbend, in A. D. 682 it is stated that the »Huns» carried on their persons amulets in the form of gold or silver »fantastic animals». This term could hardly have been used to describe wolves.

¹ Artamonov, *op.cit.*, page 187. The report is taken from Moses Kalankatuc'i's »History of the Caucasian Albanians». Artamonov used the translation of this work by K. Patkanian, St. Petersburg, 1861; his book was finished before the new translation by C. J. F. Dowsett, *The History of the Caucasian Albanians by Moses Dasxuranci*, Oxford, 1961 appeared.