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# THE HORSE IN TURKIC ART

by

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The Turks are in the lineage of the ancient Inner-Asian nomadic peoples, such as the Hiung-nu, and appear on the scene of history with the features of horsebreeders.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese could say of the Turks: "Their life is dependent . . . on their horses". In early Turkic texts, in Chinese and Arabian sources the life of the Turkic horse-breeders is described in accents of perennity, valid for the period of late antiquity as well as today in what concerns the nomadic Turkic stems of Inner-Asia who still live from horse-breeding and deliver horses to neighbouring countries. Then, as now, the Turks were seen to throw the noose to catch the wild horse

<sup>1</sup> Hiung-nu customs connected with horses: Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre Orta Asya at cinsleri*; id., *Çin'in şimal koşuları*, pp. 67, 69, 75, 76, 84, 94, 111; id. *Çin târihi*, pp. 17, 59. The Turks used the noose: Gabain, . . . *Chotscho*, ill. 28 B. Turks noose and shoot backwards: Al-Jâhiz, pp. 28-31. Customs of various Turkic horse-breeders: Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre* . . .; id., *Çinin şimal komşuları*, pp. 68, 86. Al-Jâhiz, pp. 10, 11, 29, 331. Kök-Türk and Uygur horses: Liu Mau-Tsai, pp. 452-3. Togan, *Traditions and historical records on the training of horses by the ancient Turks*; id., *Umûmî Türk târihine giriş*, part III, p. 167, notes 330, 331 and part IV, p. 209, note 106; id., *The ethnography of Inner-Asia*, p. 86. Shen horses: N. Togan and notes by Z. V. Togan, *Peygamber çağında Orta Asya*, ps. 6, 41-2, 51-3 and notes, pp. 60-1. Various Turkic and Khorasan horses: Minorsky, *Hudūd al-'ālam*, ps. 99, 100, 116, 119. Gir-tis horses: Bacot, p. 10. Uygur king's horses: Kashgarî, art. *Barsgan*. On the identification of Barsgan: Minorsky, *Hudūd* . . . , p. 116. Hephtalite, Tu-yü-hun, Soghdian horses: Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre*; N. Togan, p. 28, note 6 on Shen horses of Soghd. Identification of Hephtalites and Karluks: Togan, *Eftalitlerin ve Bermekilerin menşei meselesi*. Tu-yü-huns assimilated to Turks: Minorsky, . . . *Marvazi*, p. 99, note 3. Riding games: Kashgarî, arts. *Çöğen*, *çoğannmak*, *bandal*. Modern Turkic horses: I am indebted for most of the information given without reference to Mr. İsa Alptekin of Eastern Turkestan and Turkey and to Mr. 'Abd al-Rahîm Koşmak, once veterinary in Kashgar and now established in the same capacity in Taif. Prof. Togan and Mr. Yund have also kindly helped me not only with their works, but with verbal information and advice, in what concerns Inner-Asian horses and the breeds extant in Turkey. The late General 'Omar Sardâr Han, Ambassador of Afghanistan in India in 1963 has been kind enough to give particulars on the Türkmen *argamak* raised in Afghan territory. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the persons cited above for their generous help without which it would not have been possible to attempt this work.

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or the feral. They herd their horses in the cold and bracing northern climes or on the high plateaux of Inner-Asia, in rich pastures where water is abundant, and where interbreeding with wild species is a common occurrence. They hold races (*özüşmek* in Kashgari), play various riding games (*çevgen, çoğanmak, bandal* in Kashgari). Like other Inner-Asian nomads, in war and hunt, the Turkic riding archers could aim both forward and backward (see Figs. 2 and 12), that deadly shot of the arrow which was illustrated to the ancient world by the Parthians. In late antiquity and in the medieval period, the ancient title of the supreme monarch of the riding peoples of the north, *asvapati* "lord of the horse", was borne by Turkic kings. In royal ceremonies, as well as in religious occasions, races and riding took a ritual signification and the horse acquired a sacred aspect as sacrificial or dedicated object (*idhuk* in Kashgari). Thus the Turkic nomadic groups presented the characteristics of horse-breeding communities. Those Turks, like the Uygurs, who had given up nomadism, nevertheless sent their horses to be bred in suitable surroundings. A summary and far from complete list of horse-breeding Turkic peoples in late antiquity and in the medieval age reaches an impressive size even if the Hephtalites of Pamir who have been related to the Karluks, and the Ku-ku-nor T'u-yü-huns who seem equally Turkic, were not counted: In the north, the Kırğız bred large horses. The Oğuz wandered with their herds as far as the pastures on the banks of the Volga. The Northern Alayondlu, the Alakçin Tatars, the North and East Asian Basmils, the Tukhsi, the Chaghānian Oğuz, the Multan area's Qaiqaniāh Turks, all specialised in dappled *alaca* horses. The Bulaks bred small horses in some unmentioned place. The Ciğils raised horses in Soghd. Various Turkic groups, including Kök-Türks, bred hunters not only in the north but also "south of the desert". The Uygur kagan's horses were pastured in Kashgari's time on the Issık Køl plateau, in Barsgan. The Khalaj or Karluk raised horses on the mountains of Tokharistan. The Bek dynasty's horses were bred at Rustābak. Chaghdal in Farghānah, the ancient land of quality steeds, was called the gate of Turkestan and provided in its markets the Turkic wares amongst which counted as paramount the Turkic horses, and young Turkic slaves who might serve as equerry.

## I. THE HORSE MYTHS

### 1. *The horse genie*

The feeling of wonder which at all times fills the heroic heart of the nomad

at the sight of the horse's epic beauty found interrelated expressions in mythology and in art. It will first be attempted here to look at the horse motif in Turkic art in its mythologic and oracular aspect,<sup>2</sup> beginning with the sum of all myths, that of the astrologic horse genie.<sup>3</sup> The horse genie (Fig. 1) appears in effigy in a Bezeklik Uygur painting, amongst the antropomorphous representations of the cyclic calendar animals. Each cyclic demon is represented as an astral personification, dressed in the wide-sleeved garbs of the Turco-Chinese astral figures, holding a scroll in hand on which the Turkic name is written in Uygur characters. The figures are exactly alike, only differentiated by the zoomorphic mask which they wear on their headgears. It is well known that the cyclic genii were believed to influence those born under their sway. The belief in the action of the *müçel* continued amongst the Turks until the eighteenth century where one finds its mysteries commented in the cosmologic work *Ma'rifatnâmah* of Ibrahim Hakkı. Thanks to the continuity of this tradition, one may supply to the lack of earlier comprehensive data on the various aspects in which the *müçel*'s action was illustrated, as heraldic emblem, or as determinative astrologic influence. In what concerns the horse, an Ottoman manuscript dated 1031 A.H., *Ikhtîârât i-Türkî*, gives a complete portrait of the horse's mythologic aspect: in the horse year the winter is cold and the summer brings abundance. This omen is related to the fact that the horse likes best cold climes and abundant summer pastures. The epic horse figure is said to inaugurate a year of strife and warfare, in certain areas, particularly Turkestan. Those born in the horse year will be in perpetual movement, whether in war, or hunt, or travel. When born in the auspicious first half or the middle of the year, they will become the companion of kings, of a striking appearance, exceptionally valiant and brave, as well as intelligent. If born in the

<sup>2</sup> Omens on horses: *Irak-bitig*, Orkun, vol. II, p. 73 et seq., omens II, V, XI, XVI, XVII, XIX, XXIV, XXXV, XXXVI, XXXIX, XLVII, L, LIII, LVI, "Slim, fast horses": Bang-Gabain, *omen utru kelmek*. Overfed horse, a bad sign: *Irak-bitig*, omen LVI.

<sup>3</sup> Horse genie: Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre . . .*, Kaşgari, art. *yund*, *Müçel*, Turan, *Oniki hayvanlı Türk takvîmi*, pp. 51, 84. İbrâhim Hakkı, fols. 82-5 gives in verse the auguries of the animal cycle. Text of fols. 3, 3 verso of *Ikhtîârât-i Türkî*; "hükemâ itibârınca kaçan at yılı olsa, cenub tarafında ve nevâhî-i Türkistanda harb ve kitâl ve hûnrîzeş çok vaakî olup, kış katı olup bâzı hayvânât helâk ola ve bâzı meyvalar âfet edine lakîn yaz ekinleri eyu ola ve bahâr faslının ekserî günleri burudetle geçe ve bâzı taamların nev'i ziyâde ola. Ekser halkın meyli sefer ve ticâret ve av ve şikâr kılmakda olup . . . Eğer bu yılın evvelinde mevlûd vücûda gelse, yaşı uzun olup pâdişâhlar huzurunda sözü makbûl ola ve hem dâniş, merdâne ve hûb rûy ola. Eğer yıl ortasında vücûda gelse, ulu himmetli olup, dânâ ve dâniş pezîr ola. Ekser evkaat sefer ve hareketi çok kılup ehl-i isrâf ola. Ve eğer yılın âhirinde vücûda gelse, hûnî ve endûh-kîn olup, hiç bir işde sebâtı olmayup lakîn mütemevvil ola."

inauspicious last stretch of the horse year, the equine subject will reflect the *müçel*'s failings: he will be restless, impatient, of a murderous disposition.

## 2. The lord of the horse<sup>4</sup>

Mas'ūdī relates that the second or third greatest king of his age was "the lord of the horse" (ملك الخيل), the greatest of all Turkic kings, the king of the Toghuzghuz. This monarch had more horses than any other king of the world. He resided between China and Khorāsān, in a city called Kushan. Yāqūt also mentions the capital of the Toghuzghuz as Kushān. This place, called Küsen by Kashgarī has been associated with Kucha, the land of the dragon and heavenly horse legends, where good horses were bred. The horse is associated not only with this Turkic king. The Kök-Türks who held riding rites in funerals and in ancestral worship ceremonies, had also a riding rite connected with the royal investiture. After having been raised on the felt carpet by four princes and carried formally around the tent, the king took part in a riding ceremonial. Thus began the horse's career as royal vehicle. The Uygur king Buku also rode formally on the occasion of his return to the Manichean faith.

Both in ancient and in medieval texts the Turkic prince or *alp* (hero)'s horse appears as a daily companion. The Orkun area steles always mention the riding horse (*özlük*) and its coat colour. The charger's bravery was celebrated and a man acquired the title of a hero by being compared to his horse (*at aşar alp*). The steles reveal that one man could own up to six hundred horses. The prince's horses bore the royal *tamga* and were herded within the royal enclosure (*çit*). The royal stallion had golden hoofs (*Irk-bitig*). In the Oğuz epics also the hero and his horse

<sup>4</sup> The lord of the horse (*asvapati*): Beal, vol. I, pp. 10-15. Turkic lord of the horse: Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, vol. I, pp. 143, 160. Identification of Kushān: Minorsky, *Ḥudūd...*, pp. 130, 132, 232. Khvarazmshah "lord of the horse" coins: Rodgers. Turkic Mameluks in India's coins as lord of the horse: Rodgers and Nizami, p. 82. Kök-Türk king's investiture ride: Liu Mau-Tsai, pp. 6-8. Uygur king's ride: Ligeti, p. 255. Uygur augury on princely horses: see note 2. Selçuk ceremonial ride: Lugal, p. 15. Ghaznavid ride after enthronization: comm. by Prof. Bombaci on Mas'ūd's throne, XXVth congress of orientalist. İlkhānid ride after enthronement: Jahn, pp. 137, 140-5. Ottoman ceremonial ride: *Nâimâ*, vol. III, p. 445. Hides of sacrificial horses: Eberhard, *Çinin şimal komşuları*, p. 86, Togan, *Ibn Faqlān*, p. 27. Liu Mau-Tsai, p. 10. Roux, pp. 172-74. On epic heroes horses: İnan. Ottomans interred with horses and horse mausoleum: Yund. Karaca Ahmed's horse interred beside him at Üsküdar: A. Okan, *Istanbul evliyaları*, p. 51.

are tied with bonds of amity which go beyond the ties of brotherhood. Bamsi Beyrek escapes from the enemy citadel and finds in the herd his own horse Boz Aygır who rises on his hind legs and neighs at the sight of his master. Bamsi Beyrek then formally praises the horse and says: *At dimezen sana kartaş direm kartaşumdan yiğ!* (ed. Ergin, p. 37) "I do not call thee horse but brother, O truer than my brother!" The riders greeted each other according to a certain etiquette. The Uygur princes and princesses dismounted from their steeds and knelt at sight of a Buddhist monk. A similar scene seems to be depicted on a Kök-Türk petroglyph showing riders who have dismounted and kneel before a frontally squatting crowned figure thought to be Umay (Fig. 4 shows a fragment of this scene). In the Oğuz epic named after Segrek, the mother of the hero indicates the rules of etiquette in greeting an elder brother:

*Ağ boz atın üzerinden yire ingil,  
El kavşurup ol yiğide selam virgil!*

(ed. Ergin, p. 102)

Alight from the light-coloured greyish horse,  
Cross thy hands (on the breast) and greet that hero!

Ibn Bibi relates that at sight of the eagle on the royal black parasol, the lords dismounted and kissed the ground.

At death, the horse followed his master. In older times the horse wast on the funeral pyre with the dead hero or was interred with him. The horse's tail was cut and mounted on a pole. In the Oğuz epics, if a hero's fate is unknown and it is concluded that he must be dead, his stallion is sacrificed and the tail is mounted on a pole. In funerary ceremonies several horses were sacrificed to the dead hero and the equine hides were mounted on poles around the mausoleum. The practise has existed amongst all Turks since the Kök-Türk period and it was explained to Ibn Fadlān that its purpose was to provide horses for the dead hero in after life.

In the medieval period and thereafter, as in antiquity, the horse is a symbol of royal power. Several Turkic kings, in particular the Khvarazmshahs struck their coins to the equestrian effigy of the ancient *asvapati*. The Indians called the Turkic Mameluks "Asvapati" and their coins bear also the equestrian effigy and related legends (Asvapati, Sri hammira) (Fig. 3). The Oğuz epics depict the kings in the light of the Inner-Asian hunter monarch. After each formal court banquet, the prince and his vassals ride for a hunt: *Bigler hep ava bindi. Ala Tağa ala leşker ava çıkdı.* "The lords all rode to the hunt. The multicoloured hosts hunted on the

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Multicoloured Mountain.” *Kutadgu-bilig* also describes the Kara-hanlı prince as a hunter who disposes of countless herds of horses and whose stables are filled with thoroughbreds. In the Kara-hanlı realm, the highest office was that of the Chief Equerry (*El-başı* in Kashgari). Kashgari devotes many entries to the trappings of royal horses, to the riding ball game of *çevgen* played with a mallet-shaped root from a tree called *bandal*. Kashgari again quotes many verses of what seems to be an epic poem relating the contest between the Turkic world monarch (*azun beği*) Tunga and a mythologic personage called Ödlek who is the personification of time and whose horse is the symbol of time (*Kutadgu-bilig*, couplets 1388-89).

Under the aegis of Islamic culture, the Inner-Asian *asvapati* came to be called with the Islamic Persian term *shahsuvar*, which approximately means also “lord of the horse”.

Ibn Bibi, in *Al-awāmir al-‘Alāiyyah* (Aya Sofya Libr., ms. no. 2985), provides some explanations for the signification of the riding ceremony which took place in the Turkic investiture rites. After having received the allegiance of princes, ‘Alauddin Kayqubād, the Anatolian Selçuk monarch, was invited by the princes to ornate with his imperial *kavkabah* (metal disc mounted on a pole) the unruly black and white dappled horse of time. Therewith, at the auspicious moment indicated by astrologers, started the riding ceremony (fol. 209). In the Kök-Türk riding investiture ceremony also the king’s ride had some connection with time. In fact, the subjects brought the monarch to a state of oracular unconsciousness by half strangling him and asked him: “How long wilt thou be our king?”. The horse was as in *Kutadgu-bilig* the symbol of time, the vehicle on which the events proceeded (art. *binit* in *Tanıklarıyla tarama sözlüğü*), over which the king acquired mastery. Ibn Bibi (fol. 216) compares the king on his horse to the sun in a position of exaltation. The royal horse is a cosmologic steed comparable to the celestial eagle group of stars. The Selçuk king’s ceremonial ride towards the capital city Konya continued for several days, followed by guards and lords on foot, to the sound of fanfare and of drums carried by elephants. The chief lord (*rikābdār*) carried the saddle cover while another dignitary led the spare-horses (*koşun at* in Kashgari) which figured in the ceremonial rides in numbers proportionate to the dignity of the rider.

The royal effigies of the Selçuk period often represent the king enthroned in regalia with the royal horse waiting in attendance. Other effigies represent the king engaged in the sport of hunting felines or fabulous creatures or hawking (Fig. 2). Cavalry charges in which princely

personages take part are also frequently painted in Selçuk period manuscripts as *Waraqah-Gulshāh* of the Topkapı Museum. The histories mention various riding games such as Kashgari's *çöğen* now called *chavgān* in persianised form(?) and the *cirid*.

Similar customs existed in the courts of Turkic princes reigning in non-Turkic lands as in Ghazni or in Egypt under the Mameluks. Prof. Bombaci described the Ghaznavid investiture ride in his communication to the XXVth congress of orientologists. The Ilkhanids had also the same ceremonies. Gazan Han, after a formal inthronization, galloped away, followed by his court and ladies to a formal ride or hunt.

The Ottoman realm founded its power on the horse. In wartime the owners of stables in Anatolia and in European Turkey, some of whom had over five hundred horses, provided a cavalry of two hundred thousand. This was a period in which as the Oğuz epics repeated: "the man afoot had no hope" (*Yayaerin umudu olmaz*, Ergin, p. 33). The horse was an object of reverence equal to the warrior who defended the safety of the country. In *Tuḥfat al-mulūk wa al-salaṭīn* the horse's dignity is stressed by the quotation of various *hadīth* honouring the charger. In particular it is said that the angels circumambulate the charger who defends the Islamic community.

The Ottoman royal ride was a ceremony of importance which took place after the inthronization. The sultan proceeded to the ceremony of the girdling of the sword or returned from it on horseback. The ride which was not on horse-back was taken in a boat. Thus the sultan claimed the title of the king of the two continents and of the two seas (*khakan-i barrain wa bahrain*). In what concerns the horse ride, it was alluded to in metaphors as the taking of possession of the spare-horse of the universal wheel which the sultan had tied to his gate (poem by Nef'î). The steed of the lord of the horse (*shahsuvār*) which generally showed all the auspicious marks or spots attributed to a victorious mount was compared through its spots to a leopard. The latter personified the constellation Leo, the solar vehicle. The *alay* took place on the first auspicious day after the enthronization and started when the sultan appeared on horseback at the central palace gate and was greeted by the fanfares. The sultan rode in state, preceded by the *mehterhane* (band of musicians), the guards on foot, the standards and horse-tail trophies. The spare-horses decorated with formal trappings (*dīvān bisâti*), with honorific saddle-covers made of leopard-skins, embroidered silks and shields, followed the rider, in numbers proportionate to his dignity (thirty-three for the sultan). Poets in the military garb and the leopard skins of the Janissaries



walked with their string instruments in hand, chanting "Türkî" epics. Two of the sultan's turbans were upheld to the crowds aligned on both sides who saluted the royal headgears and prayed loudly for divine guidance for the sovereign. This scene described in histories has been painted in the *Hunarnāmah* by the great painter Osman (Fig. 5). Earlier Ottoman paintings show the royal horses held by grooms, in attendance to the enthroned king, as in Selçuk and Ilkhanid formal representations.

In other paintings the Ottoman sultans were shown in cavalry charges. Hunting continued to be a royal sport, and is even called a royal rite (*Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, fol. 206) (*mulūk ve salâtîn için sayd resm oldu*). The pages of the ms. *Hunarnāmah* as well as other Ottoman manuscripts show many royal representations in which the kings ride with the hounds or hawk on horseback.

The riding games such as the ancient *çöğen* mentioned by Kashgarî and the *cirid* in which javelins are thrown are equally frequently represented in numerous manuscripts describing the sultans' sporting achievements. Horse races were held in the sultan's presence. In horseshows, the riders stood precariously on the saddle of the galloping horses and manipulated a pair of lances (*Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, fols. 163b, and succeeding plates).

Tournaments took place in which the riders and the horses were disguised (*giyim*) into various animals, with the help of masks and of skins and furs. Thus, the ms. *Tuḥfat al-mulūk* includes a painting of a warrior with a horned mask on a horse which is covered with a sheepskin (fol. 165). Another rider with a bovine or sheep mask rides a horse disguised as an elephant (fol. 165v). On fol. 238v, the rider wears a lion mask and the horse is again in the disguise of a sheep.

A portion of Ottoman literature is devoted to the description of royal horses. The historian Vâsif depicted in the year 1219 A.H. the yearly ceremony in which the royal horses left their stables at the Topkapı Palace and proceeded ceremoniously to the spring pastures where they were divested of trappings and roamed in freedom. As the weather became clement, the *Mîr-i ahır* (Chief Equerry) invited the sultan to a kiosk in the pastures and presented to him the best yearlings. The histories describe exactly the horses presented to or presented by the sultans, on various occasions. In most ceremonies, weddings, ambassadorial receptions, the sultans and dignitaries organised rides and races.

Poems were dedicated to the royal horses such as the *Rakhshiyah* of Nef'î, in which one of Murad IV's horses, called Dağlar Delisi (the madman of the mountains), is celebrated in these terms:

*Bir de Dağlar-delisidir ki şitâb ettikce,  
 Bir olur zelzeleden lerze-i kûh u-deryâ,  
 Sarsılır arz u-semâ, sanki ki yamet koparır  
 Böyledir tünd u-şitâb eyledikçe ammâ,  
 Gelse reftâra döner bir sanem-i rânâya,  
 Başlasa cilveye bir tâvûs-i cinândır guyâ.  
 Perçemi sünbül-i Çîn, cebhesi dîbây-i Hitâ,  
 Cilve ettikçe ne dem, olsa perîşân perçem,  
 Pür olur nügeht-i mişkînile girdâb-i havâ.*

(*Rakhshiyah*, cited by Yund)

When Dağlar-delisi races,  
 Mountain and sea are united in tremor,  
 Earth and heaven shake as if Doomsday had come.  
 Thus, its race and gallop.  
 But when it paces, it is an image of grace.  
 In playful mood, it resembles the paradisian peacock.  
 Its locks are a hyacinth-like Chinese designs, its coat is of Cathayan  
 brocade.

Chide not, if the locks fall in disarray,  
 The whirling winds are therefrom scented with musk.

The horse remained the companion of princes and heroes, also in death. Early Turkish conquerors such as Karaca Ahmed (the saint around whose tomb the greatest cemetery of Istanbul was founded) and 'Alauddîn Paşa who first crossed the Dardanelles, were yet interred with their horses. Murad IV's horses marched at his funeral with their saddles disposed in reverse position. Osman II's beloved horse "Sesli Kır" was interred alone in a mausoleum on the grounds of the Üsküdar Palace in 1208 A.H.

It must be noted that the custom of interring horses with their masters continued amongst Turkic peoples until recent times. Radloff notes that in Siberia the dignitaries were buried with stuffed horses (*baydara*).

### 3. The symbolism of equine coat colours<sup>5</sup>

For reasons of colour symbolism, Mao-tun, the Hiung-nu king, disposed his chargers in squadrons of various hues, to face the four cardinal directions (bay or roan horses to the east, red horses to the south, white horses to the west, black horses to the north). In the Kök-Türk period

<sup>5</sup> Horse-coat colours: Mao-tun's chargers: Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre*, Al-Kâshif, fol. 67. *Boz at*: İz, pp. 433, 488. Ottoman horses: Yund. Altaic sacrificial horses: Harva, p. 367.

texts, the coat colour which is most often mentioned is the *ak* (with the *alaca* "dappled" which will be commented separately). According to Kashgarī, *ak* means also "dappled" except in the Oğuz dialect where it means "white". The *ak* horse will be presently considered here in its aspect of a white horse. *Irk-bitig* (Omen 29) puts into evidence the religious character of the *ak* horse: *Ak at karşısın üç bolugta talulapan, aganka, ötügke idmiş*. "In three existences the *ak* horse has sprinkled solitude and prayer." The *ak* horse of this Manichean manuscript may well be connected with Kanthaka who has been represented as a pure white horse in Uygur art (ill. in Haertel). The *ak* horses were chosen for sacrificial purposes (Çırğak inscription, Orkun, vol. III, p. 80). The prince rode *ak* horses:

*Beg yontinaru barmuş*  
*Ak bişi kulunlamuş . . .*

(*Irk-bitig*, omen 7)

The prince went to his horses,  
The *ak* mare has given birth to a foal . . .

In his campaigns, Kül Tegin rode many a *ak* horse and stallion. Other coat colours mentioned amongst princely horses of the Kök-Türk period are *boz* (in Kashgarī, white with red; Kül Tegin and Tonyukuk had such horses), and *yağız* (shiny dark, one of the horses ridden by Kül Tegin).

In the medieval period and thereafter the *kır*, *ablaq*, *kaşka*, *tepel*, *humâyî*, *semend* coats were particularly appreciated. However all these varieties of coats fall in the dappled category and will be commented together with dappled horses.

The ancient Turfan horse figurines are sometimes painted in bright blue. The same particularity may be observed in horse representations of Selçuk and Ottoman book-paintings. At least in what concerns the latter, one may note that the *kök* (celestial, blue) horse is frequently mentioned in texts (Oğuz epics, p. 14, *kök bidevi*, and *Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, fol. 57v., *kök at*). The Eastern Turkestanis designate a gray dappled horse with the term *kök alaca*. Green horses may also be observed in book-paintings. The author of *Tuḥfat al-mulūk* (fol. 55) likens the greenish coat to a fish.

The *al* (red horse) is associated in the Oğuz epics with a golden mountain (*Altun Tağın al aygırı*, ed. Ergin, 1964, p. 96). Kazan rides such a horse.

Again the Oğuz epics seem to indicate that light horse coats are reserved to high personages. The great Han Bayındır (Ergin, p. 41), "the axis of Turkestan", rides a *boz* (according to Kashgarī, white with red

parts) horse. In the Alexander romances of early Anatolian literature the immortal Khiḍr also rides a *boz* horse. On the other hand, the tall Burla Hatun, the daughter of Bayındır, who is also a fierce warrior, rides a black horse. In this connection, one might mention a fact noticed by Anohin: in Altaic custom, light-coloured horses are sacrificed to the heavenly god Ülgen who may only be served by men *kams*. But the subterranean deity Erlik whom women *kams* serve rides a black horse.

Astrologic appurtenances of horses have already been mentioned in the case of the horses of Mao-tun. Similar rules on horse colours are mentioned by the Timurid author Al-Kāshif. The yellow horse is solar, the brown horse is Jovian, the delicate *kır* horse is ruled by the feminine planet Venus, the black horse is Saturnine. The *alaca* is the steed of Mercury whose auspices vary according to circumstances.

#### 4. *The alaca*<sup>6</sup>

Amongst the horse coats with a symbolic character, the *alaca* (dappled) coat comes to the fore, since antiquity. In the fourth century B.C., the Barbarians of the northern forest bred the dappled *Tcheou-you*, compared to a tiger. The Turkic word *alaca* figures in Chinese records apparently since the Han period, as kindly indicated by Prof. Haneda who also stated that *alaca* corresponded to the so-called "heavenly" horses which the Chinese acquired from Central Asia. Prof. Eberhard connects the word *alaca* with a branch of the Altaic and possibly proto-Turkic Tavgaç, and with the Alashan Mountains in Kansu. In late antiquity,

<sup>6</sup> *alaca*: *Tcheou-you*: M. Granet, pp. 107, 115, 364-65, 375. Eberhard, *Çinin şimal komşuları*, pp. 65-6. *Alayontlu*: Bacot, p. 11. Other Turkic *alaca* breeds: Togan, *Traditions ...*; id., *The ethnography ...*, p. 86. The Basmlis in Turfan: Gabain, ... *Chotscho*, pp. 20, 21, note 24. On Turkicization of Khotan: Barthold, art. "Turkestan", *Encycl. Isl.*, 1952 ed. On the Khotanese painting of the dappled horse: Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, caption of object D VII 5. Kurtak: Togan, *Ibn Faḍlān*, p. 145; Evtuhova, various figures, and fig. 31. Madara rock relief: Ögel, p. 261. Uygur rider with cup: Le Coq, *Bilderatlas*, fig. 70. Chinese emperor's "painted horses": Liu Mau-Tsai, p. 427, note 284. Hsüan-tsang's description of T'ong Yabgu: Grousset, pp. 66-90. Sun and crescent pictograms: The citation from Erzeni is after *Tanıklarıyla tarama sözlüğü* (Ankara, 1957), art. "ablak". *Kır at*: Togan, *Traditions ...* (was born from a dragon-stallion). In epic poems: Yund and Inan. Contest between king and fate: Kashgarī, arts. *Ajun*, *Ajunbeği*, *Ödlek*. Remark of Kara-hanlı king: Lugal, pp. 41-5. Varieties of *alacas*: Kashgarī articles *ala* (black and white, الارط, الاشجر), *kır* (*ala*), *böğrül*. (Mr. Koşmak cites the modern Eastern Turkestani expressions: *küllü* (flowery), *çiren* (brown and reddish spots), *kök* (blueish grey dappled horse), *böğrül* (spots on flanks only), *azgan* (rare horse, white fetlocks and white spot on the forehead), *yektaban* (one white fetlock, an unlucky horse), *sür* (big spots, unlucky horse), *çopur* (spots of all colours, rarest of the dappled species.) The dappled horses apparently come in all species.

the *ala* horses were raised by several groups of Turks whose names have been cited above. The Turkic petroglyphs show numerous specimens of horses with a dappled or striped coat pattern. The Basmil attract our particular attention through their relations with Eastern Turkestan where the *alaca* horse has been more elaborately represented in artistic works. The Basmil lived in a snowy region at the north of the Kök-Türks but later settled in the Turfan area and were resident there before the Uygurs. Their king, the Idikut, who was of Ashina parentage held court at Beşbalık. Remarkably, the Astanah horse figurines which have been attributed to this period include a specimen of a horse with *alaca* flanks, of the category called *böğrül* by Kashgarī (Miss Johansen's article, Abb. 9). At about the same time from nearby Khotan, which according to Barthold was already populated by Turks, there comes another representation of a full-fledged *ala* (Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, pl. 42). The rider is of semi-Mongoloid type and wears the nomad's breeches and boots and the short Scythian tunic worn in later times by Turkic *balbals*, by personages in Uygur paintings and by a Kırğız rider (Fig. 2), and was called *kurtak* by the Oğuz Turks. His hair is flowing as the hair of T'ong Yabgu and bound with a scarf, again as reported about T'ong Yabgu and as observed on Uygur effigies of princely worshippers. On his forehead there is a spoked wheel ornament, as the Uygur king's wheel halo, in a book-painting. The Khotanese rider is also haloed. He has the particularity of holding in hand a cup over which a bird is shown in flight. So far, the image follows a common pattern. Prof. von Gabain has kindly indicated a similar composition on an Uygur scroll, showing a rider holding in hand a cup, with a bird hovering over it. The Madera rock relief of Omurtag Han in the Danube Bulgar area also represents a rider with a cup in hand. One might associate all three figures with supernatural personages of royal rank. The *cakravartin* wheel ornament on the rider of the Khotanese painting might confirm this point. The cup is known to be a royal emblem. As it will be commented below, the *alaca* horse was a royal mount. However, the *ala* (black and white dappled, see Kashgarī) coat of the Khotanese horse, its head ornament consisting of a disc and crescent, an emblem fit for *bodhisattvas* or kings in Inner-Asia, lend to the horsefigure also a special dignity. One remembers the equally *ala* horse of Yol tenri, an allegoric figure of *Irk-bitig* who drives ceaselessly day and night and meets man at the outset of life:

*Ala talı yol tenrim,  
En yarın kiçe sürmen.*

*Utru iki aylıĝ kiři oĝlu sokuřmuř, korkmuř.  
“Korkma” timiř, “kut birgeymen”.*

(omen 2)

I am the deity with black and white dappled horse,  
who drives day and night.

The son of man, yet two months old approaches timidly.  
“Fear not” said he, “I grant fortune”.

In Selçuk literature the black and white dappled horse of the wheel (*ablaq-i charkh*), is a metaphoric expression for the march of time, the black and white spots being compared to the even succession of nights and days. It has been noted above that the Anatolian Selçuk king ‘Alauddin Kaykubad was invited to begin the riding ceremony of the investiture rites, and to mount “the dappled horse of the days”. In this context, the Yoltenri of *Irk-bitig*, the restless rider of the black and white dappled horse, seems to be connected with the ancient Turkic deity of time, Öd or Ödlek, who is also described as a rider figure in *Kutadgu-bilig*:

*Anasından toĝup atansa adı,  
Misâfir bulup bindi Ödlek atı,  
Günü bir mangım, tünü bir mangım,  
İletür ölümke, kurutur engem.*

(couplets 1388-1389)

Just born of his mother and given a name,  
Man became errant and rode the steed of Ödlek.  
A step a day and a step a night,  
Forward towards death and the withered mask.

If the rider of the piebald horse on the Khotanese painting is the god of time Öd, the wheel ornament on his forehead would then represent the wheel of fate. Ödlek was equally identified with the moon which is also a measure of time. Kashgarî remarks that the moon and Ödlek proceed together (*Alkınur Ödlek birle ay*, vol. I, p. 41).

It has been noted above that the *ala* was not only the symbol of time but also allegorically the horse of the monarch who had become the master of time. The kings rode often *ala* horses. The Oĝuz epics mention Kayı Inal Han, the prince wearing an ermine coat, who rode a piebald horse (*ala atlı as tonlu Kayı Inal Han*). If, as stated by Kashgarî, the word *ak* means “dappled” rather than “white” or “light coloured”, Kül Tegin and other Kök-Türk princes rode frequently dappled horses. The “painted horses” counted amongst the treasures of Chinese emperors and have been represented in royal quadrigas.

The medieval sources such as the eleventh century Turkish-Arabic dictionary of Kashgarī, the twelfth century treatise on horsemanship by Zangī, the *‘Umdat al-mulūk* of Timur, give many explanations on the varieties of the dappled horse. In general, the dappled horse appears as a mount with certain symbolic significations which may be either auspicious or inauspicious, but with little utilitarian value. Zangī (fols. 63v.-66, 69) establishes a fundamental difference between dappled horses with black spots and those with white spots (*ablaq, abrash, arjal*). The former are good horses, in some instances (frontal white spot and white fetlocks), worthy of kings. The latter are, in certain cases, considered highly auspicious but are nevertheless weak horses. Every white spot, a white mane, blue eyes are in Zangī’s opinion signs of weakness, whatever the auguries may say. In this connection, Kashgarī also notes that the sleek dappled horse (art. *taz*) has weak hoofs and compares the showy *alaca* to a hypocrite: “The (hypocrite) human being’s dapples are concealed, the horse’s dapple is on the coat” (*Kişi alası içtin, yülki alası taştın*, vol. I, p. 91). Zangī however adds (fol. 61v.) that the features which are considered defects in other horses are not defects in Turkic horses. This remark embraces also such features as frontal white spots, white manes, blue eyes, which are mentioned (*Tuhfat al-mulūk* fol. 50, Ashqar-i Sīnī described as a horse from China with yellowish and reddish spots and white mane and tail) in connection with China and the Turks. Prof. Zajaçzkowski in his report to the 1964 meeting of PIAC mentioned amongst the coat colours noted in a Mameluk period Turkish-Arabic dictionary, the term *bulaca* as a variety of *alaca*. In this connection Prof. Togan remarked that Kashgarī describes the *bulak* as a small horse, but the term *bulak* also indicates a horse with a dappled limb (Radloff, *Wörterbuch*).

In the Islamic paintings of the early period, in the Selçuk and Ilkhanid ages, the *alaca* is represented not very differently from the aspect in which it appears in Eastern Turkestan and in Chinese painting, with regular tiger-like spots, or with a dragon-spine-like stripe on the spine. The proportions and features of the Eastern Turkestan poney are still recognizable in the *alaca* representations of the fourteenth century. It is only later that the *alaca* figure will also conform to the norms of taste prevalent in the Near-East.

The *alaca* with the tiger-like regular spots, as seen in the Eastern Turkestani painting, appeared again in the same aspect and character in Near-Eastern Turkish and, in general, in Islamic art. Burak was sometimes represented as an *alaca* with a human head and described as a *khing*



Fig. 1. The horse genie. Linear reproduction of the head of the personification of the horse genie on the Uygur period Bezeklik mural with Turkic inscriptions. After Le Coq, *Buddhistische Späantike*, Atlas, p. 17.





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Fig. 2. Turkic relief in gilded bronze from Uybat, showing a rider on a pony of the large-headed variety, hunting a feline prey. After Kisilev, *Ancient cultures of southern Siberia*, pl. LVII, fig. 3.



Fig 3. "The Lord of the horse". A silver coin representing the Turkic prince of Northern India, Iltutmiş. After Nizami, p. 82, who cites Cunningham: "The form of the saddle, the seat of the horseman, the head armour of the steed, the erect tail, all point to Turki ideals". The inscriptions on such coins include the prince's name and additions *ashkani* or Sri Hammira; Kashgarī (art. *hamir*) notes that this is the Turkic form of *ami* which was also used in India, according to the information given by Prof. Qurashi.



Fig. 4. Fragment of a K k-T rk petroglyph from Kudirg , Eastern Altay, showing three kinds of horses: a large-charger, with "beckem", probably masked, a small-headed thoroughbred, a pony. After Otto-Dorn, ill. 31.

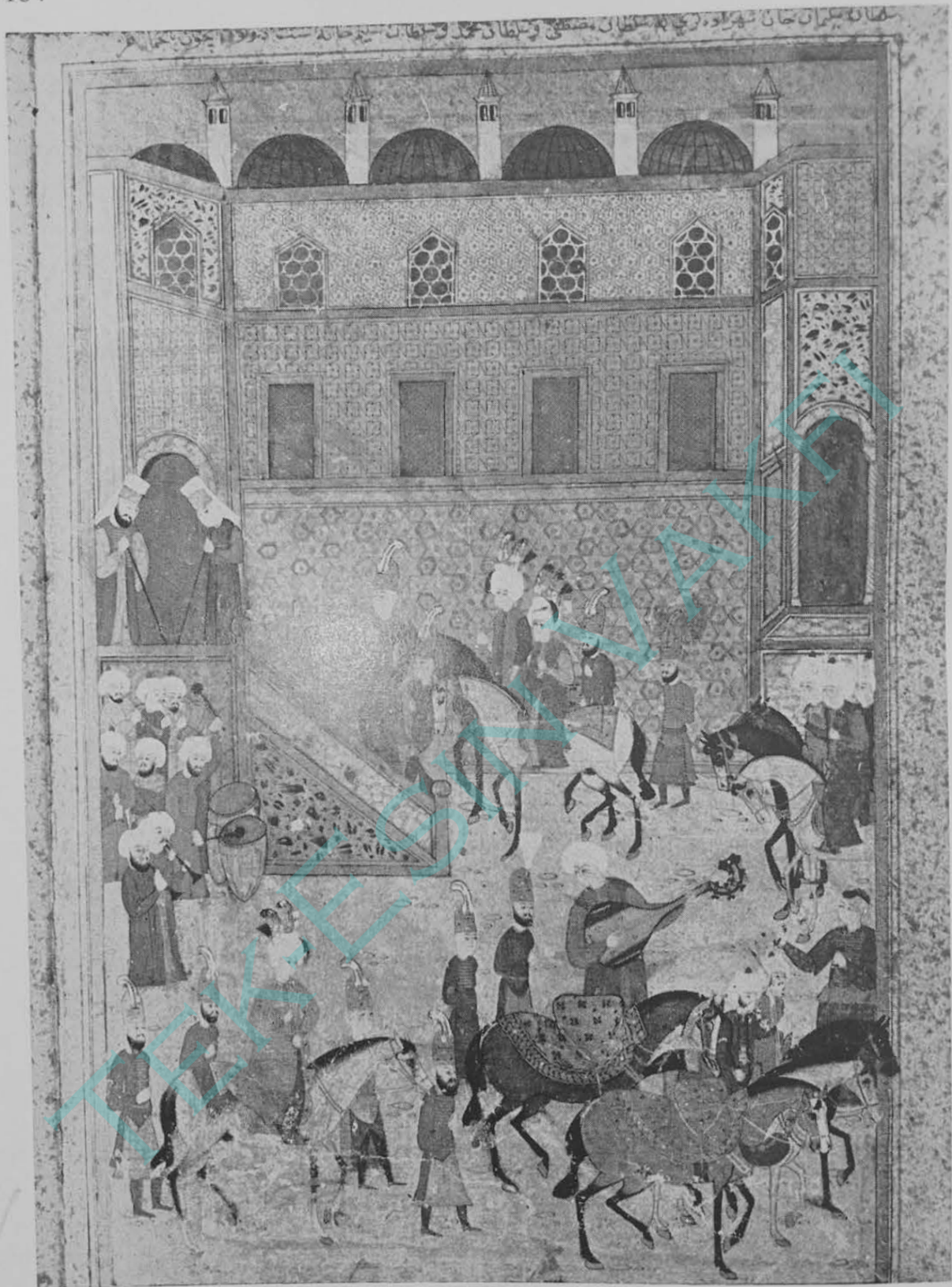
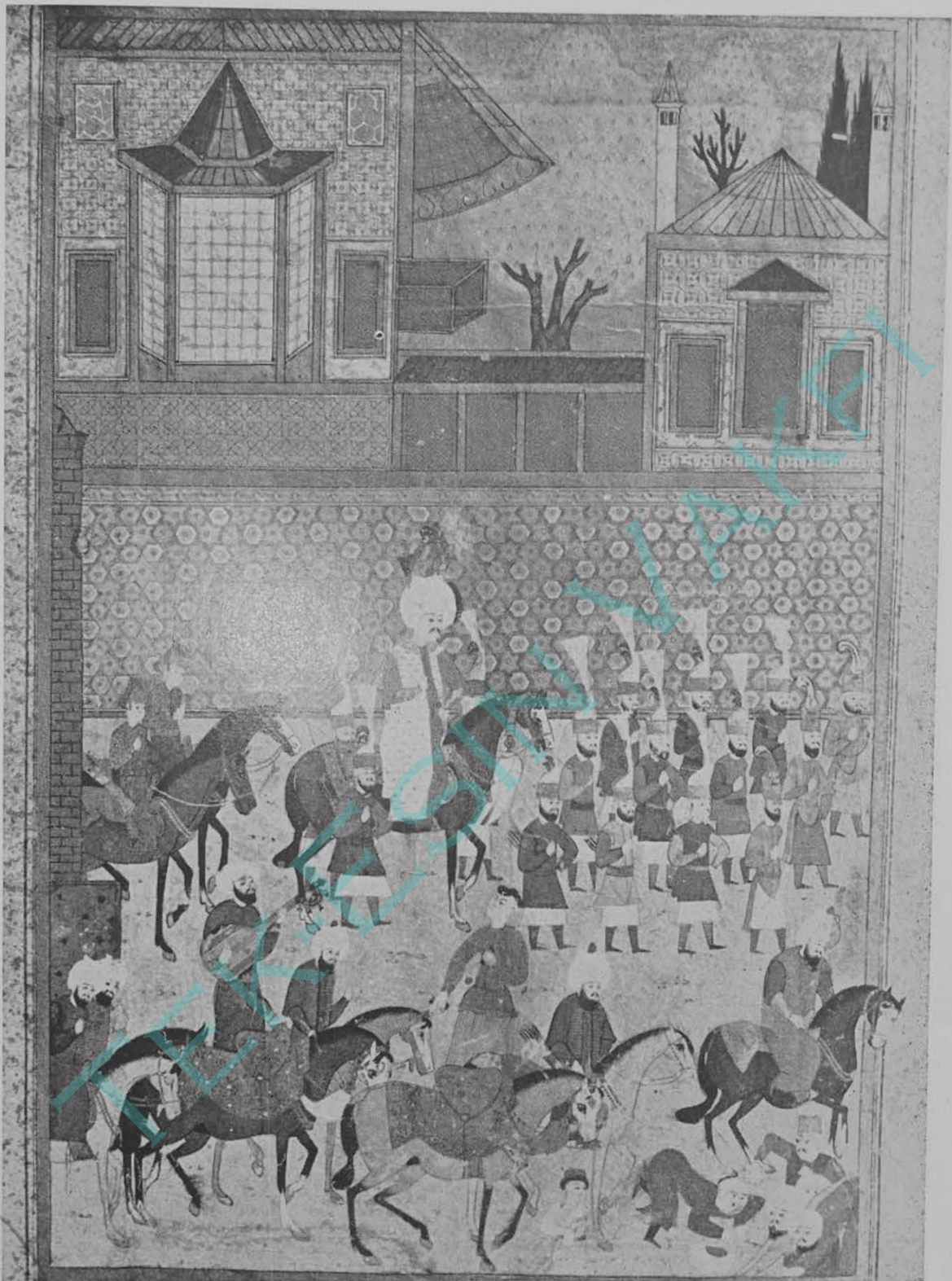


Fig. 5. Ottoman book-painting showing a formal ride of Sultan Suleyman and his three sons, Mustafa, Mehmed, Selim, on the occasion of the three princes' circumcision. The scene is depicted on two folios of the ms. *Hunarnamah* vol. 11, fol. 104. On the middle area of the plate on the left proper, the sultan is seen mounting an *abluq* which is decorated with a necklace and hanging tail-badge. The Solak and Janissary officers surround the riding sultan and the sword and mantle bearing pages follow him on horseback. On the central area of the plate on the right proper, two princes distin-



guished by their honorific feathers, approach a stairway. The *mehterhâne* orchestra is seen performing. The foreground of both plates is constituted by the procession, which includes a riding prince (inferior right corner of plate on right proper), several dignitaries, walking Solak guards wearing the "üsküf", "Türki" singing troubadours with string instruments, tumbling clowns (*tulumcu*), and *yedeks* (honorific unmounted spare horses) with festive saddle covers. The scene is possibly the old palace of Beyazıt built by Mehmed II.



Fig. 6. Ottoman painting showing Süleyman the Magnificent on horseback, dated about 1566. The horse is of the coat called *ablaq*. The *quṭās* hangs from the horse's neck. After Blochet, pl. CLXXIII.

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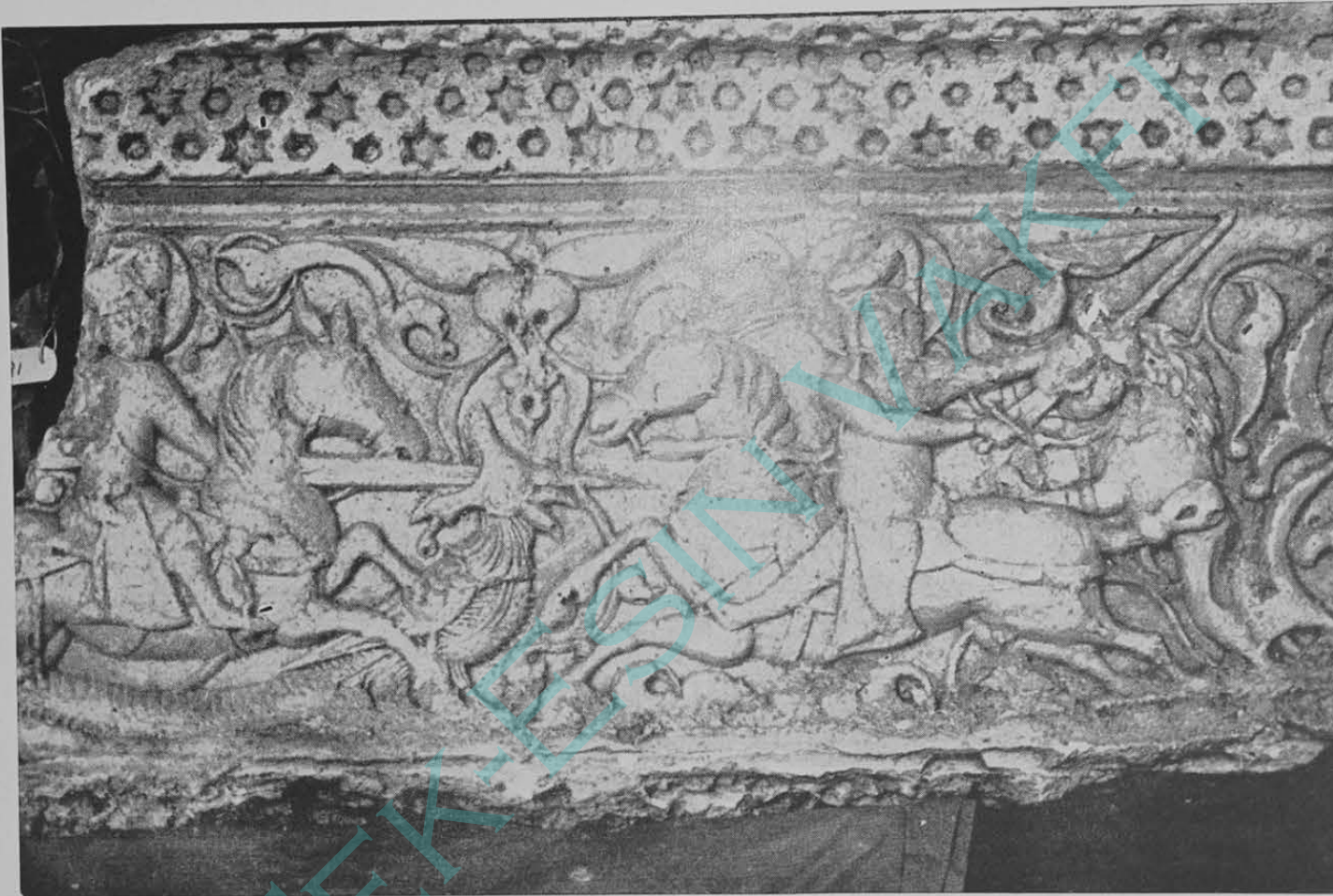


Fig. 7. Anatolian Turkish stucco relief from the palace of the Selçuk king 'Alâuddîn in Konya, showing hunters of lions and dragons. Türk ve İslam Eserleri Museum, İstanbul.



Fig. 8. Fragment of an Uygur mural painting showing a heavenly mansion's courtyard populated by a herd of horses. After Le Coq, *Chotscho*, pl. 19.



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Fig. 9. Uygur painting from Turfan showing a Buddhist monk carried in the air on a pair of winged ponies. After Grünwedel, fig. 640.



Fig. 10. Painted earthen figurine from Tun-huang showing a Turkic warrior. After Artamonov, ill. on p. 194.

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Fig. 11. Uygur painting from Turfan showing a galloping black charger. Völkerkunde-Museum, Berlin.

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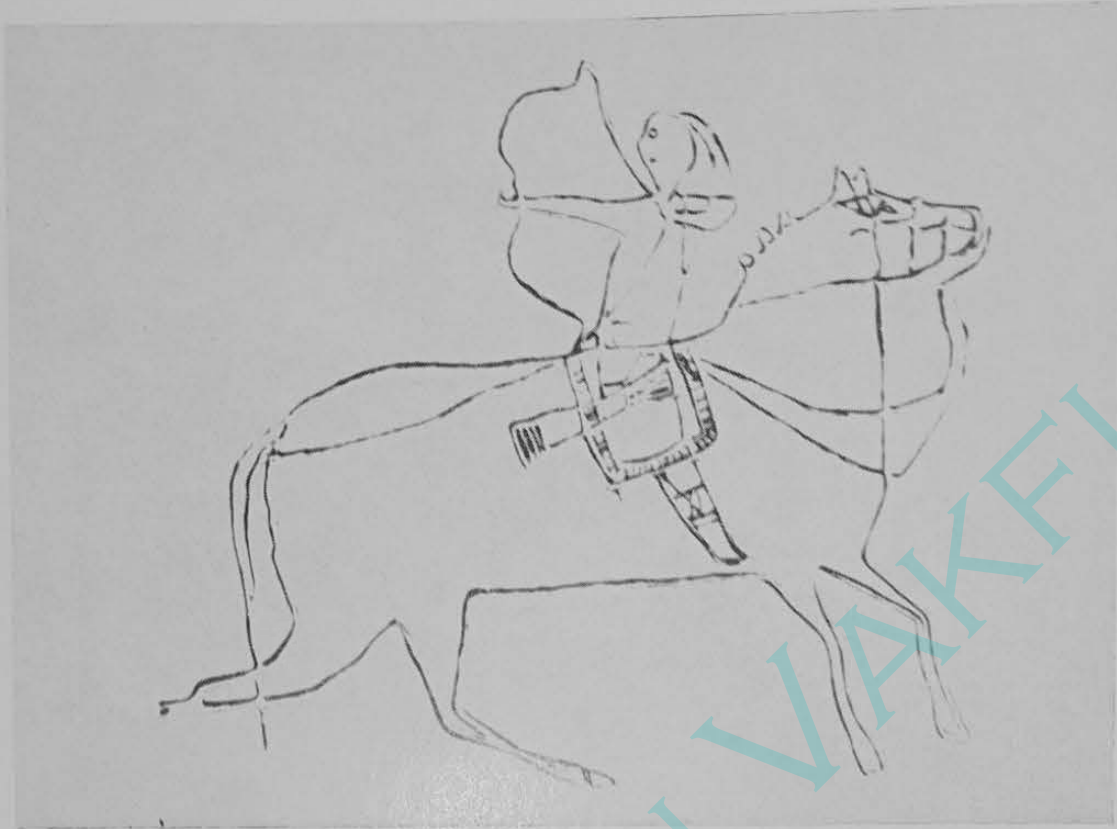


Fig. 12. Heavy horse, mounted by archer, on plate of Turkic petroglyph at Sulek.  
333 After Artamonov, ill. on p. 210.

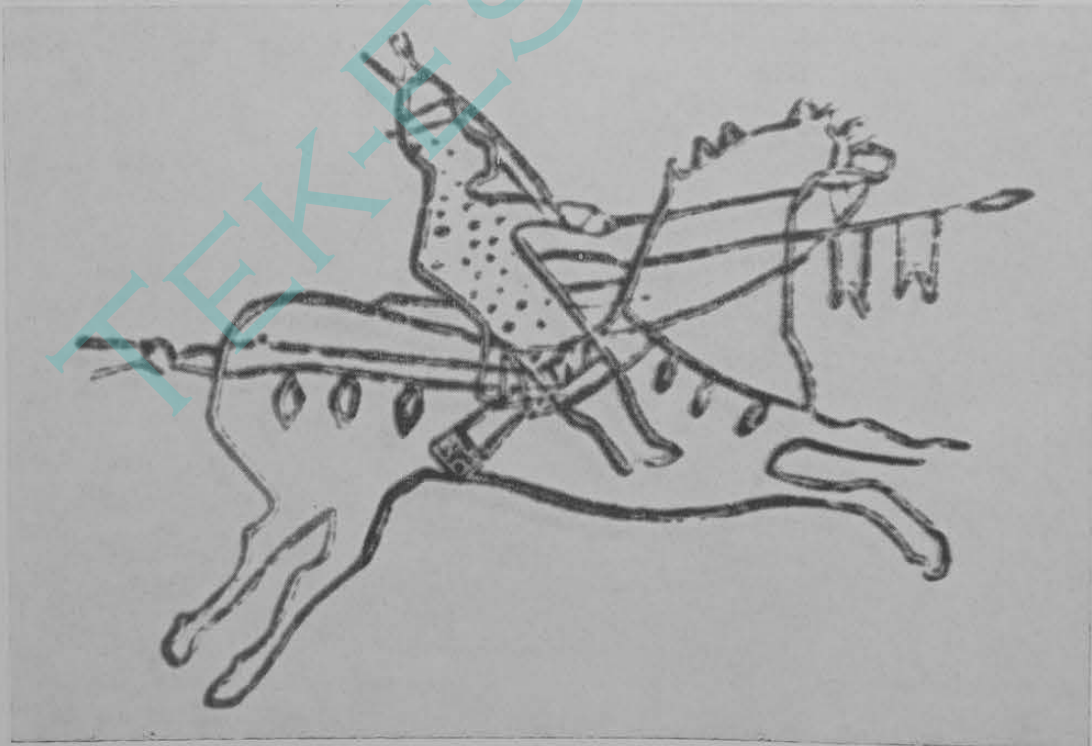


Fig. 13. Turkic petroglyph at Sulek showing a thoroughbred charger decorated with tassels and a rider holding a "batrak" in hand. After Artamonov, ill. on p. 210.  
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or *ablaq*. The Caliph 'Ali's mule Duldul was also represented in Ottoman art as an idealised *alaca* (Kalender, fol. 19) which moreover carries a flaming *sarīra*, like some paintings of Kanthaka (Esin, *Influences...*, ill. 67). The fortunate planet Mercury was depicted on an *alaca* horse. The kings continued to ride dappled horses. The Oğuz prince Kayı Inal Han (who has been described above on an *ala* black and white steed) was already a half Near-Eastern figure who belonged to the crucial time of the Turkic migrations to the Near East. Selçuk princely figures have also been represented on dappled horses, as in the ms. *Waraqah-Gulshāh* of the Topkapı Museum. It has been noted above that the formal ride of investiture of the Anatolian Selçuk king was compared to a ride on the symbolic black and white (*ablaq*) horse, whose coat pattern represented the days and the nights. The fourteenth century Turkish poet of Erzurum, Mustafa Darîr Erzenî, also describes the black and white dappled steed of the lord of the horse (*şehsuvâr*):

*Koydu ayağını rikâbına şâh,  
Tâ ola suvâr ablaka nâgâh.  
Gûş olunup sahîl-i ablak-i şâh,  
Şehsuvâr olsuğunu bilirdi sipâh  
Mustafa Darîrî Erzenî, Yüz hadisler tercemesi,  
Alî Emîrî Libr., ms. Şer'iyye no. 1154, fol. 133).*

The king's foot reached the stirrup,  
To ride instantly the dappled horse  
Hearing the neigh of the royal dappled horse,  
The cavalry knew that the lord of the horse was astride.

In the Oğuz epics the *alaca* is the horse of a heathen king, Şökli Melik, and originates from a golden mountain: *Altındağı alaca atın ne öğersin? Ala başlu kiçimçe gelmez bana* (Epic of the defeat of Salur Kazan, Ergin ed. p. 15). "Why praise thy 'alaca' of the Golden Mountain, I do not rank it with my spotted goat."

In the *Hunarnāmah* (vol. II, fol. 28) the Ottoman sultan Süleyman has been represented on a hunting expedition, mounted on a dun-coloured *alaca*. In other plates of the same book, the *alacas* with regular black and white spots seem to be reserved to the sultan's main attendant, while he rides a dark horse with auspicious white parts. The Ottoman historian Küçük Çelebi-zade Asım Efendi describes a tiger-like *alaca* which Ahmed III rode when he visited for the first time the newly built imperial residence of Sa'dâbâd, in the year 1135 A.H.; he appeared in the aspect of

the sun mounted on the constellation Leo. The sultan was riding a dappled horse (*rahş*) with tiger-like spots and hoofs that were as strong as a lion's claws. Thus the *alaca* continued to be a heavenly mount, compared to the celestial figures.

In our day, the dappled horse with the regular tiger-like spots is found mainly in Eastern Turkestan, while the horse with the black spine, similar to the spine of the onager, seems to be found both in Eastern Turkestan and in Northern Asia. Aurel Stein recognised the dappled horse on the ancient Khotanese painting (*Ancient Khotan*, fig. D. VII 5) as an Eastern Turkestani poney, of the kind sold at Yarkent and called it a Yarkent pony. However, Mr. Koşmak kindly informs me that dappled ponies of that particular description are very common everywhere in Eastern Turkestan and sold to neighbouring lands. The pony with big white dapples is considered inauspicious (*siir*) while the frontal white spots are auspicious.

Kashgarī praises the horse with a white spot on the face (*tüküz*) which he compares to the moon (arts. *tüküz*, *tükez*, *ugar*, *yetiş*). The Oğuz epics call the white frontal spot *kaşka* or *tepel*. Zangī also comments the white spot on the horse's face (fol. 65 v.). He adds that two, three, four white fetlocks are considered auspicious, although he personally thinks that a white fetlock is always a sign of a weak limb. A single white foreleg is however both inauspicious and dangerous. Zangī proves this point by quoting Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuttalī. This Turkic prince of Khuttal who spent five months in the service of the 'Abbassid caliph and the rest of the year in Khuttal, saw in his army a Türkmen riding a horse with a white foreleg, which stumbled and caused its rider's death (fol. 66). In *Tuḥfat al-mulūk* (fol. 58) the dark horse with the frontal white spot compared to a star, is called (*ablaq*) or *ağır* and is described as a supernatural horse (*rûhânî*) which through its fast stride carries its rider to victory. If in addition the horse has white bracelet-like spots on the fetlocks (*mujmal al-'arba'ah*) such a mount is the fastest of all horses, fit for kings. In fact, in the Paris Bibl. Nat. ms. *Jāmi' al-tawārikh* many Ilkhanid kings have been represented on such horses. The Ottoman Sultan Suleyman is depicted on horses with a frontal white spot and three (*Hunar-nāmah*) or four (Fig. 6) white fetlocks. This coat is designated under the name of *azgan* in modern Eastern Turkestan and appreciated more than the regular *alacas* which are common in that area.

A group of dappled horses seem to be linked with aquatic stallion legends. In this connection, it is curious that in Turkish the horse's dapples are called *pul* which means both "sequin" and "scale". Zangī

(fol. 69-71) cites Abū Ya'qūb Khuttalī to describe a Turkic mountain horse with an onager-like coat (the Central Asian onager has a dun coat with a dark stripe along the spine and shoulders) of a species said to be sired by wild stallions beside a "fiery lake". Another species of coat associated with aquatic legends is the *kır* which Kashgarī identifies with the *ala*, the black and white coat favoured by the mythologic Yol-tenri and by the Oğuz hero Kayı Inal Han. The legend of Kır At is almost equally ancient. In an epic poem quoted by Mr. Inan, Kır is given a cosmogonic character and said to have grown out of the ground together with its rider, when the tawny earth was created. In the Köroğlu epic which has been traced to about the ninth-tenth centuries, the horse Kır At was sired by an aquatic stallion from the Oxus waters. Zangī praises as second best the *kır* coat (fol. 63, 65, *sapīd khing*) and calls it worthy of kings. But it must have (like the onager) black spots on the fetlocks, and a long black line on the spine, a black mane and tail. When young, this horse is apparently called *sabz khing* and is again a royal steed. Heroes such as Köroğlu, Dadaloğlu, kings like Bayezid I, Mehmed II, Murad IV, Osman II, Selim II rode *kır* horses. Osman represented in the *Hunarnāmah* Mehmed II entering the newly conquered city of Constantinople, on a *kır* horse of a lively disposition.

Zangī also mentions the *qula* and the *samand* which are both fawn-coloured horses which must also have the auspicious black spots, the black back-line, mane and tail. The *samand* which the Turks call *kula* was considered a solar horse (Al-Kāshif) and has been represented as a royal mount in many Ottoman paintings. If however the auspicious black parts failed, the *samand* was worthless (*alma kula, olsa dahi bir pula, Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, fol. 55). In Başkurdistan, semi-wild fawn horses with black line on the spine (*Sülgen*) are considered the issue of the aquatic stallions of the Volga.

The *kharmunj* mentioned but not described by Zangī (fol. 63) is represented in the Ottoman Turkish ms. *Tuḥfat al-mulūk* as a greenish horse with black spots and is compared to a fish (*hūt*).

The dappled horse was also compared to a prey-bird. Ibn Bibi mentions the king's eagle-like (*humâyi*) horse which he compares to the celestial eagle constellation. Nef'î notes the *humâyi* horses of Murad IV. *Tuḥfat al-mulūk* (fol. 58) classifies among first rate horses the steed whose coat is dappled with red and white spots resembling the claws of the hare-hunter eagle's (*tavşancıl*) claws. The epic poems of Köroğlu, Dadaloğlu, constantly compare the dappled horses to eagles or other prey-birds. This association will be equally further commented.

5. *The dragon-stallion*<sup>7</sup>

One of the oldest mythologic associations of the horse seems to have been with the water element. Aquatic horse legends are known from the Far East to the Near-East. The Far-Eastern variety is the myth of the dragon-stallion living in a cave, which, as remarked to me by Mr. Boyle, may be connected with the cave and dragon worship practised by the Hiung-nu and Turks. The dragon-stallion myth connected with the region of Kucha includes also certain episodes on the Hiung-nu. The horses of the Kucha region were not unlike Turkic horses, through the fact that they were small but suited through their resistance to long journeys. However this may be, the myth of the dragon-horse related in Chinese sources seems to have inspired a European Scythian work from Kul Oba (See T. Rice, ill. 13). This swordsheath is decorated with a dragon-horse figure which is not directly related to the Hellenic aquatic equine representations. The Kul Oba dragon-horse's crenelated spine is reminiscent of the series of horse figures with tufted or crenelated manes found in Inner-Asia particularly in representations of nomadic horses of the Altay and Siberian region (see Figs. 4, 12, 13, and Abb. 3, art. Johansen). The dragon and cave-stallion myths were not only known to peoples connected with Turks (Hephtalites, Tu-yü-huns) but to the Turks themselves. Ibn Khürdādbih relates a Turkic version of the aquatic horse legend. At the gate of the Rustābak residence of the Bek dynasty of Khuttal, there was a lake from which emerged aquatic stallions whom the Beks tried to noose in vain but who sired a species of extraordinary horses. Later aquatic or dragon-stallion legends bring into evidence that these magic stallions are usually wild horses who appear suddenly, in the misty atmosphere of high plateaux, propitious to fables, which Kashgarī describes:

*Yaşın atıp yaşnadı  
Tuman turup tuşnadı  
Öğür alıp okraşır*

(art. *Öğür*)

The lightning shot and flashed  
The cloud whiled and greeted  
The stallion neighs to the mare

<sup>7</sup> Dragon-horses: Kucha legend: Beal, vol. I, p. 20. Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre . . .*; *Kir at*: Togan, *Traditions . . .*; N. Togan, p. 28, note 6. The Oxus flew from the mouth of a horse: Beal, vol. I, p. 10.

Zangī (fols. 69-71) cites an episode which happened in the days when the prince of Khuttal, Abū Ya‘qūb, served the ‘Abbassid caliph. The ambassador of Samarkand had presented to the caliph a collection of horses at the head of which marched an ugly Turkic horse which had an onager-like coat of an even more fanciful variety. This horse was said to be of the species called “mountain horse” (*ṭāgī*), the offspring of domestic mares which had been tied to a lake with fiery water and sired by wild stallions. The extraordinary feats of the semi-wild pony gave it precedence over the best horses. The so-called fiery waters and mineral springs are in *Si-yu-ki* and elsewhere constantly associated with dragon legends. This *ṭāgī* Turkic horse with the onager-like coat may well then have considered one of the dragon-horses of ancient Inner-Asia. The dragon-horse legends lived amongst the Turks not only in Inner-Asia but also in the Near-East. The category of dappled horses with the onager-like stripe on the backbone, generally associated with aquatic stallions, such as Kır At and others, have been mentioned above. Ak-Boz, the steed of Bamsi Beyrek, the Oğuz hero (Ergin, p. 27) was also an aquatic foal (*deniz kulunu*). Nef’î mentions the horse Evren (dragon).

In the eighteenth century, the Anatolian popular poet Dadaloğlu still celebrated his horse in terms which betray that the signification of the aquatic horse legend was forgotten while its form remained:

*At kulağın dikmiş de göz süzer  
Gövel ördek gibi göllerde yüzer  
Çırpındırır yele, ceyrândır tozar  
Atın eşkini seldir, yeğite gerek*  
(Yund, *Türk atı*)

The horse raises its ear and watches  
It swims in the lake like a drake  
It shakes its mane and gallops like a fawn  
The fast horse is a torrent which alone the hero may ride.

It has been noted that Prof. Togan encountered living aquatic-horse legends in Başkurdistan, in connection with a tarpan-like semi-wild horse species of a dun coat with a black line on the spine, said to be sired by aquatic stallions in a lake-like widening of the Ak-Edil, at Şülgen.

If one remembers that the ancient dappled horse *Tcheou-you* was simultaneously a dragon, it may perhaps be permissible to conclude that the dragon or aquatic-stallion legends indicate semi-wild horses with peculiar marks on the coat.

6. *Pegasus*

The myth of the celestial horse<sup>8</sup> is linked to that of the aquatic horse both in Hellenic mythology and in Inner-Asia, where the aquatic dragon is also depicted as a flying figure. The ancient dappled *Tcheou-you*, the solar horse, was both a dragon and a bird. The king of Kucha's dragon-horses were harnessed to a chariot which carried the king in the air.

The horse's first association with the heavens is its function as a celestial sign, serving as station to the cyclic succession of years. The ancient Turkic inscriptions express clearly the idea that "Kök Han", the celestial king, moved along the animal signs. The horse appears also as a vehicle of celestial and astral deities. The bas-relief consisting of four horse-heads forming a solar disc found at Airag-Nur (Songino, Zavkhan province) in Mongolia (ill. in Vandui) has been thought to establish the equine's connection with solar cults. On the other hand, Waley's and Petrucci's studies in the Tun-huang mandalas have shown that in that area the horse is the lunar vehicle and the geese draw the sun's chariot. The lunar association must have prompted Kashgarī to cite a verse in which it is humourously advised not to mistake the horse's frontal white mark for the moon (art. *tüküz*). The Timurid book of astrology *Lubāb al-iḳtiyārāt* states quite clearly that the moon which because of its transient aspect is considered an unsteady influence is however considered an auspicious ascendant only in the case of horses for whom restlessness and movement constitutes a favourable feature.

The princely spirit which went up to heaven after death appeared also as a riding figure. Ibn Faḍlān relates that a celestial phenomenon which seems to have been an *aurora borealis* was interpreted to him by the Turkic king of the Volga Bulgar region as a joust in heaven between riding spirits.

The area of Eastern Turkestan is particularly rich in myths on flying horses. A breed of celestial horses associated with this region were renowned in ancient Inner-Asia. The king of Kucha's heavenly quadriga has been noted. An Uyghur painting (Fig. 9) shows a Buddhist monk raised in the air by two winged ponies who have knelt down to support him, in a way reminiscent of Al-Jāḥiẓ's account of the Turkic ponies which knelt on command. Kashgarī, who originated from this region fertile in flying-horse myths, uses the term "to acquire wings" (*kanatlan-*

<sup>8</sup> Celestial horses: *aurora borealis*: Togan, Ibn Faḍlān, p. 52. Altaic legends: Harva. Shen horses: N. Togan, p. 28, note 6, ps. 5, 153, note 61. *Rakhshiah*: Dadaoğlu poems: Yund. Al-Kāshif, fols. 45, 67: "Tālī kamer, burc munkalib ola . . .", "rab al-sa'ah burc-i munkalibde kamer ola . . .".


*mak*) as a casual synonym for riding. He also cites more than one proverb in which the exhilaration caused by riding is compared to flying: "the horse is to man what the wing is to the bird" (*er atın, kuş kanadın*) (vol. I, p. 34).

Legends of flying horses which are in reality wild horses of a delicate tarpan type are still extant in Eastern Turkestan. Possibly in reference to these legends, bird-shaped saddles are used in that area. In Turkey also, the horse's rapidity is often compared to the flight of a bird. Köroğlu celebrated Kır At as the monarch of the bird species, the dancing eagle (*Karakuş oyunlu kır at*). Ibn Bibi compares 'Alauddin Kayqubād's horse to the royal eagle constellation. The Oğuz epics as well as Ottoman literature frequently liken the thoroughbreds to preybirds. Nef'i mentions specifically Murad IV's *humâyî* (eagle-like)-coated horse and compares other horses to peacocks. The winged unicorn is represented as a horse (illustr. on fol. 66 v., *Tuḥfat al-mulūk*).

The present Altaic legends also abound in celestial horse myths. The cyclic horse is a heavenly figure. Other stars are depicted as grazing horses tied to the heavenly Ülgen's stake, the pole star. Solbon (*Çolpan*, *Çoban* in Ottoman Turkish), the evening star, is a horse shepherd, on a dappled horse, whose herd grazes in the heavenly prairies. Solbon is represented on the *kams*' drums as a rider holding a star (Harva, p. 96). Zangī uses the term *çoban* for Türkmen horse-breeders.


Miss Johansen kindly reminded me that the Altaic *kam* attempts the cosmic voyage to heaven astride a horse-shaped stick which represents the sacrificial horse.












## II. TAMGAS, DECORATIONS AND TRAPPINGS




The Turkic horses bore tribal *tamgas*.<sup>9</sup> The *tamgas* encountered in various texts and in pictorial representations have been noted below. Prof. Uzunçarşılı, in the introduction of his work on Ottoman history (*Osmanlı Tarihi*), has devoted a chapter to the study of Oğuz *tamgas*. One *tamga* amongst these is of particular interest to our subject: the *tamga* of the Alayondlu Oğuz, who with some other Turkic tribes were renowned for the particularity of raising *ala yonds* (black and white dappled horses). Their *tamga* is apparently given in the *Selçukname* of Ali Yazıcızâde in the form . A tamga reproduced on a Sulek charger

<sup>9</sup> Horse tamgas: Orkun, vol. III, p. 134. Liu Mau-tsai, p. 453.



petroglyph has the shape . The Turkic horse tamgas given by Mr. Liu Mau-Tsai after *T'ang-hui-yao* are as follows:

	A-shi-na horse
	Ho-lu horse
	A-schi-tê
	Ta-a-schi-tê
	Pa-yen A-schi-tê
	En-kie (Sse-kie) south of the desert Kök-Türk horse
	Fu-li-yu which were again Southern Kök-Türk horses
	Ki-pi which resembled the Southern Kök-Türk horses
	Hi-Kie or Uyghur horses which resembled the Southern Kök-Türk horses
	Hu-sie horses which were of the same horse as the Kök-Türk horses
	Nu-la horses which resembled the same south of the desert horses

Moreover, the Turkic so-called "runic" alphabet included forms of an ideogrammatic character, connected with the sound *at* (horse) (  ).

The mane and tail presented also some peculiarities which however seem to be inherited from the ancient nomads.<sup>10</sup> The late Han works of art show the Hiung-nu (and the Chinese) chargers with cut or knotted tails. The same peculiarity is seen on the large horses of the Pazırık carpet. In the Turkic period, almost all representations of horses appear with knotted tails. *Irk-bitig* mentions this habit:

*Tıǵ atın kudrukun tügüp tigret,  
Yazıǵ kodu . . .*

(omen 77)

Tie the golden bay's tail and drive it.  
Should it break the bond . . .

In this text the impression is given that the horse's tail was tied in order to train it. Another mention of the horse's or bird's tail (*uş* in Kaşgari) occurs in the Talas inscriptions: *Taşına, uşına olıtı abadım* (Orkun, vol. II,

<sup>10</sup> Mane and tail: Balādhurī, vol. II, p. 320. Yāqūt, art. *Qaiqaniah*. Alparslan ties horses' tails at Malazgird: Lugal, p. 34. Perçem: Tührani, vol. II, p. 581.

p. 135) "I cared for his stone and sat down to tie his horsetail." Orkun connects this text read by him, to the Turkic custom of tying the dead Bamsi Beyrek's horse's tail, which is mentioned in the Dede Korkut epic (*ağ boz atinin kuyruğunu kestiler*). Orkun remarks also that in the Pazırık burial the horses tails were cut. The same custom was observed by the Arabs amongst the Turks of Multan in the year 44 A.H. and adopted by them. In this second case, the dead enemy's horse's tail was raised as a trophy and tied to the pole. Kashgarī also mentions the *Kesme*, the cutting of horse or human hair, and says:

*Tünle bile bastımız  
Teğme yangak pustumuz  
Kesmelerin kestimiz*

(art. *kesme*)

We made a surprise attack by night,  
We lay hidden around them,  
We cut the cuttings.

Kashgarī again confirms the habit of tying the horse's tail before engaging the battle:

*Kudruk katı tüğdümüz  
Tenriğ öküş öğdümüz,  
Kemsip atı teğdimiz,  
Aldap yana kaçtımız.*

(art. *kudruk*)

We knotted firmly the tail,  
We praised God mightily,  
Drawing the reins, we touched with the spur,  
We galloped aside in feint.

The scene depicted in Kashgarī's poem was enacted on the battle-field of Malazgird by the Selçuk Turks who after prayer tied their horses' tails and engaged the battle. Kashgarī again introduces another kind of tail-badge worn by chargers and warriors which consisted of a yak-tail or a silken badge (tassel? flag?) and was called *beçkem* (*perçem* in Oğuz dialect):

*Beçkem urup atlaka,  
Uygurdaki tatlaka  
Oğri, yavuz itlaka  
kuşlar gibi uçtimiz.*

(art. *beçkem*)

Attaching the *beçkem* to the horses,  
We flew like birds to attack  
the Barbarians in the Uygur land,  
the ferocious, stealing dogs.

The Oğuz epics mention the *khotaz* necklace of the horse (Ergin, p. 24). In Ottoman sources as in Râshid's history, the tail-badge worn on the horses' neck is called with the term *qutas*, arabicised form of the Turkic *kotaz* (yak tail). Râshid always mentions the large hair badges of horses on occasions when formal apparel (*divân bisâti*) is indicated.

5,336,337 The tail-badges, hanging from the necks of horses, the aigrettes and birds' wings worn on the heads of warriors (a distinctive sign of Turks according to Kashgarî, art. *Türkmen*) and of horses on special metallic skull caps (found in Khazar graves), may all be observed on Turkic chargers (Figs. 4, 5, 6). Kashgarî mentions also the *moncuk*, a bead, or jewel or a lion's claw, sometimes attached to the horse's neck. The word *moncuk* is also used in Ibn Bibi in the signification of a royal standard. 335

The Turkic chargers were also mailed (Fig. 4). Kiil Tegin's stele commemorates the *kedimli at* "caparisoned horse" who succumbed only after a hundred arrows had pierced its mailcoat. The Uygur chargers wore masks (Ettinghausen, ill. 10) as the Pazırık sacrificial horses. The charger of the Altay petroglyph (Fig. 4) appears equally to be masked. 335

The horse tail was used as a standard. Kashgarî however mentions the *tuğ*, not as a horse-tail, but as a silken orange banner (tassel?) emblematic of royal power. Nine, seven or five *tuğs* indicated kings of various grades. Prof. Gazimihal's studies have brought into evidence the fact that the Hakanlı *tuğ* was, like the Ottoman *felek*, a tail badge upon which musical instruments were attached. In fact, Kashgarî mentions that the army was mobilised by beating the *tuğ* (*tuğum tikip uruldu*, vol. I, p. 195). However in later texts, as in Selçuk, Ottoman, Ak-koyunlu histories, the horse-tail standard is equally called *perçem* or *çalış*, or *tuğ*. The Ottoman sultan had six or seven *tuğs*, and the paşas had less, according to rank. In war-time, two of the sultan's *tuğs* were pitched at the palace gate, with religious ceremony. The two *tuğs* went ahead of the army. The others followed, with the sultan's march.

The dented mane constitutes another peculiarity which may be noticed in the Kul-Oba dragon-horse motif. A three-dented mane is also observed on the riding horse represented at Pazırık (see Abb. 3 of Miss Johansen's article). Here however the dents are in various colours and one wonders if the mane is not tufted and the tufts encased in coloured bags. The Hiung-nu had the custom to keep tresses in bags. The

three-dented variety of the mane is most often met in representations of Altaic, Siberian and Eastern Turkestani horses. It appears uniformly on the horses of all species in Northern Turkic petroglyphs, as in Sulek (Figs. 12 and 13) and in the Altay (Fig. 4). The three-dented mane may then be called a local custom of the Altaic, Siberian, Eastern Turkestani areas, started since the Pazırık period and continued in the Turkic times. The horse figure on the Nagy-Szent-Miklos vessel (see Otto Dorn, ill. 31) found in a trove with Turkic inscriptions has what seems to be a tufted mane. This custom may still be noted on the horses of the Anatolian Turks and in the Altay where Zelenin observed it as the sign of a sacrificial horse. The tufted or crenelated manes appear also on other horse representations, at the two opposite ends of Inner-Asia, in China (the effigy of T'ai-tsung's charger) and Persia (Sassanian royal horse representations). The tufted mane can in these cases be attributed to influences of Inner-Asia where the three-dented mane is far more frequent.

The Turks laid stress on the care of the horse and its trappings.<sup>11</sup> Al-Jāhiz notes that the Turkic rider was his own saddler and veterinary. The kagan was repairing his saddle when the ambassador of the caliph was ushered into his presence. The second Ottoman king Orhan undertook himself the shoeing and other services of his horse, like the heroes of epic poems. The Kök-Türk Altaic petroglyph (Fig. 4) shows the peculiar form of the Turkic saddle and its high cantle and pommel. This shape which seems to be developed from the Pazırık saddlery has remained unchanged to this day in Inner-Asia and in Anatolia in the form of the *Osmanlı eğeri*. The rider attaches various objects such as his noose and bag on the cantle or pommel and leans on them in archery and in horse games. An ancient Kök-Türk pommel was decorated with a hunting scene (Ögel, ill. 13). The Ottoman saddles' pommels, in the Military Museum of Istanbul and at Topkapı appear embossed with gold and gem ornaments. In Eastern Turkestan the nephrite which bears the same name as the pommel (*kaş*) is used for this ornamentation of princely saddles, which are sometimes in the shape of birds' heads. The bulky and unstable Turkic saddle is prevented from slipping either forward or backwards by straps which tie it across the horse's chest (*kemeldürük*) and under the tail (*koş-kum*). These straps decorated with tassels and discs, are also observed on representations of Turkic horses from the earliest periods (Fig. 4).

To preserve the horse's body from the pressure of the wooden saddle, Kashgarī explains that an under-saddle cover (*içlik*) is used. In the Turfan

<sup>11</sup> Trappings: Turkic kagan's saddle: Togan, *Giriş*, p. 50. Ögel, pp. 201-204. Orhan Bey shoes horse: Yund. *Kedimli at*: Orkun, vol. I, p. 136.

horse figurines from the Astanah cemetery, the under-saddle cover is made of tiger fur, or of a textile imitating tiger-skin. This custom has also continued in the Ottoman period (Fig. 4) until today in Turkestan (Abramson, ill. 13). One could ride, on the *içlik*, without a saddle, as seen on various art works. The cart horse's driver rode without a saddle, on the *içlik* (Artamonov, p. 454). The wealthy riders had a richly embroidered *içlik* or *çul*, as it was called in Ottoman Turkish:

*Beğler gelir sağlı sollu,  
Hep atları sırma çullu,  
Altın muhli, gümüş nallı . . .*  
(Köroğlu epic poem, cited by Yund, *op. cit.*)

The lords of the right and left sides,  
Their horses covered with gold embroidered cloths,  
Shoed with silver nails and golden hoofs . . .

The under-saddle covers of Turkic kings' horses may be seen in Selçuk, Ilkhanid, Timurid, Ottoman (Fig. 6), Türkmen book-paintings.

Kashgarī mentions a further saddle-cover, reserved to dignitaries and made of the same orange material called *al*<sup>12</sup> as the Kara-hanlı king's banner. On an Altay petroglyph, where the horses are riderless, the *al* may be seen as a cover draped over the saddles (Fig. 4). In the period of the Uygur kagans of Kan-tcheou, some Tun-huang paintings (Ch. 00388 of Delhi Museum) show over-saddle covers in orange material, which are either tucked in or left hanging. According to Professor Ettinghausen's studies, these over-saddle covers, called *ghāshīah* in Arabic, which had an emblematic meaning connected with the prince, begin to be represented in Near-Eastern Islamic works at the same time as the arrival of the Selçuk Turks. The term *ghāshīah* has the generic signification of a horse cover and is used in histories in both the sense of an under-saddle and an over-saddle cover. Kashgarī who lived at the time of the settlement of the Selçuk kings in the Near-East translates the word *al* with a verb of the same root as *ghāshīah*. The habit of carrying the overlord's *ghāshīah* is mentioned in Selçuk histories on many occasions. The pagan Turkic princes vanquished by the Selçuks carried the Selçuk king's *ghāshīah*, thus taking the part of an equerry. The chief equerry (*el-başı* in Kashgarī) was however one of the highest officials, together with the prince who led the honorific spare horses (Kashgarī, *koşun at*). Tuğrul Bey did not hesitate

<sup>12</sup> *al* and *ghāshīah*: Kashgarī, art. *al*. Lugal, p. 15. Ettinghausen-Guest. Ottoman saddle-cover: Serrano y Sanz: p. 122. *Koşun at*: Kashgarī, art. *koşun at* and Tihrani, vol. II, p. 122. Turkic kings of Kantcheou: Hamilton, pp. 143-44.

to carry the Caliph's *ghāshīah*. One may perhaps conclude that the *ghāshīah* in the sense of a royal emblem and the *al* made of the king's banner, were one and the same. The custom continued and the over-saddle cover, in red silk, is a common feature of representations of Turkic princes, in book paintings. A painting by the Jalairid prince Sultan Ahmad gives a good view of the similarity of the *ghāshīah* to the Altaic and Tun-huang *al* (İpşiroğlu, ill. 112, 116). The over-saddle cover is often represented in Ottoman book-paintings and contemporary texts note that it was carried by grooms of dignitaries, to cover the richly decorated saddle and protect it from dust when the dignitary alighted from his mount. The Ottoman historian Râshid when describing the riding procession which followed the circumcision of the sons of Ahmed III, notes the formal trappings of the princely spare horses, which was the same as the trappings of royal spare horses (*yedek*) on the enthronement rides: it consisted of a saddle ornamented with gems and of gemmed shields, and with an equally bejewelled saddle-cover (*zînpûş*) and with skins (Fig. 5, inferior righthand corner). Each spare horse was led by an equerry. The red saddle cover appears even in representations of the Ottoman sultan and of dignitaries in the English ceramic figurines of the Crimean War period. In Eastern Turkestan, the princes (*hans*) used a stiffly embroidered saddle cover (*yapık*) until some decades ago. In opposition to the custom of the honorific saddle cover used by the Turks, the Persians had other emblems. The Ottoman chronicler Çelebî-Zâde notes that when in 1141 A.H., the Persian ambassador visited Istanbul, his spare horses had Persian trappings: the honorific sign (*âb-i rûy*) over the saddles consisted of a category of drums (*tabl i-bâz*) beaten by hawkers, to frighten into flight the aquatic birds.

### III. THE HORSE SPECIES IN TURKIC ART

Literature<sup>13</sup> as well as art works confirm that the Inner-Asian horses in general and the Turkic horses in particular have certain distinctive features. Zangī notes that the rules which determine excellence in a Near-Eastern horse do not apply to Turkic horses (fol. 61 v.). He explains the physical features of Turkic horses but also praises the Turks' method of training which consisted in coaxing the foal into discipline rather than forcing it, in feeding it well and in letting it roam freely as much as possible, away from the constraint of the manège (fol. 78).

<sup>13</sup> Przewalski and tarpan horses' area of distribution: Hermanns, ill. 4, 5 7, and table on pp. 286-87. Elongated form of Inner-Asian horses and strong hoofs: Togan, *Traditions . . .*, citing Ibn Khürdâbih. Also Radloff, pp. 59, 500.

The physical peculiarities are manifold. Some of these features may be attributed to the comparative high percentage of wild blood. Zangī notes the extraordinary fast pace and resistance of the Turkic horses (fols. 69-73). Their height was apparently generally small to medium (fol. 61).  
 + The hoofs were so strong that the horse was not shod (fol. 70) but could still ride in the roughest areas. This feature is shown in art works in exaggerated form. Again in art works, the limbs are generally short, reaching about half the size of the height at the withers. According to Prof. Togan, the Inner-Asian horses have a tendency to lower their heads (like the tarpan, Herrmans), in a gesture noted in many art works. The rumps are generally depressed, even in thoroughbreds, such as Türkmen *argamaks*.

Ibn Khūrdābih had noticed the elongated trunk of the Turkic horses. This peculiarity may be seen on Inner-Asian horse representations since antiquity, in the medieval period (Figs. 4, 12) and even in present Altaic equine representations, and in Türkmen *argamaks*.

A flat back which vouches for a comfortable seat is a foremost quality required by Turks who went to long expeditions on horseback. The term *yassi* "flat" occurs as a praise in Kashgarī as well as in Ottoman texts (*Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, fol. 21). This feature is observed on many Turkic horse representations (Fig. 12).

A long neck is equally appreciated. Some ancient representations show Inner-Asian horses with phenomenally long and arched necks. The Ottoman texts mention also the long neck as a quality which makes a good jumper (*Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, fol. 24).

The horses bred in Northern Asia had apparently fluffier coats, in lighter colours. These peculiarities become evident by the fact that Kashgarī mentions the season of the changing of the fur (art. *tiledi*) and many light-coloured varieties of coats. The dappled coats are also frequent. In the Türkmen area, the coats are sleeker and darker. Light-hued manes, blue eyes (چشم نازغ) occur in Turkic horses according to Zangī.

Kashgarī devotes several entries to the synonyms of the word ambler (*yorga*) so that one is under the impression that amblers were frequent in Eastern Turkestan. Zangī (fol. 68 v.) mentions the fact that some horses are born amblers while others are taught to amble. He notes that the horses of Khuttal are amblers. The ambler was used for comfortable riding, but also for hunting. In fact, in Ottoman Turkish the term *yorga* indicates both a fast horse and an ambler. The post Tatars of the Ottoman army rode *yorga* horses with a long stride (*eşkin*) who maintained continuously such a fast pace that they covered long distances in a shorter

Çeşm-i Zangī)

time than the ordinary horse which gallops a while but must pace to rest from the exertion. In the Ottoman period, the ambler appeared as a horse of Turkic species or training. The Ottoman encyclopedist Ahmed b. Musa Merkez Efendi (d. 963) translates the Persian word *rahvār* with the Turkish *yorga* and adds "a Turkic horse" (فرس ترکی). Mr. Koşmak remarked that, as mentioned by Zangī, there are in Eastern Turkestan born amblers. He attributed this feature to the exertion of sliding on icy peaks or of galloping in tall grass. The non-ambler horse is apparently so rare in Eastern Turkestan that it is designated with a special term, *sök-sök*.

Zangī (fol. 57 v.) deplors the fact that the ignorant Turks make incisions in the horses' nostrils to improve the breath. This particularity was observed by Prof. Togan in Central Asia.

The ancient Chinese knew of various categories of horses, and mentioned the Turkic semi-wild horse, the small pony, the medium riding horse, the large horse harnessed to chariots and used as chargers. Zangī (fol. 68 v.) makes approximately the same classification. He notes that the Turkic horse although excellent is either small or medium and therefore suitable for personages of second rank such as the king's attendant or accompanying musician (or for the head equerry who in that age was of princely rank). The small pony must be used by children, by lone riders who travel lightly, and for the riding games (Zangī mentions both the *cogen*, which he calls *chavgan* and the riding game played by throwing javelins which the Ottomans called *cirid*). Zangī notes (fol. 70) that the Turks do not use large horses for hunting but prefer the swift *ğāğī* (semi-wild mountain horse) which is as fast as the onager. The medium horse is called a "four-sixth" in allusion to the length of its jump in comparison to the jump of the large six cubit jumper (*Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, fol. 36 v.). The "four-sixth" is according to Zangī suitable for all purposes, including campaigning, hunting riding games. The heavy horse is good for long drives, as well as the ambler, and for heavy riders. Finally, the five-sixth cubit jumping large horse is for battle array, for jousting with spears and for heavy riders (fols. 52, 68 v.).

Zangī's classification will be followed below, starting with the most characteristic specimen of Turkic horses, the semi-wild pony.

### 1. *The semi-wild ponies*<sup>14</sup>

Prof. Eberhard has noted that the Chinese used the same word (*t'ao-tu*) to

<sup>14</sup> Semi-wild ponies: Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre . . .* (Hiung-nu wild ponies, Tibetan ponies). Hunnic horses: Altheim, vol. IV, pp. 56, 280. Avar poney: Artamo-



indicate the wild horse and the steeds of the Hiung-nus. In fact, the remains of such ponies were found in the ancient nomadic graves. From that early period onwards, the works of art show two kinds of different ponies which may correspond to the Przewalski and tarpan types both of which existed and still exist in Inner-Asia. The studies of M. Herrmans have brought about the fact that the Przewalski type is situated in Northern and Eastern Asia, while the Tarpan was propagated in southern Turkestan. Mixed species are also mentioned. The works of art confirm this distribution. The horse figures on Siberian metal reliefs of about the fifth century B. C. (see Abb. 5 of Miss Johansen's article) and in a Hunnic grave of the Transbaikal (see Rudenko, *Hunnic culture* . . . ill. 41), could be related to the Przewalski pony or to the present large-headed dwarf Siberian pony, while a horse figure from a pre-Hiung-nu site in the T'ien-shan mountains shows a tarpan type of pony and a mixed type (see Ögel, pl. III, fig. 3).

The Inner-Asian nomads took these ponies on their long migrations. The European Huns, the Avars, the Parthians rode, reportedly and as observed in works of art (Kunstschatze, ill. 57), the Przewalski type of pony. The Przewalski category of pony is also to be observed amongst the mounts of the hunters represented in the paintings of the Manchurian caves of Leao-yang.

However, there were, as seen in art works, and there are still in Inner-Asia other equine races of pony-size but of a graceful appearance, distinguished from the heavy Przewalski pony through their comparatively small and delicate heads and their arched necks. It will appear below that these delicate ponies might be the issue of a tarpan-like species still extant in Khotan. It seems possible to come to the conclusion that these delicate ponies were admired species of equines in Inner-Asia since antiquity. The chariot horse of Siddartha in the Swat reliefs (Facenna, pl. 62), the riding and chariot horses of Vassanthara in the Miran murals (Stein, *Ruins of desert Cathay*, fig. 146), the quadrigas of astral deities, the stucco figurines of Şorcuk (Stein, *Serindia*, pl. 136), the Kanthaka representation in a Tun-huang scroll (Esin, *Influences* . . . , fig. 67), all show specimens of the pony, with the comparatively small head. The Uygur works also include many varieties of these tarpan-like creatures, represented with the naturalism and expressive charm of Uygur animal figures. In Uygur works, the little ponies are often shown kneeling down, as Turkic ponies were taught to do on command, according to

nov, fig. on p. 178. Skeletons of nomadic horses: Rudenko, *Culture of the Altay* . . . , ill. 15, 28. Al-Jāhīz, p. 39. The Ghazni relief: see Bombaci, *op. cit.*

Al-Jāhīz. On an Uygur mural (Fig. 6) a winged pair of tarpan-like ponies have knelt down to bear the burthen of a Buddhist monk, about to rise in the heavens. Other paintings show the little delicate ponies kneeling down to the Buddha, as representatives of the equine race. A herd of these graceful horses have been shown in the courtyard of a heavenly mansion (Fig. 8) and may well be the horses of the solar or lunar deity. The Kōk-Türk petroglyphs show also, amongst quality horses, many specimens of the diminutive pony, which seems to be the appreciated semi-wild hunter (Fig. 4) of tarpan type. These ponies are not foals, as they are elaborately saddled and, in Fig. 4, decorated with the three-dented mane and the other ornaments of a quality horse.

The Przewalski type of pony figures also in Turkic art. It appears in a gilded bronze relief from the Uybat region found in a trove with Turkic inscriptions and shows a riding archer shooting backwards a feline prey, while his poney gallops at a frantic pace (Fig. 2).

Al-Jāhīz relates the surprise of the Arabs when they witnessed the achievement of the Turkic ponies. A feral that had run away could not be caught by riders from Khorasan and others mounted on stately thoroughbreds. A Turk of short stature arrived who must have looked like the little figures of Selçuk art, to paraphrase the late Prof. Diez (in *Kunst der Islamischen Völker*, p. 186) like the moon-faced little personages which seem to be transposed from Uygur to Selçuk book-painting. The small Turk was riding an equally insignificant pony which may have been an *arkun* of the Przewalski type. While the Khorasanis and Arabs were laughing at the unprepossessing pair, the Turk set his poney at a swift pace and reached the feral.

Zangī has reported the appearance of a Turkic semi-wild pony at the time of the 'Abbassid caliphs. It has been already mentioned above that this so-called Turkic "mountain horse" (*ṭāgī*) had been brought as a present to the caliph by the ambassador of Samarkand and paraded at the head of a group of good horses, from Khuttal and elsewhere. Unanimous hilarity greeted the appearance of the Turkic pony which seemed very ugly to the princes of the court of the caliph who were used to see the best horses of the world arrive to Baghdad. The ambassador however explained that this Turkic *ṭāgī* was the fastest hunter available and related the following story. In ancient times two Turkic tribes had been at war with each other. One of the tribes carried away all the horses of the other tribe on a mountain, at the summit of which was a fiery water. They established their residence there, the mares were bound with a tether and left beside the water. The hidden onlookers saw the arrival of wild

stallions who thus sired the species called *ṭāgī*. The *ṭāgī* was so fast that on a distance of ten leagues, the onager or the deer could not reach it. It was noosed by the Turks not later than when about two years old and saddled and improved. Older foals could not be tamed. The Turks used the *ṭāgī* to catch with the noose the onager and to hunt in mountainous areas. The *taḡī* proved its mettle in Baghdad also where a race was organised to test it. To bring the *ṭāgī* in the same condition as the horses of the caliph's stable, he was fed, given attention for some time and its unshod hoofs were shod. The night before the races the horses were carried to a distance of fifteen leagues which they covered on the next day starting at the break of day. The Turkic *ṭāgī* arrived to the goal just after the morning prayer and ran away to cover another stretch of fifteen leagues so that its rider was exhausted. The quality horses of the caliph "pranced" to the goal, some six hours later, between midday and afternoon prayers. Thereupon, Ya'qūb al-Khuttalī, the Turkic king of Khuttal who served five months a year at the court of the caliph and was the greatest horse amateur of his time travelled to Turkistan to try to acquire some more *ṭāgī* ponies. Abū Ya'qūb had also described the *ṭāgī*. The signs of a good horse were completely lacking in the *ṭāgī*'s appearance. It was a "four-sixth", a medium-sized horse which had a rare coat of a strange appearance, similar to that of the onager. The *ṭāgī* was however plumper than the onager. It had a sturdy appearance, with powerful bones, shoulder-blades, dentition and hoofs. The neck was medium. The mane and tail were coarse and short. In short, the *ṭāgī* must have had the appearance of a wild horse and looked perhaps like the pony ridden by the hunter on the Turkic metal relief from the Uybat (Fig. 2). An incision had been made in the nostrils, to heighten the breathing capacity. The word *ṭāgī* is reminiscent of *taḡī* in *Kutadgu-bilig*, couplet 5375.

In the medieval age the semi-wild Turkic ponies are frequently mentioned. Kashgarī notes that the fastest hunter is the *arkun*, born of a domestic mare but sired by a wild stallion. He also mentions the *bulak* as a small horse, with a flat and comfortable back, specifies that it was raised by the Bulak Turks, but does not mention any wild parentage. The *arkun* had an honourable place in the stable of the Kara-hanlı king (*Kutadgu-bilig*, couplet 5369). The Ilkhanid period book-painting inserted in Hafiz Abrū's *Zubdat al-tawarīkh* (Topkapı H. 1653) which represents the Kara-hanlı king shows the monarch on a fawn coloured small pony with a white mane (fol. 284 v.) which may be a *ṭāgī* or *arkun*. The pony on which İltutmiş is mounted (Fig. 3) appears to be of the same type.

The Oğuz epics establish a distinction between two types of fast horses

used by the Turks at the period of the composition of the Dede Korkut legends which are dated around the ninth century. Dede Korkut foreseeing that he must escape from the fury of the Mad Karçar requests the fastest horses in the king's stables (Ergin, p. 30). These are of two species: the small-headed fast stallion (*kiçi başlı kiçer aygır*) and the sheep-headed brown horse (*toklı başlı torı aygır*). The description seems to correspond to a tarpan-type horse and to the heavy and hairy Przewalski pony.

The migration in great numbers of the Turkic ponies to the Near-East occurred at the Selçuk period. Yaqut (art. *Turkistan*) recounts the surprise of the Near-Easterns at the sight of these unfamiliar horses which were being watered in the Tigris. The onlookers apparently remembered the Prophetic *hadith* on the Mongoloid people who would water their horses in the Tigris and gain ascendancy over the Islamic world.

The works of art of the Selçuk period testify to the use of ponies as hunters. The Ghaznavid (ill. in Bombaci) and Selçuk riding hawkers on stucco reliefs, on bronze mirrors (Storm Rice, ill. 6) or on the tiles of the 'Alāuddīn Kiosk at Konya do not ride majestic horses like the Sassanian kings, but little ponies like some hawkers of the Leao-yang caves, like the tiger hunter of the Uybat relief (Fig. 2). They are evocative of Kashgarī's poem on the hunting Turkic prince:

*Çağrı alıp, arkun münüp, arkar yeter  
Avlar keyik, taygan idhip, tilki tutar.*

(vol. I, p. 42).

Falcon in hand, riding the semi-wild horse, he reaches in speed the  
mountain goat,  
He hunts the deer and drives the hound to catch the fox.

The pony with the delicate tarpan-like appearance continued to be represented in the character of a thoroughbred horse fit for princes in Ottoman works of art until about the end of the fifteenth century (Minorsky, *A catalogue...*, frontispiece). After that date, the princely horses became statelier. Yet, the little pony was still represented in the paintings depicting the Anatolian cavalry. In the opinion of experts, such as Mr. Yund, the Anatolian ponies are partly scions of the Inner-Asian Turkic ponies.

Meanwhile in Inner-Asia the wild ponies continued to be noosed in ancient fashion and herded for the purpose of domestication and inter-

breeding, as mentioned in histories and represented in art works (İpşiroğlu, ill. 117).

In this connection, a word may be said on a group of unidentified works of the Istanbul collections which through the stylistic analysis of Prof. Ettinghausen and the historical research effected by Prof. Togan, seem to be linked to the borders of Turkestan and of China. Prof. Togan has even suggested the possibility that Muḥammad Siyāh Qalam may be the reputed painter Muḥammad Bahşi Uygur described in Timurid records as a highly gifted and queer artist who tried to make Chinese porcelain. The Uygur origin of the painter and his taste for Chinese techniques could explain the peculiarities of Siyāh Qalam's work. However this might be, the horse representations of Siyāh Qalam paintings resemble in no way the slim horses with Arabian aspect painted by his contemporaries. The horses in the Siyāh Qalam works must be related to the horse representations on the borders of Eastern Turkestan and China, such as the Şorcuk pony figurines, the Uygur paintings of ponies, the Ming period representations of Eastern Turkestani *alaca* ponies. The same remark may be made on another unidentified painting showing *alaca* ponies which, as remarked by Prof. von Gabain, has an even more pronounced Chinese style (İpşiroğlu, ill. 113).

The noosing of *kulans* as the wild ponies are called, continues to our day. The Eastern Turkestanis in particular report of many kinds of *kulans*, living on high peaks, where even breathing is difficult. The *kulans* appear to be wild horses, wild asses, and a third species which they liken to a mule but which is entirely striped with reddish and white stripes. Mr. Hāji 'Abd-ur-Rahîm formerly of Turfan and now living in Istanbul, has encountered the zebra-like creatures in the mountains of Çimen, on the border of Turkestan and of Tibet, in the Çerçen area. They are apparently very swift and can never be caught. He has also seen onagers both in the Çimen Mountains and in the Altay Mountains and describes them as ashen gray, without stripes. The horse *kulans* of the Altay are apparently large-headed animals and possibly of the Przewalski type. The Altay and Bar Kөл ponies are crossed with *kulans*. These semi-wild horses which look like the Mongolian pony are extremely fast and win all races, as the *arkuns* mentioned by Kashgarî. The Barkөл pony, known for its bad temper is apparently difficult to ride. The Kırgız also go hunting on *kulans*, with hounds, hawks and eagles as in a painting of Muḥammad Siyāh Qalam (İpşiroğlu, "Ein Beitrag...").

The fastest and best-looking horse *kulan* in Eastern Turkestan is apparently found on the mountains of Khotan towards Aqsa-i Chîn. These

*kulans* are said to be sired by birds. Mr. Koşmak, the veterinary, told me that he personally noosed some of these. They are graceful creatures, with a golden coat and a small head and must consequently be of tarpan type. It has been noted that Prof. Togan saw in Başkurdistan a breed of equally delicate, fawn-coloured and striped semi-wild horses called *Şülgen* and said to be sired by aquatic stallions.

## 2. *The medium-sized thoroughbred*<sup>15</sup>

The historical sources as well as the art works are in agreement in depicting an Inner-Asian horse of middle-size whose main quality was its speed and resistance. It does not seem to have been greatly differentiated in aspect from the delicate type of semi-wild tarpan pony which has been commented upon above. Sometimes in art works it is difficult to decide if the horse with the small head and arched neck is of the pony or middle-sized thoroughbred class. A possible prototype of the medium-sized thoroughbred species is a horse representation of the pre-Hiung-nu period, found in the T'ien-shan mountains to which it will be referred under the name of the T'ien-shan horse (Ögel, pl. III, ill. 3). This creature presents a rather incongruous appearance which however corresponds to a real breed, represented many times and existing to our day, combining a heavy Przewalski type of trunk and limbs and a depressed rump together with the paradoxically diminutive head and the gracefully arched neck of a thoroughbred. The same type of horse appears in saddled form on the felt appliqué cover of Pazırık (see Abb. 3 of Miss Johansen's article), as an obviously valued riding horse, with a dented mane. The textile cover of the Hiung-nu Noin-ula grave illustrates two specimens of similarly shaped horses (Rudenko, "Hunnic culture", pl. 63). The medium species of horses amongst the hunters represented in the Manchurian Leao-yang cave paintings present also these peculiar characteristics. The graveyard figurines of Astanah show in perhaps exaggerated form the same combination of a heavy trunk and limbs, even thick and seemingly furry

<sup>15</sup> Middle-sized thoroughbreds. Southern Turkic horses and groups which raised them: Liu Mau-Lsai, ps. 453-54, 267 (A-sche-te). For Ho-lu, see Chavannes, *Documents*, index. For Enkie of Sse-kie, ps. 243, 318, 322, notes 25, 1776. For K'i-pi, see Chavannes, index. For Hi-kie, see ps 357, 568, and Chavannes, p. 87. For Hu-sie, see N. Togan, note 32. Shen horses: N. Togan, pp. 28, 30, 42, 51, notes 28, 32, Al-Jāhiz, p. 23. Hiung-nu wild ponies in Kansu: Eberhard, *Çin Kaynaklarına göre . . . Muḥammad Siyāh Qalam: Togan, On the miniatures . . .*, pp. 5-9. Turkic horses brought to Ghazni: Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol invasion*, pp. 272-84.

fetlocks, with a surprisingly delicate head perched on a phenomenally long and arched neck. If we turn to the Altaic K $\ddot{o}$ k-T $\ddot{u}$ r $\ddot{u}$ k petroglyph (Fig. 4), in the group of three horses of various species, while the charger is large and the pony is diminutive, the medium saddlehorse is of the T'ien-shan type. One may perhaps assume that the Turkic hunter renowned for its resistance and its speed, but said to be of a "goodly proportion", was similar to the medium-sized horse of the K $\ddot{o}$ k-T $\ddot{u}$ r $\ddot{u}$ k petroglyph.

The reputed "Shen" horses of Kucha, also raised in Khuttal and Soghd, were like the Turkic hunter, small horses of exceptional resistance, used on long expeditions. The smaller species of horses represented in the sixth and seventh centuries in Turkestani works of art probably represent the Shen horse. The larger of the  $\mathcal{S}$ orcuk stucco horse figurines (Stein, *Serindia*, pl. 136), the horse of the Varakhshah riding archer (ill. in Shishkin), may be counted as middle-sized horses, between the pony and the charger.

At the end of the seventh century the Turks were raising "south of the desert" in the area of the Shen horses, a breed of horse entirely similar to the Shen horse, and of which many representations are extant. This is a medium-sized horse of a sturdy but graceful aspect which was used in many capacities, as saddle-horse, hunter or charger. The southwards movement of Turkic tribes and the appearance in Kansu of the semi-wild kind of Hiung-nu ponies correspond to notices of this specific breed of "south of the desert K $\ddot{o}$ k-T $\ddot{u}$ r $\ddot{u}$ k horses" which were similar to breeds raised by the king of Farghanah and by the Uygurs. The Sse-kie, the Fu-li-yii, the K'ipi, the Hu-si, the Nu-la, all raised horses similar to a prototype which was the Sse-kie "south of the desert" K $\ddot{o}$ k-T $\ddot{u}$ r $\ddot{u}$ k horse of good proportion. This southern type of Turkic horse is however not expressly differentiated from Northern Turkic hunters, such as the A-shi-na and other horses. The breeders of the Southern Turkic horse, the Sse-kie, crossed the desert to Kansu between 690 and 705. Remarkably enough, a rider figurine found at Tun-huang, now at the Ermitage Museum and designated by Artamonov as a Turkic rider (Fig. 10) shows a type of horse which is related to the Uygur representations of thoroughbreds of the Turfan area such as the splendid black charger (Fig. 11) shown on a mural painting, with the accomplished technique of Uygur animal representation at its peak. The Uygur painters were not only amongst the skilled artists of Inner-Asia but had a knowledge of horse anatomy which can only be explained through the familiarity of a riding people. Another Uygur representation of Kanthaka (ill. in Haertel)

as a milkwhite thoroughbred with an expressive grace, can testify to the taste of the Uygurs in what concerns the esthetic concept of the thoroughbred. It may be truly said that the Turkic form of the horse ideal has been embodied in the Uygur thoroughbred.

A further testimony on the Southern Turkic thoroughbred appears in the Sung period Chinese paintings published by Prof. Ettinghausen showing Uygur chargers. Other Chinese paintings represent Khotan horses (Paul-David, *La Chine des Song*). All are medium sized thoroughbreds similar to the Uygur black charger (Fig. 11). It must be noted that the Chinese representations are naturally somewhat deformed with the then prevalent taste for overfed horses. The early Turks had admired slim, fast horses (*incka*, *yüğürik*) and *Irk-bitig* considered the overfed and consequently unwilling horse as a bad omen. Yet perhaps with the growth of the influence of the Chinese taste, the concept of the prosperous, lordly horse had won precedence over the image of the well-fed, but animated and graceful Turkic thoroughbred, as represented in the Uygur murals. In the eleventh century Mahmud of Kashgar said: *Beğler semüz atlanır* "the lords ride fat horses".

Prof. Togan's research in Arabian sources has clarified the question of the Southern Turkic horse and brought to light that it was no other than the Shen horse of pre-Turkic Kucha and its vicinity. The Arabs called indifferently Turkic or Tokharian *birḍaun* all Inner-Asian horses which they came to know through the Turks of Tokharistan. In the late 'Omayyad and in the 'Abbassid periods, the horse-breeders of the mountains of Tokharistan seem to have been predominantly Turkic. A Tokharian horse had first been to the 'Omayyad court, by an ambassador of Farghanah, a pagan Turk named Bayincur. This thoroughbred *birḍaun* had been admired by the Arabs for its qualities of speed and resistance. The horses raised by the Turkic Bek dynasty of Khuttal, a breed which Prof. Togan has shown to be identical with the Shen horses, were equally considered valuable mounts. The Beks raised horses for the 'Abbassid caliphs both in Khuttal and in Baghdad. Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuttalī whose work on horse-breeding is well-known was a Bek prince.

The Turkic or Tokharian horse seemed heavy to the Arabs who designated it under the name of *birḍaun* which is derived, as Prof. Bombaci kindly informs me, from medieval Latin and means, both in original and in arabicised form, a draft horse. This appellation may be due to the fact that the *birḍaun* had some sprinkling of Przewalski wild ponies' blood with the characteristic heavy trunk, fluffy coat and furry fetlocks of these heavy species. The Przewalski antecedents may have betrayed themselves



in other features denoting wild ancestry such as the small size, the extraordinarily swift pace, the restless vivacity and the strong hoofs noted by Arab authors in the Turkic horses.

Al-Jāhīz compares what must have been the best *birḍaun*, the Kagan's saddle-horse, with the best of Near-Eastern steeds, the mount of the Sassanian monarch. The related episode which is probably legendary nevertheless offers the characteristics of direct observation of both species of horses. It must be remembered that the "great Kagan" of that period was the "Lord of the horse", the Toghuzghuz monarch who resided between China and Khorasan, in Kushan. If Kushan is Kucha, the Lord of the horse's capital was the land of the Shen and dragon-horses of antiquity. This point confirms again Prof. Togan's opinion on the identity of the southern Turkic horse or *birḍaun* with the ancient Shen horse.

The great Kagan and the Sassanian great king parleyed on horseback. The Kagan was firmly seated and motionless, like a statue. In this respect he resembled the Sassanian royal steed, which was perhaps of the heavy type of large horse represented on Sassanian reliefs, and stood perfectly still as a horse in effigy. But the Sassanian monarch and the Turkic *birḍaun* were extremely lively. While the Sassanian monarch excitedly gesticulated with hands and head, the *birḍaun* ceaselessly trampled and rose on its hind legs.

Kashgarī mentions a category of horse called *ikılaç* which was a good-looking horse, used both as racer and as ambler (*erik*). Zangī's remark on the amblers of Khuttal suggest the possibility that the *ikılaç* was a variety of southern Turkestani and Khuttalī middle-sized horse. The *ikılaç* does not figure in the list of good horses stabled by the Kara-hanlı king (*Kutadgu-bilig*, couplet 5369). Reports (Zangī, fol. 72) from the period of Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuttalī on the southern Turkic or Türkmen horse are sufficiently explicit on this middle-sized Turkic species' appearance. Abū Ya'qūb intended to campaign on a distance of a hundred leagues. Amongst his soldiers he observed a Türkmen who had only one horse. The king observed that the campaign would exhaust the strength of several horses. The Türkmen however persisted that his single horse was capable to follow the army throughout the campaign. Abū Ya'qūb's interest was at once roused and he began to observe the Türkmen horse. The rider was young and drove ceaselessly, adding the strain of hunting had of polo parties to the fatigue of campaigning. The Türkmen took nowever care to let his horse roam freely and fed it well. The Türkmen horse ate more than others and claimed for more oats by hitting the ground with his front hoof. While other horses grew weary and thin, the

Türkmen horse had a prosperous appearance. Abū Ya'qūb has depicted the Türkmen species as a medium-sized horse of an undistinguished appearance, showing no signs of quality. It had however strong bones and boasted of a coat which is considered first rate in the Near-East, the spotless bay hue (*kumait*, which Zangī also calls with the Turkic name of *yağız*). The Türkmen horse had a particularity. When one struck its back, it folded (?) its spine (*ba pusht dutāgī kard*), without showing any signs of fear. Zangī himself had such a horse, a bay horse with a white frontal spot which was also an excellent horse, on which Zangī played polo, hunted and campaigned without rest. The Türkmen horse appears then as a medium horse suitable for all purposes and with a darker coat than Northern Turkic *ṭāgī* semi-wild horses. Marco Polo notes that the Türkmen horse was also bred by Anatolian Turks.

The horse on the relief from the 'Alauddīn Palace of Konya showing a dragon and lion hunt (Fig. 7) may have been a middle-sized Türkmen horse of the species described by Zangī. In the epic poems also, the *alps* who ride to lone adventures had horses which could be used for many purposes, and looked nevertheless handsome enough in parades. The Ottoman book-paintings show also many specimens of the middle-sized horse which could be trained as an *ambler*, and was used on long rides as a horse of versatile qualities. In formal rides, the large horse was reserved for the king or the commander in chief and the main attendants rode medium-sized horses of good species (Fig. 5).

The middle-sized thoroughbred of a rather heavy species, similar to the *birḍaun*, is represented in Selçuk, Ilkhanid and Timurid art very frequently. Some representations in humorous vein are even reminiscent of the ancient horse figure on the Kök-Türk Altaic petroglyph (Fig. 4). These drawings of unidentified origin have been attributed by Blochet (pl. 104) to the Herat school and by Martin (pl. 230) to the Ottoman school.

Prof. Togan encountered in Badakhshan a type of horse bred by Turks of that region, which reminded him of the historical descriptions of the *birḍaun*. This was a medium-sized horse, with strong hoofs, whose remarkable vivacity was further heightened by an artificial incision made in the nostrils. It held its head not upwards like a classical thoroughbred but downwards in a gesture often noticeable in medium-sized horse representations of Eastern Turkestan, such as the Şorcuk figurines, or the Chinese paintings of Uygur horses (Ettinghausen).

3. *Large thoroughbreds*<sup>16</sup>

The Chinese sources give the measurements of chargers and of chariot horses, as those of comparatively larger species. The graves of ancient nomads contain skeletons of such large horses which according to Rudenko, may have been bred by the nomads themselves. Vitt opines that the nomads acquired these thoroughbreds from elsewhere. When the art works are observed, it appears that just as in Western Asia, the ancient horses of Inner-Asia also had the appearance of chariot horses, with a massive and elongated trunk and a flat back. The Hiung-nu chariot horses were reputed and said to drag a light chariot on a distance of a thousand *lis* a day. The procession of massive white horses each bearing a rider seated on the Pazırık carpet are in the proportions of Siddartha's chariot horse which also bears a rider (Facenna, pl. 62) or the white chariot horses of Vassanthara in the Miran murals (Stein, *Desert Cathay*, ill. 146). The Han charger presents also a massive appearance (Paul-David, *Chine des Han*).

The ideal of the muscular and fiery Hellenistic charger with its arched neck, curved spine and full croup apparently arrived to Inner-Asia at the same time as the reports on Alexander's large horses, which were long-lived legends, and subsisted until Marco Polo's time. A Hellenized version of the fiery charger appears in Sarmatian art (Rudenko, "...Altay", ill. 113). Kushan art evolved its own norm of the charger (Facenna, pl. 151), in Hellenistic taste, yet, partly inspired by Central Asian breeds, such as the T'ien-shan horse with comparatively heavier limbs, elongated trunk and more depressed croup than the Hellenistic shape. A conventional charger form which might be called Greco-Kushan was thus established and evolved towards the ideal of later Central Asian art, as seen on the murals of Kızıl (Le Coq, *Bilderatlas*, ill. 32) and of Panj-kent (pl. 33). The radiance of Kushan art reached also China. The late Han period representations of Hiung-nu wars show both Hiung-nu and Chinese chargers on similar conventional mounts, with reminiscences of Kushan and Hellenistic shapes (Eberhard, *Çin Tarihi*, pl. VI). Other Hiung-nu representations show less conventional and possibly more true

<sup>16</sup> Large horse skeletons: Shang period at Ta-su-k'ung near Anyang: Cottrell, *Concise encyclopedia of archeology* (London, 1960), pl. 11. T. Vitt and Rudenko on large nomadic thoroughbreds; Rice, p. 71. Hiung-nu and Turkic chariot horses: Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre . . . Turkic carts*: Ögel, pp. 204, 293. Alexander's horses: N. Togan, note on p. 28. Sir Gerard Clauson kindly told me that there were reports on Alexander's horses reaching Eastern Turkestan, in classical sources. Large Kirgiz horses: Eberhard, *Çinin şimal komşuları*, p. 68.

to nature representations of gigantic, muscular chargers of a fiery aspect, which might be the same T'ien-shan type of horse, large varieties of which were used as chargers, as seen in the Astanah figurine (Artamonov, p. 43).

In the Turkic period, the problem of the origin of large horses occur again. It is true that at this time there are reports on the large horses bred by the Kırğız. In fact the Sulek petroglyphs show many horses of the type of the massive, flat-backed, large horses of the Pazırık carpet. The Sulek specimens are particularly obese, short-limbed (Fig. 12, 13). Images of this type of large horse are equally found in the Kurikan area. One such horse bears a *tamga* (Artamonov, p. 210) which might be an indication of origin. The Sulek and Kurikan large, obese, flat-backed horses, decorated with *beçkems*, carry either archers, or knights in armour who charge with *batrak* in hand (Fig. 13) (the *batrak* is according to Kashgarī the lance bearing the *alp*'s colours). Amongst the three horses of the Kök-Türk petroglyph, the largest may be recognizable as a charger through his aigrette, *beçkem* and seems to belong also to the category of the large, obese, flat-backed horses (Fig. 4). In this connection, it will be recalled that together with the ordinary riding horse, the *özlüg*, Kül Tegin is reported in the Orkun inscriptions to ride the "Az" or "Azman" horses, obviously another species. *Azman* means gelding in Ottoman Turkish. Prof. Togan thinks that the Azman might be a horse raised by the Az. Still another specimen of the large, obese charger is seen on a jug from Nagy Szent Miklos, a trove with Turkic inscriptions (Otto-Dorn, ill. 31).

The questions raised by the differentiation of the shapes of horses on Turkic petroglyphs is perhaps partly answered in *Kutadgu-bilig*'s couplet on the stable of the Kara-hanlı king:

*Kewel, tazı, büktel, tagı arkun,  
Akur toldı . . .*

(couplet 5369)

*Kewel, Arab, büktel, and arkun,  
The stable is full . . .*

The *arkun*, as commented above, is a semi-wild horse. In his transposition of *Kutadgu-bilig* into modern Turkish, the lamented Prof. Arat has interpreted *kewel, tazı* as thoroughbreds in the category of Arab horses. Kashgarī also cites a couplet in which the *kewel* appears as a charger with strong hoofs:

*Yürüdü kewel at,  
Çakıldı kızıl ot.*

(art. *kewel*)

The *kewel* advanced  
A red flame struck (under its hoofs)

If the question of the *kewel* is left aside, there remains the *büktel*. On the *büktel* Kashgarī is explicit. It is a massive horse with a broad, comfortable back, and a flat spine. In fact, it may correspond to the large, obese horses with flat spines in the Sulek petroglyphs (Fig. 13) and to the charger of the Altay petroglyph (Fig. 4).

Representations of Turkic draft horses, harnessed to the burthen of a cart, bearing the supplementary weight of a tent and its inmates and occasionally carrying even a rider-groom, appear in later book-paintings. A Slav book-painting showing the Kıpçak migrations illustrates a powerful draft-horse with a strong neck, seemingly arched by the strain of the harness (Artamonov, p. 454). On the other hand, the illustration of Turkic migrations in the chapter of Rashīd al-Dīn's world history devoted to the Turks (H. 1654 dated 717 A.H. of Topkapı) represents an idealised slender horse in the prevailing early Timurid taste.

#### 4. *The Turco-Arab*<sup>17</sup>

The interbreeding between the Turkic and Arab breeds whose offspring is said to be the present Türkmen *argamak* as well as the Arab pony has been studied at length. The histories note that the Turkic and Arab breeds came into contact at a very early period. The Arab riders encountered Turkic riders in the vicinity of Multan as early as 44 A.H. and proceeded to cut horse-tail trophies in imitation of Turks. It has been noted that the Turkic horses came to the Near-East already in the 'Omayyad period. Zangī confirms this fact by relating an episode which happened before the period of Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuttalī in which Turkmen and Arabs had argued on the respective merit of their horses

<sup>17</sup> Interrelation with Arab horses: N. Togan, note 61. The comparatively large size of the Arab horse: Eberhard, *Çin kaynaklarına göre . . .* The Uygurs present Arab horses to the Chinese: Ögel, p. 368. Khorasan horses: Al-Jāhīz, pp. 10,8-11. Minorsky, *Ḥudūd*, pp. 19, 100, 116, 119. "Tupçak": Togan, *Giriş*, p. 438, note 157. Baysungur-*Shāhnāmah*: Goddard, pls. I-X. On the identification of painters: Togan, *On the miniatures . . .*, pp. 6-9, Pougatchenkova, M. Qādī Aḥmad. The *argamak*: see Radloff, *Wörterbuch*, art. "*argamak*". Prof. Togan informed me that the *argamak* was bred by the Türkmen on the Sir Darya, near Ashkabad (Tekke Türkmen raise the *akhal*). General Omar kindly gave the names of the Türkmen of Qatagan of Mazār i-sharīf, of Balkh and of some Özbek tribes as breeders of fine horses of *argamak* aspect. Mr. Alptekin was good enough to indicate the Eastern Turkestani *argamak* bred in the Yulduz plateau near Qarashahr, in the Sayram plateau of the İli region, in Tamşılık, in Barahtay.

(fol. 83). The Arab horse had reached the Uygur land in 1006 and was even presented by the Uygurs to China. *Kutadgu-bilig* written in 1068 mentions the *tāzī* amongst the Kara-hanlı king's horses. The word *tazī* is however not always indicative of an Arab horse but may also indicate a horse raised by Arabs in Khorasan or elsewhere, or a horse of any breed which looks like an Arab. The Oğuz epics mention specifically Arab horse (Ergin, p. 21), and the *bidevi* or "long-necked *bidevi*", as well as other undetermined large horses (Kazılığ Mountain's large horses).

In the interbreeding of various species of horses which followed the Islamization of Central Asia, the Khorāsānī breeds mentioned as stately horses by Al-Jāhīz, must also have played a part. *Ḥudūd al-‘ālam* notes a few places in Khorāsān where horses were bred. But this does not of course mean that these horses were entirely different from Turkestan breeds. As noted by Al-Jāhīz, the Turks and Khorāsānīs were connected as closely as the Meccans and the Madinese. The word Khorasani itself is not indicative of an ethnic origin and may indicate an Iranian as well as a Turk. In fact it will become apparent that the Khorasani expert horsemen were Arabs. On the other hand, the Khorasanis who were settled by the ‘Abbassid caliphs to the south of present Turkey were Turkic riders, as expounded by Mr. N. Ramazanoğlu to the XXVIth congress of orientalists. It seems then possible that the large Khorasani horses could be connected with certain large Turkic breeds, such as the Kırğız (Girtis) horses. They might again be local horses of the large species said to have existed in Badakhshan before the introduction of the *birḍaum*. In Marco Polo's time the legend of the ancient large horses was connected with Alexander. A possible connection between Khorasani and Persian horses may occur. The Persian horse was known for its placidity, both in the period of Al-Jāhīz and later, when the Turco-Arab had already become the standard equine ideal of the Islamic world. In the Ottoman period the horses of Afghan breeders were linked to those of Persian breeders. On the occasion of the visit of the ambassador of the Afghan kings of Persia in 1141 A.H., Küçük Çelebi-zâde notes that their horses were like those of the Persians. He compares these horses disparagingly to the lively Turkish steeds and remarks in a vein comparable to that of Al-Jāhīz that the Persian horses were like chessboard figures which needed to be pushed manually into a new position.

When one turns to the art works, an early sign of the interbreeding of Inner-Asian and Near-Eastern horses may be said to appear on a painting of Qaşr al-khair depicting a riding archer in Inner-Asian garb, who is clean-shaven as the Turks were reported to be, in opposition to Arabs and

Iranians, and whose hair is flowing, again like a Turkic prince. The horse itself does not show the fine limbs of the desert thoroughbred, or the stockiness of the Sassanian steeds. It is however a larger horse than the horses on the southern Turkic and Chinese representations. Yet, it has some features of the Inner-Asian breeds, such as the elongated trunk, the depressed rump, the knotted tail. In fact, it looks rather like the present Türkmen *argamak* which is said to be crossed from Turkic and Arab breeds. The Qaşr al-khair painting suggests that an interbreeding between Arab and Turkic horses may have occurred even before the period of Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuttalī.

The reports (Zangī, fols. 46, 48-9) however affirm that it was Abū Ya'qūb who first experimented a mixture of breeds between Turkic mares and *Tāzī* (Arab, Khorasani?) stallions and produced the Turco-Arab species. Abū Ya'qūb was guided in equine matters by ten Türkmen experts who were masters in their field and by ten Arab experts from Khorasan, who were equally skilled. Zangī opposes the Turkic connoisseur and author Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuttalī to the Arab amateur and author Muḥammad 'Abdallāh Ibn Muslim.

Zangī who wrote at about 555 A.H. already considers the Turco-Arab as a familiar horse. He notes however the peculiarities of thoroughbred Turkic horses, and opposes them to the large non-Turkic horses. All species seem to have abounded in the area where Zangī lived which seems to have been the vicinity of Mosul and Damascus that he mentions (fol. 50b). Zangī knew Turkish as well as Persian and Arabic. He frequently uses Turkish words. He was a contemporary and possibly a relation of the Turkic Zangī dynasty. In fact he mentions the court of "the late Sultan Muḥammad" and the princely vassals of the monarch (Naşruddīn Akkuş, Zain al-Dīn Küçük of Mosul) who owned large stables and organised races and riding games, as his daily sport companions. Zangī himself was a passionate horse amateur who recalls with emotion the day when as a young man devoted to riding sports, he came in possession of Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuttalī's famous work (fols. 46 v., 50 v.).

Judging from the equine representations in book-paintings, the Mongol invasion must have brought many Inner-Asian species of horses and possibly interrupted the development of the Turco-Arab breed. It is only in the Timurid era that the ideal shape of equine beauty, similar to the Qaşr al-khair horse and to the present Türkmen *argamak* became again prevalent. It is significant that this return to the Turco-Arab ideal was evolved on the ancient area astride Turkistan and Khorasan where an-

ciently the Arab and Türkmen horses had met and where the Türkmens now breed the *argamak*.

The evolution may be followed in Timurid painting. A horse representation of the miscell. coll. H. 2160 of Topkapı attributed to the Timurid artist Amīr Jalāl Kāsī of Farghanah illustrates well the early aspect of the Türkmen *argamak*. In the Baysungur-*Shāhnāmah* dated 1437, the work of three Türkmens of Tabriz who were all members of the Çagatay Turkic aristocracy (Ja'far Baysungurī, 'Ali Muşawwir, Qivām al-Dīn Mujallid) and of the Timurid prince Mirza Khalil, again the *argamak* is represented. In this instance, however, certain features of the present Arabian, such as the slender limbs, are discernible. The illustrations made by the Turkic painter Maḥmūd Mudhahhib to Niẓāmī's *Makhzan al-asrār* in Bukhara, in 1545, show finer horses, nearer the forms of the present Arabian steed.

Timurid art had achieved an immutable pattern of the thoroughbred. This horse, seemed to be like the ancient *birḍaun*, a versatile mount, used in many circumstances, as chargers, hunters, and when playing riding games.

The Turks of Inner-Asia also play on the *argamaks* their present riding game, the *oğlak* (*büz-Kashī*) in which the object of contest between the riders is the body of a mountain-goat. These modern breeders of the "southern" type of Inner-Asian horses in Russian Turkestan and in the predominantly Turkic areas of Northern Afghanistan parade with their *argamaks* in festivities and use them also in daily life. In Eastern Turkestan, the *argamak* is also raised but used only on festive occasions and when playing the *oğlak*. The local semi-wild and other ponies are preferred for racing and hunting.

All Inner-Asian Turks wear their best attires for riding games. The Türkmens wear their large sheepskin or smaller karakül caps and their bright *çapans* which looks like the ancient three-quarter coat of the Kök-Türks. The Kırğız and the Eastern Turkestanis wear felt or velvet hats which are brimmed and notched, decorated with leopard or other fur and ornamented with feathers. These hats may be observed in Siyāh Qalam's painting of riders (İpşiroğlu, "Ein Beitrag...").

In Turkey, horse representations had offered a medley of various types of mostly North-Eastern Asian ponies. In the sixteenth century, the *argamak* type was introduced, mainly in the character of a parade horse (*alay atı*), on which the sultan and high personages were shown in effigy. The numerous paintings showing the Turkish cavalry in display all offer the same composition. The commander in chief is mounted on the



“parade horse”, a large thoroughbred in *argamak* shape. The officers however are already astride the resistant middle-sized horses on which they will cover long distances, and encounter enemy charges. Spare horses are also led by grooms. The Anatolian cavalry is aligned, astride the sturdy Anatolian ponies which are still extant (Esin, *Turkish miniature...*, pl. 9).

The scenes of book-paintings depicting the riding game of *cirid* played by throwing javelins show that the *argamak* type of horse was used also in this occasion. The Turkish peasants still play the *cirid*, but on their Anatolian ponies.

The histories mention more than once the later importation of Inner-Asian horses to Turkey, presented by the khans of Crimea or by the princes of Turkestan, or brought by migrants. The elaboration of the *argamak* type as an equine ideal seems to correspond to the foundation in the Ottoman palace of a school of Türkmen masters under Shah Kulu which worked alongside the local school of Ottoman palace painters. The late Prof. Meriç was about to publish the names of several Türkmen artists who had arrived to Turkey after the battle of Çaldıran. This list found in Topkapı archives has unfortunately remained unpublished. The *argamak* style equine ideal was adopted by Ottoman painters as the perfect shape of the royal mount. The *Hunarnāmah* dated 1585 and illustrated by the celebrated Ottoman painter Osman which devotes many pages to the sultan's equestrian achievements, shows constantly the *argamak* type of thoroughbred, as royal mounts. The horse of Suleyman the Magnificent (Fig. 6) is a typical *argamak* of the *azgan* (highest) variety according to Mr. Koşmak's verdict.

After the Ottomans' link with the Türkmen and Tatar world was cut through the loss of Adharbajjan and of Crimea, the thoroughbreds came only from Arabian lands. The Ottoman equine ideal became ever more like the Arab thoroughbred, with a full rump, a sleek coat and slim fetlocks. The author of the Ottoman Turkish ms. *Kitāb al-maqbūl fī fadhāil al-khuyūl*, dated 1106 A.H., mentions fleetingly amongst other breeds of good horses, the species raised by the “Türkmen and the Ghuzzah” (fol. 17 v.) but affirms that the best horse in the world is the “date-coloured desert *sāilāwī*” (fol. 19).

The same author describes the horse as a very tame, an almost human creature, devoid of the allegorically significant but robust, heroic and grotesque equine characteristics so aptly depicted in ancient Turkic art works and texts. The horse seems to be reduced to the pattern of a parade horse, for the use of the sultan's formal *alay*:

A good horse should have a charming mien, gazelle's eyes. Its ears should be wide apart and in the shape of reed leaves. It should have small teeth, a well-rounded forehead, dry eyebrows. The horse must be tall, have a high waist, a delicate muzzle, a sweeping mane, flat shoulders, plump thighs, a full chest, a large croup. The well proportioned limbs should end with dark-hued fetlocks. The horse must be quick in response, yet distant and aloof. It should pace with pride, as if greeting (admirers) right and left. It should know its worth and step carefully. If it encounters a river it should not be afraid and take it in its stride. The horse's pace should be firm, not like the slinking of hypocrites but like the step of refined gentlemen. The horse should never relax from the effort of maintaining its rump and withers at an equal height.<sup>18</sup>

One wonders if this humanisation of the equine expressed the end of the horse age and the consequent decadence of the heroic concept of Ancient Inner-Asia or if it was another aspect of that devotion which the Turk felt for his daily companion, the horse. Even in the nineteenth century, Namık Kemal paraphrasing the Crimean han Gazi Giray, epitomized the attachment to the equine races of the Turks who still breed horses on the plateaux of Inner-Asia and Anatolia:

*Râyete meyl ederiz kaamet-i dîlcû yerine,  
Tuğâ bel bağlamışız, kâkül-ü hoşbû yerine.*

Our inclination is towards the horse-tail standard, instead of the heart-  
robbing figure,  
We have linked our fate to the horse's tail, not to the perfumed lock.

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<sup>18</sup> Turkish text of quotation from Yund, *op. cit.*: "Atların eyüsü oldurki güzel yüzli, ceylân gözlü ola ve kulakları karnış yaprağı gibi olup iki kulağı arası geniş, ve ufak dişli, yumru alınlı, kuru kaşlı, uzun boylu ve uzun saçlı, kısa belli, küçük burunlu ve küçük omuzlu, yassı ve oyluğu dolu, çok göğüslü, kuyruk yatağı geniş, butları arası etli, aşıklarından aşağı siyâh ola. Sür'atle baka, yabancı, yâni gurûrlu, ve yürürken iki tarafına selam veriyormuş gibi yürüye. Önüne ırmak gelürse, sıçrayup geçe, irkilmeye, korkmaya. Yürürken ayaklarını berk dutunup, çiy sak adamlar gibi yürümiye. Kendüyü aşağı koyuvermiye, önu ardından ve ardı önünden yüksek olmiya".

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