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Ancient Turks / L. N. Gumilev - "MTF", - (Steppe Trilogy)

"Ancient Turks" is the well-known work of the brilliant Russian historian, geographer and philosopher L.N. Gumilev (1912-1992) devoted to the comparatively little-studied period of the world history of VI - VIII-th centuries AD, that coincided with the formation and blossoming of the Great Turkic Kaganate. The realization by the author's analysis of ethnic, political and the religious aspects of this power is presented in a fascinating and imaginative narration manner peculiar to the author.

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## Table of contents

From the author 5

Introduction 6

Part One 8

Chapter one 8

Changes on the Yellow River 8

Zhuzhans and Teleuts 9

Zhuzhan Khanate 11

Chapter two 12

War of Zhuzhan Khanate with the Wei Empire 12

Teleut Khanate - Gaogyu 13

Discord in Zhuzhan 14

Descendants of the Wolf Woman 16

Chapter Three 19

Beginning of the History of the Ancient Turks (Turkuts) 19

Defeat of Juzhan 20

War in the East 21

War in the West 23

The Avars in the Black Sea 25

Defeat of the Ephtalites 27

Chapter Four 29

Caravan Trade 29

Sogdian Maniach 30

Sharing of Ephtalite Succession 32  
War with Byzantium 32  
China and Caravan Route 34  
Chapter Five 36  
Power and the People 36  
End of Introduction Fragment. 38

Lev Nikolaevich Gumilev Ancient Turks

I dedicate this book to our brothers, the Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union.

From the author

This book was begun on December 5, 1935. Since then, it has been repeatedly revised and replenished. However, it has not exhausted all the abundance of material, and has not covered all the problems associated with the history of the ancient Turks. That's why continuing the research is not only desirable, but necessary.

For the rest of my life, I will cherish the memory of those who helped me to carry out this work, and who have long since passed away among us: my excellent predecessor G.E. Grumm-Grzhimailo, my mentors N.V. Kühner, A.Yu.

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Introduction

Theme and its significance:

The history of mankind has been studied extremely unevenly. While the sequence of events and changes of social formations in Europe and the Middle East was outlined in compiled works already at the end of 19th century, and India and China were described at the beginning of 20th century, the vast territory of Eurasian steppe is still waiting for its researcher. This is especially true of the period before the appearance of Genghis Khan on the historical scene, when two remarkable peoples, the Huns [see: 63] and the ancient Turks, as well as many others who did not have time to make their names famous, formed and perished in the Central Asian steppe.

It would be a mistake to believe that all of them only repeat each other, although their mode of production - nomadic cattle breeding - is indeed the most stable form of economy, almost impossible to improve upon. But the forms of life, institutions, politics, and place in the world history for the Huns and ancient Turks are completely different, just as their fates were different. On the background of the world history the history of ancient Turkic people and the empire created by them boils down to the question: why did the Turks arise, and why did they disappear, leaving their name as a legacy to many people who are not their descendants?

Attempts to solve this problem by analyzing only political history or only social relations have been made repeatedly, but failed. The ancient Turks, despite their great importance in the history of mankind, were small in number, and their close proximity to China and Iran could not fail to affect their internal affairs. Consequently, the social and political history of these countries are closely intertwined, and to reconstruct the course of events we must keep both in view. Equally important were changes in economic conditions, particularly those associated with high or low levels of Chinese exports and the Iranian government's barrier measures.

Since the borders of the Turkic Kaganate at the end of the 6th century were closed in the west with Byzantium, in the south with Persia and even India, and in the east with China, it is natural that the peripeteia (unexpected reversal) of the history of these countries at the considered period are connected with the fates of the Turkic state. Its formation was in some ways a turning point in human history, because until then, the Mediterranean and Far Eastern cultures had been separated, although they knew about each

other's existence. The vast steppes and mountain ranges hindered relations between East and West. Only later the invention of metal stirrups and pack horses, which replaced carts, allowed caravans to cross deserts and mountain passes with relative ease. That is why from the 6th century the Chinese had to reckon with the prices on Constantinople market, and the Byzantines had to count the number of the Chinese king's lances.

In this situation Turks not only played the role of mediators, but at the same time developed their own culture which they thought possible to contrast with the culture of China, and Iran, and Byzantium, and India. This particular steppe culture had ancient traditions and deep roots, but is known to us to a much lesser extent than the culture of the settled countries. The reason, of course, is not that the Turks and other nomadic tribes were less gifted than their neighbors, but because the remains of their material culture - felt, leather, wood, and fur - are preserved worse than stone, and so among Western European scholars arose the mistaken opinion that the nomads were "drones of humanity" (Viollet-le-Duc).

Nowadays the archaeological work in southern Siberia, Mongolia, and Central Asia refutes this opinion every year, and soon the time will come when we will be able to speak of the art of the ancient Turks. But even more than material culture, the researcher is struck by the complex forms of social institutions of the Turks: the unit-loyal system, hierarchy of ranks, military discipline, diplomacy, as well as the presence of well-established worldview, which is opposed to the ideological systems of neighboring countries.

Despite all this, the path on which ancient Turkic society embarked was disastrous, as the contradictions within the steppe and on its borders proved insurmountable. At critical moments, the vast majority of the steppe population rejected the support of the Khans; this led to the dissolution of the Kaganate in 604 into the Western and Eastern Khaganates; in 630 and 659 it resulted in the loss of independence of the Kaganate. - Of course, this destruction of the people did not mean the extermination of all the people that made it up. Some of them submitted to the Uighurs who inherited the power in the steppe, while the majority took refuge in the Chinese frontier troops. In 756 the latter revolted against the Tang dynasty emperor. The remnants of the Turks actively participated in it and were

hacked to pieces along with other rebels. This was the true end of the people and the epoch (and thus our theme).

But the name "Turk" did not disappear. Moreover, it spread to half of Asia. The Arabs began to call all the warlike nomads to the north of Sogdiana the Turks, and they adopted this name, because the original bearers of this name after it disappeared from the face of the earth, became a model of valor and heroism for the steppe. Later on, the term was transformed once more and became the name of a language family. Thus, many peoples who were never part of the great Kaganate of the 6th-7th centuries became "Türks". Some of them were not even Mongoloid, such as Turkmens, Ottomans, and Azerbaijanis. Others were the worst enemies of the Kaganate: The Kurykans, the ancestors of the Yakuts, and the Kyrgyz, the ancestors of the Khakasses. Others were formed earlier than the ancient Türks themselves, such as Balkars and Chuvash. But even that widespread linguistic interpretation which nowadays is given to the term "Türks" has a certain basis: the ancient Türks most vividly embodied those principles of steppe culture which were in the Hun's time and were in a state of anabiosis (suspended animation) in the 3rd - 5th cc.

Thus, the importance of ancient Turks in human history was enormous, but the history of this people is still unwritten. It was told in passing and in abbreviated form, which allowed avoiding the difficulties of source, onomastic, ethnonymic and toponymic nature. These difficulties are so great that the present work does not claim to have any definitions. The author only hopes that it will serve as a stepping-stone to the solution of the problem.

This book is an attempt to combine methods of historical analysis and synthesis. It analyzes selected phenomena in the history of the ancient Turks and peoples related to them, or their predecessors. This also includes a critique of sources, onomasticism, and ethnogenesis. 2 By synthesis, the history of the Türks<sup>1</sup>, Blue 2 Türks-Uygurs<sup>3</sup> is understood as a single process which forms a certain integrity in terms of periodization, and the described phenomenon is mapped onto the canvas of world history.

1 The Türks of the First Kaganate (546-658).

2 Kok-Türks of the Second Kaganate (678-747).

3 Mentioned here is made only of the Uigur nomadic Khanate (747-847), (the later Uigur sedentary ones are not considered here.)

## Part One: The Great Türkic Kaganate

### Chapter One

#### The Eve (420-546) Changes on the Yellow River

The Great Migration of Peoples in Europe, which broke the decrepit Rome in the 5th century, occurred in East Asia 100 years earlier. In what is known in Chinese history as the era of the Five Barbary Tribes (304-399), northern China was invaded and conquered by the Xiongnu and the Xianbi, who established a number of ephemeral states resembling the barbarian kingdoms of the Goths, Burgundians, and Vandals.

Just as in Europe, the Eastern Roman Empire survived on the Balkan Peninsula, so in China, on the banks of the great Yangtze River, did the independent Chinese Empire, the heir to the Han Empire. It was as similar to its great predecessor as the early Byzantine Empire was to Rome in its heyday, and also found strength only to defend itself against the barbarians assailing from the north and west. The weak and incompetent rulers of the dynasties 4 left the Chinese population of the "Middle Plain", as the Huang He Valley was called at that time, to the barbarian chiefs. However, despite the oppression of foreigners and the bloodshed of their continuous feuds, the Chinese in Northern China prevailed over their conquerors and this conditioned the rebirth of China in the 6th century.

The Toba tribe, which had defeated all its rivals 5, succumbed to the charm of Chinese culture. By 420, the early feudal state created by the Tobas united all of northern China into one empire, which was given its Chinese name, Wei (386). This was the first step of the Toba'ath Khan to compromise with the Chinese population, who constituted an absolute

majority of his subjects. The process of assimilation of nomads that began led to the fact that by the end of the 5th century the descendants of Tobasians had cut their braids, and communication with the subjugated undermined their strength and traditions. They even stopped using their native language and began speaking Chinese. Along with their language and clothing, they lost the steppe valor and cohesion that had once enabled them to triumph, yet they did not merge with the Chinese population, since they stubbornly sought to recreate their own state.

As the palace upheavals and ensuing massacres weakened the power of the Wei dynasty, the Chinese commanders in the service of the Xianbi emperors proved stronger and more vigorous than their masters. In 531 in the north-east Gao Huan rebelled, defeated the Tobasian troops and occupied the capital - Luoyang. Initially he acted ostensibly in the interests of the dynasty and proclaimed one of the princes as emperor. However, he, fearing his commander, fled to the west, to Chang'an, where he found support in another governor, Yuyin Tai, an okytai syanbi. Gao Huan enthroned another prince from the same Wei dynasty. Thus, the empire split into the Western Wei and the Eastern Wei. In fact, the rulers of both territories were Chinese military commanders who temporarily retained the Xianbei emperors as a screen. This state of affairs could not last long. The harsh rule of the Jin dynasty fell in 420, 4, the Liu Song in 479, the Southern Qi in 502, and the Liang in 557. 5 The Xiongnu, Muyun, Di, Yuvin (ancestors of the Tartars), and Kidan of the Syanbi so embittered the Chinese that, when power was in their hands, they were not inclined to be ceremonious with the defeated. Yuvin Tai poisoned several false emperors and his son in 557 considered himself powerful enough to abolish the hated dynasty and found his own, the Bei Zhou 6.

The Xianbi were treated even more harshly in Northeastern China. In 550, Gao Huan's heir, Gao Yang, forced the last emperor to abdicate the throne in his favor and poisoned him. The emperor's 721 relatives were murdered and their bodies were thrown into water to deprive them of burial. The new dynasty was called Bei-chi.

Both northern kingdoms were quite strong economically and politically. The Chinese population, freed from alien domination, developed a vigorous activity to rebuild their culture. However, the rivalry that arose between the

Bei Zhou and the Bei Qi bound their forces and deprived them of the opportunity to pursue an active policy.

In the south, the last emperors of the Liang dynasty marked their rule with arbitrariness and crimes, and the successive Chen dynasty continued these traditions. The 557-palace coup and the execution of the last Liang emperor provoked armed resistance from supporters of the fallen dynasty. The rebels were able to repel Chen's forces and establish a small state of Hou-Liang in central China.

China became fragmented into four mutually warring states. The tense situation that constrained China's strength was a lifesaver for two small and relatively weak nomadic powers: the Zhuzhan horde and the Togon (Tu-yu-hun) kingdom. They were among the leading powers of East Asia due to the easing of pressure from the south. The Rouran, a steppe khanate formed in the middle of the fourth century, experienced a crisis in the early sixth century that nearly destroyed it.

But that is what we are going to talk about.

The kingdom of Togon lay in the steppe highlands of Tsaidam. As early as 312, a small Syanbi tribe with princes of the Muyun clan migrated from southern Manchuria to the west and settled near Lake Kukurunor. Here they waged successful wars against isolated Tibetan clans and unsuccessful ones against the Tobasians. The latter resulted in Togon becoming a vassal of the Wei Empire, but its collapse gave the Togons their freedom back. In the second quarter of the 6th century, Prince Kualyu declared himself Khan and in 540 A.D. sent an embassy to Gao Huan, thus becoming an enemy of the Yui-Win Tai. This fact determined the further foreign policy of Togon, which we will encounter below. Despite the fact that Togon occupied a vast territory with "cities" (76, p. 84 full book), and had an already organized government, apparently borrowed from the Tobasians, it was not a strong state. The Tibetan clans, subjugated by arms, dreamed of liberation and revenge; the economy was based on extensive animal husbandry; the level of culture was low; and the arbitrariness of the Khans caused constant plotting, treason and repression, which added fuel to the fire. All these circumstances limited Togon's opportunities and later led him to an ignominious end.



## Zhuzhan and Teleuts

The question of the origin of the Juan-Juan people has been raised repeatedly, but has not received a final resolution. It is possible to think, that the formulation of the question is wrong, because it is necessary to speak not about an origin, but about addition. As a people, Zhuzhan did not have a single ethnic origin. The origins of Zhuzhan were somewhat peculiar. In troubled times, there have always been many people who have been knocked out of the saddle and compromised. There were also many of them in the middle of the IV c. Everyone who could not stay in the tobas khan's rate or in the capital of the Xiongnu shanyu, fled to the steppe. 6

What is meant by the North Zhou dynasty (Bei - Northern dynasty).

They also fled there from their cruel masters, deserters from armies, impoverished peasants from impoverished villages. What they had in common was not their origins, nor their language, nor their faith, but the fate that doomed them to a miserable existence; and this fate demanded that they get organized. In the fifties of the fourth century, a certain Yugului, a former slave in the Xianbi cavalry, was condemned to death. He managed to flee to the mountains, and about a hundred fugitives like him gathered around him. The fugitives found a way to negotiate with neighboring nomads and lived together with them.

Yugului's successor, Gyulyuhoi, established relations with the Tobas Khans and paid them an annual tribute in horses, sables and martens. His horde was called Zhuzhan. Zhuzhan wandered all over Khalkha up to Khingan, and their khan's headquarters were located near Khangai. The life and organization of Zhuzhan were both very primitive and extremely far from the tribal system. A regiment of a thousand men was considered a unit of combat and administrative power. The regiment was subordinated to the leader appointed by the Khan. The regiment had ten banners of a hundred men each, and each banner had its own chief. Zhuzhans had no written language at all; sheep dung or wooden notations with serifs were used as a counting tool. Laws corresponded to the needs of war and looting: the brave were rewarded with a larger share of the loot, and cowards were beaten with sticks [30, vol. I, p. 209]. For 200 years of existence in the Juan-Juan horde, any progress was imperceptible - all efforts were spent

for a robbery of neighbors.

“

In what language did the Juan-Juan speak with each other? Chinese sources give us very mixed data. "Weishu" sees the Juanji as a branch of the Dunhu. "Sunshu, Lianshu and Nanshu". [275, S. 18-19] consider them a tribe related to Huns, and finally Bei shi (?) ascribes to Ju-yüü the Gaogu origin [29, p. 101, 44, vol. II, p. 174-175]. The information of the Southern Chinese historians is derived second-hand, and the origin of Iugulüyü itself does not matter, because it is clear that not all tribesmen gathered around him. Most likely, Juan-Juan was explained in Syanbi, i.e. in one of dialects of the Mongol language, because translating the titles of their khans in Chinese, a Chinese historian indicates how they sounded in the polldin "in the language of Wei state", i.e. in Syanbi [30, vol. I, p. 209 ff]. Juan-Juan also considered themselves of the same origin as Toba [Ibid, p.226], but, taking into account the diversity of their people, it has to be supposed, that a reason for such claim came from the similarity of their languages, instead of a vague genealogy [44, pp. 174-175; 160].

The main strength of the Zhuzhan Khanate was the ability to keep the Tele tribes in submission. At the dawn of their history, i.e. in the 3rd century B.C., the Telesians lived in the steppe west of the Ordos. In 338 they submitted to the Tobas Khan and at the end of the fourth century they migrated north to Dzungaria and spread across western Mongolia, as far as the Selenga River. Being scattered, they could not resist the Jujans and were forced to pay tribute to them.

The Tele tribes were very necessary for the Juan-Juan, but the Juan-Juan horde was not necessary for the Telesians at all. Juan-Juan was formed by those people who avoided exhausting labor, their children preferred to replace labor by tribute. The Telesians were cattle breeders, they wanted to graze their cattle and not pay anyone anything.

The political systems of both peoples were formed in accordance with these inclinations: the Juan-Juan merged into a horde, to live at the expense of their neighbors with their military power; the Tele remained a loose confederation of tribes, but they defended their independence by all means.

The Tele lived close to the Jujans, but were nothing like them. They left the Hunnu empire early, retaining their primitive patriarchal system and nomadic way of life. Neither did Chineseization touch the humble nomads who inhabited the remote steppes, where there was nothing attractive to the Chinese. The Tele had no general organization; each of the 12 clans was governed by an elder, the head of the clan, with "relatives living in harmony". [30, vol. I, p. 215].

The Tele roamed in the steppe, moving in carts with high wheels, they were warlike, free-loving and not inclined to any kind of organization. Their self-name was "Tele"; it still lives on in the Altai ethnonym - Teleut. The descendants of the Teleuts are Yakuts, Telengits, Uigurs, and others. Many of them have not survived to this day.

Zhuzhan Khanate.

At the beginning of V century in the steppe from Khingan to Altai ruled undividedly Juan-Juan Khan Shelun, by the nickname Deudai - "Shooting at a gallop from a bow". Having conquered the Telian nomads, he encountered the Central Asian Huns, who settled on the Ili River. Their head was a certain Zhiba-yegi. In a persistent fight at the r. Ongin ravine Jiba-egi defeated Shelun, but could not cope with the Juan-Juan power as a whole, and "by submission bought his peace". [Ibid, p. 249].

The main task of Shelun was to prevent the strengthening of the Toba-Wei empire, whose forces far exceeded those of Zhuzhan Khan. Only continuous wars in the south of China prevented the Toba-wei emperor from settling his subjects, and therefore Shelun supported all the Toba's enemies. In 410 Shelun died and his brother Hului became khan. Hului left Toba alone and turned north, where he subjugated the Yenisei Kyrgyzov (Yegu) and Khevei (some Siberian tribe). In 414, he fell victim to a conspiracy, but the leader of the conspirators, Buluchzhen, died in the same year. A cousin of Shelun, Datan, became the Khan. The beginning of his reign was marked by a war with China, but the Zhuzhans' raid was fruitless as well as the punitive expedition sent to follow them. The situation remained unchanged.

In 418-419 the war between Juan-Juan and Central Asian Huns and Yuezhi resumed. Jujans penetrated into Tarbagatai and scared everybody there, that the leader of the group of Juja Tsidolo (Kidara), wanting to avoid neighborhood with Jujans, went south and occupied the town Bolo [30, vol. II, p. 264] in Karshi oasis [78, p. 201-207]. Here he faced Persians and Ephtalites. Kidar's companions, Kidarites, are known in history not by their ethnic name, but by the name of their leader.

7 The date of this war is calculated as follows: Datan, who fought with Yueban, ascended the throne in 414; in 415 he raided China - hence was occupied in the east. The next raid on China took place in 424. So, the war with Yuebang falls in this interval. Clarification is achieved by using numismatics. In 417 a coin bearing the name of Kidara was issued, but S. K. Kabanov considers the date of the Kidarite kingdom as 420. [30, vol. I, p. 189; vol. II, p. 259; 78, p. 172].

8 The assumption of R.M.Hirschman that the capital of Kidarites was in Balh [222, p. 79-80] was not confirmed.

## Chapter Two Ancestors

### The War of the Zhuzhan Khanate with the Wei Empire

The year 420 was the culmination of Zhuzhan's power. Easy victories over the northern and western tribes made Zhuzhan a hegemon in the Great Steppe, but by no means ensured this khanate neither peace nor prosperity. Zhuzhan's principal enemy was the Toba-wei Empire, and Zhuzhan's khan, Datan, sought to do all he could to prevent the strengthening of his natural rival.

In 424 Dathan invaded China with some 60,000 cavalry and marched into the capital, sacking the palace of the empire. The mobilization of the Tobasian troops and the lack of discipline among the Zhuzhans forced him to return without taking up arms. In 425 the Tobasians drove the Juanjans beyond the Gobi. In 430, Emperor Tai-wu-di (Toba Dao) decided to exterminate the Jurajans in order to free his hands in southern China. A huge army entered the steppes, and the Juanjans scattered to wherever they went. Dathan fled to the west and disappeared without a trace. The

Telesians slaughtered his men. Datan's son, Wu-di, refused to continue the struggle and began paying tribute to the Wei Empire. However, the peace was broken in 437 by Wu-di himself, who conducted a raid. Apparently, the Juan-Juan could not imagine their existence without plundering. The return raid in 439 gave nothing to the Toba emperor: he had to return without meeting Juan-Juan, who had hidden in gorges.

In 440 Wu-di, taking advantage of the war of Toba against Hesi, attacked the border again, but the barriers left on the border captured his vanguard. The Jujans once again fled. The same story was repeated in 445, after which Wu-di died, passing the throne to his son Tuhezhen (445-464). Now the roles had been reversed: the Toba-Wei Empire had reached its zenith and its troops were invading the steppe, forcing the Juanjans into hiding in the mountains. In essence, this was not war, but merely punitive campaigns.

Tuhezhen 's son and successor, Yucheng (464-485), tried to continue the struggle but was defeated in 470 and in 475 asked for peace and submitted tribute. Juzhen weakened and raids on China became an unaffordable luxury. The poorer and weaker western region was now chosen as an object of plunder. In 460 the Juan-Juan seized the Turfan valley, where they massacred their former allies, the Southern Huns, who had fled there from the victorious Toba. In 470 the Jurajans sacked Khotan, but the strengthened state of the Ephtalites put an end to the Jurajani aggression. The border Zhuzhan became Tien Shan.

The new Zhuzhan Khan, Douhun (485-492), was a "violent man prone to murders". [30, vol. 1, p. 195]. He marked his accession to the throne by the execution of one of the nobles and his entire clan. This aroused indignation in the country. The Khan's desire to attack China was even more disliked. Everyone understood that a raid, even a successful one, would be followed by a campaign of the Chinese troops, the repulsion of which was out of the question.

The Tele Elder Afuzhilo strongly advised the Khan not to start a war with China, but when he was convinced that his arguments did not work, he rebelled with all the Tele people. The number of Tele tribes was not small at that time (according to the Chinese data, 100 thousand kubitaks). At that

time, Afuzhilo roamed to the west, to the Irtysh valley. There he took a title "Great Son of Heaven" [Ibid, p.217], whereby he reflected his claim to a place of equality with the Juan-Juan khan, and the war broke out like a flame.

In 490 the Chinese troops entered the steppe from the east and, together with the Telesians, pinched Zhuzhan in a pincer. Rouran nobles laid all responsibility on the hapless khan and killed him (492).

The Tele to the west was an event of the utmost importance: in the west, these scattered nomads formed their own power. The process of ethnogenesis began again in Asia. At the same time, the Turks formed a nation in the Altai Mountains, the Tibetans in the Brahmaputra Valley, and a renaissance began in China, producing the magnificent medieval culture of the Sui and Tang dynasties. The ancient period of East Asian history was coming to an end, and the ugly remnant of it, Zhuzhan, was to perish. Middle Asia on the eve of Turkic power creation - end of V century.

#### Teleut Khanate – Gaogyu

The fall of the Teleuts and the coup d'état of 492 was a turning point in the history of Zhuzhan. It lost its hegemony in Central Asia and was forced to fight not for power, but for existence. Nagai, who replaced the murdered Daulun, ruled for only one year. He adopted the motto of his rule: "Quietly", i.e., he abandoned the warlike intentions of his predecessor. Nagai's son, Futu, continued his father's policy as long as it was possible [30, vol. I, p. 196].

Meanwhile, the Teleuts mastered the new settlement and destroyed Yueban, the last remnant of the Hun's era. At the new place the Teleuts tried to create their own state. For this purpose, they divided the people into two halves: the northern ruler Afujilo took the title "Great Emperor", and the southern one - the title "Crowned sovereign". [Ibid., p. 217]. It is not known what they called their own state, but the Chinese called it Gaogyu, which

means "high cart". It has gone down in history under this name. Politically, the Gaogyu had a Chinese orientation, counting on silk for clothing, but this silk did not do him any good. In 494, the Ephtalites defeated Iran and, having secured their rear, turned north. The southern part of the Gaoguish power was defeated with lightning speed. 9 It is convenient and correct to call them Western Teleuts, since the Altai Teleuts are their descendants, and the disconnected tribes of the eastern Teleuts are Teleuts, as is customary in Soviet historiography.

The "hereditary sovereign" was killed, his family taken captive, and the people dispersed: some submitted to the Juanjans, some went to the Chinese possessions. In the following year, 496, the northern power was just as quickly conquered. The Ephtalites chose from among the captives a prince, Miwotu, and placed him over the remaining Teleuts. So, Gaogyu turned into a vassal of Eftalites, an enemy of Jujans and an ally of Chinese, who paid to him for the alliance 60 pieces of silk cloth [Ibid.] Apparently, at that time (497) Ephtalites captured Karashar, and the governor of the principedom Gaochan in Turfan oasis, a Chinese Ju, asked the Chinese government to accept and transfer his subjects to the Chinese lands.

A circle of steel was closing around Zhuzhan. But the Gaochan did not want to leave their settled place and, after killing their ruler, joined Zhuzhani. This somewhat defused economic tensions, as the agricultural Gaochan could supply Zhuzhan with bread, fruit and cloth; but it also heightened political tensions, as it irritated the Chinese emperor Xuan-wu-di. To the request of Futu Khan for peace the emperor said that he had no views to the north only because he was busy with conquering South China, and in general he considered Futu and Rzhuzhan rebellious subjects [Ibid, p. 196]. Meanwhile, in Gaochan the Chineseophiles triumphed and the alliance with Zhuzhan was dissolved (500) [30, vol. II, p. 251].

To support the Chinese interests in the Western Province, a three-thousand detachment of regular troops under the command of Myn Wei was sent there. Based in Hami, it constrained the Zhuzhans. Futu's new embassy to China went unanswered. The Teleuts were raised against the Jujans, who had to pay in blood for their 60 pieces of silk. At Lake Pulay, Miwotu defeated the Jujans. They fled southward, but were met by Chinese units of Myn Wei in the Beishan mountains. Panicked, the Jouzhans rushed back,

ran into Teleuts and were defeated again (508). In the massacre the ill-fated Futu Khan died. Miwotu sent his scalp to Myn Wei. In return, he was given gifts: a complete set of musical instruments, 80 musicians, 10 pieces of crimson and 60 pieces of multicolored silk cloth.

Cheunu, the successor of the dead Futu, twice tried to negotiate with China, but realized that only force could save him. In 516 he attacked Gaogyu, defeated Miwotu, and, after capturing him, killed him in a very peculiar way. The prisoner's legs were tied under the belly of a nag, which was driven until Miwotu died from the jolting. Miwotu's skull was then varnished and turned into a bowl. Teleuts, who escaped from Jujans, joined the Ephtalites [30, vol. 1, p. 218]. After that, the embassy of Juan-Juan khan was received by Emperor Wei - Xiao min-di (518). They were reprimanded for inaccurate execution of vassal duties [Ibid, p. 197]. Such wording allowed for any compromise, and it seemed that Zhuzhan had escaped from a hopeless situation.

Discord in Zhuzhan.

Cheunu did everything possible to save Zhuzhan. Having defeated the Teleuts, he did not continue the war in the west and made a treaty with the Ephthalites. The alliance was cemented by marriages of Jujuan princesses and Ephtalite nobles [Ibid, p.203] 10. In the east Juan-Juan and Korean (Gao-Guili) crashed together to defeat one of the Manchurian tribes, Dedeugan, and weakened the position of the Wei house in Manchuria [30, vol. II, p. 74]. The Turfan issue was also successfully resolved. In 518 the Chinese government officially gave up the idea to withdraw population from Turfan oasis to the Inner China and recognized the Principality of Gaochan [Ibid, vol.I, p.252]. 10 Apparently, the conclusion of Jujuan-Eftalite alliance broke off friendly relations between Eftalite kingdom and Wei empire. In the 516-520 and 526 years Eftalite embassies were sent already to Southern China, to the Lyan empire, and in these negotiations, it is possible to see an attempt of anti-Tobas coalition organization [227, p.452-453].

They were regularly supplied with bread and fabrics. The iron goods were delivered to Juan-Juan by their Altai vassals, Turkuts (Türks-Tukyu). But the unity in the horde was broken. Buddhism penetrated into Juan-Juan. As usually, Buddhist missionaries first of all made the Khan a Buddhist. The "shamyni" - Buddhist priests and "ni" - nuns appeared in the rate.



Under the new conditions, Buddhism took fantastic forms: for example, nuns had legitimate husbands, but this apparently did not embarrass the Khan. However, despite the scarcity of information, we can say that not everyone liked Buddhism. Opposition arose both in the khan's family and in the army. The Juja lost the unity it needed more than ever. In 513 the head of the Zhuzhan embassy to China was the shaman Hongxuan, who brought "an idol encrusted with pearls" [30, vol. I, p. 196]. This is the first case in the history of nomads when a cleric acted in a secular role.

Even more revealing is the following. A young shamaness, named Deu-hun divan, lived in the Zhuzhan stake. It is striking that the nickname "divan" was Persian: "oder- vivan. "She cured and sorcered (i.e. shamanized with the power of spirits), and Cheunu always had faith in her". [Ibid, p. 197]. The Chinese chronicler considers her a charlatan and relays an account of her fraud, but that is not what interests us. "Cheunu greatly respected and loved her, and, acting on her advice, led the state administration into confusion" [ibid.] In 520, when Cheunu was on a campaign, the divan was killed on the order of the mother-khanshah, and when Cheunu returned, his mother, in collusion with the nobles, killed him and gave the throne to her other son, Anahuang.

Ten days later, Cheunu was avenged. A certain Shifa, a relative of the khan, attacked the stake and smashed it. Anahuang managed to flee to China, and his mother and brothers were killed. While Anahuang was begging for mercy in China, his uncle Polomyn gathered his supporters and defeated Shifa. Shifa fled to Manchuria to tribe Dideugan [30, vol. II, p. 79] and there was killed. Poloman accepted a title of Khan. In 521 year, he was defeated by rebellious Teleuts and with the rest of his subjects migrated to China. Zhuzhan was again on the brink of destruction.

At last China achieved its goal: both Zhuzhan khans fell into its hands. Those who came from the north said that "the state was in great turmoil." Each clan lives separately, and alternately plunder each other". [Ibid, vol. I, p. 202].

The Teleuts took advantage of the strife: the younger brother of the tortured Miwotu, Ifu, restored the Gaogu state and in 521 defeated the Polomyn zhuzha, driving them into China [30, vol. 1, p. 219]. In the autumn of the

same year Sinifa, Anahuang's brother, who replaced him, fled to China from the Gaoguys. The Chinese government decided to consolidate its success. Polomyn and his followers settled within China, at Lake Kukuror, and Anahuang, who had more confidence, abroad, north of Dunhuang. Polomyn immediately tried to flee to the Ephthalites, as three of his sisters were married to the Ephthalite king. But Polomynian was detained and died in prison. Anahuang had more fortitude. In 522 he begged 10 thousand sacks of millet for sowing, but apparently the Juanjans ate the millet, and as a result, the following year they had a famine that led to the plunder of the Chinese population. Anahuang detained the Chinese official sent to look into the matter, robbed everything in the vicinity, and with the entire horde retreated northward. There the Chinese official was released. The pursuit sent for Anahuang returned with nothing [Ibid, p. 204]. This dizzying adventure saved the Zhuzhan.

The Wei empire was disintegrating at an astonishing speed, and a new political situation was created every year. Already in 496 western Manchuria was lost, where the Khi (Tatabs) revolted [30, vol. II, p. 73]; the Liang empire in the Southern China was activated, and, finally, in 524 in the north of the country broke out and quickly grew rebellion in the Woyie fortress. Anahuan volunteered to suppress this rebellion and defeated the rebels in the spring of 525. For this he was rewarded with "miscellaneous things" and a full pardon. Now it was Gaogyu's turn. Left face to face with the Teleuts, the Jouzhans defeated them head-on. Ifu was killed by his younger brother Yuegyu, who tried to continue the war, but was also defeated in 534-537. Ifu's son, Bidi, killed his uncle and led the resistance. In 540 Bidi was defeated by the Juju and the Gaogyu power ceased to exist. Meanwhile, in China, the Wei Empire split into eastern and western parts that fought among themselves. Here Anahuang emerged as the hegemon, for both sides ingratiated themselves with him. This was the last ray of bloody Zhuzhan glory.

Descendants of the she-wolf.

Knowledge of genealogies and special study of them was a long time peculiar to Central Asian peoples [148, vol. I, p. 153]. At the same time, it is interesting that many of them named as their ancestor this or that animal. So, Tibetans considered their ancestors a male monkey and a female

rakshasa (forest spirit), Mongols - a gray wolf and a fallow deer, Telesians - also a wolf and the daughter of the Hun's shanyu, and Turks - the Hun's prince and she wolfs. The last two legends originated a very long time ago, apparently in the period when these peoples inhabited the southern edge of the great Gobi Desert, because the mythology is to some extent corrected by the facts of political history and ethnogenesis.

Among the tribes defeated by the Tobasians in their conquest of northern China were "five hundred Ashina families". This "five hundred families" arose "from the mixing of different clans" [30, vol. [I, p. 221], who lived in the western part of Shaanxi, reconquered in the 4th century from the Chinese by Huns and Syanbi 12. The Ashina were subordinated to the Hun prince Mukan, who owned Hesi (area west of the Ordos, between the bend of the Huang He and Nanshan). When in 439 the Tobas defeated the Huns and annexed Hexi to the Wei empire, the prince "Ashina with five hundred families fled to Zhuzhans and, settling on the southern side of the Altai mountains, mined iron for Zhuzhans". [30, vol. I, p. 221].

The text talks about the origin not of the whole nation of ancient Turks, but only of their ruling clan. There is nothing legendary in this version of the origin of ancient Turks. Apparently, Ashina was a leader of a small team, composed of the daredevils, who for some reason didn't get along in numerous Syanbi and Hunnish principedoms. Such petty military units, which cannot be called states, arose constantly during the turbulent era of the 3rd to 5th century, but disappeared without leaving a trace.

The Chinese called the subjects of the Khans of Ashin Tu-kyu. This word is deciphered by P. Pelliot as "Türk + yut", i.e. "Türks", but with a plural suffix which is not Turkic, but Mongolian. In Old Turkic all political terms are formed in Mongolian plural. That gives a ground to think that they were brought into the Türkic language from outside.

The word "Türk" itself means "strong, sturdy". According to A. N. Kononov, it is a collective name which later turned into the ethnic name of a tribal community. Whatever the original language of this association, by the 5th century, when it entered the arena of history, all its members understood an intertribal language of that time - the Xianbi, i.e. Old Mongolian. It was the language of command, bazaar, and diplomacy. With this language the

Ashina moved to the northern edge of the Gobi in 439. The word "Ashina" meant "wolf." In Turkic the wolf is *buri*, or *kaskir*, and in Mongolian *shono/chino*. "A" is a prefix of respect in Chinese. Consequently, "Ashina" means "noble wolf. [62, c. 104-105.

11 "Five hundred families" is a figurative expression meaning "a few" [62, p. 105].

12 In Chinese historiography this epoch is called *Wu-hu*, i.e., "five Pre-barbarian tribes". The list of the states formed by the nomads on the territory of China. The list of the states formed by nomads on the territory of China [see: 52, p. 658-662].

The word not subjected to Chinggislation is preserved in the Arabic record of this name *Shane* [241, p. 289].

The question how much right it is to call Ashin's Khans totemists cannot be solved given the present state of our knowledge [206, p. 1-22 (separate print)], but it is clear that the name "wolf" was very important for the 6th c. Türks. Chinese authors consider the concept "Türkic khan" and "wolf" synonyms, evidently based on the Türkic khans' views. It is not by chance that the Syanbi princess said about her husband, khan *Shabolio*: "Khan by his properties is a wolf". [30, vol. I, p. 237]; and in the instruction for attacking Turks, it is told: "That is a measure to be used: to chase the nomads and to attack wolves". The golden wolf's head of the *Türkiye* [Ibid, p. 290; 198, p. 61]. A golden wolf's head decorated the Turkic banners [30, vol. I, p. 229], and, finally, in the two legends about the origin of Turks, the first place belongs to the progenitor *Wolf* [Ibid, p. 220 et seq; 234, p. 327-328; 240, S. 5]. The two slightly different legends are characterized by the absence of any hint on the historical event - the crossing of the Ashina horde from Gansu. Therefore, one must assume that the legends originated in the Altai and may have been created specifically to justify the rights of the newcomers to an exclusive position.

The first legend is curious because it knows about the "branch of the Xiongnu house from the Western edge to the west", i.e. about *Attila's* power. This branch was utterly exterminated by its neighbors; only one nine-year-old boy survived, whose hands and feet were chopped off by his enemies and he was thrown into a swamp. There the wolf became pregnant from him. The boy was killed all the same, and the wolf-wolf

escaped to Altai and gave birth to ten sons there. The clan multiplied, and "after several tribes, someone Asyan-she with all aimak came out of the cave and recognized himself as a vassal of Juan-Juan Khan". Thus, according to this legend, the Altai Türks (Turkuts) descended from the Western Huns, but not directly, and mystically, through the mediation of a wolf, and if to consider that the Western Huns were annihilated about 468, and the Türks appear as a people already in 545, one could only marvel at their rapid reproduction and the change of generations!

The second legend deduces the Turks from a local clan So, and again from a wolf. All representatives of the So clan, according to the legend, died "because of their own stupidity" (it is not explained in what way), only four grandsons of the wolf survived. The first turned into a swan, the second settled between the rivers Abu and Gyan under a name Tsigu, and the third and the fourth on the river Chusi (Chuya) in the southern Altai. This legend was explained by N.A.Aristov, who compared the So legend with the tribe of the Kumandins - a Northern Altai tribe on the Biya River, linked the first grandson with the tribe of the Lebedins - Ku-Kizhi, and linked the second with the Kirghiz, who lived between Abakan (Abu) and Yenisei (Gyan - Kem). The grandson of the eldest son is Asyan-she of the first legend. Here they both converge [4, p. 5].

The foothills of the Mongolian Altai, where the fugitives found themselves, were inhabited by tribes descended from the Huns and speaking Turkic languages. The men of the Ashin prince's cohorts merged with these natives and gave them the name "Turk", or "Turkut".

The destiny of this word is so remarkable and important for our subject that we should pay special attention to it. The word "Turk" for 1500 years changed its meaning several times. In the 5th century, as we have seen, the name "Türks" was given to the horde consolidated around prince Ashin, who in the 6th-8th centuries formed a small nation which already spoke Türkic. But the neighboring peoples, who spoke the same language, were not called Türks. Arabs referred to all nomads of Central and Central Asia as Turks, without regard to language. Rashid-ad-Din began to differentiate Turks and Mongols, apparently based on language, and nowadays "Turk" is a purely linguistic concept, without ethnography or even origin, as some Turkic peoples assimilated the Turkic language in their relations with their neighbors. With such a variation in the use of the term a clarification is

necessary. That people, which history is described in our book, in order to avoid confusion, we will call them Turkuts, as they were called by Jurajans and Chinese in the 6th c.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever was the origin of those "five hundred families" that united under the name Ashin, they were inter-connected in Mongolian until the vicissitudes of military success threw them out of China into Altai. However, a century's stay in a Turkic-linguistic environment should certainly have contributed to a rapid change in the spoken language, especially since the "five hundred families" of the Mongols were a drop in the Turkic Sea. We must assume that by the middle of the 6th century both the members of the Ashina clan, and their companions were completely Turkicized, and retained traces of the Mongol language only in the titulature they brought with them.

On the basis of the above said, it is clear that the origin of the Türkic-speaking and the origin of the people which called themselves "Türkic"/"Türkiyut" are completely different phenomena. The languages that are now called Turkic were formed in ancient times [19, p. 30 full book], while the Turkic peoples emerged at the end of the 5th century as a result of ethnic mixing in the forest-steppe landscape of the Altai and its foothills. The aliens merged with the local population to such an extent that a century later, by 546, they were a coherent entity which is commonly referred to as the ancient Turkic peoples or Türkuts.

And the Turkic-speaking milieu itself at that time had already managed to spread far to the west of the Altai, to the countries where the Oguzes, Kangls, or Pechenegs, the ancient Bulgars and Huns lived.

<sup>13</sup> This conventional term was suggested by us in 1959. [see: 48, p. 105; 7, p. 104].

## Chapter Three

### Creation of Great Power of Ashina Kind (545-581)

#### The Beginning of the History of the Ancient Turks (Turkuts)

Though the history of every nation is deeply rooted in antiquity, the

historians of all epochs have a tendency to begin their descriptions with the date which, in their opinion, defines the origin of a people. For example, the Romans had an extremely tentative date, the foundation of Rome; the Arabs had a realistic date, the flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina; Russian chroniclers chose 862, and attributed the "beginning" of Russian history to it; French chroniclers attributed the "beginning" to Clovis of Merovingian, and historians, at the instigation of Augustin Thierry, attributed it to 843, the division of Charlemagne's Empire, etc. For the Turkites this date turned out to be 545.

A new war broke out in Northern China [207, p. 356]. The ruler of the Eastern Wei empire, Gao Huan, having made an alliance with Zhujan khan Anahuang and Tong khan Kualyu [76, p. 85], attacked the Western Wei empire and strongly constrained his rival Yu-vin Tai; however, the allies did not receive a decisive victory. In search of supporters, the emperor of the Western Wei, Wen-di, sent a certain An Nopanto<sup>14</sup> to the Turkic prince Bumyn <sup>15</sup> to establish friendly relations.

The messenger, who arrived to Turks in 545. [234, p. 329] <sup>16</sup>, was received cordially. "In the horde all began to congratulate each other, saying: now an envoy from a great power has come to us, soon our state will also rise". This seemingly insignificant fact indicates that the domination of Juan-Juan was oppressive for Turkuts, and the inevitability of the war for freedom did not scare them.

Conforming to the sentiments of his people, Bumyn was disloyal to his suzerain, the Jujiang khan, sending to the capital of the Western Wei, Chang'an, a return embassy with gifts, and thus cementing an alliance with the enemy of his lord. However, this did not cause a rupture with the Jujans: apparently the negotiations were conducted in strict secrecy. These embassies for a quarter of a century determined the eastern policy of the Turkic power as an ally of the Western Wei and its successor Bei-Zhou, directed against the Northeastern China, where since 550 the Bei-Qi dynasty was consolidated. However, Bumyn was aware that he was too weak to fight the zhujang, of whom he was a tributary, when he became involved in world politics. Bumyn decided to do his duty as an ally and vassal in good faith. The opportunity presented itself in the same year.

The western Telian tribes were taking the Zhujan yoke hard. Finally, their patience burst: they rebelled, and from the western Dzungaria moved to Khalkha to strike a blow in the heart of Juan-Juan. The campaign was so poorly organized and the timing so badly timed that one would assume a spontaneous outburst of popular indignation rather than a systematically organized war. History has not even preserved the names of the leaders of the rebellion. When the Telesians were midway, from the gorges of the Gobi Altai, rows of Turkuts in platted skulls and cloaks rode out into the mountains.

14 An Nopanto is called "nomadic foreigner from Jiu-Quan". [30, vol. I, p. 228], i.e. from Hesi, where 100 years ago came out Ashin horde. The source stresses its origin not by accident: was sent a person who knew the Turkic language, and it indicates that the connections of the Ashina horde with its homeland were not lost.

15 In the Orkhon inscriptions he is called Bumyn-kagan. V. Bartold (13a, p. 358] and P.M.Melioransky [111, p. 64, 94-95] tried to combine him in one person with Istemi-khan. However Thomsen [281, p. 95], Marquart [243, S. 185], Aristov [4, p. 9] and G.E.Grumm-Grzhimailo [44, vol. II, p. 219] brilliantly proved that these are two brothers, corresponding to the Chinese Il-Khan Bumyn and Istemi.

16 N.J.Bichurin writes 535, but this date is less probable, as the empire has just broken up and the balance of forces was still unclear. Liu Mao-tszai gives date 545 [240, S. 6].

Telesians did not expect a flank attack, and besides, they were going to fight not with the Turkuts, from whom they had never seen anything bad, but with the hated Jujans. So, they immediately expressed full submission to Bumyn, and he, in accepting it, committed a second disloyal act towards the Jujans.

Obedience in the steppe is a mutually binding concept. One can be the subject of 50,000 tuktaks [30, vol. I, p.228] 17 only if one does what their inhabitants want; otherwise, one will lose both his subjects and his head. The Telesians wanted one thing: to destroy the Juan-Juan, and Bumyn evidently knew this when he accepted them into his horde. But since that was what his tribesmen wanted as well; war was inevitable. The khan shared the desire of his subjects, and so events moved swiftly.



## The defeat of Jujani

Bumyn went to the trouble of provoking the Zhuzhan and, at the same time, did not want to be seen as an offender, so he turned to the Zhuzhan. He asked Zhuzhan Khan Anahuang to marry him a princess.

This would immediately put him, according to the steppe customs, on an equal footing with the khan, which the latter could not agree to, without dropping his authority. The angry khan answered rudely: "You are my smelter [Turkuts smelted iron for zhujans], how dare you make me such an offer". [30, vol. I, p. 228]. The refusal put Bumyn in the position of the offended, which is exactly what he wanted. To cut off paths to reconciliation, he ordered the execution of the Zhuzhan ambassador, and now the alliance with the Western House of Wei was of great use to him. He immediately resumed negotiations with Wen-di and, in the summer of 551, he married the Chinese princess Chang-li, which finally consolidated his authority among the nomads. In an effort to take advantage of the suddenness of the attack, Buming campaigned in the winter of 552 and won a complete victory over the Zhuangs. Anahuang committed suicide, and his son Yanlochen fled to his Tsis allies [8] 18.

Bumyn took the title Ilkhan, but died at the end of 552. His son ascended the throne, taking the title Kara Issyk-Khan (i.e., Black Hot Khan).19

The Jujans, suddenly [234, vol. III, p. 350] defeated by the Turkuts, chose as their leader the uncle of their dead khan, Dynshuzza, and continued the struggle. But in the battle near Mount Laishan they were again completely defeated. In the end, they were defeated once again. By their luck, however, very short-lived, Kara Issyk-Khan died under mysterious circumstances, his son Shetu [see p. 64 of this full book] was dismissed, and a younger brother of Kara Issyk-Khan, Kushu, with the title Mугan-Khan, ascended the throne 20.

The new khan was firm, rigid, brave, clever and was not interested in anything, except wars [30, vol. I, p. 229]. In late autumn of 553 he defeated Juan-Juan again. The Cis emperor accepted his unhappy allies and repulsed Turkuts pursuing them [77]. But the Jurajans could not get along

in China. Deprived of their herds and property, unused to labor, they took to plundering, and the Tsisian government was forced to send troops against them already in the spring of 554. The Juanjans were defeated. But this did not change their behavior, in the summer of 555.

17 Г. E. Grumm-Grzhimailo supposed that against Juan-Juan appeared "Parpurums" [44, 220]. The number of kubitaks coincides with the number of all Tele tribes of the Central Asia, cited by D.Pozdneev [128, p. 38-39]. Therefore, should be thought that Bumyn subdued the entire confederation of Tele tribes, which until then inhabited Dzungaria, and after the death of Jujans spread east to Baikal and Kerulen.

18 C. Julien translates differently: Anahuan himself killed his son Yan-lochen and escaped to Pi [234, vol. III, p. 330], but Gan-mu (in translation by Ia-kinfa [see: 76]) reports about Anahuan's suicide.

19 Kolo Ishigi-khan.

20 This khan had names: "animal" - Tszushu (kushu - bird); clan name - Sygin (yegin - grandson, nephew); nickname - Yandy - victor; title name - Muyuy, or Mugan-khan. We retain for him the last name, which became customary in scientific literature [see: 234, p. 331].

The Tsisk emperor expelled Juan-Juan from his territory to the steppe, where they were immediately defeated by Turkuts and Kidans [240, S.35]. Dynshutszy with the remnants of the horde rushed to Western Wei to seek refuge, but there they needed Turkuits as allies against the Qi empire, and gave out to the Turkic ambassador three thousand bound Zhuzhans. The ambassador ordered to behead all adults, but spared children and servants "following princes" [30, vol. I, p. 208]. The Juan-Jugs were finished, and Turkuits became masters of the whole eastern half of the Great Steppe.

For the rendered services in extermination of Jujans Türkjuts paid off the Western Wei empire in the same 556 year. At the time when Jujans heads were rolling before the eastern gate of Chang'an, the joint Türkic-Chinese troops broke into Togon, whose population had to seek refuge in the Nanshan mountains [76, p. 85]. The victors took the residence of Kualyu Khan - a town Shudun, located near Kukunor, and another town - Khamchen. The next year, the Togonians tried to repay the raid with a raid on the Chinese lands, but, unable to take the fortresses, they were forced

to retreat. The Qi empire could not help its dying allies, since earlier it spent forces to repulse the Kidan from the north (553 [207, p. 359]) and the Liang kingdom from the south (555 [77]). The successes inspired Yuyvyn Tai's son, Yuyvyn Tszu, dared to throw away the screen of legitimacy and, having forced the last emperor of the Wei dynasty to abdicate, he ascended the throne in 557 and named his dynasty Bei-Zhou.

Türküt power at the end of the 6th century.

## War in the East

Having defeated the Jujuns, the Turkuts moved on to decisive action against their nomadic neighbors. 554 was the year when an empire was created from the principality. The state of Qigu in the north was conquered. It is not clear what the Chinese meant by the name Tsigu, Kyrgyz or Chiku [44, p.222, 311], anyway from that time Mugan-han secured his northern border, though the Türkuts failed to force the Sayan Mountains [see: 189, p.146]. 21

21 The name in the Tibetan text Zama-kagan, or Zama-mogan, according to Pelliot's witty conjecture, is Mugan-khan [see: 189, p. 151]. The name Zama cannot be Ozmysh as Ozmysh-khan, the last ruler of the Blue Turks (see below), did not attack the north for two years of his reign (742-744) [cf.: 204, p. 13]. One should think that the word "Zama" should be read "Azma" - "not going astray" (negative form of the verb "az"). Such epithets are often found in the titulature of Turkic khans.

In the east at that time lived three peoples: Tatabs, whom Chinese called Hi, Kidans, and thirty Tatar tribes, who had the name Shiwei among the Chinese geographers [34]. All three peoples spoke dialects of the Mongolian language, were close in everyday life and culture, but always feuded with each other. The Tatabs lived on the western slopes of Khingan and maintained an alliance with the Bei-Qi [30, vol. II, p. 73]. The Kidan occupied the steppe part of Manchuria, north from the r. Liaohe. They constantly were at war with Tatabs, and consequently were in conflicts with the Bei-Qi.

In 553 the Bei-Qi emperor, Wen-di, defeated and subjugated a large part of

the Kidan people. The rest either fled to Koguryo (Korea) [ibid., p. 75] or submitted to the Turkyuts who reached the Yellow Sea basin. As a result of the victory over the Kidans, the Beichi state did not strengthen, but, on the contrary, worsened its foreign policy position, as Turkic possessions now engulfed it from the north. The brutal massacre of the remnants of the Xianbi and the open patronage of Buddhism, which absorbed vast resources, weakened its resistance to external enemies. And at the same time Bei Zhou grew and strengthened - both because of the alliance with the Turkuts and because its rulers relied on the service class and did not spend money on Buddhist and Taoist monks.

The emperor Wu-di issued a decree forbidding Buddhism and Taoism in 579; this Chinese Henry VIII took the name "Heavenly Beginning", ordered the statues of Buddha and Lao Tzu to be placed on the sides of his throne and, sitting down between them, took public worship [240, S. 36; 207, p. 380], thereby trying to discredit the religion.

The Zhou empire began to gain fame even in Western Asia, where various rulers sought to establish ties with it. So, in 553 there came an embassy from Ephtalites [30, vol. II, p. 269], in 555 from Iran [Ibid, p. 263]. After a new defeat of Togonians, this time by Chjous forces only, ambassadors came: in 559 by Gaochan (Turfan) [30, vol. II, p. 252-253], in 561 by Kucha [Ibid, p. 257] and in 564 by Karashar [Ibid, p. 256].

The main task of the Bei-Chou empire was to destroy the eastern Bei-Qi empire, but the latter had internal resources, if skillfully used, sufficient to preserve its independence. Everything was decided by the question of which side the Turkic khan would take.

In 561 both emperors sent ambassadors to Mugan-khan with a request to marry the princess. The gifts presented from rich Bei-chi almost settled matters, however the diplomatic dexterity of Chjou ambassadors forced Mugan-khan to remain loyal to the treaty [30, vol. I, p. 232; 234, p. 337; 240, S.20]. He decided to make up for the loss of gifts by acquiring military booty.

In 563, the allies besieged Tszinyan, but had no success, and the Turkuts, having plundered the country, returned to their native steppes. The next

year the campaign was repeated, but the complete defeat of one of the Zhou armies, inflicted by the Qisians near Luoyang [77], forced Mughan-khan to withdraw. And still, in spite of this failure, he rejected the alliance with Qi offered to him again. This is explained by the fact that, according to the alliance treaty, the Zhou Empire paid the Turks 100,000 pieces of silk cloth every year.

In 572 Mughan-khan died. His brother and successor Tobo-khan made peace with the Qi Empire, without breaking with the Zhou Empire. When the latter dared to refuse to pay tribute, one military demonstration of the Turkuts was enough to restore the original situation. The Qi empire, fearing Turkic raids, depleted its treasury by paying tribute for peace. Tobo-khan said: "Only if in the south the two boys [Zhou and Qi] were submissive to us, then we need not fear poverty". [30, vol. I, p. 233].

The alliance with the Qi empire led to the cultural communication of Turkuts with China. Buddhist monks appeared at the Khan's headquarters and converted Tobo-khan to their faith. The Buddhist missionary very naively proved to the Khan the superiority of Buddhism over other faiths by the wealth and power of the Qi Empire, which observed the Buddha's law.

The subsequent defeat of the Qi

In 581, after the Sui Dynasty came to power, the Buddhists had to return to China [240, S. 36-37]. In 576 the Zhou managed to defeat the Qisians and capture Pingyan. The Tsis tried to retake the city but were not successful, and the Tsis emperor, besieged in Yechen, abdicated in favor of the prince Gao Yuan-tszun, who also was captured in 577, before surrendering the city. Despite the defeat, the overthrown dynasty found a vigorous defender in the person of Gao Baoning from Taiyuan [240, S. 31-32]. Before the defeat, in 576, he was appointed commandant of the border fortress Yingzhou in modern Chahar. In a short time, Gao Baoning gained the respect not only of the Chinese, but also of the nomads. After the fall of the dynasty, this circumstance ensured his independent position. Gao Baoning was not an unprincipled political amateur; he possessed the moral qualities that promoted the rebirth of northern China: loyalty to duty, patriotism and unyielding perseverance. He rejected the victor's proposal of honorary surrender and subscribed to the authority of the last Qi, Prince

Gao Shaoyi, who had fled to the Turks. For this deed, Gao Baoning was granted the title of Chancellor (of course, without the opportunity to hold office).

The Turkic khan, evidently fearing the excessive, from his point of view, strengthening of the Bei-Chou, also sided with the defeated dynasty. The alliance was joined also by the general Liu Zhangzi, who rebelled against his emperor and fortified himself in Fangyan [31, p. 17] (near Peking). Gao Baoning immediately mobilized all the forces at his disposal and sided with Gao Shaoyi. However, he was too late. His troops had only just reached the coast of Liaohe when they received the news that Fanyang had been destroyed and that the rebellion had been crushed. Gao Shaoyi returned to the Turks, and Gao Baoning strengthened in his region.

A much more formidable enemy for the Bei-Chou turned out to be the Turku. In 578, Tobo-khan invaded China and defeated the Zhou army by a head. Negotiations begun in 579 were broken off and hostilities continued with complete success for the Turkuts. However, the Chinese ambassador was able to entice Tobo-khan with gifts and in 580 a peace was made whereupon Gao Shaoi was extradited and escorted to Chang'an, the capital of the Zhou state. He died in exile in Sichuan [30, vol. I, p. 234; 240, S. 33].

The year 580 was the apogee of Turkut power. In 581, Tobo-khan died, and in China the Zhou dynasty was overthrown by the worst enemy of Turkuts - fighting general Yang Jian, founder of the Sui dynasty, which completely changed the political situation. Gao Baoning outlived his opponents and remained in Chahar an independent prince, an ally of the Turkic khans [240, S. 44].

## War in the west

While showing activity on the eastern border, Turkuts simultaneously made a campaign to the west. Unfortunately, sources do not give sufficient detail about this extremely important event, but the general course of events can still be outlined.

The western campaign was led by Istemi-Kagan, a younger brother of

Bumyn. Istemi-Kagan had earlier accompanied Bumyn and commanded ten chiefs, apparently tribal [198, p. 38]; most likely, they were the leaders of the Northern Altai tribes of Ugrian origin. Their descendants, now de-jure, are Shorians, Kumandians, Lebedians, and others. It is no coincidence that the name of Istemi Khan is not Turkic, but Ugrian and is the name of an ancestor spirit [225, p. 950 sq.]. The Chinese estimated the number of his troops to be 100 thousand, but this figure reflects not the real number of soldiers, but the rank of the commander, in this case the highest, which corresponds to his title, "bagadur-jabgu" 22.

His campaign Istemi began later than in 552, because the Abars were still an independent tribe that year, who sent gifts for Bumyn's funeral 23, and, apparently, after the decisive defeat of Juan-Juan, which occurred in the fall of 553. The most probable date of the campaign was the spring of 554, when the Juan-Juan was finished, and the steppes were covered with grass, which was decisive for the cavalry.

Judging by the speed of movement the Turks did not meet strong resistance. In 555 their army reached the "Western Sea". By which is meant not the Caspian, but the Aral Sea, as Ferdowsi indicates the following borders of the Istemi domains: "from Chin [China] to the bank of Jeyhun [Amu Darya] and to Gulzariun [Syr Darya] across the Chach [Tashkent]" [210, VI, p. 310]. [210, VI, p. 310].

On the basis of this quotation, we can quite accurately draw the border of 555: it went north from Tashkent, then crossed the Syr Darya at the turn to the north and in the latitudinal direction went to the lower reaches of the Amu Darya and the southern shore of the Aral Sea. Sogdiana and Bukhara at that time were subordinated to the Ephtalites, whom the conquerors confronted 24. Thus, in a year and a half the Turks subjugated all of central Kazakhstan, Semirech 25 and Khorezm 26.

But further on it was more difficult. On the northern shores of the Aral Sea Turkuts encountered resistance from the Huni (Hionites) 27, Var 28 and

Ogors 29 tribes. Only by 558 these tribes had been defeated and the Turkits marched to the Volga, chasing away those who refused to submit. These were fragments of the Var and Huni tribes, about 20,000 men [66, p. 374; 5, p.24], who then merged into a single nation, the Avars 30.

The Turkuts did not cross the Volga and limited themselves to subjugating the Ural steppes. That was the end of the western campaign of Istemi. What was achieved in four years set a number of new political tasks for the Kaganate.

The emergence of a single power that embraced the entire Asian steppe was a factor of great importance for the diplomacy of China, Byzantium and Iran.

22 Bagadur is a Mongolian word, entered in Turkic already in VI century. Yabgu - deputy of Hagan [see: 50, p.24].

23 Chavannes mistakenly suggested that Istemi accompanied his elder brother on his march to the west [198, p. 219], but in Chavanne's time the ethnonym apar was not yet discovered and was read together with the second ethnonym apurim as arag-apurim or parpurums [111, p. 65; 267, S. 429], and Radlov compared this ethnic group with the Tele tribe fufolo. The Turkish scholar Bahaeddin Öqel's article "Kötürç yasıtlarinen "Apurim lari ve "Fulin" problem" solved the question. Bellten IX. No. 33 (Journal of the Turkish Historical Society), where he proved that Apurim was none other than Rum, i.e., Byzantium. Thanks to these and other studies it became possible to specify the time of the western campaign, which in turn removes Chavannes' hypothesis about parallel existence of two branches of the Turkic people, western and eastern. Istemi went to conquer the west as djabgu (yabgu) of his nephew Mugan-khan, and the mentioning in the "Great inscription of Kül-Tegin" both brothers as ancestors of eastern Turks excludes the existence in antiquity of two branches of this people. The division occurred only in the 7th century under the circumstances which will be discussed below.

24 This fact is noted only in the "Ganmu". [See: 77].

25 The tribes of the Chu group, Dulu and Nushibi, who lived there, had the same customs as Türkuts, and differed little in their language [198, p. 47].

26 Among the subordinated to Türkürkiyut khan were mentioned Kholiats [112, p. 381], who are identified with Khvali of the Russian annals and thus



with Khorezmian [161, p. 95].

27 Chionites - descendants of Sarmato-Alanian tribes, inhabitants of the "swampy settlements" discovered by S.P.Tolstov in the lower reaches of Syr Darya [see: 51, p. 134].

28 Var, or yap, are neighbors of Chionites, a tribe of Ugrian group [see: 169, p. 160].

29 The Ogors, or Ugars, were ancestors of the Hungarians; they lived in the 6th century in Bashkiria and on the steppes between the Volga and the Urals [see: 115, pp. 96-97]. Rubruk reports that the population of Bashkiria preserved its language, which was understandable for the Hungarians even in the 13th century [138, p. 122 and 211].

30 Theophylact Simokatta specifically warns the reader that these "pseudo-Avars" should by no means be confused with the "true Avars", i.e., the Avars living in Central Asia. This problem caused a long polemic [see: 7, pp. 64-65].

The political situation in the Black Sea region in the late 50s of the 6th Century was very complicated and tense, mainly due to the subtle and far-sighted policy of Byzantium. The area of the lower reaches of the Dnieper and Don was occupied by the Bulgarian people Kuturgurs. Their kin, the Uturgurs, lived in the Kuban. Byzantium, suffering from the raids of the Kuturgurs in Thrace, encouraged the Kuturgurs to take military action against them with gifts and embassies. The dexterous policy of Justinian brought both these kindred tribes almost to mutual extermination [5, p. 22]. To the east of the Kuturgurs, in the Kumy region of Dagestan, there lived a tribe of Sabirs. Sabirs actively participated in the Byzantine-Persian war, first on the side of Iran, then against it. In 552 they conquered Agania, but as early as in 554 were defeated by Persians [239, t. 9, p. 328]. On the bank of Kuban River lived Alans, faithful allies of Byzantium. Through them Greeks for the first time received the news about the appearance of a new barbarian nation, the Avars.

### The Avars in the Black Sea coast

The position of the Avars, fleeing from the Turku invasion, at first sight seemed hopeless: behind them stood a much stronger enemy, before them were strong, numerous and rich nations, used to war and able to win. The Avars were poor fugitives, bereft of both their herds and their homeland.

How and why they not only survived but were victorious can only be answered by scrutinizing the political situation of the time.

The first task of the Avars was to break away from the enemy. They succeeded to do it only because at that time in Central Asia the Aftalits became active and distracted Istemi, who said: "Avars are not birds, that, flying in the air, to escape Turkic swords, they are not fish, to dive into the water and disappear in the depths of the sea abyss, they wander on the surface of the earth. When I will finish with the Hephthalites, I will attack the Avars, and they will not escape my forces". [112, c. 328].

Istemi started active actions against Ephthalites only in 561, when Khosrai Anushirvan made peace with Justinian and was able to turn his attention to the east. The final peace in Central Asia was made in 571, and only then were the Turkites able to turn west again, but the Avars took advantage of the respite so successfully that they became unreachable for Istemi-khan. Having broken away from the Turkuts, the Avars began to look for allies. They asked the Alanian leader Sarosius 31 to facilitate their rapprochement with Byzantium. Sarosius took on the Avars and helped their ambassador sneak into Lazika, from where he was transported to Constantinople, where he was received with distrust and disfavor. However, Justinian sent a reciprocal embassy with Valentine the swordsman at the head. Valentine brought gifts to the Avars and offered to start actions against the enemies of the empire, the main one at that time was Iran. The alliance was concluded (558). But instead of attacking the enemies of the Byzantine Empire, the Avars attacked its allies.

Their first victim was the Sabirs, who mistook the new nation "Var" for the true Asiatic Avars (Abar), who defeated them heavily in the middle of the 5th century. This misunderstanding caused panic among the Sabeans and decided the Avars' victory. Thus, proved fatal a small linguistic mistake. The Sabirs were followed by the Uturgurs, also loyal allies of the empire, as well as the Zals who lived on the left bank of the lower Don. Then the Avars, having crossed the Don, attacked the Ants and subjected this people to total depredation.

Just as the Avars were supported by Alans in the Caucasus for some time, in the Black Sea coast this role fell to the share of Kuturgurs. Although the

sources do not contain a direct indication to the conclusion of the alliance between Avars and Kuturgurs, but all course of events and indirect data allow to assume, that such alliance took place.

31 Г. B. Vernadsky suggests that it is not a name, but a title "Sar-i-os", i.e. "the head of Os" (Pers.) [284, p. 194].

From 551 to 558 Kuturgurs do not dare to approach borders of the Byzantium empire. The reason for this is well known: the eastern frontier of the Kuturgurs was threatened by the Uturgurs thanks to subtle Byzantine diplomacy, while the western frontier was threatened by the numerous Ante tribes which inhabited the entire forest-steppe strip north of the Black Sea steppes. Menander wrote that the Avars "made war with the Uturgurs," and followed that by raids they devastated the lands of the Antes. "The rulers of Antes were brought into distress and lost their hopes". [112, c. 324].

Unfortunately, Menander does not report what hopes the Antes lost, and in general his story has so much reticence that it requires a critical revision of his report about the results of the Avar-Byzantine negotiations. After Valentin's embassy the Avars smashed the Byzantine supporters - Sabirs, Uturgurs and Antes. Since these actions were contrary to the interests of Byzantium, it is natural that Iran benefited.

Indeed, it is quite impossible to suppose that the Avars turned only to Constantinople and, even if negotiations were successful, ignored Ctesiphon. If you accept the assumption that there was an alliance between the Avars and the Persians, it becomes clear why the Avars were forced to leave the Caucasus. Byzantine's staunch ally, the Alanian prince Sarosius, could not support the Avars under such circumstances, and the Avars, despite their victories, could not stay in the vicinity of the Caucasus, especially since a formidable force of Turkuts stood in their rear.

But Zaberghan of Kuturgur, the enemy of the Greeks, naturally, was glad to get in the person of Avars new allies that he needed for the fight against Byzantium and its friends, the Uturgurs and Antes. Indeed, as soon as the Avars, having defeated the Uturgurs, secured the Kuturgurs from the rear, Zaberghan undertook a new campaign to the Balkans and reached the walls of Constantinople. One time, immediately after the Avar embassy, the

Turkic (July, 558) came to Constantinople and met with a good reception. Probably, it played a role in cooling of the Greek-Avarian relations.

Thus, in 558 the Persian diplomacy was victorious, creating a strong new enemy for Byzantium and moving its dangerous neighbors from its borders to the Balkans. As will be seen later, the Persian-Avarian alliance lasted until 628 and almost undid the Byzantine Empire.

The Ants tried to reach an agreement with the Avars by sending to them an ambassador, Mezamir, whose immediate goal was to ransom prisoners. Mezamir, when he presented himself to the Avars, behaved so arrogantly and impudently that he was killed by the Avars, despite his position as an ambassador. Having dispossessed the ambassador, the Avars proceeded to rob and enslave the Ants.

Having secured the support of such a vigorous ally, the Kuturgurian prince Zabergan decided that no one else was threatening him from the east, and, having made an alliance with the Sklavins, he invaded Byzantium. In March 559 he crossed the Danube on ice and divided his army into three detachments: one moved through Macedonia to Hellas and penetrated to Thermopylae, the second threatened the fortifications that protected Chersonesos of Thrace, and the third, at the head of which he himself stood, broke through the breach in the Long Wall, damaged by the earthquake and by criminal negligence not restored.

Panic broke out in Constantinople: from the gloom of oblivion was extracted the aged war chief Velizarius, who drove the barbarians away from the capital. Other detachments were also repulsed. Nevertheless, Zabergan camped in Thrace and continued his plundering until he was paid a handsome sum and promised the same "gifts" as the Uturgurs. Only then did the Kuturgurs leave Thrace.

Justinian immediately took up with the chief of the Uturgurs, Sandilkh, whereupon the Uturgurs attacked one of the detachments of Zabergan, returning from Thrace, destroyed it, and Sandilkh returned the spoils he had repelled to the Greeks. The war that followed weakened both peoples as much as it benefited the Avars.

In 565 Justin II stopped paying tribute to the Avars, claiming the empire was powerful enough. But the power of the Avars was growing. In 565 they were already smashing Thuringia and were successfully fighting the Frankish king Sigzebert. In 567 the Avars, in alliance with the Lombards, destroyed the Gepids, who were assisted by Byzantium, and seized the valley of the Tissa.

A year later, after the departure of the Lombards for Italy, the Avars became the masters of all Pannonia and the menace of Central Europe. Their force consisted of auxiliary armies of Antes, Western Slavs and Kuturgurs, who were completely subordinated to the Avar Khan. The first Avar Khan Bayan, threatening Byzantium in 568 cynically stated: "I will send such people to the Roman land, whose loss would not be sensible for me, even if they perished completely", and sent 10 thousand Kuturgurs to raid [112, p. 391].

The described events reveal springs of international politics of the 60th years of the VI century. The Avars, as opponents of Byzantium, needed an alliance with Iran, while the Turkuts, enemies of the Avars, could be on friendly terms with Byzantium.

However, the balance of power was complicated by the presence of the Hephthalite state, hostile to both the Turkic Turks and Iran. Therefore Istemi-khan's alliance with Khosroi Anushirvan was more attractive than negotiations with Justin [210, VI, p. 310]. Around 560 the Persians and Turkmens made an offensive alliance: the former to "avenge the death of Shah Peroz" [277, p. 161]. [277, p. 161- 162], the second - to seize the blossoming cities of Sogdiana.

The Ephtalites were forced to fight on two fronts and even on three, as the Ephtalite king Mihirakula, possessing Kashmir and Punjab, fought persistently with Indians [154, p. 94-95].

### Defeat of the Ephtalites

The eastern policy of Sassanid Iran is insufficiently studied, but even fragmentary information preserved in the sources convinces the researcher that it was flexible and prescient. For example, the strengthening of North-Western China was immediately noticed in Iran, and as early as 555 a

Persian embassy arrived in Chang'an. At the same time, an embassy was sent to the Turkuts (it arrived earlier, of course), which established an alliance, sealed by the marriage of the Shah and Istemi Khan's daughter 32.

The Ephtalites, having lost their allies – the Jujans, became worried and also tried to establish relations with China in 553, but Yuvin Tai, the ruler of Western Wei empire, was in alliance with Turkits, and the Ephtalite intentions, evidently, didn't meet sympathy. There was no unanimity among the Hephthalites themselves. The grandee Catulf kept King Gatfar from war, but, insulted by the king, betrayed his fellow tribesmen and fled to the Shah of Persia [112, p.328, 372].

Active hostilities began in 560, after they were provoked by Gatfar. Being worried about the relations between the kagan and the shah, he decided to do everything to prevent this marriage that was contracted after the defeat of Ephtalites, i.e. after 569, but the Turks' son Hormizd IV inherited the throne in 579, and was deposed on February, 6, 590 having already a young son [153, p. 34; 123, p. 88]. 32

Ferdowsi believes that Already Chavannes rejected such a late date [198, p. 229], but according to Tabari's version, the marriage and the alliance were made a year before the war against Ephtalites, which began, according to Chinese information, in 555. This date coincides with the beginning of Istemi western campaign, and Hormizd's age ceases to be doubtful: at the time of his death, he was 36, and his son was 16-18 years old [see: 251, S.187; 278, p. 161-162]. The embassy is also mentioned by Belazuri and Ibn Khordadbeg, but their description is extremely distorted and implausible [see: 203, p. 380].

The Turkic people were not able to make such a rapprochement possible. The Türkiyut embassy, moving through Sogd, was cut off, except for one rider, who managed to escape and bring sad news to Istemi-khan [210, VI, p. 310]. War became inevitable. Istemi mobilized all available troops, and among them were Khotans [ibid., p. 312], who before that were subjects of the Ephtalites. Khosroi Anushirvan outstripped his ally and defeated Hephthalites for the first time in 562. The war did not end with this defeat [112, p. 377] 33.

The first victim of Turkic vanguard was Chach (Tashkent), where Turkuts massacred [210, VI, p. 312]. Then the main Turkic forces, having crossed the r. Chirchik [237, p. 302], joined their vanguard in Maymurg 34. The Ephtalites concentrated near Bukhara [210, p. 312], but Gathfar, not daring to take a fight on the plain, where superior Turkic contingent had advantages, retreated to mountains and took a fight near Neseef (Karshi) [239, t. X, p. 63].

According to Ferdowsi, the Sogdians cried a lot when the Turks attacked, but did not want to fight for the Ephtalites. The battle near Neseefa lasted eight days and ended with complete defeat of the Ephtalites (565). The survivors, realizing that the time of independence for Hephthalite power had passed, deposed Gathfar and chose the Chaganian prince Fagonish as king, obliging him to submit to Khosroi Anushirvan, who, in their opinion, could oppose the Turks.

Khosroi, having received at the same time a letter from Hagan and an offer of submission from Fagonish, responded to neither. Contrary to the opinion of the nobles, who were afraid to open the western border, he moved to Khorasan at the head of all his troops [210, VI, p. 316 sq.].

When the common enemy was broken, the allies turned out to be enemies. The differences between the Kaghanate and Iran, which had hitherto been muted by the need to deal with the common enemy, were now revealed and proved to be very deep and even irreconcilable. We shall deal with them in the next chapter, but for now let us return to the Ephtalites. For the time being, let us return to the hegemony in Central Asia by force of arms and cruelty, the Hephthalites were not popular in the countries they conquered.

The 6th century was the time of economic and cultural boom. The cities grew rich and the agriculture, crafts and trade flourished. At that time, the Sogdians were experienced and skillful merchants-intermediaries. They established regular communication between China and the Mediterranean, using the ancient caravan routes. But the trade was hindered by the brigandage of the Jurajans and the constant wars that the Ephtalites waged with their neighbors. The Türkiyuts, who united the steppe and Sogdiana,

opened up excellent opportunities for trade, and the Sogdian merchants became loyal subjects of the Türkiyut khans. It was advantageous for the Turkuts to have such loyal subjects. Thus, Central Asia became an integral part of the Kaganate. The situation cut off the Ephtalites from revenge and forced them to close themselves off in their mountains, where their remnants have survived to this day [51, p. 129-140].

33 Vivien de Saint Martin (Les Huns blancs p. 77) gives a close date - 563.  
34 Maymurg - principdom in Samarkand region, S. of Zarevshan [14, p. 95].

## Chapter Four

### Silk and the Caravan Route Caravan trade

Having defeated Ephtalites and North-Chinese kingdoms, Turkic Turks achieved not only political, but also economic power, because in their hands appeared a great caravan road, connecting the West and the East. This route began in Chang'ani and ran along the slopes of Nanshan through numerous valleys irrigated by streams flowing down from the ridge. This part of the route was easy, but was followed by an extremely difficult passage through the desert to the oasis of Hami and from there into the Liukchun Depression to Turfan. Both these oases and some neighboring ones comprised the independent principality of Gaochan, populated by descendants of Chinese settlers, who had completely settled in their new homeland.

From Gaochan, the caravan route bifurcated. One branch ran along the southern slopes of the Tien Shan through Karashar, Kuchu and Aksu, then past Issyk-Kul to the Chu valley and from there through the Talas valley to Isfara. The other branch, the northern one, began also in Gaochan and went through southern Dzungaria through Urumchi, Manas, Kurkaraus and the Irene-Shabirgan mountains to the Ili River Valley, and from there to the south, to Central Asia. In addition, there was another difficult road through the passes in the Tien Shan from Karashar through the Yulduz valley to the Ili valley, but it was rarely used [198, p. 5] 35.



The caravans rested in Central Asia. One of the largest staging posts was Paikend. From there the road went through Khorasan to Ray and Hamadan and through Byzantine fortress Nesvia (Nizib) to Syria and Constantinople. From the Chinese Sea to the borders of Persia it was 150 days, and from there to Nisib on the Roman border another 80 days [68, p. 542].

Trade was very lively and profitable, but it served not the masses who lived in a subsistence economy, but the social elite, who needed luxury goods. The Chinese received the famous eyebrow dye from Iran for their empresses, which was very expensive. Babylonian carpets were also a rare commodity. Finally, authentic and artificial Syrian gems, corals and pearls from the Red Sea, fabrics from Syria and Egypt, drugs from Asia Minor were imported into China [203, p. 129]. But the most important subject of trade was silk, which began to arrive in Europe from the time of Augustus. The Byzantium demand for silk was enormous, because in addition to the needs of the court and the aristocracy silk was used as currency in relations with the barbarians, in particular for the hiring of auxiliary troops.

Justinian's pretensions to world power forced the Byzantine government to maintain diplomatic relations with all the states of Europe up to and including the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. The Byzantine government needed vast quantities of silk for gifts, bribes, and hiring soldiers. For silk Byzantium received allies, mercenaries, goods and slaves from Europe. Thanks to the trade Justinian could conduct the world policy which placed almost the whole Mediterranean region under his authority. Silk in Byzantium was valued on a par with gold and precious stones [37, p. 99]. The artery that supplied Byzantium with this most precious commodity ran through northern Iran, and the Sasanian government did not at all let go of its control over the caravan trade. Keeping a very large portion of the raw silk for processing, the Iranians, the Persians were always able to sell their products to Western countries at prices they set themselves [203, p. 128; 124, p. 187]. 35

The first European to travel the third road from Kyrgyzstan to Karashar was V. I. Roborovsky in 1893. [see: 149].

The Persians, seeking to weaken the Byzantine Empire, naturally sought not to increase its turnover, but to increase the price of silk in order to siphon more money from Byzantium and weaken it politically and militarily. Increased trade was not in Iran's interest: whatever the price, Byzantium had to compensate for the resale of silk in Europe, which helped it develop its military capacity. Therefore, the Persians carefully regulated the silk trade, not only setting high prices, but also limiting the amount of silk exported to the West [68, p. 543].

Naturally, Byzantium could not put up with this situation, because by overpaying for silk it contributed to the strengthening of Iran, which was hostile to it. In the intervals between the wars, the Constantinople court was saddened to see how much gold was leaving the country for the enemies of the state [Ibid., p. 544]. But attempts to free itself from economic dependence were unsuccessful. Around 531 Justinian tried to negotiate with Ethiopia for African merchants to take on the role of intermediaries and establish the transportation of silk across the Indian Ocean [124, p. 198], but the Persians were so influential in Indian ports that the Ethiopians failed to take away their monopoly on silk purchases, and a peace concluded in 532 restored the usual order of trade [68, p. 546].

A new war with Iran, which broke out in 540, forced Justinian to lower silk prices by a special edict, but it was impossible to force Persian merchants to sell silk at these prices. As a result, the silk weaving mills in Syria went bankrupt because of the lack of raw material [68, p. 548; 125, pp. 90-94]. In 570 Khosroi Anushirvan, having captured Yemen, definitively closed for the Byzantines the access to the east through the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. At the same time a new partner, the Turkic Turkic Kaganate, entered the historical game. It was noted above that the Turkuts were pumping out huge amounts of silk from China in the form of tribute. Despite the fact that the Khans hung silk around their yurts, they could not use all the silk they received.

After the defeat of the Ephtalites, the Sogdians became subjects of the Turkic khan. They have long been famous in the East and West as dexterous intermediaries and merchants. Replacing the Ephtalite masters with Turkut masters only benefited them because they gained unhindered and non-threatening access to the inner regions of Asia. It was in the

interests of the Sogdians to expand the silk trade as much as possible, just as it was in the interests of the Turkuts to find a market for their silk surplus.

### The Sogdian Maniach

Thus, the Sogdian merchants rightly saw the defeat of the Ephthalites as the beginning of their prosperity. Indeed, the road to China was open and safe, the Turkmens did not know where to put their looted or tribute silk, and the intermediary could make a fortune as never before. The task was only to deliver the silk to Byzantium, but that had to be arranged with the Shah of Persia. Istemi-khan, for his part, went along with the wishes of his new subjects, especially as it coincided with the interests of his entourage. Therefore, the khan willingly agreed to the Sogdian-Manikh's proposal to send him to Khosroi Anushirvan as a plenipotentiary ambassador with the charge of obtaining permission for the transportation through Iran of the silk stocks accumulated by the enterprising Sogdians. The ambassador even suggested that the Persian king take part in the trade, i.e. buy silk himself and resell it to the West [112, pp. 371-372]. The Sogdians would lose a little on the price of goods, but would gain much more by increasing the turnover.

Of course, the Persian government could not accept the deal, because if it sent all the silk to Byzantium, in a few years there would be on the Euphrates an army so numerous that all the forces of Iran would not be enough to defeat it. The low purchasing power of Iran's population made it impossible to use silk domestically. By buying silk, the Shah of Persia was only losing gold, just as he needed it for his eastern policy, just as the Byzantine emperor needed silk for his western policy.

Khosroi found a way out of the predicament into which he had been put by the allied khan. On the advice of the ephthalite Catulfus, the silk brought in was paid for and burned in the presence of the ambassadors. This showed the Sogdians that the Persians would not tolerate a change in the existing situation [124, p. 209]. The Sogdians immediately complained to the khan, who decided to settle the conflict. He sent a new embassy to Iran consisting of Turkuts. But this embassy, too, achieved nothing. To make matters worse, most of the Turkut ambassadors died of some disease; only three or four returned.

Meanwhile, Maniach managed to persuade Khan to break his alliance with Iran and enter into relations with Byzantium. However, transporting silk around the Caspian Sea through the Caucasus was expensive and unsafe: Ugrians, who fled before Turkut spearmen, could easily loot and cut out the merchant caravan. The road through Iran was shorter and easier. Therefore, Istemi-khan went to settle the dispute with weapons. He claimed that the ambassadors had been poisoned, and acted as an avenger 36.

Fully aware of the seriousness of the war he was engaged in, the khan hastened to acquire an ally. He sent an embassy to Constantinople headed by the same Maniach, who was tasked to conclude with emperor Justinian not only a trade treaty, but also a military alliance against Iran. Maniach made his way to Constantinople via the Caucasus. He arrived just in time. In 568 the Lombards invaded Italy and Emperor Justinian II prudently gave up his active western policy which had so drained the finances of the empire under Justinian. Moreover, renewal of the war against Persia was inevitable and a powerful alliance was not to be neglected. That is why the emperor received the Turkestan embassy extremely favourably, and in August 568 sent the eastern city commander Zemarchus Cilician along with returning Maniachus to confirm the alliance [112, p. 375]. Istemi-khan lasciviously received the Byzantine ambassador and, as a confirmation of his sincerity, invited him to accompany the army moving towards Iran. Khosroi did not want war. In the valley of the river Talas the Turkic army met the Persian embassy, but the khan demonstratively put Zemarkh on a more honorable place than the Persian ambassadors, and in his presence addressed to the latter with reproaches.

### The Persian ambassadors

36 H. V. Pigulevskaya [125, p. 202-204] interprets these events differently, but, in my opinion, unconvincingly. She believes that "Türks, who were not yet out of a semi-nomadic (? - L.G.) state, were not inclined to wide trade exchange, and only under pressure of their subjects, Sogdians, they agreed that the latter, led by Maniach, sent an embassy to Iran". However, it was the nomadic Turkuts who were able to extract silk from China and supply the Sogdians with it, because without war the Chinese did not give silk in the right quantity. Even if they agreed to sell the silk, neither

Sogdians nor Persians could pay for it at those prices and still get a profit. Precisely because the Turkuts received silk in the form of tribute and booty, they sold it to the Sogdians for nothing, and then the trade became profitable. Then, it is more than difficult to admit the presence of pressure of the subdued on their conquerors; finally, Maniakh was a close associate of Khan, and it is natural to think that he received diplomatic credentials from him, instead of going to explain with the Shahin shah of Iran at his own risk. Menandr's phrase that Istemi Khan allowed Sogdians "to send an embassy by themselves," says only that they took upon themselves to conduct negotiations, hoping to better handle the matter than Turkic begs, not skilled in diplomacy. H. Pigulevskaya believes that Sogdians asked permission to "freely trade silk in the Iranian state", but Menander directly indicates that their request was for silk passage to the west, to Byzantium, even if with the help of Persian treasury. Below N.V. Pigulevskaya suggests that the refusal of the shah to let silk through can be explained by the fear of competition, but there was no free silk trade in the 6th century, so there could not be any competition either. One cannot agree with the conclusion: "For Iran the Turks did not represent desirable allies". How can a country waging a tense war on one border not want there to be peace on the other. But the logic of events pushed Turks and Persians to a war equally undesirable for both.

The embassy returned to Iran with the news of war. After that the khan let Zemarkh go and he returned to Constantinople accompanied by Maniakh's son and an authorized ambassador, Turk Turkut Tagma-Tar-khan 37. Mannakh died at that time, but the alliance of Byzantium and the Kaganate outlived its creator and was inherited by the Khazar Khagans, as well as the enmity with Iran, which continued even when the Persian kings were replaced by Arab khalifs.

### The division of the Ephtalite inheritance

The official pretext for the war was the demand of Istemi-khan that the Persians pay him the tribute which used to go to the Ephtalites [251, S. 158]. The refusal was inevitable, and khan hit for sure. The Türkiyut cavalry quickly crossed the Amu Darya and in Dzhurdjan seized "trade cities and ports of the Syrians 38, previously possessed by the Persians" [168 S. 49]. [168, c. 493] 39. However, the lines of the frontier fortifications erected by

the Persians against the Ephtalites as early as the fifth century proved impassable for the Turkuts. The attack stopped, and already in 569 Turkuits returned to Sogdiana [203, p.373].

This was the end of military operations, as Istemi-khan did not want to smash his forehead against the regular and well-trained army of the Shahinshakh. Knowing that Byzantium was about to start a war in Mesopotamia and divert Persian troops there, he decided to negotiate the division of the Ephtalite inheritance for the time being. By the treaty of 571 Khosroi Anushirvan received Sind, Bost, al-Rohaj (Arakhozia), Zabulistan, Tocharistan, Dardistan and Kabulistan. In addition, the hereditary province of eptalite prince Faganish - Chaganian was subordinated to Persians [251, p.156-169]. Türküts got Sogdiana.

The signing of peace was a great success for Khosroi Anushirvan. Secondly, he freed his forces for war in the west where the Armenians rebelled, the Georgians handed over to the Byzantians, the Ethiopians became active in Arabia, and finally, in 572, Byzantine troops marched out and laid siege to Nisib. Having transferred to the west his trained troops, Khosroi quickly achieved a turning point in military actions and already in 573 took Dara [168, pp. 493-495]. As a matter of fact, these successes were due to the forced inaction of Turkic khan: Avars, irreconcilable enemies of Turkuits, conquered steppes from Sava to Don, and Istemi-khan had to transfer his offensive from south to west. Between 567 and 571 the Turkic Turks took over the whole North Caucasus 40 and joined the possessions of the Byzantine Empire near the Bosphorus. It is possible that they sought to continue a new caravan route for their friends and advisors, the Sogdian merchants.

Byzantium, clutched by the Persians and Avars, grasped the alliance with the Khan. In the next years, embassies of Eutyches, Herodion, Paul of Cilicia and Anangastes were sent to Turkites [239, t. X, p. 169]. It seemed that the alliance would be consolidated and a bridge between the East and the West would be built, but events took a different course.

### The war with Byzantium

In 553 Byzantium started its own silk industry [168, p. 493; recent literature

in: 124, p. 204; 110, pp. 47-51]. The larvae of silkworms were delivered

37 Tarkhan - a title given to a person exempted from paying taxes.

38 Merchants-intermediaries in the silk trade with China were called Sirs [49, p. 23].

39 M. E. Massa believes that these ports were in Djurdjan, which was lost to the Persians in 484, seized by the Turkic Turks about 568. [110, c. 50].

40 The Türküts subdued the B-n-j-r (Bulgars), Belenjer and Khazars, reached Derbent and, having examined the fortifications, returned to the steppes [Tabari 1, 2, pp. 895-896; Ibn-al-Asir, pp. 9-10 - quoted from: 7, pp. 137-138].

Reached to Constantinople, according to Procopius of Caesarea, by two Christian monks, and according to Theophanes of Byzantium, by a certain Persian, in a hollowed-out staff. N.V. Pigulevskaya believes that the larvae were brought from Sogdian cities [124, p. 205-206], and according to M.E.Masson, who refers to Theophanes' story, they were delivered from Djurdjan [110, p. 50]. Silk production developed in Constantinople, Beirut, Tyre and Antioch. By the end of the 6th century the question of silk importation was no longer of the same importance for Byzantium [Ibid., p. 49] and the hopes of the Turkites to obtain the silk monopoly were in vain. The existence of competition could not but force them to lower the prices of silk products, which significantly reduced the benefits of trade.

In addition to the competition in the silk trade, the Avar issue contributed to the cooling of Byzantine-Turkic relations. According to the treaty of 568 Byzantium undertook not to conclude a peace and alliance with the Avars, so when the Avar embassy came to Yustin with a request for peace and permission to occupy Pannonia, it was refused [168, p. 493]. In spite of this, the Avars established themselves in Pannonia and defeated the Byzantines, which forced them to make peace in 570 [112, p. 400].

These two circumstances were enough for a political regrouping to take place. The Turkeyuts on the Volga were among the newly subdued tribes, subdued only because the Turkic heavy cavalry had no equal opponent so far. The out-of-the-way strengthening of Avars created a center of attraction for all enemies of Türkiyut Kaganate, first of all for Kuturgurs, and was a threat for Türkiyuts themselves. But while Avars were engaged in a war

with Gepids and Greeks, and the result of war was unclear, Turkuts could disregard a weak opponent. But when Avars created a powerful state, which secured itself a peace with Byzantium, Turkuts couldn't help worrying. Indeed, Valentin's embassy in 576 met with a completely different reception than the previous one.

The ambassador was received by Turksanf, one of the eight appanage princes (at that time the Turkic state consisted of eight appanage princes, subordinated to the great khan). When Valentine greeted him, he replied, "Aren't you the same Romans who use ten languages and one deceit?" After uttering these words, he gagged his mouth with ten fingers, then continued: "As I now have ten fingers in my mouth, so you Romans have many tongues. With one you deceive me; with another you deceive my slaves the varchonites... Your king will be punished in due time for making friendly speeches with me, and for making a treaty with the Barhonites (he meant the Avars. - L.G.), my slaves who have fled from their masters. But the Varchonites, as subjects of the Turks (Turkuts. - L.G.) will come to me when I want... Why do you, Romans, leading my envoys to Byzantium through Caucasus, assuring me that there is no other way for them to go? You do this in order that I, because of the difficulty of this road, refuse to attack the Roman regions. But I know exactly where the river Danaprus is, where the Istre flows, where the Evros flows, and by what routes did my Varhonite slaves enter the Roman Empire. Your power is not unknown to me. The whole earth worships me, beginning from the first rays of the sun and ending with the limits of the west. Look, miserable people, on the Alanian peoples and the Utigur tribes, who were inspired with immense courage, who relied on their strength and dared to stand against undefeated Turkic people, but they were deceived in their hopes. Now they are in subjection to us, became our slaves". [112, c. 418-420].

This text explains us the turn of Turkic foreign policy, but the motivation of Turksanf in Menandr's account is obviously incomplete. The Turksanf in his awareness could not have been unaware that the peace which Byzantium made with the Avars was forced by the heavy defeats suffered by the Greeks on the Danube. It would have been very easy for Valentine to find an excuse, but instead he just refers to his position as ambassador which guarantees him safety, to his old friendship with Turksanffe's father, etc. In short, he behaves as if he were guilty. The Arab historians Tabari and



Saalibi explain this. In their descriptions of Khosroi Anu-

The chronicles of Khosroi Anu- Shirvan's wars, they inform that having returned from the campaign against Byzantines, Khosroi turned against Khazars (i.e. Western Türkuts. -L.G.) and settled accounts with them [279, p. 614; 278, II, p. 161] 41. This Saalibi account is not dated, but put after the capture of Antioch; Tabari presents the events out of chronological sequence. Before 575 Byzantine embassies received a very warm welcome from the Turks, but in 575 an armistice was concluded between Iran and Byzantium, and Khosroi could settle accounts with the allies of his enemies with the troops he had freed. In the period from 570 to 576 the Turks were busy with the subjugation of the Northern Caucasus. With their help the Byzantine protégé Guaram Bagratid obtained the throne in Kartli (575) [196, p. 216] 42. Hoping for Byzantium, they did not expect a stab in the back.

In such a situation Turksanff's irritation becomes understandable. The consequences of the breach had an immediate effect. In 576 Turkuns, supported by Uturgurs, took Bosphorus, "and by this it appeared that Turks [Turkuns] are struggling against Romans" [112. [112, c. 423]. The Turkic assault did not stop there. They invaded Crimea but, apparently, were pushed out of there. Then Turkuts tried to reach Byzantium through the western Caucasus [169, p. 160-161; 56, p. 72] but encountered resistance from the kingdom of Egrisi, the northern border of which ran along the Caucasian Mountain range. They failed to penetrate into Transcaucasia, and in the early 80s the Turkuts had to retreat, having killed many prisoners. They were able to gain a strong foothold only on the plains of the North Caucasus and in the foothills of Dagestan up to Derbent. Turkic threat to Byzantium passed away.

## China and the Caravan Route

Now let's see what the source of silk, China, extracted from the trade, so profitable for the Turkic Turks, Sogdians, Persians and Greeks. Hard-working Chinese peasants produced this valuable commodity, but hardly used it themselves, for taxes were high and collected steadily. The luxury goods received for silk went mainly to satisfy the whims of the court and did not play a significant role in the domestic market. Moreover, they were

worth considerably less than the silk exported, and the trade was unprofitable for China as a whole. But the Bei-Chou government could not, or rather did not dare to change the situation, because its political successes depended entirely on the behavior of Turkic khans; Bei-Qi and Togon were defeated only thanks to the Turkic help, and, moreover, South China was to be conquered, which was impossible without a secure rear. At the same time, it should be remembered that the Bei Zhou dynasty was not of Chinese, but of Xianbi origin and relied on the octatized Xianbi nobility that turned into large landowners of Northern China. Needless to say, the descendants of the Tobas "kosoplets" had forgotten their language and manners, for the native Chinese they remained hateful barbarians, descendants of enslavers. The foreign policy of the Bei Zhou government was no less odious to the Chinese population. The alliance with the Turkuts, which was so highly paid, showed that the dynasty had not broken with its steppe traditions. In addition, the persecution of Taoism and Buddhism pushed these influential organizations into the ranks of the opposition. Finally, the accession of the multitudinous Bei Qi kingdom strengthened the Chinese element in the empire. But the so-called Guanlong faction played a decisive role in the events that were brewing. At the cruel time of the fall of the Wei dynasty, many wealthy Chinese families from Shandong migrated to Yuwun Tai in Shaanxi and settled in the Guanzhong and Lunxi regions. Here they allied with local Chinese officials and landlords and on the basis of neighborhood, of ethnic unity and kinship formed a grouping named after the Guan (zhong) and Lun (si) - Guanlong. At the last Bei-Chou monarchs the leader of the Guanluns was the commander Yang Jian, grandfather of the young emperor (on his mother's side) [175, p. 178].

41 It is likely that Khosroi took towns and ports in Jurjan from the Turks, as this area later belongs to Iran.

42 M. Brosset questions this date because the situation described is similar to that of 589. It seems to me that the error here is not in the chronology, but in the description of the event. The larger and later overshadowed the smaller, earlier one. In other words, I believe the chronicler that Guaram became king in 575.

The Yang Jian was "angry, untrustworthy and, not liking books, acted cunningly; he could make himself afraid, and his orders were executed

quickly and accurately, he was engaged in state affairs from morning till evening without any signs of fatigue" [207, p. 25]. [207, p. 25]. His political sympathies and antipathies were determined by the environment on which he relied. He took measures to alleviate social contradictions within the country, while in relation to his neighbors he preferred to aggravate relations.

In 563, Yang Jian attempted to change the policy by bringing the Turks into conflict. He justified it in the following way: "The Turkic warriors disregard both rewards and punishments, have little respect for their leaders, and, for the most part, are disorderly. It is not difficult to manage them. Thus, it is evident that it is in vain to speak much of their power. They only want to induce the government to reward their envoys generously in the hope of getting a harsh retribution when they themselves go there. The court receives false reports, and the military leaders at the first hearing of them are betrayed by fear. Enemies on the surface appear to be courageous, but in fact it is easy to manage with them. At present, in my opinion, all the former and the latter envoys should be beheaded". [30, vol. I, p. 232].

However, these words do not reflect the real reality, but the program of the "Guanlong group". The Türkiyut heavy cavalry was not only more maneuverable than the Chinese infantry, but, unlike the early nomads, acquired the ability to act in a frontal attack. The clashes of 578-579 prove the military advantage of the Turkuts with all its obviousness. In his polemic with the supporters of the steppe orientation, Yang Jian tries to present them as bribe takers, which hardly corresponds to the truth. But his most important point is his suggestion that no gifts, i.e. silk fabrics, should be given to the Turkuts. This measure would indeed undermine the economic power of the Turkic khans, and at the same time would reduce the taxation in China itself.

Thus, the "Guanlong group" proposed the economic and political isolation of the country. The proposed program was rejected by the emperor, but Yang Jian knew how to wait, and time was working for him. The demands of the Turkites and the strength of the Chinese increased in proportion to the weakening of the Syanbi element loyal to the Bei-Chou dynasty. In the spring of 581, the Chinese nobles raised the banner of rebellion against the government and the masses joined them. Yang Jian used the moment to

force the last emperor, a boy of nine, to abdicate the throne in his favor. The unfortunate child was soon assassinated and all members of the Yuwian clan were executed, after which the rebellion subsided. The new dynasty was named Sui.

Despite the fact that the "Chinese" party easily won a complete victory, Yang Jian did not dare to drive the numerous Svanbi nobles to despair. By a special edict he confirmed that "all ranks and titles of the previous dynasty still remained in force" [175, p. 180]. The Svanbi nobility survived, and this determined the further history of both China itself and the Middle Asia. Yang Jian could not go to civil war, which undoubtedly would have arisen without this edict, as he was faced with two important political tasks: the conquest of southern China, which was easily completed in 589, and the defeat of the Turkuts. The latter turned out to be much more difficult than the leaders of the Guanlong faction had anticipated.

## Chapter Five

### Inside the Kaganate Power and People

According to the Chinese information, the proclamation of the khan was furnished with a complicated ceremony: the dignitaries sat him on a felt and carried him around nine times, along the sun, to the shouts of greeting from those present. Then they put him on a horse, tied his throat with a silk cloth and, quickly loosening the noose, asked him how many years he wished to be Khan. In the history of the Turkuts there is no indication that the answers to these questions played any part in determining the term of reign; most probably the custom had survived as a rudiment from the time when the Khan was an elected tribal chief. The succession to the throne followed a complex system, which will be described separately.

The first person in the state after the khan was the yabgu. As a matter of fact, the yabgu was a vice-king, and members of the reigning clan were most often appointed to this position. For example, under Ilkhan Bumyn his brother Istemi had the rank of yabgu. At the same time, the yabgu was not an heir to the throne; the heir was called "tegin" regardless of his position. The title "shad" belonged to princes of blood who had fiefs in their administration, for example, Simo, later khan, could not become a glad

because of suspicion that he was illegitimate [30, vol. I, p. 260].

The ranks of lesser importance received persons who did not belong to the Ashin clan, but all ranks were hereditary [Ibid, p. 299; 234, vol. III, p. 333; 240, S. 9, 498]. We may assume that Turkic-Turkic society was aristocratic. However, let us refrain from premature conclusions. Along with free people and the nobility, Turkut society also knew slaves from among the prisoners of war. They were mainly women. Istemi-khan in 569 gave a captive from Kyrgyz people to Zemarch [112, p.379]; female prisoners from China were taken out by thousands during successful raids; so, in 619 Chulo-khan after taking Binchjou "took away all women and girls in the city", and the trapping in Atrpatakan (628) was remembered in the Middle East [30, vol. I, p.246; 77a, p.128]. Finally, because of the quarrel during the prisoner exchange Uigu-shad lost his throne [30, vol. I, p. 287-288]. Thus, it should be recognized that Turkuts knew about slavery.

But here a question arises: how could slaves be used in nomadic economy? A slave, if he is not crippled, could always run away on his master's horse, and the expenses on him would not be repaid. Obviously, the condition of the slave was not difficult, and indeed there is a text that testifies to this. In 486 Shabolio-khan was asked to recognize himself as a vassal of the House of Sui. Shabolio asked: "What does the word vassal mean? He was answered, "In the kingdom of Sui, vassal means the same as in our country the word slave. Khan replied, "I have the good fortune to be a slave of the son of Heaven," and expressed his joy with a gift for the ambassador. The above quote begs the question: what is the joy of being someone's slave? Obviously, Shabolio Khan had something else in mind when he learned that he was henceforth the "qui" of the Chinese emperor. Do we adequately translate the word "qui" as slave, even though it undoubtedly reflects a certain dependence? It is no coincidence that the Chinese considered the equivalent of the word "qui" not "nu" but "tch'in", which N. Y. Bichurin translates as "vassal" and St. Julien as "sujet". [234, vol. III, p. 497]-subject. Fortunately, some texts of Orchon inscriptions give us the opportunity to clarify the meaning of "qui" and bring clarity to the problem. The "Great inscription" to Kül-teginu says: "...tabgach bunka baglik uri oglyn kul bolty, silik kyz oglyn kyung bolty...". [104, p. 29], i.e. "...the people of tab

They [Türks] became 'kulas' 43 with their sturdy male progeny and 'kulins' with their pure female progeny". But at that time the Türks lived in the steppes south of Gobi by their life, enjoyed many privileges comparable to the Chinese population of the Tang empire; participating in the campaigns, they made brilliant service careers and brought to their yurts full of spoils. There was only a fact of subordination to a foreign-tribal sovereign without any social oppression.

Take another text:

"[Elteres-Kagan]... put in order and taught a people that lost its el [see below] and its kagan, a people that became slaves and became slaves, abolished the Turkic establishments; he put in order and instructed by the establishments of my ancestors" [104, pp. 37-38]. Again, it emphasizes only submission to a foreigner, but not deprivation of personal freedom. In the third case, when the death of Barsbeg is described and it is stated that "his people became slaves and slaves" [ibid. [ibid., p. 39], there was a simple conquest, not the sale of captives in a slave market 44.

Thus, the main content of the concept of "qui" is subordination to someone else. This connotation remained till the 19th century, but as the later Turks incorporated into the system of Muslim culture with its typical slave-trade, the term "qui" began to be applied also to the sold slaves, which did not exist in earlier times. The use of the kul in the 6th-8th centuries was quite different: the Turkuts brought them to their lands, settled them in certain places and taxed them 45.

43 From S. E. Malov: "slaves" and "slaves". [104, c. 37].

44 C. P. Tolstov, interpreting "qui" as "slave", draws a conclusion, that "slave-owner ideology comes up to the full swing here" [Mackensen 2002. [160, c. 45]. On the basis of the texts analyzed, one cannot agree with this. The other texts, on which he relies, are read differently by S.E. Malov [106, p.16 (text), p.20 (translation)].

45 This system is described by S. P. Tolstov contrary to the statement he made [160, pp. 46-47].

End of the introductory fragment.