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## STUDIES AND ARTICLES

### GENEALOGICAL MYTHS AND PROBLEMS ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF ANCIENT TURKIC PEOPLES

*B.E. Kumekov\**, *A.B. Sagandykova\*\**, *T.E. Mukhazhanova\*\*\**,  
*G.E. Sabdenova\*\*\*\**, *R.S. Myrzabekova\*\*\*\*\**

#### **Abstract**

In the article the main problem of origin of ancient Turkic peoples which is actual and disputable at present day is investigated. This research is carried out on the basis of genealogical myths from ancient sources. The history of origin of the certain ethnos is always connected with myths and legends. Based on similar texts, researchers reveal information, necessary for the research, which is not recorded in historical treatises. The first Turkic folklore monument recorded by Chinese historiographic tradition (in writing) in the 6th century and reflected an early stage of Turkic ethnogenesis are genealogical legends of the tribe Ashina origin and its appeal to the dominating group of the Turkic tribal union appearance.

**Key words:** *Ashina, ethnic processes, empire, "Turkic", myth*

According to Klyashtorny S.G. to the middle of the 6th century there is a stage of ethnic history based on the conclusion of the political union of relative ancient Turkic tribes, the head of which was the family created by Turkic-Ashiny. Then the ethnic term Turkic turns into the general politonym, designating all steppe population subjected to creators of the First Turkic khaganate (551-630).

Also as Klyashtorny S.G. (2006) notes, formation of the territorial political unions into khaganates (Turkic, Uigur); the karluk, tyurgeshy, oguz, Kyrgyz, kimak and kipchak states, predetermined the main territorial location displaced to the West side and weakening of ethnic processes in the Middle Asia where consolidation of the Mongolian tribes results in superiority at this territory followed.

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In the developed “empire” it should be noted that the material and spiritual culture carries on the traditions (relative language, writing, customs, the uniform socio-political nomenclature, etc.) as well as the processes connected with political and territorial claims and trade cultural ties introduces the changes in ethnocultural processes.

In researches of Gumilev L.N. (1967) reasoning is given, that not all tribal families entering the conglomerate of Turkic community were Turkic peoples by origin.

After a number of the events connected with disintegration of the Turkic khaganate, the name “Turkic” does not disappear. The etymological “Turkic” value extended to considerable territories of the Asian continent further is modified in the name of a language family. So many people never entering a great khaganate of the 6-7th centuries (for example, the Turkmen, the Osians, the Azerbaijanians, the Balkars and the Chuvashs, etc.) became “Turkic peoples” (Tulebayev, 2011). But even that widespread linguistic interpretation which is nowadays given to the term “Turkic” has a certain basis under itself: ancient Turkic peoples most brightly realized those beginnings of steppe culture which ripened in hunnes time and were in the condition of anabiosis in hard times of the III-Vth centuries. Complex forms of social being and social institutes of the Turkic: ale, specific ladder system, hierarchy of ranks, military discipline, diplomacy, and also existence of accurately fulfilled outlook opposed to ideological systems of neighboring countries (Gumilev, 1967).

Klyashtorny, S.G. (2006) in his judgements expresses quite different opinion, having characterized the unity of “The Turkic language type”; it reveals ethnopsychological imperatives which at the subconscious level appear in everyday life of most of the Turkic people. Speaking about the unity of Turkic language type Trubetskoy N.S. does not support the hypothesis, that on the basis of similarity of language, ethnogenetic culturological system there is a formation of uniform “Turkic” outlook. So formation of national consciousness developed on the basis of the ethnic stereotypes which led to the mythologized and epizirized ideology.

Coming back to the described above book by Gumilev L.N. (1967), where the historical moments connected with the family of Ashins are given. Gumilev L.N. ranks this family to related at that time syanbiy and hunns principalities which talked in the ancient Mongol language. The word “Ashina” meant “wolf”. In Turkic a wolf is ‘bury’ or ‘kaskyr’, and in Mongolian ‘shonochino’. “A” is a prefix of respect in Chinese. Therefore, “Ashina” means “a noble wolf”. The word which did not undergo chinification remained in the Arab record of this name Shane” (Gumilev, 1967).

In the book of Bichurin N.Ya. (1950), there is an interesting fact, that the western orientalist without having apprehended beliefs of the Chinese history at all, compared the house (family) of Tyugu, in the Mongolian name of Dulga, in a conformable combination tyugu with Turkic peoples. That led to acceptance of the family of Dugle which came from the Hunns’ house, to the Turkic origin.

Bichurin N.Ya. (1950) specifies: “ancestors of the tukyu House inhabited from the western sea to the west and one made the ‘aimak’. It is separate branch of the House to Hunn, by the pro-name Ashina. Subsequently this family was broken by one of the next possessors and absolutely exterminated. There was one ten-year-old boy. The warriors, seeing his early childhood, regreted to kill him: so, having cut off his hands and legs, they threw him into the grassy lake. The wolf began to feed him with meat. The possessor, having heard that the boy is still living, sent people again to kill him. The sent, having seen

the boy beside the wolf, wanted to kill it too. At this time, according to the Chinese legends, this wolf appeared in the country to the east from the western sea, in the mountains lying from Gaochan on the northwest. In mountains there is a cave, and in the cave there is a plain, overgrown with dense grass. From all four parts of the cave the mountains lie. Here the wolf hid and gave birth to ten sons who married and all had children. Subsequently each family made the isolated family of them. Among them there was Ashina, the person with great abilities, and he was recognized as the sovereign: that is why over gate of the residence a banner with the wolf head was exposed – in reminiscence of the origin” (Bichurin, 1950).

Proceeding from the legend, it is possible to assume that the family Ashina because of conflicts of intertribal families, was forced to go to other lands.

In reflections of Gumilev L.N. (1967), the next lines are given: “The foothills of the Mongolian Altai where fugitives got, were inhabited by the tribes coming from hunns and speaking Turkic languages. The combatants of the prince Ashina merged with these natives and gave them the name “Turkic”, or “Tyurkyut”.

However, again there is a question who were hunns actually?

And further reasonings are given, that: “whatever origin there were those “five hundred families” which united under the subname Ashina, between themselves they spoke Mongolian until peripetias of military success did not throw out them from China to the Altai... It must be assumed that to the middle of the 6th century members of the family Ashina and their satellites were absolutely made Turkic and kept traces of Mongol speaking only in titulature which was brought by them. The population turned out so full that in hundred years, by 546, they represented that integrity which it is accepted to call as ancient Turkic nationality or tyurkyuts. And the Turkic environment at that time had already managed to extend far to the west from the Altai, to the countries where the Guses, the Kangles or the Pechenegs, the ancient Bulgarians and the Hunns lived (Gumilev, 1967).

Bartold V.V. reports that there are not enough data to understand the main point what people during the period of early VI century were called Turks and how this name extended to other people. Radlov V.V. shows that Turks of the 6-8th centuries belonged to the people Oguz. The Oguz, or Turks were divided into several nationalities (tyoles, tardush in the East, tyurgesh in the West), some unions who began to be called further as Karluks, Uyghurs and Kyrgyz are also mentioned, but there are no proofs that these people had already called themselves as Turks. Bartold V.V. assumes that the word Turk was acquired by the Arabs to those people who had similar language as those Turks with whom they dealt in the 7th and 8th centuries. In the West Turks were called neither Pechenegs, nor Cumans, and such word was used to designate only the seldzhuk people, and then the Osman Empire, originated from the people of oguz (Bartold, 1968).

Bichurin N.Ya. (1950) points that data on existence of ancient tribes are very doubtful. There is a mixture of historic facts with national legends. In one of multiple legends, data from where there could be a Turkic and Mongolian family provided:

“Iafetov’s son Türk is believed to be the forefather of the tribes inhabiting the Middle Asia from the Caspian Sea to the Korean Bay: but this legend is apparently accepted for the purpose to stretch a family tree of the Houses reigning till Noy. In the seventh generation from Türk two twins were born: Tatar and Mongol for whom their father them Illi-khan divided Tyurkistan: the first got the East half, and the second – the Western half.

And it, apparently, is fiction to name the beginning of two Houses ruling in the East and the Western Mongolia. In the third generation from the Mongol Oguz-khan, that is the son of Kara-khan, the son of Mongol, the first of grand ancient conquerors in the Central Asia” was born (Bichurin, 1950).

Here, the source from “the history of the Mongols” of the Persian historian Khondemir is given. Where it is told that Kara-khan began the war against his son Oguz-khan because he accepted another religion. Oguz-khan won and within 73 years subdued all the Tyurkistan, and designated the most part of names for the Mongolian tribes. The second source on “The History about Tatars”, Abyul-Kazi-khan writes that Kara-khan began the war against his son Oguz-khan who was hunting at the time, because of disagreement in religious beliefs. After the victory Oguz-khan declares himself the khan and begins war against Tatar-khan who was near the Chinese border. Having won Oguz-khan expanded the borders of his possession lying from Mongolia to the south to India, in the West to the Chinese sea.

Comparing legends with historical data Bichurin points that Oguz-khan that is Mode or Modo-khan who came from the house of the Hunn.

The unclear question is who Tatar-khan was: “Khan of the East Mongols or Yuechzhyy khan? Both of them wandered in contiguity with China; the first one owned the lands lying abroad provinces Chzhi-li; the second one wandered on the lands composing nowadays the northwest corner of the Chinese Empire. But this misunderstanding is explained by the partition of Mongolia into east and western half from which the first is given to Tatar, and the second to Mongol from which the people also received names” (Bichurin, 1950).

Following further, in 92 the Hunns were struck by the Chinese and there was only one generation from the house of Hunns under the patrimonial name Ashina (Dulga) who went to the lands of the Altai and were subordinated by syanbiys, and then zhuzhans. And only in 552 the Dulgan possessor Tumyn, who was released from under the power of the Zhuzhan House declared himself as Ili-khan (Bichurin, 1950).

However, if we refer to the work of Inostrantsev K.A. (1926) “The Hunns and the Guns” where he also gives opinion of the professor Sorbonne Degin who stated Abul-Ghazi’s legends that from the general ancestor Turk originated two twin brothers, khans Tatar and Mongol. Here Degin does not specify the assumption who actually “twin brothers” are, and in the statement of history of East Turks who apparently originated from the northern Hunns he calls these Turkic both Turks, and Mongols.

Providing stories of “the Roman historians”, Degin designates that about the Western Tatars (Hunns) many fables were told who they were and where they came from. “In Tataria they were called Hunns and founded the large state which was destroyed by Chinese. Then they dissipated. They went to the west and subsequently entered the Roman Empire. Others stayed on borders of China and were broken only by Zhu-zhen Tatars ... when one leader by the name Tu-myn became at the head of many hordes and formed the new state. These people were called then Turks. They took control of all Tataria”.

Inostrantsev K.A. (1926) notices that Degin indicates to one certain thing quite right: “The Turkish horde, having received the power, gave the name to all other people, or rather other people knew the Hunns only under the name of Turk as subsequently Chinghiz-khan from the horde of Mongols was the reason that the name Mongol became

the name of almost all Tatars” that means that the winner calling the subordinated people by his name, thereby lets know about his possession.

It is also necessary to note that Inostrantsev K.A. (1926) emphasizes that Degin did not distinguish the people of the Central Asia into races and tribes, but stated only the political facts of history. Also here we will not give opinion of other researchers which are carefully described in the works by Inostrantsev K.A. It is worth noting, as well as a number of the other researchers writing history of the people, their opinions differ concerning belonging to the Hunns (Guns) to the Mongolian or Turkic family. And unfortunately judgements of researchers have subjective character, a number of wrong views and guesses on the matter take place.

According to the second legend given by Bichurin N.Ya. (1950): “ancestors of the tyukyu House come from the sovereign House So living to the north from the Hunns. The elder of the aimak was called Apanbu. There were 70 brothers. The first was called Ichzhini-nishydu, and was born from the wolf. Apanbu with other brothers was silly by nature that’s why his all House was destroyed. Nishydu had supernatural power: he could cause winds and rains. He married two wives one of which as it was told, was the daughter of summer, another – the daughter of winter spirit. The first gave birth to four sons from whom the first turned into Ivis; another reigned between the rivers – Afu and Gyan, under the name Tsigu; the third reigned at the river Chusi; and the last lived at Basychu-sishi mountains. It was the eldest son. On the mountains the family Ananbuy lived. There mostly cold dews were. The eldest son made warmth, and through that rescued all others: that is why by common consent he was appointed as the senior sovereign over themselves under the name Tukyue. It was Nadulu-she. Nadulu had ten wives. All his sons were called according to the house of mothers. Ashina was the son of younger wife. After Nadulu’s death the sons of ten mothers wanted to elect one instead of the father. They came to a big tree and set such a condition among themselves: who jumps up in the tree higher than others, so he will be appointed as the head. Though Ashina was too young, but jumped up very high: that is why brothers recognized him as the sovereign, under the name Akhyan-she” (Bichurin, 1950).

This legend was stated from “The History of the Northern dynasty Wei” (from 386 to 558). Aristov N.A. (2003) also gives the arguments, explaining his ideas of this legend: “... the fourth, eldest son, by the name Nadulushe (No-tou-lou-che), lived in the mountains Basy-chu-si-shi (Tsien-sse-tchou-tche-chi); the horde occurring from the mentioned general Turkic forefather lived in the same mountains; this horde strongly suffered from the cold caused by dews; Nadulushe taught them to extract fire, warmed and impregnated so kept life; the mentioned horde obeyed him being grateful for it, recognized as the head and nominated tou-kioe. His descendant Tumyn was the first sovereign of Turks (tou-kioe) who entered the intercourses with China in the first half of the 6th century (Aristov, 2003).

At last, Basy-chu in translation from Turkic can mean “upper courses of the Chu river”; as shi in Chinese – “stone”, the place where the eldest son settled is a pasture essence lodged at “stone (or rocky) mountains in river courses of the Chu river”. Generally, according to geographical and ethnic data of the legend that Turks-tukyu (more precisely on Iakinfu, “the Dulga house”, i.e. actually khan family) occur from the tribe So living in the north of the Altai and that, after their resettlement to the Altai and reproduction, they were divided into four branches: one was approved on the northern

slope of the Altai, with the name ku ('Ban' or 'Man' meant, apparently, "earth", "country", that subsequently was turned into prefix of collective meaning, as e.g. and in the name the Turkman or the Turkmen), the second branch was based on the Yenisey and the Abakan with the name the Kyrghyz, the third remained to wander in the Altai on the river Chu, and the fourth formed the tribe which accepted the name Turk. This the last, turned known to the Chinese in the second quarter of the 6th century who began the political relations with it and in 536 subjected gaogyuyets in number of 50 t. tilt carts, then put an end to dominion zhuzhany and by 556 owned all Mongolia and the Middle Asia to Hindu Kush and the Black Sea (Aristov, 2003).

Though Aristov N.A. (2003) points that this legend does not give considerable data on Turkic tribes (hunnas, kangles, gaogyuyets), and possibly, it is only mentioning of all Turkic peoples in the north of the Altai and it means only ruling of khan family, the dominating generation which united the separate Turkic families living on the southern slopes of the Altai and gave the name Turkic to their union and tribe that was accepted or received by it.

In compositions by Bartold V.V. (1968) the review of the article provided by Aristov N.A. (2003) is given, where the considerable moments underwent a critical remark about incorrect interpretation of the question "about the initial origin of Turkic peoples and their ancestral homeland". It is specified that it is impossible to define locations of Turkic family coming only from the called rivers and the districts located in the Altai. And also that the empire of hunnas formed the Turkic family, being based only on language similarity and many other analogies.

That again leads us up a blind alley. If referring to works by Klyashtorny S.G. (1994), from the Chinese historical chronicle of Zhou-shu, he says about Tutszyue (Turkic peoples) there is a special tribe syunna (hunna). Localization of tribes is located in mountains to the north of Gaochang that means on the East Tien Shan, to the north of the Tarim basin and the Turfan oasis. And as according to the legend Ashina accepts names on mother, i.e. there is a mixture of tribes of syunnu-ashina to local population of the East Turkistan, here terms 'huo' denoted the settled population speaking in the Iranian and Tokhar languages.

It turns out that the family hunna did not go to the lands of the Altai, and settled down in the East Turkistan, doesn't it?

Let's consider further, Klyashtorny S.G. (1965) gives political events from which follows that: "After disintegration of the Tszin empire in Khesi and Gaochan the dynasty the Early Liang was established. In 376 the Northern China was united by the dynasty Early Tszin for several years, but already in 385 the commander of this dynasty Luy Guang created an independent kingdom in Khesi. Later Liang (385-403) whose protectorate extended to Gaochang and some other oases of the Tarim basin. By the beginning of the 5th century Hunns of Ordos headed by the tribe Helyan took the northern part of Shansi and Pinlyan. Their leader, Helyanbobo, created here the kingdom Sya (407-431) which last sovereign died in fight against the syanbiy tribe tuguhun, and lands were occupied by the vey emperor Tay U-di. The tribe Helyan and the Hunn tribes adjoining it were partially subjected to syanbiy-tabgach, partially ran to the west, to Khesi where in 397-401 the hunn prince Tsyuitsyui Mensyun based a dynasty of the Northern Liang (the territory of Khesi and Gaochang). In 439 Tye U-di took Khesi, but two sons of Mensyun – Ukhoy and Anchzhou – from 10 000 families ran to Shanshan (the region of