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ANCIENT TURK (T'U-CHÜEH) BURIAL CUSTOMS

BY

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This paper, originally written in honour of Professor Emel Esin in 1981*, deals with the so-called *Kök-Türks*, in a sense as used by a related recent voluminous work of hers,[1] by this term recalling the authors and subjects of the Orkhon inscriptions, and distinguishing them from the predecessors and inheritors of the Turk Khaghanates ruling between the middle of the 6th, and 8th centuries, respectively. These "heavenly" Turks — as the attributive *kök* "blue (sky)" is interpreted e.g. by Professor Esin — will be treated here mainly upon written evidence, primarily on the basis of Chinese sources;[2] thus the sphere concerned is much narrower than her comprehensive cultural-historical view — also including the related or alleged ethnic relatives, predecessors and neighbours — and even narrower compared to the term *Ancient Turk(ic)* of archaeologists.[3] The title, therefore, refers to the Chinese term 突厥 *T'u-chüeh*, designating the political partner of the Chinese Empire from the 40s of the 6th century until their defeat by the Uighurs (742/744), *i.e.* a few years later than the inscriptions in question were written.

The cultural unity of the Turks, also suggesting an ethnic unity, and reflected e.g. by a wide linguistic affinity, has so far seemed, for several scholars, to have obviously been represented by the burial customs of the Turks as well.[4] This general cultural-ethnic uniformity — a direct consequence, in the view of the author of this paper, of their rider-nomad way of life in vigour, and the related social structure[5] — is also shown by the Chinese term *T'u-chüeh*,

* The publication of the volume (Ankara), however, seems to have been hindered.

[1] Cf. Esin (1980).

[2] Also including early China in the Chou times (11th—3rd centuries B. C.) and even earlier. The author of this paper, however, upon a few written sources concluded that several peoples or "tribes" recorded on different names and called Barbarians in China, must have been related to the Chinese, with a main difference of economy and culture, see Ecsedy (1974), (1979).

[3] Cf. *Drevnetjurkskij*; on the term see e.g. Trifonov (1973), p. 352, N. 1; on its validity as an expression of the ethnical-cultural unity of ancient Turks: Grač (1966).

[4] As seen in the summary description of the funeral ceremony: Esin (1980), 113—115; Gumilev (1967), 260—261.

[5] Cf. Ecsedy (1972); (1977).

unchangedly denominating for two centuries the whole sphere of power of the Turk Empires (*T'u-chüeh* 國 *kuo* "*T'u-chüeh* Country") as well as the conquering and ruling social-ethnic group(s) concerned. This generalization of political aspect of the Chinese sources, supported by the description of their customs as those of "the Turks" *par excellence*, involve opportunities for further simplifications, especially as offered in the translations, formulating and re-formulating, and by necessity reconciling the laconic records of different Chinese sources. A re-reading of the original texts, however, brought some lessons — enumerated here — concerning a supposable chronological and/or economic (ethnic) division of the unified, but perhaps not at all uniform sphere of the Turks.

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The seeming homogeneity of customs may also be a consequence of the inherent limits of separate disciplines and the usual sources used by them. Namely, the readers of Chinese sources may consider Chinese records the best, if not the only authentic source about the early period of the Turks, and these first descriptions of theirs contain detailed and decisive information about their burial with cremation. This is so much in accordance with the experience of archaeology, that several scholars regard the records to other effect as mere exceptions in emergence cases;[6] or, they attribute another type of burial, also regularly occurring in the territory of the Turks — viz. burial (without cremation) with a horse — to the enemies and/or subjects of the Turks: the 鐵勒 *T'ieh-le* tribes, in spite of a related silence of the written sources (or a few records to other effect, see below).[7]

Nevertheless, we find a report about an "irregular" burial in the first phase of Turk power, still in the time of the Chinese Dynasties Northern Chou (*Pei-Chou*, 557—581) and *Sui* (581/589—618) — whose records first contain standard descriptions of the Turks — and before the time of the compilation of their dynastic historical sources: the *Chou-shu* (CS) and *Sui-shu* (SS), respectively, in the 630—650s.[8] Namely, in 576, at the funeral ceremony of *Ištämi* (Sizaboulos, Tardu ~ 達頭 *Ta-t'ou*'s father, i.e. 室點蜜 *Shih-tien-mi* or 悉帝采 *Ssu-ti-mi* ~ *Ištämi*, the ancestor of the Western Turks) — according to Menandros: 43 — four "Hun prisoners" were killed, in order to be his heralds in the other-world, buried together with his horses (and other treasures).

[6] E.g. Gumilev (1967).

[7] Cf. Trifonov (1973); his conclusion: p. 374.

[8] The CS was presented to the throne in 636; see its Western translations in Frankel (1957), 124—134, and Liu Mau-tsai (1958); Bičurin (1950—1953). The two authors (and the related group of scholars) presented the parts concerned of the SS to the emperor in 636 and 656, respectively, the monographs were ready by 644, cf. Balázs (1962), p. 86. See the translations: Frankel, pp. 135—146; Liu Mau-tsai, Bičurin.

This well-known story[9] apparently reports the burial of a great leader of the Turks, and this alone may explain the extraordinary circumstances, thus it is generally evaluated as a belated case of human sacrifice,[10] having no connection with the usual burial customs, attested in detail by the Chinese sources. This conclusion may be strengthened by the accessory circumstances, resembling those of the Chinese descriptions, e.g. the cutting of the face as a sign of mourning, so shocking and unpleasant for the Byzantine delegation being present.

The story of Menandros, where no mention can be met about incineration, does not seem to disturb the lessons of the Chinese records, not only because *Ištämi*'s case was a unique occasion of a ruler's burial, but because — in the same period — cremation as the way of burial among the Turks is shown by sporadic Chinese passages as well. E.g. in 582, after a fierce battle with the Chinese general 達奚長儒 *Ta-hsi Ch'ang-ju*, the Turks gathered the corpses of their fellow-warriors on the battlefield and burned them with cries and laments.[11] This method of burial — where, by the way, the interment of the ashes is not mentioned — may represent a solution evoked by the necessity of leaving the place, i.e. for escaping. It could also be a regular case, which can still be considered a case of emergency; the solution, however, i.e. cremation corresponds both with the general description of the Turks or with shorter passages of the Chinese sources, and with the archaeological evidence in general. (Naturally, in the case cited, the concomitant funeral requirements could not be solved because of the shortness of time, and the distance from their lodging place and family, etc.)

Nevertheless, the royal burial of 576 deserves special interest, in spite of its extraordinary character, because it fits into a series of kingly burials, ranging from Japan's "old tomb" (古墳 *ko-fun*) culture, in the first centuries A. D., to the prodigious burial of the Hun ruler Attila; or: from the first royal tombs in Shang-time China, in the last centuries of the 2nd millennium B. C., until modern mythic stories about "Attila's tomb" in Hungary.[12] Having traced this peculiar type of burial throughout Eurasia, the author of this paper would describe the Turk royal departure of 576, that recalled many other ancient royal burials concerned, a „Scythian type" funeral cere-

[9] Cf. Chavannes (1900), 240—241: "Ambassades byzantines chez les Tou-kiue occidentaux".

[10] Cf. Esin (1980), p. 110 (while this is not mentioned in her report about the description of "The *yog* (funeral ceremony)" as a whole, pp. 113—115).

[11] On the military actions between the Chinese troops of the Sui House and 沙鉢留 *Sha-po-lio* ~ *Išpara* khaghan's Turks, in the 2nd year of the *K'ai-huang* period, see *Ta-hsi Ch'ang-ju*'s biography: SS, chap. LIII, cf. Liu Mau-tsai (1958) I, pp. 94—95; cf. Liu Mau-tsai, pp. 45, 66, 100, 115, 119 (but without the passage concerned).

[12] See the related references: Ecsedy (1982).

mony, since it was recorded in Europe by Herodotus among the Scythians, in about the same period when its East-Asian parallel — the "first", i.e. representative case — was commemorated in Chinese records (in 588 B. C.). It must have been a belated reminiscence of an archaic rite, far from being a usual burial with extraordinary details, and therefore it deserves to be evaluated as another type of burial, perhaps with its own historical (cultural-ethnic) background.

For this reason, it should be emphasized that the "Western Turk" royal burial in question not only reflects interment without cremation, but also a characteristic ideological basis, distinguishing it — apart from the formal similarities — both from the Turk funeral customs described in contemporary China and the ancient burials with human sacrifices, also well-known in China's early centuries. The related practice was considered uncivilized in China almost since the beginnings of historical records (but it was still in use, even if only in cases of high-ranking personalities, as seen from an excavation in Honan, 1978—1979, from the 6—5th centuries B. C.), and it was attributed to barbarians only, at least since the time when the sacrifices were substituted in China by clay or wooden figurines. The Chinese burials of this ancient and Barbarian type, however, seem to involve propitiatory, offering human sacrifices — whether or not interring them with the deceased person — to gain the favour of supernatural powers, without an elaborate or an apparent idea of an after-life. The enlarging circle of substituting figures, developing into a whole court around a princely person (in the 2nd century B. C., as seen in Ch'angsha, in the excavations made since the late 1960s) or an imperial army — belonging to the alleged or expected tomb of the First Emperor 秦始皇帝 *Ch'in Shih Huang-ti*, 221—210 B. C., excavated from the 1970s — is characteristic of the time when the substitution (of the sacrifices by figurines) was obligatory and natural; thus it served memorial purposes and ostentations of earthly, i.e. social luxury rather than pious intention — as shown by the related condemnations of puritanist Confucian philosophers — the wishes concerning an other-world being just symbolized. (As a matter of fact, all this may concern the time prior to and outside the influence of Buddhism of non-Chinese origin, also providing new concepts of human fate after death.)

At *Ištämi* khaghan's burial four *prisoners* were sacrificed — similarly to China in the Shang or early Chou times (by about the middle of the first millennium B. C.), the defeated enemy being "superfluous", not accepted by the society and not yet used in great number in the economy, e.g. as servants (slaves) —, and they might be called "Huns" as a synonym of "Barbarian"; no more detail helps to judge whether or not they could belong to a population defeated by the rulers of the Turk Empire, perhaps differing in ethnic, etc. By the way, we are informed by Herodotus (IV: 71—73) that among the

Scythians, "having no purchased slaves", the wife and servants follow the deceased leading personality to his tomb (let us add: without cremation). Anyhow, the sacrificed prisoners of the Turks had a function in their supposed after-life, being sent to hand over the filial messages to *Ištämi*, thus they must have been expected to follow the ruler and to render further personal service to him. The further remark of the Greek record, to the effect that the message — about the funeral honour paid to the dead ruler — was told to them "in their Barbarian language", may mean but Turk(ic), since they must have been considered to be able to communicate with the Ancestor.

All this must have happened somewhere on the western slopes of the Altai (as the Ektag, "White" or "Gold" Mountain is identified by E. Chavannes),[13] at the court of the future Western Turks; while a few years later *Išpara*'s Eastern Turks burned their dead fellows on the battlefield, without further human sacrifices. The difference could be due to the difference of rank of the buried persons in question, a royal personality being honoured by the archaic 'luxury' of human sacrifices, while the corpses of common warriors were simply buried on the field. This kind of distinction, although probably also manifested in the funeral ceremonies of the Turks, does not explain *Ištämi*'s burial, because cremation was also applied at later khaghan's burials, and it was stated by the Chinese to have been general among the Turks in this early period, see below.

Ištämi's burial cannot be considered a Western Turk "custom", in contrast to, say, Eastern Turk cremation, either for its unique nature (not being attested by archaeology or other records) or for the primarily political character of the distinction between Western and Eastern Turks from 581 on,[14] not necessarily or constantly reflected e.g. in their geographical, i.e. territorial division either.[15]

At least the "Scythian type" burial was not unknown among the Eastern Turks, as seen after 頡利 *Hsieh-li* (*El(i)* ~ *Il(i)*?) khaghan's death, in the 8th year of the *Cheng-kuan* period (634).[16] The khaghan, having stayed in the Chinese court — under the protection of the emperor 唐太宗 *T'ang T'ai-tsung*, as a prisoner-like "guest" — died in the capital *Ch'ang-an*, but "his country's people" were called to arrange the funeral ceremony, in the traditional way. Namely, his corpse was burned and a mound (冢 *chung*) was made for him, north of the river 潕霸 *Pa*[17] — after the due rituals — according to the customs recorded as standard by the Chinese sources (in spite of T'ang T'ai-tsung's

[13] Chavannes (1900), p. 236.
[14] Cf. Chavannes, 219—221.
[15] Cf. Ecsedy (1980a).
[16] CTS, chap. CXCIV, *shang*, cf. Liu Mau-tsai (1958) I, p. 145; HTS, CCXV, *shang*, Liu Mau-tsai I, p. 195.
[17] The river Pa (*Pa-* 水 *shui*) in Shenhsi: cf. Liu Mau-tsai II, p. 581 (N. 762).

remark to other effect, see below). *Hsieh-li* khaghan, however, did not leave for the other-world alone: he was followed by a friend and relative of his, the 胡祿達官 *hu-lu ta-kuan* (*uluγ tarqan*?),[18] named 吐谷渾邪 *T'u-yü Hun-yeh*,[19] who once accompanied *Hsieh-li*'s mother 婆(～娑) 施 *P'o* (～ *So*)*-shih*[20] to her new home — after her marriage — and supported *Hsieh-li* since his birth. So much shocked by the khaghan's death, he killed himself, and his self-sacrifice so moved the emperor that he ordered: he should be buried in the side-part of *Hsieh-li*'s mound, and also erected for him a memorial stone with an inscription of his deeds. Another relative of *Hsieh-li* (啓民 *Ch'i-min* khaghan's 3rd son) is also mentioned by the related passage of the *Hsin T'ang-shu* (HTS): 蘇尼失 *Su-ni-shih* (*Ch'i-min*'s younger brother) was similarly followed in his death by sacrifices (in an earlier time?),[21] i.e. 殉 *hsün*, the term used when recording the ancient royal burials in China with human sacrifices.[22]

This voluntary self-sacrifice may induce us to assume that the human sacrifices at *Ištämi*'s burial did not mean a mere occasional barbarism either, but a kind of reminiscence of an archaic funeral rite, representing preparatory steps for the personal "survival" (continuity) — guaranted by the presence of closely related personalities — of a deceased leader. In East Asia this kind of burial was first and best attested by the Chinese records concerning the 匈奴 *Hsiung-nus*. According to the related Chinese report — recorded before 90 B. C. at least — when a personality of theirs (of high rank, if not of a ruling position) died, he was buried in coffin(s) (word by word: in 棺槨 *kuan-kuo* "inner and outer coffin(s)"), together with gold and silver (treasures), and those men and women of his (臣妾 *ch'en-ch'ieh* 'subjects (of rank) and concubines') who accompanied him, numbered hundreds and thousands . . .[23]

Setting aside now the thorny problem of the ethnic and/or linguistic character of the leaders of the *Hsiung-nu* empire — far from being solved — we

[18] 胡祿 *hu-lu* is considered some kind of rank, and 達官 *ta-kuan* but a variant of the title 達干 *ta-kan* ～ *tarqan* by Liu Mau-tsai II, p. 581 (N. 763), p. 613.

[19] The first part of his name is written with the usual characters of the name of the tribe(s) (people) 吐谷渾 *T'u-yü-hun*, disturbing China several times in the year concerned, but in the following passage this loyal subject is mentioned as 渾邪 *Hun-yeh*, in a way suggesting 吐谷 *T'u-ku* ～ *T'u-yü* to be used as a family-name.

[20] The character 婆 *p'o* is often used for 娑 *so* in Chinese transcriptions of Turkic names: Pelliot (1929), p. 243, cf. Ecsedy (1980), 30—31 (Notes 18, 24); see Ts'en Chung-mien (1958), p. 589, referring to a form 娑施 *So-shih* of this name in the TFYK, chap. CMLXXIV

[21] This remark, to be met in the HTS alone, is found "unreliable" by Ts'en Chung-mien, p. 617 (probably both for the laconic character of the record and the missing references).

[22] On the Chinese terms, here and below, see Ecsedy (1982).

[23] *Shih-chi*, chap. CX, p. 1034b.

can at least admit the presence of the ancestors of the so-called Altaic peoples under their rule, among them those of the Altai's masters in the 6th century as well. The Turks are explicitly said by the Chinese sources to have been the offspring of the *Hsiung-nu*'s, no matter how stereotype these introductory parts of the Chinese records about a foreign people used to be.[24] Anyhow, a cultural-historical continuity can be supposed with good reasons, perhaps also reflected in the memory of this archaic burial custom among the Turks, or at least among a part of them, even if the bulk of the population buried their dead in a different, more human way.

The latter supposition, about a part of the empire founded by the Altai Turks, may be supported by a mediatory link, both between the ancient burial custom and a later substitution (e.g. by carvings) of the human sacrifices, and a territorial link between the *Hsiung-nus* and Turks, that may be referred to as "Scythian" or *Hsiung-nu* burial customs, as well as to the ancestors of the Turkic-speaking rulers of the Altai and the related lands. Namely, a discovery of a cemetery near 高昌 *Kao-ch'ang*, in 1975, showed some traces of a "foreign" population in the territory as early as in the 5th century A. D., the excavated pictures and carved figurines (of "servants") depicting dresses, ornaments and physiognomy of apparently non-Chinese origin.[25] After a survey of the Chinese documents of an administrative character found in the tombs, the discoverers were inclined to judge the territory to have been basically Chinese, not only from a political-administrative, but also from a cultural point of view, concluding *e.g.* from the literacy found there.[26] Nevertheless, the name of the territory and administrative district (and its centre, the later "city" and "fortress") *Kao-ch'ang* was obviously a Chinese transcription of a local place-name of probably non-Chinese origin,[27]

[24] See the Chinese source-references concerning the early phase of Turk history: Ecsedy (1968), 151—152. By the way, in the "genealogical" remarks by the Chinese on the Turks, we do not find any comment about their language, not even in the usual stereotype form (e.g. mechanically connecting them with their "ancestors", i.e. the *Hsiung-nus*, in this respect, too).

[25] The cemetery was found north-east of the ancient walls ("city") of *Kao-ch'ang*, on the slopes of the mountain 火焰山 *Huo-yen-shan*, cf. Turfan (1978), p. 1. The chronological scopes of its use may be indicated by a document, written in Chinese (on transactions concerning wine), originating as early as from 422 A. D., *i.e.* the 11th year of the 玄始 *Hsüan-shih* period of the Northern Liang House (北涼 *Pei Liang*), cf. Turfan (1978), p. 3.; and one of the further documents, written (in Chinese) in 481, i.e. in the 17th year of the 永康 *Yung-k'ang* period of the khaghan 受羅部眞 *Shou-lo-pu-chen* of the *Juan-juans* (or *Jou-jans*).

[26] Cf. T'ang (1978), 20—21.

[27] See Pelliot (1911); cf. Gabain (1973), pp. 214 (*Kao-ch'ang*), 219 (*Qočo*, considered there a name of non-Chinese and non-Turkic origin). The later name of the settlement and its neighbourhood *Qara-Qočo* is reflected in its modern Chinese name 哈喇和卓 *Ha-la-ho-cho*.

and the population consisted of several ethnic elements of the Altaic sphere in later, better documented periods,[28] so it is not surprising that a closer look at the material found in the tombs concerned gave more "Barbarian" details than those seen in the preliminary report.

In the tombs, in wooden coffins — in addition to the remains of the corpses, among many other objects — small wooden tablets were found in 1975. On a few longish pieces, narrowing into points on both ends, drawings of men could be seen (with "large-dense eyebrows, big eyes and court Barbarian (胡 *hu*) beard"), with black Chinese characters on the body-part: 仆弋人 *tai-jen* "a substitute", while on other ones *tai-jen* was written on one side and on the other one something in red characters, in some script of a "national minority", resembling Soghdian script.[29] The tomb where the latter tablets were found was connected — first of all because of the document dated from a *Juan-juan* khagan's ruling period, from 480[30] — with the *Juan-juans*, struggling for this territory with the Northern 涼 *Liang* House and with Northern 魏 *Wei* (386—534), respectively.[31]

When arranging the findings in 1976, a member of the team succeeded in reading the script on the tablets and he published — in another short and "preliminary" article — his conclusions, with a few photographs of the inscriptions concerned. According to him and the photographs, on one side of the tapering tablet(s), lengthwise from above downwards, we read the Chinese characters 仆弋人 *tai-jen* "substitute", i.e. "substituting man (person)", while on other side Soghdian letters can be read "in Turk language (突厥語 *T'u-chüeh yü*): *Kiši* meaning 'man' (人 *jen*), 'servant/slave' (仆人 for 僕人 *p'u-jen*) or 'wife' (妻子 *chi-tzu*)".[32] On another tablet the Chinese word 人 *jen*

[28] Cf. Gabain (1973), 18—23.

[29] Turfan (1978), p. 2.

[30] See Note 25.

[31] Turfan (1978), pp. 5(—6). On the territory of (*Pei*) *Liang* and the history of the small state concerned see Franke (1930—1952) II, pp. 197—199.

[32] *Kiši*: 'man, human' and 'wife' (1. *čelovek, čelovečeskij*, 2. *žena*) in ancient Turkic, cf. *Drevnetjurkskij slovarj* (1969), p. 310. — Here I thank Prof. A. Róna-Tas for drawing my attention to the fact that: the two kinds of meanings are referred to by Clauson (1972) to two different forms of this Turkic word. The form *kişi* is interpreted by him as " 'man, person, human being', without distinction of sex, often in contrast to animals and supernatural beings" (p. 752); this meaning completely corresponds to the Chinese word 人 *jen*. The form *kişi*, however, is said to have been frequently written for *kisi* — both the Runic and Uighur script being unable to distinguish them —, i.e. "the older and probably the original form", meaning 'wife', cf. p. 749 (—750); see a form *kis* 'wife', too, p. 748. Thus the tablet in the tomb near *Kao-ch'ang*, showing the earliest record of a Turkic word proper, could be put near the entombed person for his wife — if the more archaic interpretation is taken into consideration — but the final word in this matter can be said only upon a more detailed report about the tombs in question.

'man (human being)' can be read, in Soghdian script, as *rin*, while on a third one (type?) *tairin* can be read, i.e. a transcription of 仆弋人 *tai-jen*, in Soghdian script again (no photograph or comment being seen in the publication about the other sides of the tablets in question). Finally, five names are quoted from the Chinese documents found in the tombs: two of them end with the characters 提勤 *t'i-ch'in*, interpretable as a Chinese transcription of *tigin*, indicating Turk princely persons and relatives, and a Turk official title as well; while one of the cited names contain the characters 烏胡愼 *Wu-hu-shen* (or *ch'en*) (*wu* being published in its modern simplified form), interpreted by the author of the publication as a transcription of *Uγuz*, written — probably: misprinted — as *Uruz* (without treating the third character, impossible to be explained as an ending of a transcription of the ethnic name *Oγuz* ~ *Uγuz*).[33]

The tablets with the transcription in Soghdian script of (仆弋)人 (*tai-*)*jen* were found in the same tomb where the document dated from Northern Liang (422) had been placed, so it originated from a time when the territory was under *Hsiung-nu* rule — the author concludes. The Turkic-language inscriptions cannot belong to the later masters of the territory: to the *Juan-juans* who spoke Mongolian (according to Pelliot's view, as we may see from the reference); and the name *Uγuz* (*Oγuz*), apparently as corresponding to the name *Uiγur* (misprinted as *Uirur*), i.e. to its transcriptions of different forms, is connected (without further arguments) with the nomadic tribes of the 4th—5th centuries A. D. 鐵勒 *t'ieh-le* (or 狄歷 *ti-li* or 赦勒 *ch'ih-le*) ("a phonetic variant of 丁零 *ting-ling*"), "called 高車 *Kao-ch'e* ('high cart'), too", upon the large wheel carriages used by them; their tribal (ethnic) name could occur among a population differing from them — in the view of the author of the report — just to indicate their foreign origin.

On the basis of this discovery — cited at length both because it is quite recent and since no further documentation is available for the time being — a link can be found between the burial customs of the *Hsiung-nu* "ancestors", i.e. predecessors of the Turks and the archaic reminiscences of the aristocratic funeral ceremonies of the Turks themselves: a kind of "Barbarian" burial — or: burial of a population including a non-Chinese component — where "substitutes", i.e. substituting tablets were placed, probably instead of human sacrifices. Apparently the Chinese usage of substitution by carved figurines represents another type of burial, since it occurs within the same time and in the same cemetery where the "substitution of human beings" (wife/wives,

[33] The cited names are: 1) 若愍提勤 *Jo-min t'i-ch'in*, 2) 烏胡愼 □ *Wu-* (simplified in the paper) *-hu-shen* (*or, ch'en*) X, 3) 吳儿折胡眞 □ *Wu-erh-hsi-hu-chen* X, 4) 征 (?) 都施摩柯勒 □ *Cheng* (?)*-tu-shih-mo-k'o-le* X, 5) 禿地提勤 *T'u-ti-t'i-ch'in*, and — as mentioned in the publication — similar names can also be found in the documents. The illegible characters at the end of the names 2), 3), 4) might be important for the explanation, as they can represent e.g. titles, ending(s) of names, etc.

slave(?)) is shown by the tablets with inscription. All this occurred under the rule of the Chinese dynasty Northern *Liang* whose rulers's family, the 沮渠 *Chü-ch'ü* is considered to have been of *Hsiung-nu* origin; in 422 *Chü-ch'ü* 蒙遜 *Meng-sun* was the ruler. But, seeking for the origin of a Turk cultural element, it is more important to recall that the ancestors of the founders of the Turk Empire were said to have lived in the neighbourhood of *Kao-ch'ang* at the time of the defeat of Northern Liang (439 A. D.); and this record, a laconic and obscure myth of the origin of the Turks, can be found in the introduction of the same chapters of the Chinese historical sources that declare them to be the offspring of the *Hsiung-nu*.

Even if the records about *Kao-ch'ang*, as an old homeland, etc., would concern only a part of the Turks — the mythical stories in the textual neighbourhood being similarly obscure[34] — the territory of *Kao-ch'ang* and its population can on good grounds be supposed to mediate cultural tradition-like burial customs to the ancestors of the Turks. This may at least be true regarding the ruling 阿史那 *A-shih-na* clan of the Turks, not only because an aristocratic tradition can be borrowed first by the ruling element of another population — whether not related or subjected to the earlier rulers — but also because the above myth mentioning *Kao-ch'ang* concerns the rise of the *A-shih-na*, one of the ten wolf-born sons, each founding a clan after having left the cave of the mountain near *Kao-ch'ang*. The few cases of burials with human sacrifices, referred to above, are indeed connected with Turk leaders of *A-shih-na* origin: with *Ištämi* khaghan, *Ch'i-min* khaghan's younger brother *Su-ni-shih*, and *Hsieh-li* khaghan respectively; although the self-sacrifice of *T'u-yü Hun-yeh* in the latter case, a sign of loyalty of a relative or close devotee of the khaghan's mother-side, i.e. from another clan — due to the well-known rules of exogamy — may show that the related knowledge and emotional obligation was not confined to the *A-shih-na* clan alone.

[34] The introductory parts of the CS and SS (and later texts, following them) seem to record such divergent stories about the ancestors of the Turks, that e.g. Ts'en Chung-mien (1958, pp. 962—964) divides them into three different myths of origin, as if suggesting three different groups of Turks concerned. The first story would concern "a separate tribe of the *Hsiung-nu*", the survived offspring escaping to *Kao-ch'ang*'s neighbourhood; the second group of the mythic stories is connected with those ancestors of the Turks who came from "North (or North-West) of the *Hsiung-nus*": from 索國 *So-kuo* "Soghd Country"; and the third group of mythic record refers to those Turks who — after the defeat of the 沮渠 *Chü-th'ü*, *i.e.* the rulers of Northern *Liang* — came under the rule of Northern *Wei*, in 439. Unfortunately enough, we could divide the related myths into more stories as well; the only common feature of these mythic stories is that a gap of (more than one) generation is left before the direct founders of the Turk Empire emerged from the Altai region, from the *Juan-juan* Empire. Naturally the sparse data do not make it possible to solve the problem in this way either, at least not without a discovery of new sources either of a written or archaeological nature.

As far as the linguistic background of a kind of cultural continuity (or a borrowing at least) can be judged from the inscription of the tablets and the names found in the cemetery near *Kao-ch'ang*: they do not contradict an assumption of a Turkic-speaking population concerned. Unfortunately, the arguments of the second preliminary report are far from being satisfactory. The rank and title *tigin* ~ *tegin*, being the first among the Turk official titles in the Chinese records, and said to be conferred on the sons, brothers (and other close relatives) of the khagans,[35] does not offer an apparent Turkic etymology; as a matter of fact, similarly to several other ranks and titles, it can be of foreign origin as well: inherited or borrowed by the Turks, in an unknown (maybe: ancient) phase of their history. (By the way, the Turk title *qaγan* was also used already by the *Juan-juans*.) The tribal (ethnic) name *oγuz*, could also be — for similar reasons — of foreign origin; moreover, it designated tribes (tribal confederacy) hostile to the Turks — even if subjugated — having at least a fate or their own. But the name, as mentioned above, does not offer a usual Chinese transcription, and the decipherment of the other cited names does not seem easier than e.g. the name of the mentioned *Juan-juan* khaghan (or the *Juan-juan* names that could help to clear up the language concerned). After all, it is due to the Turkic word *kiši* in Soghdian script that the presence of a Turkic-speaking population in the above cemetery and territory can be supposed or at least cannot be excluded.

The main argument for the Turk character of the population buried near *Kao-ch'ang* in the 5th century — i.e. the statement that they did not belong to the *Juan-juans*, since the latter were not Turkic-speaking — is, paradoxically enough, not weakened by the fact that the only word in question was preserved in Soghdian script. Naturally, this does not change the basic difficulty — the lack of *Juan-juan* linguistic material, the strong opposition of names of *Juan-juan* personalities in Chinese chronicles to be explained from Turkic — but it may avert the usual, although often tacitly applied lesson of the Chinese transcription of the name of the Turks 突厥 *T'u-chüeh*, supposed to have reflected a *Juan-juan* — "Mongolian type" — plural form of the name *Türk*. As a matter of fact, the Chinese name can be explained from the Chinese language and usage of transcription as well; but recently it was pointed out that a natural and correct explanation of the Chinese form of the designation of Turks can be due to a Soghdian mediation, too, to be illustrated e.g. by the first attempt of the Turks to establish official and commercial contacts with China; the Chinese delegation, in return, included a Soghdian envoy

[35] 'Title of the khaghan's family members, prince', cf. *Drevnetjurkskij slovar'* (1969), p. 547: *tegin* I.

(interpreter?), in 545.[36] If we take into consideration, on one hand, that an inscription was found, written in Turk language and Soghdian script, perhaps from the first decades of the (First) Turk Empire, made in or after *Išpara* khaghan's rule (581—587);[37] and on the other, the fact that Soghdians arrived and began to settle in China a few centuries earlier: perhaps from the end of the 2nd century A. D.,[38] a Soghdian diplomatic and cultural — written or oral — mediation toward China is not at all improbable. The word *kiši*, written in Soghdian script, could have referred to a Turkic population, though not because in contrast to a different language of the *Juan-juan* rulers of the territory from the end of the 5th century, but because the tablets in the tomb at *Kao-ch'ang* show the same Turkic-Soghdian relationship that can be seen at the historical appearance of the Turks, under *Juan-juan* rule (in 545) or independently ruling over the sphere (after 552) as well.

The Turks were recorded in connection with *Kao-ch'ang* after their rise as a power: in their standard Chinese description *Kao-ch'ang* occurred among the first "countries" conquered by them, queens or princesses of Turk origin were mentioned in stories concerning *Kao-ch'ang*'s rulers, etc.[39] The archaic burial custom of a component of the later Turk Empire — "humanized" by written forms of substitution of human sacrifices — must have survived as a royal tradition among the Turks, or even among their descendants until as late as the funeral of Chinghis, so that certain scholars might consider this type of burial an "Altaic custom".[40]

Nevertheless, since funeral peculiarities may also conceal or reveal ethnic differences in Central Asia,[41] attention should be paid to the Turk

[36] On Pelliot's reconstruction of the Chinese transcription *T'u-chüeh* as *Türkü t* (referring to Marquart's reconstruction, *i.e. Turkut*), see: Pelliot (1915); the explanation based on arguments of contemporary Chinese possibilities to transcribe clusters (in the word *Türk*): Pulleyblank (1965). On the Soghdian mediation, as a cultural and historical factor, responsible for the Chinese transcription of the name Türk, corresponding to a restored Soghdian form *Turkit* (**Turkīt* or **Turkīd*), see Harmatta (1972), 272—273: on the Soghdian envoy 安諾槃陀 *An No-p'an-t'o* (~ *An Nāhidβand* < **Nāχβand* < **Nāγβand*, as restored there). In West, in the Western Türk diplomacy with Byzantium, too, a Soghdian mediation or interpretation can be pointed out, cf. Harmatta (1962), pp. 148 sqq.

[37] Cf. Kljaštornyj—Livšic (1971).

[38] Cf. Harmatta (1971); (1979).

[39] E.g. in 590 A. D.: SS, chap. LXXXIII, cf. Liu Mau-tsai I, p. 124.

[40] However, in connection with the burial of Chinghis khan, Pelliot recalled that this type of funeral tradition had been known in ancient China, too: Pelliot (1963), p. 329.

[41] Cf. Djakonova (1975), esp. chapter V, pp. 120—159. (A related method cannot guess the ethnic of a single grave, i.e. the population that had made it, but it can determine certain distinctive features, at least for orientating.)

variant of the Scythian type burial (continuing the royal tradition of the *Hsiung-nus*), involving a patriarchal intention to provide a basis for the after-life of a deceased person. Apart from a general symbolism to this effect in cemeteries in many parts of the world — as a reflection of the living world[42] — the Turkic-speaking peoples seem to have preserved the old type intention for the time after "moving to the other world", i.e. to meet their closest relatives and dependents there, as if by this guaranting the integrity of individual after-life, although for men of high rank and social prestige only, similarly to the steppe-life in this world.[43] The Turks themselves seem to have tried to leave the most archaic and most barbarian solution — e.g. the widows as a rule, were married to the (younger) brother or son of the husband, as mentioned, in a disapproving way, by the Chinese records[44] —, while among their subjects (or descendants) the custom of considering that the widow remained the wife of the deceased (and so was obliged to live alone) could still be noticed.[45] Even the final consequences were drawn in the archaic ethnic spheres of the Turkic peoples as late as in the 17—18th centuries, when true wives, friends and servants were still said to have followed their "masters" to the tomb,[46] i.e. to the fire in which the corpses left their earthly form, according to the general tradition of Turk burial customs, that will be touched on below.

[42] E.g. several old Hungarian cemeteries, preserving corpses of a whole extended family (or lineage or clan), in a separate or separable form, provided the opportunity to recognize the positive picture of this "reverse" world, as initiated by the archaeological research of Gyula László, and generally applied in Hungarian archaeology of landconquering times. (Then, by the way, the organization reflected in the cemeteries must have also involved the impact of Turkic form of earthly organization and desires concerning an after-life.)

[43] The *Hsiung-nu* or Turk burial with sacrifices of "followers" differs in this respect, too, from e.g. the Chinese type of "humanization" of sacrifices, substituting them by carved figurines, of a whole court's multitude as well: the latter social luxury could be attached to a woman or a child, too. (Naturally the works or expenses must have been covered by the related communities, etc., both on the steppe and in China, even if expressing personal mourning and sorrow, too.) Cf. note 46.

[44] This practice is also seen in the case of the Chinese princesses marrying Turk rulers (in succession); cf. e.g. Ecsedy (1968), 163—164 (N. 48). — See it below, too.

[45] It was recorded by the Chinese about the tribes of the 室韋 *Shih-wei*, including populations of different origin, some of them being attributed "Turk" customs, cf. TT, chap. CC, p. 52a(2c); THY, vol. III, chap. XCVI, p. 1721.

[46] On the Turkic-speaking people of Siberia, seemingly homogeneous concerning their ideas about a life after death and the related burial customs, see Alekseev (1980) 163—176 (cf. the summary: pp. 302—315); on the memory (at least) of a tradition among the Yakuts to bury (and, in case of cremation: to burn) the wife and servants with high-ranking men: 186—189.

A possible connection of cremation or self-sacrifice of a wife, etc., with more distant funeral customs, e.g. with those in India, in any historical phase of Turkic peoples, is a too complex problem to be even mentioned here, but also seems to exceed the scope of early Turkic history.

* *

In the Chinese sources detailed descriptions concern the daily and general funeral customs of the Turk population. The over-all validity of the ceremony, mentioned in the Chinese records as concerning the realm of the Turks as a whole, used to be queried by a few Chinese records to other effect, and by the archaeological findings of tombs with different contents, as well as by researches concerning the appropriate explanation of statues (carvings) made of stone, and wood, etc., found in the territory of the Turk Empires. The related Chinese sources, as can be seen below, still conceal some so far unexplored information.

The basic texts have been known and have been studied for a long time,[47] and no correction of the interpretation of the main moments or important details seems necessary. The Chinese descriptions of Turk burial customs are similar, while they also show differences; but their translations attempt at conciliating them so successfully that they are sometimes considered different aspects, different details of one and the same burial ceremony. It happened recently that attention was paid to a passage of the *Sui-shu*, which cannot be found in the *Chou-shu*,[48] but without the re-examination of the whole description, though — in my view — this would make it easier to evaluate e.g. a T'ang emperor's declaration about the change of burial customs of the Turks.

For, in a well-known and dubious statement of the emperor 太宗 *T'ai-tsung* (627—650) of the *T'ang* House (618—907), recorded in the 2nd year of the *Cheng-kuan* period (628), we read that in spite of the custom of the Turks to burn their dead, recently (今 *chin* "now"), when burying them, they raise grave(~ mound)s, by this turning back to the orders of their fathers and grandfathers (i.e. ancestors), insulting both evil and good spirits (i.e. demons and gods, etc.: 鬼神 *kui-shen*).

[47] By Bičurin (the first edition of his work was published in 1851); Liu Mau-tsai (1958); the records in question were interpreted, explaining separate passages, several times: by Jaworski (1926), Its (1968), T. Pokora in Jisl (1960), and so on.

[48] Kyzlasov (1969), 37—39.

This can be read in *Hsieh-li* khaghan's biography,[49] though he was incinerated before being buried — as mentioned above — thus it may raise justifiable doubts. The latter doubts may be strengthened by one more passage in the very textual neighbourhood of the above imperial condemnation, in the 4th year of the *Cheng-kuan* period (630), a year with hard battles, starvation and diseases for the ("Eastern") Turks. According to an imperial order to provide the due sacrifices (of Chinese type: drink and food) in order to bury the dead Turks that had remained on the battlefield, "south of the Great Wall, dry bones (were piled) as a hill". We could ponder the recognizability of the "nationality" of dry bones (on fields where more than one army, more than one tribe, etc., could leave their fallen fellows), or warn of the irregular nature of a moment of catastrophe in the latter story.[50] However, it is primarily worth mentioning that both statements occur in (alleged) imperial sentences, their actual political aim being more important than the exact details of their content. This is also shown by the scholarly wording of the emperor's decrees to be respected if only for their allusions of a classical style, namely that of the Chou times (1st millennium B. C.): to chronicles (in 628) or to philosophers (in 630) of the old age rather than to contemporary reality. By the way, the imperial disapproval apparently shows that a mound is concerned (to be "raised": 起墓 *ch'i mu*), mentioned as contradicting the Turk tradition; but as seen above, a grave mound and cremation do not exclude one another, and the word 墓 *mu* and the tombs themselves in ancient China had had a history of their own, from a burial place without a mound and then provided with it.[51]

Before answering a justifiable question concerning the change of Turk burial customs — if any — mentioned by the T'ang Emperor, it should be admitted that from the middle of the 7th century, the courts of the Turk rulers must have been farther from the Chinese capital than in the first century of their rule, both from a geographic and diplomatic point of view. That may be the reason for the lack of further records of Turk royal or aristocratic burials — for, probably, only these extraordinary funeral occasions could be of importance for China, after their general description having been settled — until the 730s. Then the rulers of the declining Turks asked and received Chinese craftsmen to build a funeral palace, with frescos depicting the deeds

[49] Only in the HTS, chap. CCXV, *shang*, cf. Liu Mau-tsai I, p. 193 (omitting a passage, irrelevant here). The reader should know that the notes (II, p. 562) concerning T'ang T'ai-tsung's announcement, in a summary of the Turk burial customs (I, p. 464), fell victim to accidental misprint (or some other confusion). — The imperial remark cannot be found in the chronicle passages of the HTS.

[50] E.g. Gumilev (1967), cf. Note 4.

[51] See the philological details in Ecsedy (1982), Note 57 (and 35).

of the dead person, and with inscriptions, as we are informed by the Turk inscriptions, Chinese inscriptions and historical records as well.[52] Concerning e.g. Kül Tegin's tomb erected in 731 A. D., archaeological evidence also helps to interpret the records reporting about it.[53]

From our angle it is remarkable in the latter tomb that the statue (or a part of it) of the deceased personality can also be found inside the tomb, while his body's mortal remains, i.e. (probably) the ashes cannot be found there: it must have been interred elsewhere, in a hidden place, in harmony with the traditional intention to protect it from any harm or trouble. But since the body (ashes) was (were) not entombed there, this late burial cannot be considered an archaism, reminiscent of the ancient Turk burial of *Hsiung-nu* type, still well-known by the *A-shih-nas* a century earlier; not even in a symbolic form — seen e.g. in the above mentioned cemetery near *Kao-ch'ang* —, at a time when it must have been well considered obsolete. The archaeological evidence of the statues inside and around the tomb (or: symbolic tomb, recalling the deceased person, his wife, servants, and animals, etc.)[54] show a Chinese-type memorial temple that also used to be more or less concealed in remote places. T'ang T'ai-tsung's condemnation would be understandable concerning a Turk funeral custom that ventured to borrow from China, or at least imitating Chinese tradition; this supposition, however, could be — at first glance — contradicted by the long period that elapsed between the emperor's age and the representative form of "memorial tomb" of Kül Tegin, built and decorated by Chinese masters.

In order to clarify whether this latter type of Turk burial was known in early T'ang times — the scholarly disapproval expressed by an alleged imperial declaration having not necessarily originated at the moment when it was cited — we have to re-examine the well-known standard descriptions found in Chinese sources from the first period of the T'ang House. It was recently noted that one moment: the statue (modelled figure) of the deceased person, put in or at his tomb, is not mentioned in the text of the *Chou-shu*, only in the *Sui-shu*.[55] But since the final form of these two Chinese sources were prepared in about the same two decades: in the 630—650s (cf. Note 8), no direct conclusion can be offered. Besides, from the point of view of the

[52] CTS, chap. CXCIV, cf. Liu Mau-tsai I, 179; HTS, CCXV, *hsia*, cf. Liu Mau-tsai I, pp. 228—229. On the mausoleum, built for the Turks by the Chinese, cf. "The Kül Tigin inscription": Tekin, pp. 237 (271); "The Bilgä Kagan Inscription": Tekin, pp. 247 (281) (Bilgä died in 734 A. D.). See Ts'en chung-mien (1958), pp. 827 (877) sqq; 840 (908) sqq, too.

[53] Cf. e.g. Jisl (1960); Jaworski (1926), supplementary remarks by W. Kotwicz, pp. 261—266.

[54] Jisl (1960), pp. 69 sqq. Tables I, V: 2.

[55] Cf. Kyzlasov (1969), 37—39, on the basis of the translation by Its (1968).

verisimilitude of the statues, their possible interpretation as a realistic representation of the dead (the "ancestor"), and the relationship to the carved stone figures (*kamennye baby*) on the steppe, this difference of the two chapters of two Chinese dynastic sources could not provide a further lesson.

Induced by an assumption that the addition of the description of the Turk funeral ceremony in the *Sui-shu* is not necessarily an organic part of the burial customs related by the *Chou-shu*, a fresh comparative survey seemed and proved to be fruitful. Since the method was quite simple, so-to-say mechanic, and the texts concerned are available, here only the results, i.e. the conclusions will be summarized, also for those who will not directly control the translations with the help of the original Chinese records.

Although it is well-known, perhaps it is not futile to begin with the fact that four standard descriptions of the Turk funeral customs have survived from the first half of the T'ang period, i.e. in a T'ang-time redaction: in the dynastic historical works *Chou-shu*, *Sui-shu* and *Pei-shih* (PS)[56] and in the "ancestor" and model of Chinese encyclopedic works: the *T'ung-tien* (TT).[57] Serious textual vicissitudes weakened the credit of the PS, its chapters being several times just borrowings from other sources, thus it may be useful to mention that its text relating to the burial customs of the Turks is almost identical with that of the SS and, in a few cases, with that of the CS; therefore, it may confirm, indirectly, the structure of the survived records. The related text of the TT is shorter than those of the dynastic histories, but if we copy it — for instance — side by side with the passages in question of the CS, no new element or not even a completely new word (character) can be found in the later text (ready by 801, see Note 57); it is simply a shortened form of the CS-passages, omitting certain components or "superficial" characters in the course of copying (dictating?). Naturally the TT is again an indirect witness of the extant records of the CS, while proving to be irrelevant concerning our matter (by the way: in its several other passages on the Turks as well).

The other survived descriptions are not just variants, on the topic of Turk burials or different realizations of one and the same story. No matter how similar or different the related passages or fragments of the passages may seem, only two of them must be really taken into consideration: those in the Turk chapters of the CS and SS, respectively. But before falling into the trap of conciliatory translations — even if they aimed at and succeeded in realizing an ideal "literary" preciseness — a word-by-word comparison of the two texts (at least) concerning burial customs of the Turks shows

[56] The translations — in addition to Bičurin and Liu Mau-tsai — see: CS, SS, cf. Note 8: Frankel (1957), 156—170.

[57] Cf. Balázs (1962), pp. 90(—91).

them to be parallel *in structure*. Beside being longer or more laconic, in a few cases, than the passages of the other source, the descriptions differ — as we shall see — only concerning the details about the artistic representation of the dead personality.

By parallel textual evidence, all this merely confirms the information about the due course of Turk funeral rites, with the well known details, and it is unnecessary to quote here at length:[58] the laying out of the corpse in the tent,[59] the killing of animals (sheep, horses), by the relatives of the dead person inside and outside his home, for sacrifice, before the tent; riding (7 times, as told by the CS) around the tent; cutting the face (of the mourners), while their blood meets their tears, and all this (?) happens 7 times. On a related, i.e. suitable day (CS, PS; SS: "on this/that day") the deceased person is placed on the back of his horse, and his objects are burned with the (riding) corpse (CS, its text corresponding to the PS; but related in a shorter form, also by the SS), collecting the ashes for being preserved until the burial (CS, SS, PS). Those who died in the spring or winter, are buried when the grass is yellow and the leaves of the trees fall, while those who die in the autumn or winter, are buried when the vegetation is in blossom: a pit is dug for entombing (the ashes), and on the day of burial the same ceremony is carried out — with sacrifices, riding and cutting of faces — by the relatives, that was done after the death (CS only). On the tomb a memorial sign is erected, made of stone (CS) or wood (SS, objects are placed on it); and then we read the ominous phrase about the memorial representation of the dead hero (SS, PS), without an organic textual function, to be mentioned below. The text continues with an explanation of the signal- (i.e. memorial) -stone on the tomb (in the SS, too, as if no importance should be attached to the fact that it mentions a "tree" — wooden pole? — to be stood there); the number of stones (apparently not identical with the signal-stone or rod) symbolizes the enemy killed by the deceased person during his life (CS, SS, PS), while the heads of the sacrificed animals are hung on the signal-pole (CS, PS). The meeting of the mourners provided an opportunity for the acquaintance of youngsters to be married (CS, PS): and the widows were to marry one of those brother-in-laws of theirs who were younger than the late husband, or to their stepsons born before they (i.e. the women) got married (CS, SS, PS, cf. Note 44).

[58] As no correction of the translations (i.e. of the "linear" and "literary" interpretation of the descriptions) is suggested here — a structural comparison of the events and moments being offered instead — this analysis will not refer to the translations according to the passages concerned.

[59] The related Chinese passage cannot concern the statue of the dead person, as sometimes considered, on the basis of the translations, as pointed out by the author of this paper: *Acta Orient. Hung.* XX (1967), pp. 374—375.

This description of the burial of a respected person: a man, i.e. a warrior — i.e. full-right personality of his clan, with offsprings and relatives, and respected by members of other clans, too (to be met at the funerals for marriage) — contains the same moments, formulated with slight differences in the various dynastic sources. The related passages are textually so much parallel and similar — the omissions, or the added characters not changing the course of the events — that the reader is inclined to conclude: all of them must have originated from one and the same record (information); its most complete and natural form can be recognized in the CS, and the only emendation or interpolation is the phrase about the artistic representation of the dead hero's life-scenes, whether or not this detail may be due to the difference of time of the dynasties they refer to (*Chou*: before 581, *Sui*: afterwards), or to information during the first decades of the T-ang-dynasty (after 618).

The formulation of the inserted phrase is as follows (SS, LXXXIV, p. 832a): 立屋其中圖畫死者形儀及其生時所經陳之狀 *li wu ch'i chung t'u-hua ssu-che hsing-i chi ch'i sheng-shih so ching ch'en chih chuang* "(they) erect a house and inside draw-and-paint the figure and braveness of the dead (person), and the form (∼ way) of battles he passed through in (his) life-time". (The text of the PS, often corrupt by misprints etc., shows differences in a few irrelevant characters, but may strengthen this records and the place of this emendation in the structure of the description.) We read it immediately after the information that a pit was made for the ashes, the objects of the dead person were burned, and the remains of sacrifices put on (a) pole; and this interpolation could recall the record about 闕特勒 *Ch'üe t'e-le* (∼ 勤 *ch'in*): *Kül Tegin*'s burial in 731—732,[60] when — after having erected a memorial stone for an inscription, and a memorial temple, (with) statue(s) carved from stone — on the four walls "his war-and-battle scenes" (,,forms/ways"), *i.e.* 其戰陳之狀 *ch'i chan-ch'en chih chuang* were drawn (CTS: 畫 *hua*; HTS: 圖 *t'u chan-ch'en chuang*).[61] A suspicion that this record may be a source of the interpolation in the SS—PS, can, however, be dispelled by the fact that the final form of the latter sources must have been ready by the middle of the 7th century; probably it was the text of the two dynastic histories of the T'ang Houses (CTS, HTS) that used a *cliché* for the events in 731 (732), ready-made as early as about a century earlier.

All this may shed a new light on the disapproving phrase concerning the change of Turk burial customs, attributed to T'ang T'ai-tsung in 628,

[60] The 19th year of the *K'ai-yüan* period (731) is mentioned in the HTS, i.e. the proper data of Kül Tegin's death, while we find the 20th year (732) in the CTS. On the discrepancies of these and other related dates see Liu Mau-tsai II, p. 620, N. 994.

[61] CTS, chap. CXCIV, *shang*, p. 1443b, cf. Liu Mau-tsai I, p. 179; HTS, CCXV, *hsia*, 1505a, cf. Liu Mau-tsai I, pp. (228—)229.

when he had to seek a pretext to explain why he would help one of his Turk allies (突利 *T'u-li* khaghan) with Chinese troops against the other (*Hsieh-li* khaghan): two rivalling leaders fighting with one another, south of the Great Wall. The condemnation — touched by expressions of the chronicle 佐傳 *Tso-chuan*, made a millennium earlier — found the Turks guilty of abandoning the customs of their ancestors, although the archaic Chinese terminology — mentioning "grave-mounds", see above — was, by its history, ambiguous enough to express the actual details. The "betrayal" of a Barbarian — from an inner-Turkic patriarchal-moral viewpoint — could hardly be reprimanded by the Chinese; the feeling of offence is easier to understand if this change of custom concerned the adaptation of a Chinese one, even if the memorial temple with carvings and paintings, etc., was built in extraordinary cases in China, too. (But as late as a century later, Chinese artists were summoned to work on Kül Tegin's monuments.)[62] At least certain details of this kind of luxurious burial were attributed to the Turks — as seen from the above textual analyses of the Chinese records — and it can be supposed with good reasons that the Turks, living and fighting in China's neighbourhood or within China, reaching e.g. the capitals as well, could become acquainted with Chinese customs, and they might "impertinently" ("treacherously") adopt them in extraordinary cases: after the death of their rulers, and high-ranking leaders, etc.

The final strengthening of the above argumentation can be found in a recent discovery of Chinese archaeology: in Shenhsi — the province of the T'ang time capital Ch'ang-an — a "tomb-palace", made of stone, was excavated, with carvings, and paintings on the walls. As it turned out from a long inscription written in Chinese, a Chinese general of Turk origin, named 阿史那忠 *A-shih-na Chung* was buried there, toward the middle of the 7th century.[63] The case of this member of the ruling family (clan) of the Turks (his relations being a matter of further research) may offer an example of a "dissident" Turk personality, turning back to his people's tradition and joining China in his life and death as well, to be disapproved by the guards of Chinese tradition and authority.

* * *

As seen above, the burial customs of the Turks were less universal and uniform in their empires than they are usually thought. A few records

[62] Attested only by the HTS, CCXV, *hsia*, see above.

[63] Cf. T'ang A-shih-na; CTS, CIX — HTS, CX, cf. Ts'en Chung-mien, pp. 777—787.

show archaic rites (with human sacrifices, intended for a clearly outlined after-life) that can be traced back, on the path of the *A-shih-na* line and the intermediary territory of *Kao-ch'ang*, to the *Hsiung-nus*, perhaps involving a special cultural (-ethnic) component of the empire-founding Turks. The other "deviation" from the standard burial customs shows the perspectives of the (Eastern) Turks under Chinese "protection" and influence: a Chinese type memorial palace (temple) with carvings and paintings, represented e.g. by Kül Tegin's tomb (-palace), and followed by further ceremonies on the cultural and political borderland between China and the steppe region.

Upon the textual analyses summarized above, the usual assumption that with the help of Chinese records all the carved tomb-figures in the realm of the Turks could be explained, should be considered — unfortunately — almost an illusion. The method of connecting archaeological results of the 8th century with Chinese sources has proved fruitful for a long period,[64] but the mosaic-constructing method, finding the custom of tomb-palace and carvings (etc.) too, in the Chinese records, and thus generalizing it over the whole Turk Age and territory, does not seem justifiable.[65] The statues of funeral intention can be expected to represent the dead persons — upon Chinese information, but perhaps even under Chinese influence — in direct ratio with a close relationship with China in space and time; the carved figures on the steppe before this period — if they were related at all to the Turks — are out of the question. (The inner and autochthon Turk custom to represent the figure of the defeated enemy is so much beyond the Chinese sight that no related Chinese record seems to have been met so far.)

Anyhow, the memorial statues must have been attached to the Turkic cultural heritage, appearing among different descendants of the Turks, but not necessarily connected with the other elements of ancient Turk funeral ceremonies. This latter reservation may be a warning for the usage of Chinese records concerning the "Chinese type" representative burial of the Turks as well, because the described cases do not mention incineration, or not even the entombment; thus the surviving custom of cremation is not excluded — especially if the ashes were buried elsewhere — even if this is not recorded.[66]

[64] Cf. e.g. Jaworski; Jisl; Grač (1955), p. 426 (etc.).

[65] This is the case e.g. in the excellent article by Jaworski, too; the method is widely used e.g. by archaeology, due to the first approaches to the sources ("inherited", sometimes, up to the present time).

[66] E.g. the 結骨 *Chieh-ku*, once subjects of the Turks, then said to be the ancestors of the Khirghiz, at funeral ceremonies cried with repeated ("three") laments (without cutting their face), burned the corpse of their dead, collected the remains of the bones, and they buried them the following year, erecting a tomb-mound, cf. TT (i.e. before 801), chap. CC, p. 52 b2. They also cut their face according to the THY, III, chap. C, p. 1784.

(The early records concerning the "anti-traditional" Turk burial, as pointed out, were not necessarily and originally connected with the description of the standard burial with cremation.)

Naturally, both the "regular" and "irregular" Turk burial customs could be adopted by the subjects of the Turks as well,[67] or their subjects might follow different funeral customs within the Turk sphere of power, too. The burial customs thus represent only one and not at all exclusive, even if important cultural component that could at least contribute to historical processes of ethnic character.

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[67] The 高車 *Kao-ch'e*, said to be identical with the 敕勒 *Ch'ih-le* (etc.), i.e. 鐵勒 *T'ieh-le*, defeated by the Turks, made pits for the deceased persons, put the corpse there in sitting position — we may add: without cremation — riding around the open pit even several hundred times, while men and women, adults and youngsters all gathered there, cf. TT, chap. CXCVII, p. 45 b1; cf. Note 7. Nevertheless, among the tribes in question this was not necessarily the only way of burial, at least not for their whole history, and so on.

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