



Examining Animal Figures in Turkish Mythology in Terms of Veterinary Medicine History

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Abstract: Turks have believed in many religions/beliefs in a long historical process. Among these religions/beliefs, the belief in Shamanism/Sky God has been a priority. This belief, which places nature in its centre, has significantly affected the life and philosophy of life of the Turks. Animals have found their place in the mythology, culture, art, concept of time, literature, and many other subjects of the Turks. The Turks attributed holiness to the horse, the eagle, the deer, and many other animals, especially wolves, and placed them at the centre of their lives. In this study, various important animals for the Turks are discussed in the context of Turkish Mythology and culture; besides the characteristics of the animals, the Turkish Calendar with Twelve Animals and the animals mentioned in the main Turkish Legends (Legend of the Creation, Legend of the Origins, Legend of Oğuz Kağan, Legend of Şu, Legend of Alp Er Tunga, Legend of Satuk Buğra Han) were examined and their importance in terms of the place of animals in the lives of the Turks and the history of veterinary medicine was emphasized.

Keywords: Animal, History of veterinary medicine, Turkish mythology.

Türk Mitolojisindeki Hayvan Figürlerinin Veteriner Hekimlik Tarihi Açısından İncelenmesi

Özet: Türkler uzun bir tarihsel süreç içerisinde çok sayıda din ve inanışa inanmışlardır. Bu din ve inanışlar içerisinde Şamanizm/Gök Tanrı inancı öncelikli olmuştur. Doğayı merkezine alan bu inanış Türklerin yaşantısını ve hayat felsefelerini önemli ölçüde etkilemiştir. Hayvanlar, Türklerin mitoloji, kültür, sanat, zaman kavramı, edebiyat ve daha birçok noktasında kendilerine yer bulmuştur. Türkler kurt başta olmak üzere at, kartal, geyik ve daha birçok hayvana kutsallık atfetmiş ve hayatlarının merkezine yerleştirmişlerdir. Bu çalışmada Türkler için önemli olan çeşitli hayvanlar Türk Mitolojisi ve kültürü bağlamında ele alınmış olup, hayvanların özellikleri yanı sıra On İki Hayvanlı Türk Takvimi ve belli başlı Türk Destanlarında (Yaratılış Destanı, Türeyiş Destanı, Oğuz Kağan Destanı, Şu Destanı, Alp Er Tunga Destanı, Satuk Buğra Han Destanı) adı geçen hayvanlar incelenmiş ve hayvanların Türklerin hayatındaki yeri ve veteriner hekimliği tarihi açısından önemi vurgulanmıştır. **Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hayvan, Türk mitolojisi, Veteriner hekimliği tarihi.

Introduction

Turks led a nomadic life, mostly based on animals (Koca, 2002), in a geography spanning a wide area, which in history is also designated Eurasia (Baykara, 2001), and with the influence of this wide geography, they believed in many religions/beliefs, primarily Shamanism/Sky God. Nature has shaped the lifestyles, prohibitions, beliefs, and philosophy of Turks who attribute great importance to nature (Güngör, 2002; Moldabay and Azmuhanova, 2019).

Mythology, which is formed by the combination of the Greek words "Mythos" in the sense of fairy tale, story and "Logos" in the sense of science; it is a form of expression that is formed by the emphasis of the supernaturalness of the characters through the creation of events that occurred in primitive ages (Can, 2011; Özarlan, 1994).

In Turkish Mythology, the Sky God, the creator of the universe located in the sky, is referred to as the Turkish God. In addition to the Sky God, there are god/helper spirits with good character known by names such as Ülgen, Kayra Han, Ana Maygil, Yayık, Suyla, Umay, Utkuci, Ak-ene, while there are also god/helper spirits with bad character such as Erlik and Albastı (Çoruhlu, 2002).

Since, throughout history, Turks attribute great importance to nature and animals in their lives, animals have found an important place in Turkish Mythology. While Turks consider some animals sacred, they attribute bad meanings to others (Özkartal, 2012; Tansü and Güvenç, 2015). In Turkish Mythology, animal figures such as the wolf, horse, deer, turtle, ram, sheep, rabbit, eagle, goose, etc., are frequently seen. These animals are frequently referred to in studies on the history of veterinary medicine (Armutak, 2004; Armutak, 2013a; Armutak, 2013b).

Orkun (2022) claims that the first veterinarians in Turks were shamans. In addition to this, he also mentions that in the geographies where Turks live, they have information about animal diseases, especially the horse, and their treatments, which have been passed down from the past to the present. According to Dilgimen (1947), the significance of veterinary medicine among the Turks is emphasized due to their knowledge and usage of words related to animals and diseases. Erk (1966) says that the source of all diseases in ancient Turks was attributed to the spirits and that the shaman also performed rituals in the treatment of animals.

In the study, animal figures frequently encountered in Turkish Mythology: culture, and legends were examined and classified as terrestrial animals, fowls, and other mythological figures. In addition to these, in the study, the Turkish Calendar with Twelve Animals and briefly the animal figures in the main Turkish Legends are also mentioned.

1. Animals

1.1. Terrestrial Animals;

1.1.1. Lion: The Lion figure; although it is thought that it entered Turkish art together with Buddhism, the presence of

lion depictions in the Kurgan¹ of Pazyryk² shows that the Turks have known the lion since ancient times. The mane of the lion, which is a symbol of bravery, was associated with the Turks because the Turks had long hair (Çoruhlu, 2002). In the west of the Turkish world, the lion is considered a sacred animal. Especially in the Uyghur and Oghuz regions, there are many people named Aslan (meaning lion in the Turkish language). It is possible to say that the lion took the place of the wolf in some Turkish regions. With the advent of Islam, the lion has maintained and continued its importance in society and beliefs with the phrase "Ali, the lion of Allah" (Roux, 2011).

1.1.2. Horse: The Horse, as a word, is thought to be one of the oldest words of the Turkish language, it is generally used as a common name among Turks, and it is said to be an animal that Turks have known for a long time. Turks have benefited from horses in many areas, including transportation, meat, and milk, in trade, and especially in wars as passenger animals (Baykara, 2001). While Kaşgarlı Mahmud emphasized the importance of the horse for the Turks with the rhetoric "*The Horse is the Wing of the Turk*", cutting the tail of the horse was designed as "widowing" and was accepted as a sign of mourning. Tying or knotting the tail of a horse is known as war preparation, and this belief continued after Islam. The participation of Sultan Alpaslan in the war by tying the tail of his horse himself before the Battle of Manzikert and his soldiers joining the war by tying the tails of their horses can be given as an example of this. The fact that the tails of horses are found with knots on horse corpses in the kurgans examined in the archaeological excavations shows that this belief has been a tradition that has continued since ancient times (Başdin, 2017; Yılmaz and Toraman, 2020). Although it is certain that the sacrificed horse has a connection with the sky in the Turks, the belief in the steppe in the horse as an animal of celestial origin was common even before Christ (Roux, 2011). It is told that the horse sees the God, and at the same time, in the legends of Yakut, the horse is sent to serve the heroes; in another legend, the devil travels by turning his drum into a three-legged mare, and in the legends of Buryat, he carries the deceased shaman to his new home (Tansü and Güvenç, 2015). The horse is both the animal of death, and the bearer of spirit, and the shaman often used a horse-like pole in his rituals as a tool for the celestial journey. Even in the absence of an available alive horse for the rituals of the shaman, the hair of a grey horse or the skin of a grey mare that he burns is used symbolically for his ritual (Eliade, 1999). "Tulpar", another figure we encounter in Turkish Mythology, is unique to Turkish civilization and mythology, depicted in white or black colours, helping the brave and believed to be faster than the wind. It is a flying horse whose ancestor is believed to be a stallion living in the depths of the waters, and, in the Bashkir

¹ "Kurgan", the typical tomb type of steppe nomads, it is pure Turkish and derives from "korugan". It is thought that this name may have been given because it protects the dead (Tarhan, 2002).

² The spread area of Pazyryk Culture is the region that includes the Altai

Mountains and its immediate surroundings. Today, it covers the Altai Republic depending on the Russian Federation, the East Kazakhstan Province of Kazakhstan, Western Mongolia and the north of East Turkestan within the borders of China (Kutlu and Kutlu, 2022).

belief, its wings cannot be seen by anyone, and if seen, it will disappear (Gürçay, 2019). Turks, who conferred great importance on horses in their lives and did not spare them, spent most of their time on horseback and discovered and used the saddle before other civilizations. Known for its superior movement and maneuverability, the Turkish Saddle, which has a unique structure, has also found its place in science, and because of its similarity to the Turkish Saddle, its name (*Sella Turcica*) was given to an anatomical structure consisting of the hypophyseal pit (fossa hypophysialis) where the pituitary gland is located on the cerebral surface of the basisphenoid bone and the sellar ridge (dorsum sella) (Gültiken and Osmanağaoğlu, 2006).

1.1.3. Bear: The Bear generally symbolizes the forest spirit in Turkish Mythology. The Bashkirs considered the bear their ancestor, while the Yakuts swore on the bear skull. Shamans kept some of the body parts of the bear on their clothes and used them as a helping spirit in some rituals. Like the wolf, the bear has become taboo in Turkish societies, and saying its name is forbidden (Çoruhlu, 2002). As the mention of the name of the bear is considered objectionable today, the expression “Karaoğlan-Kocaoğlan” (dark boy-big boy) was preferred instead of the bear (Taş, 2020).

1.1.4. Deer: The Deer, is also referred to as “ıwik” in Divan-ı Lugat’it Türk and has been one of the animals that have preserved its importance from past ages to the present day. Deer, which is accepted as a totem animal, also appears as a hunted animal in the Orkhon Monuments. The use of antlers at the entrance of houses in many regions of Anatolia shows that the deer culture from the past has not been forgotten. The deer in Anatolia has been the subject of many legends. For example, it is told that the dervish-ghazi known as “Geyikli Baba” in Bursa took part in the Ottoman Army and participated in battles on his deer in the Ottoman’s struggle with Byzantium (Mandaloğlu, 2013). In Turkish Mythology, the deer is mostly passed as good, but it is believed that it will bring bad luck to those who do evil to it. The deer, which helped and guided the shamans and heroes before Islam, also became, without losing its meaning and importance, an animal that guides and protects the saints and heroes with the same importance and meaning after the conversion to Islam of the Turks. It is also said that the deer became immortal by eating the immortal grass on the blessed mountain, known as the land of the sovereigns, and in this way, their existence was continued. Deer is also mentioned as a saving and protective motif in the “Mother Maral Legend” in Cengiz Aytmatov’s book “The White Ship” (Aytmatov, 2016).

1.1.5. Tortoise: The Tortoise was described with very similar names in most of the Turkish States [tisbaga (Azerbaijan), tasbaka (Kazakhstan), tasbaka (Uzbekistan), tusbaga, tusbaa, tosbaga (Türkiye)]. Since it has a protective shell, withstands harsh conditions, and is long-lasting, it has also gained an important place in Turkish culture and symbolizes the power, protection, and continuity of the state. The turtle is used in folk medicine against diseases such as infertility, cancer, and tuberculosis, as well as its shell is used against the evil eye and, therefore, hung at the entrance of houses to bring good luck (Ercilasun, 1991;

Şimşek, 2016). In addition to these, it is also possible to see a pedestal in the form of a turtle figure in the stones, which have the Göktürk Inscriptions, erected by the Western Turkic Khaganate in the century VIII, and containing a lot of information about the Turks (Derin, 2014).

1.1.6. Ram-Sheep: The Ram-Sheep is an animal that the Turks have attributed various meanings to and sanctified since its apparition in history. Before and after the adoption of Islam, Turks gave importance to the figure of the ram/sheep and placed it at the centre of life by ascribing the meanings of protection, power, strength, bravery, abundance and abundance and protection from the evil eye in the period between birth and death. While stones in the shape of a ram are known as totems in the Turks, in the geographies populated by Turks, the figure of the head of a ram is embroidered like a seal in tombstones to motifs in carpets-rugs (Güven, 2019). In general, although the tradition of erecting stone statues in cult centres and around kurgans, as well as in graves, was especially popular in Turkish societies and widely practised in the centuries VI-XIII, this tradition started to disappear gradually under the influence of Islam (Bağırılı, 2014). On the tombstones with figures such as rams and sheep in Tunceli, and the tombstones with horse figures, historians emphasize that the sacrificial ram and sheep are important for the Turks as well as the sacredness of the horse for the Turks. Accordingly, they think that these figures come from Central Asia and Shamanist culture. Afterwards, they think that this culture continues in Aq Qoyunlu people (Danik, 1993). Ram-sheep-shaped tombstones, as an invariable Turkish culture, have been one of the most important pieces of evidence of the imprints of the Turks in the region, and it is not surprising to encounter horse- and ram-sheep-shaped tombstones in Anatolia. It has been determined by the research that the tombstones found in the geography where the Aq Qoyunlu and Qara Qoyunlu people used to live are quite common in the Turks who lived in Central Asia, Caucasus, and Anatolian lands in the pre-Christian era. There are examples of these tombstones in most of the provinces in Eastern Anatolia, the Eastern Black Sea, and Central and Western Anatolia (Güven, 2019). This connection emerges from the comparison of these tombstones found in Azerbaijan-Nakhchivan and in the province of Tunceli.

1.1.7. Wolf: The Wolf is one of the most important figures in Turkish Mythology. In Turkish Mythology, besides the wolf being a sacred and auspicious animal, it has been described in legends, both male and female, in the role of a parent, a saviour, a leader and guide, a helper of the heroes, brave and compassionate animal. The wolf has also played an important role in folk beliefs and medicine, and it is not considered acceptable to kill wolves or fear them (Uraz, 1994). In most regions of the Turkish world, it is possible to see the god-wolf depiction on the rock tombstone, the materials used by the shaman, and his clothing. The wolf, which is considered to be an element of heaven and earth, was quoted by Ögel (1993) in Turkish cosmology as “*The Small Bear constellation consisted of two horses pulling a chariot and the Big Bear constellation consisted of seven wolves chasing it, and the Yakuts attributed the formation of*

the phases of the moon to the wolves and bears eating the full moon". Although the wolf partially loses its meaning with the acceptance of Islam, its importance continues as a symbol of bravery and power and with the belief that it protects from the evil eye (Çoruhlu, 2002). According to Roux (2011), the wolf plays the most important role in Turkish Mythology. The picture or head of the wolf, which is an ancestor animal, is on the banners, and the marching of the banner-bearer and the wolf leading the army in legends are associated. In connection with this situation, the Göktürks even call the guards of the kagan "wolves" because of their semi-animal nature (Baldick, 2016).

1.1.8. The Cattle, Ox, Yak: The Cattle, Ox, Yak, and the combined expressions, it should be first understood that the "Tibetan Ox" is also called yak. This animal, also named "kotas", was hunted as a sacred animal by the Altai Turks, and for this reason, the Old Turks called the drag hunt "cattle". In the Turks, "the drum" and "tug" are signs of khanate, and this sacred tug is made of yak tail. Even in the later periods, when no yak could be found, horses were started to be sacrificed at the feasts (Gökalp, 2014). The bull (ox, cow) is mostly considered a ground element. Due to its power and strength, the bull was accepted as the totem of bravery and the God of war by the Turks. This idea is supported by the comparison of the ruler with a fat, fat bull in the Inscriptions of Tonyukuk (Çoruhlu, 2002).

1.1.9. Rabbit: The Rabbit was counted as an element of earth and sky and it preserved its importance in many Turkish communities, becoming the helping spirit of the shaman, and its skin was used in the drum of the shaman. The rabbit, as it symbolized abundance as a hunting animal among the Göktürks, has been a symbol of abundance and luck in the post-Islamic periods. The tail, head, paw, hide, and ear are the frequently used parts of the rabbit. Rabbit's foot is often used to provide kut³. Even though it seems like a necessity to clean the stoves, rabbit feet were used by women in Anatolia mostly for fertility and blessing (Ergun, 2011).

1.1.10. Snake: The Snake has been included in the myths of almost all nations and has mostly been a symbol of medicine (Sivri and Akbaba, 2018). For the Turks, the snake is an animal that has been frequently encountered in both written and oral culture and in pictures since ancient times. In these, very different meanings such as immortality, magic, evil eye, resurrection, underground, holiness, monster, element of earth, and health are ascribed (İnce, 2015). In Shamanism, the snake was associated with the God of the underworld, Erlik, who was said to have a whip made of black blacksnake; and the shaman used the snake as a tool in the rituals (Çoruhlu, 2002).

In Turkish Mythology, the snake is related to medicine and health, and it is mentioned as it follows: "*Akbuğa Khan is the God of medicine and is the protector of physicians. He is symbolized by a large white snake he carries on his arm. The White Snake, on the other hand, unlike the snakes on*

earth, is not poisonous. Its poison is a medicine and cures all kinds of diseases" (Karakurt, 2011).

1.2. Fowls;

1.2.1. Goose: The Goose is known as an animal that is thought to have been born in North Asia and is valued by the Turks as a symbol of seigniorship and happiness (Sever, 1999). The goose appears as a smart bird in Turkish Mythology. The goose mentors the shaman by showing him which deity and which ways he is able to reach. The shaman uses the goose as a riding animal in some rituals. It is believed that the shaman uses his drum as a horse at the beginning of the ritual, and after a while, by saying that the horse is tired, he turns his drum into a goose and continues his heavenly journey with the goose (İnan, 1986; Sever, 1999).

1.2.2. Crane Bird: The Crane Bird, assumed to be the representative of the Sky God in ancient Turkish belief, is known as the helping spirit of the shaman and is considered sacred. Yakut Turks believe that some of their tribes are descended from this bird. The importance given to the crane has not changed with Islam, and it has preserved its importance as an animal whose coat (don)⁴ can be worn. It is rumoured that Ahmed Yesevi also entered the coat of the crane. While murdering a crane is considered bad among the Bashkirs, in Anatolia which is a distant geography, it is believed that it brings disaster to the one who hunts it (Mirzaoğlu, 2019).

1.2.3. Eagle: The Eagle, in the context of Turkish Mythology, can be denoted as the grey wolf of the skies. The eagle, which is considered an important symbol of derivation, is the most valuable part of shamanic rituals and one of the national symbols of the Turks. It is thought that the eagle is on the world tree as the representative of the Sky God. It is accepted as a symbol of justice and protection in some Turkish States (Çoruhlu, 2002). The Yakuts attributed the arrival of spring and the melting of snow and ice to the flapping of the wings of an eagle, also called a blackbird. According to the Yakuts, those who take false oaths in the name of the eagle are extinct, and their family ends. According to the belief, childless women beg the eagle and ask him for a child; if the woman had a child, it was believed that the child born was descended from the eagle (İnan, 1986). The eagle, which is important for the Turks, was sometimes used as a double-headed figure. It is thought that the double head represents power and is used in art due to symmetry (Durmuş, 1994). It is possible to encounter the double-headed eagle figure in many architectural monuments in Anatolia.

1.2.4. Falcon: The Falcon is commemorated by Turkish names such as "Tuğrul, Çağrı, Sungur". The Turks took care of this animal mostly in their homes and used it for hunting. Each of the Oghuz tribes used this animal as a symbol. The Turks even think that this animal is an intermediary between the earth and the sky. It is believed that, in a more advanced time, Hacı Bektaş Veli, who came to Anatolia in the coat of a

³ When people are born they are given a soul and when they die they get it back, but people are not created equal. God also bestowed blessings on his carefully created creatures. This blessing ensured good luck and success in life. (Ögel, 1993).

⁴ "A universal motif in which heroes transform into the image of a creature, human, animal or plant so that they can hide or protect themselves" (Ögel, 1993).

pigeon, was fighting with Doğrul Baba, one of the dervishes born in Anatolia, who was in the coat of a falcon. A similar narrative includes parts of Abdulkadir Geylani's life, which Fuad Köprülü mentioned in his work of Kayıkçı Kul Mustafa (Ögel, 1993).

1.3. Other Mythological Figures;

1.3.1. Huma Bird: The Huma Bird is important in terms of Turkish Mythology and often appears in folk music and idioms (state bird, etc.). This bird without feet is always flying and does not land on the ground. It lays eggs in the air and until the egg falls to the ground, it hatches, and a new huma bird is born. According to one narrative, when a society wanted to choose a head for the state, the huma bird was released, and the person whose head was placed on became the head of the state. For this reason, this bird is also known as the state bird. According to a belief, a person who intentionally kills a huma bird dies within forty days (Uraz, 1994).

1.3.2. Phoenix, Simurg, Griffon: The Phoenix, Simurg, Griffon, which appears in different cultures and myths under different names, the Phoenix or Zümrüdüanka bird shows mostly similar characteristics and is generally considered the same as the Sîmurg of Iranian origin and it is also assumed to be related to Garuda in Indian Mythology. At the same time, it is thought that this mythological bird may be related to birds of prey and hunter, such as the eagle and the falcon, which have become national symbols for the Turks. The phoenix is a beautifully feathered, long-necked bird. This bird flies very high and takes shelter on Mount Kaf. According to the stories, when death approaches, the sun burns the nest of this bird, and the phoenix re-enters its nest. This bird does not come out of its nest and dies there, and the phoenix is born again from its bones. In pre-Islamic Turkish art, griffons are often depicted as having the body of a winged or wingless lion, the claw and head of an eagle, and the eagle-headed ones, especially unique to the Altai region, represented an important and victorious animal. Gryphons. Although it is a creature that represents the sky, the breaking of dawn, and the sun and points to the element of the Sky (Yang), it also has the characteristics of wisdom, knowledge, enlightenment, alertness, strength, and revenge. Gryphons are also seen as the gathering of the powers of the animals that make up their body. These mingling mythological beings are actually based on the eagle in Turkish Mythology (Çoruhlu, 2019; Uraz, 1994).

1.3.3. Dragon: The Dragon, although widely known in Chinese and Indian circles as an important mythological figure almost all over the world, its importance for the Turks cannot be underestimated. Serpents and lizard-bodied wolves in Siberian and Ordos bronzes may be considered prototypes of the Chinese dragon. The dragon was used in a good sense both in Chinese and Turkish societies. While it was associated with goodness and creative power by the Uyghurs, with Islam, it was thought to represent evil. In the most general sense, it expresses goodness, abundance,

prosperity, healing, power, and the cycle of life for the Turks. It is rumoured that, besides abundance, the dragon, as it is associated with the wheel, which has an important place in Turkish art, turning the wheel of the sky. Ejderha found its place in Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk (Çoruhlu, 2019; Saz, 2021).

2. Turkish Calendar with Twelve Animals

Since the old Turks were integrated with nature, this situation also affected their time calculation and calendars. The "Turkish Calendar with Twelve Animals", also called the "Turkish Calendar", which started to be used in the religion of Tsin⁵, is important for the Turks. The Tsin Turks denominated age to every twelve years in this calendar named with the names of twelve animals. The animals mentioned in the calendar: 1st-year stckan (mouse), 2nd-year ud (cattle, ox), 3rd-year leopard, 4th-year tabışkan (rabbit) 5th-year lu (dragon), 6th-year snake, 7th-year yunt (horse), 8th-year koy (sheep), 9th-year bicin (monkey), 10th-year takagu (chicken), 11th-year it (dog), 12th-year b/ıguz (pig). The person whose year of birth corresponded to an animal was commemorated with the holiness of that animal. The Turks also used this calendar for divination and attributed meaning to every animal. For example, they thought that wars would increase in the year of the cattle due to the fighting of oxen with each other (Gökalp, 2014; Kafesoğlu, 1997; Mahmud, 2005). The Twelve Animal Turkish Calendar was not only used by the Turks throughout history. Apart from the Turks, Mongols, Chinese, Hindus, Tibetan, and Indo-Chinese tribes also used this calendar (Turan, 1941).

3. Legends

According to Yıldız (2009), legends, which is used as a way of expressing mythologies: "They are anonymous works with a unique tradition in which the adventures, world view and ideals of a nation are expressed by uniting them around a hero, typically based on a prototype. Legends are a tool at the most critical point in the formation, protection, and transmission of culture for a nation." When Turkish Legends are examined, various animals are often encountered in their content and this emphasizes the place and importance of animals in Turkish Mythology. To briefly mention these legends:

3.1. The Legend of Creation

The most accepted of the known Creation Legends is the one compiled by Radloff and belonging to the Altai Turks. In the Creation Legend compiled by Radloff, Bay Ulgen is not the great god himself, but a co-creator, and it is possible to see something similar in the Ak-Creator and co-creators of the Yakuts (Ögel, 1993).

In the legend, at the time there was no earth and sky, man and god were flying in the sky. When the time comes, God creates the earth. God says to the bare tree without branches and knots that he sees, "Let nine branches grow from here and become a family" and the devil hears this, he wants them for himself, but God does not give them to him.

⁵ According to Gökalp, "Tsinler" is a Turkish tribe that gave its name to China and became the dynasty that united various governments and established

an empire for the first time in China (Gökalp, 1976).

When the devil descends to the earth, he says: "He looked at the people of God, some like humans, some like wild animals, some like birds". He thinks of taking them for himself. He sees that man eats fruit from only one branch. The Devil asks man why he does not eat from the others and man says that God forbids it. God puts a dog at the base of this tree as a guard, instructing it not to fall asleep, and a snake next to it, instructing it to sting the devil if he comes. The devil instructs the sleeping snake to eat the fruit and the snake goes and eats the fruit. The devil then tricks two people, Törüngei and Eci. They are normally hairy, but when they eat the fruit they suddenly become hairless, embarrassed and hide behind a tree. God is very angry with these two people and the snake. The snake says, "O God, I didn't chase you; you had my ear, I was ready for every sound of yours; while I was sleeping here, Devil snuck up on me, he got inside me and made me like this" and says that Devil deceived him. The serpent says, "I swear, Devil did not appear to me for some reason, how can I see him?" God punishes the snake and says, "O snake, from now on be the Devil himself! Let man be your enemy, let him kill and take your life, be the epitome of evil and let your name remain so!". After God punishes the man and woman, it is the devil's turn to be punished. Devil said: "I asked you to give from your nation, but you ignored my request and told me not to give! "So I stole, deceived, and stole again, and even the one who ran away on a horse, I dropped him and took him again..."

After the devil has taken up residence in the sky, the devil's sky disintegrates and fragments fall from it, changing the shape of the earth. God throws those who are subject to the Devil out of the sky, "Some drowned in the water, all falling from the sky. Some fell on cattle and died in their horns, some fell on trees and died in their snags..."

The devil asks the heavens for space, but God refuses to give it to him and gives him a space as big as the end of a stick, where the devil begins to spread evil. Realizing the evil intentions of the devil, God gets angry with the devil and says, "Get down to the bottom of the earth, get down now, get down from here! Take all that you have and all that you don't have, get down from here, get down to the bottom of the earth, and build yourself whatever you want! Gather your roof, your camel, get down to the bottom of the earth!..."

When the time comes, God gives kut to the devil. "When he received the kut, the devil withdrew to his world, the devil made a bellows, a pliers. Taking a hammer in his hand, he struck the anvil once, right under the hammer, a frog jumped out. He struck once and a snake came out, wriggled, and disappeared. He struck a bear and it ran away In one shot, the bear came out, ran away, and brownout. Once a pig came out, the wildest of pigs, once an albis came out, the hair of the evil spirit. And out came the şulmus, scattering evil, And out came the camel, and God's patience overflowed. God came angry and gathered everything he had, pliers, hammers, bellows, whatever he had. They were all gathered together and thrown into the fire. From the flame of the bellows, a woman jumped out. From the pliers and the hammer, a man emerged. God was angry and spat in her face. The woman became a bird and flew away, this bird is called Kordoy, it stinks the swamp, and the dog barks

at this bird. The male also became a bird, it is called Yalban, its legs are very long and its shape is very strange. This is a very strange bird, for some reason, it has no hands. He searches for his discarded boots. The only thing it loves is gnawing the heel, and the dirt in the house is good food for it".

God advises his people, "I have made cattle for you to eat!" "I have made the waters that flow in the world for you, "I have made them pure and clear for you to drink!" and turning to his helper spirits, he says: "This is your duty, O Shal-Yime, listen! "Protect those who drink raki and get drunk! "Protect the little children, the lambs! "Protect the little calves, the young foals..."

And to the god Bodo Sungkü: "... May orphans find benefit, may they find companionship with everyone! If a Hakan has a good name, don't think, don't believe, that his people are good too! Teach people to be good at all times, teach them how to catch fish with hooks and fish with nets. Teach them how to keep animals, teach them how to keep squirrels, teach them how to make a dress. Always send people on the road better than you! "Train them as if they were me, better than me!" he advises.

After God had said these things, he said: "Mani-Shire was all alone in the world. He found a hook and immediately hooked the fishing line, spun the hemp, and made a net himself. He also built a boat and fished with it, the fish were plentiful and he was happy. He invented gunpowder and fired it with a rifle, he used his rifle to hunt squirrels..." (Ögel, 1993).

3.2. Origin Legend

Although there are various narrations about the Türeyiş saga, three of them are taken from Chinese sources, one narration was examined by Abu'l-Gazi Bahadır Han in his work Şecere-i Türk, and the last and most historical narration was examined by Reşideddin Fazlullah in his work Cami'ut-Tevarih (Bastem, 2019). Ögel (1993) describes the most accepted version of the Derivation Legend in Volume I of his work titled Turkish Mythology as follows:

During the establishment of the Gokturk State, there was no great authority gathering the north of China in its hands. When the Gokturk State was established, all of the surrounding small states began to resemble and get closer to the Turks in order to get the support of the Gokturks.

"The Göktürks, a branch of the Huns, derived from a family called A-si-na (A-shih-na) and later multiplied and began to live in separate tribes. When the Gokturks were defeated by a country called Lin, they were all killed and only a 10-year-old boy survived. The soldiers took pity on the boy and did not kill him, but cut off his feet and threw him among the grasses in the swamp, and left. At this time, a she-wolf appeared around the boy, fed him meat, and raised him, and over time, as the boy grew up, the wolf and the boy began to live together. As a result of this relationship, the she-wolf conceives the child. Hearing that the child was alive, the king of the enemy country immediately ordered his soldiers to find and kill the child. When the soldiers see the boy and the wolf side by side, the wolf immediately escapes from there and goes to the mountain in the north of Kao-ch'-ang

(Turfan), where there is a cave with a plain covered with grass and meadow. Here the pregnant wolf gave birth to ten children. These ten children grow up and breed with the girls they bring from outside. From each of them, a lineage is derived, and the Göktürks are one of these ten lineages" (Ögel, 1993).

3.3. Oğuz Kağan (Oghuz Kaghan) Legend

In the Oğuz Kağan Legend, information about the religion of the Turks is given, the life of the Turks is described and the Töre, the rules of Oghuz, which have shaped the foundation of the Turkish States from the past to the present, are often emphasized.

Much work has been done on the Oğuz Kağan Legend, one of the most important Turkish Legends we have today, and there are two important sources of this legend, one of which is the only manuscript copy in the National Library of Paris, which is incomplete and written in Uyghur script. It was first found by Rıza Nur and published in German by W. Bang and GR. Rahmeti [Arat] in 1932 and then in Turkish in 1936 (Bars, 2008).

The book Oğuz Kağan Legend prepared by Bang and Rahmeti in 1936 begins with the birth of Oğuz Kagan. While explaining that Oğuz Kağan grew up, walked, and started to play forty days after his birth, he also mentions his physical characteristics. He emphasizes the strength and physical structure of Oğuz Kağan by saying that his feet are like ox feet, his waist is like a wolf's waist, his shoulders are like sable shoulders, and his chest is like a bear's chest. Oğuz Kagan herding a herd of horses, rides horses, and hunts prey. At the time when Oğuz Kağan lived, there was a large forest in the region and there were many flying birds in the forest. In this forest, there is a big rhinoceros that eats the herds of horses and the people and torments the people, and Oğuz Kağan goes hunting with the desire to save his people by hunting this rhinoceros. Oğuz Kağan uses deer and bear as bait to catch this wild rhino. Then he stands under the tree and when the rhino comes, he defeats the rhino with his halberd, cuts off its head with his sword, and leaves. When he comes again, he sees a hawk eating the intestines of the rhino and kills the hawk with his bow and arrow.

In the legend, Oğuz Kağan has three sons and Oğuz Kağan gives a big meal to his nation and gathers all the beys at the meal, and makes the following statement: *"I have become Kagan for you; let us take the bow and shield; let us have the aim, buyan; let the wolf (us) uran (war cry)"*.

In the legend, while Oğuz Kagan is sleeping in the tent during his expedition to march on Urum Kagan, a light like the sun enters the tent and a wolf with sky feathers and sky mane comes out of that light and addresses Oğuz Kagan: *"You want to march on Urum, I want to march in front of you"* and the wolf marches in front and the soldiers march behind. As a result of the battle, Oğuz Kağan defeats Urum Kağan and makes a treaty with Urum Kağan's brother. Then Oğuz Kağan again sees the wolf with sky feathers and sky mane. The wolf says to Oğuz Kağan: *"You walk from here with the soldiers and take the people and the beys; I will guide you from the front"*. Again the wolf walks ahead and the soldiers behind, and Oğuz Kağan is happy.

One day, Oğuz Kağan's beloved pied horse disappeared on the road. The horse escaped to Muz Tagh, a very cold and icy mountain. Among the soldiers, there is a brave soldier who fears neither God nor the devil, and this soldier goes after the horse to this mountain and brings the horse back after nine days. Oğuz Kagan said to this soldier, who was covered with snow, *"You be the head of the beys here and your name will be Karluk forever"* and gave him a lot of jewels and continued to move forward.

One day the wolf stopped again and Oğuz Kağan had his tent pitched in a place called Çürçet, which had horses, oxen, calves, gold, and silver. Çürçet Kagan, who is here, comes against Oğuz Kagan and they start to fight. Oğuz Kağan wins. Oğuz Kağan's soldiers, his retinue, and his people received such a great booty that horses, mules, and oxen were not enough to load and carry it. One of the soldiers, a skillful craftsman, builds a cart and they take all the goods with it.

Oğuz Kağan marched to many places with the wolf was victorious in many battles and annexed many places to his homeland. One day Oğuz Kağan came to a place called Barkan, a warm place with lots of game and birds and lots of gold, silver, and ore. Here he fought with Masar Kağan and as a result of the victory, Oğuz Kağan set off for his homeland with countless goods and horses.

Although the aging Oğuz Kağan wanted to hunt, he called his children because he was old and lacked courage. He instructs three of his children to go east and the other three to go west. After hunting a lot of game and birds, the three of them find a golden bow on the way and give it to their father. Their father cuts the bow into thirds, gives it to his children, and says: *"O my eldest (sons), the bow is yours; shoot arrows like a bow up to the sky"*. After hunting a lot of game and birds, the other children found three silver arrows on the road and gave them to their father. Their father was again delighted, gave the arrows to his children, and said to them: *"O my little (sons), the arrows are yours. The bow shot the arrow: be like the arrow"*.

Oğuz Kağan convenes a great assembly and summons his entourage and people. Oğuz Kağan had a golden chicken placed on the pole he had erected on his right side and tied a white sheep under it. He had a silver chicken placed on the pole he erected on his left side and tied a black sheep to the bottom. He sits Buzuks on his right side and Uçoklar on his left side. Oğuz Kağan divided and gave his homeland to his sons and said to his children: *"O my sons, I have travelled a lot, I have seen many battles, I have shot many pikes and many arrows, I have walked a lot on horseback, I have made my enemies cry, I have made my friends laugh. I have paid (my debt) to Sky God. Now I give you my homeland"* and the legend ends by leaving his homeland to his children (Bang and Rahmeti, 1936).

3.4. Şu (Shu) Legend

According to Ercilasun, the source of the majority of Turkish Legends are translations made from the languages of the nations with which they have relations. The Şu Legend is one of them and is found in the "Turkmen" article of Kashgarli Mahmud's Dîvânü Lûgati't-Türk. As mentioned by Kashgarli Mahmud, the time in which the Şu Legend takes place is 300 BC, when Alexander, the famous king of

Macedonia, known as Zülkarneyn, embarked on his expedition to Turkestan (Ercilasun, 2002).

Kashgarli Mahmud narrates the legend as follows:

When Zulkarnayn wanted to pass Samarkand and take the Turkish hands, there was a ruler named Şu. Şu has a silver pool that he carries even during mobilization. He fills this pool with water and releases geese and ducks into it. When the soldiers asked Şu what to do, should we fight, Şu said to his soldiers: "Look at these geese and ducks, how they dive into the water". In his words, they got the idea that the sultan was not planning to fight. By this time Zulkarnayn had crossed the river and the scout reported this to Şu. Şu has the drums beaten at night and moves eastward. Thinking that the ruler was unprepared, the people panicked and mounted on whatever beasts they could find, everyone took each other's beasts and they set off. In the morning, the army is formed on a flat plain. When the army suddenly moves out at night, only twenty-two people who cannot find an animal to load their cargo are left. According to the legend, Oghuz tribes are formed from these twenty-two people. Zülkarneyn comes and looks at the people who stayed here, they have long hair and Zülkarneyn immediately realizes that they are Turks. When he saw them, without asking anyone, he called them "Türk mânend", which means "like a Turk". This name remained for those men until today. When the time came and Zulkarnayn retired, 'Şu' returned and went as far as Balasaguna and built a city called Şu. He also put a talisman there. Today, storks come as far as that city, but they cannot pass through it. The effect of this talisman lasts until today (Mahmud, 2005)

3.5. Alp Er Tunga Legend

Although the Iranian poet Firdevsi Persianized Alp Er Tunga in Shahnameh, he mentioned this name a lot (Aksoy, 2002; Atsız, 1992). Alp Er Tunga, who is mentioned as Efrasiyab in Shahnameh, is mentioned by Kashgarli Mahmud (2005) in his work Divânu Lügati't-Türk, who says that Efrasiyab and Alp Er Tunga are the same person. Information about Alp Er Tunga is given in Orkhon Monuments, Kutadgu Bilig, Şeh-nâme, Divanü Lügat-it-Türk, Şecere-i Terâkime and Süleymannâme (Alptekin and Şenocak, 2019). The main source we have is the Shahnameh written by Firdevsi, which talks about the struggle between Turks and Iranians.

In the legend: Upon the death of the Sultan of Iran, the Sultan of Turan, who is also the father of Alp Er Tunga, gathers the elders with the idea of waging war against Iran. Upon the speech of the sultan who says that it is time for the Turk to take revenge, Alp Er Tunga's sense of revenge swells and he says to his father: "I am the one who can fight with lions, I must take revenge on Iran". In addition to Alp Er Tunga's height like a cypress, his chest and arms are like lions, he is as strong as an elephant and his tongue is like a ravenous sword. Alp Er Tunga's brother was hesitant about the war, but his father told him, "Alp Er Tunga is a lion in hunting and an elephant in war. The knight is a crocodile. He is avenging his ancestors. You should unite with him. When the grass grows green in the plains, march your army to "Amul". Trample Iran with your horses. Paint the waters with blood," he protests.

Alp Er Tunga moves to Iran with his army, when the two armies meet, the Turkish warrior Barman asks for an equal soldier from the other side, and only Kubad from the other side volunteers for this battle. His brother tells him "Barman is a young, lion-hearted horseman. His neck is as tall as the sun. You are old. If the blood reddens your white hair, our braves will be frightened", but Kubad does not listen to him, and says "Man is the prey, death is his hunter" and starts the battle and is defeated at the end of the battle.

The Iranian leader directly wants to kill Alp Er Tunga, so he gathers his army and moves on. Meanwhile, Alp Er Tunga was sitting in his headquarters in Beykend with tents made of parskin.

At one point, Alp Er Tunga enters the city, which is crowded and over which not even an eagle flies, with plenty of food and pools. He closes himself in the city and when the time comes, Alp Er Tunga is defeated again and again. At the end of the legend, Alp Er Tunga, who never dies, can only be killed by trickery (Atsız, 1992).

3.6. Satuk Buğra Han Legend

Satuk Buğra Han was born at the end of the IXth century and was the first Muslim ruler of the Karahanid State, which was the first Turkish state to convert to Islam (Hunkan, 2009).

According to the legend: Hazrat Muhammad saw all the prophets during Miraj, but since he could not recognize one of them, he asked Cebrail (Gabriel) about that person. Cebrail tells him that this person is not a prophet, but a person who will come down to earth three centuries after the death of Prophet Muhammad and spread the Religion of Islam in Turkestan. Prophet Muhammad is very happy to hear this and prays for this person. Muhammad prays for this person to appear, and after the prayer, forty horsemen suddenly appear in front of him. These horsemen are the spirits of forty friends with Satuk Buğra Han at their head.

When the son of the ruler of Kashgar, whom he named Buğra, was born, disasters occurred and fortune tellers interpreted this as the baby would grow up to be a Muslim and demanded that he be killed, but his mother opposed this and saved her son.

When he was twelve years old, Satuk Buğra Han went hunting with forty friends, saw a rabbit, and started to chase it. Satuk Buğra Han leaves his friends while chasing the rabbit. After chasing the rabbit for a while, this rabbit, disguised as an old man, is Hızır Alayhisselam and Satuk Buğra Han understands this situation and listens carefully to his advice.

When the time comes, Satuk Buğra Han's father dies and his mother marries his uncle as per custom. Satuk Buğra Han invited his uncle to Islam, but when his uncle refused, his uncle entered the earth and Satuk Buğra Han became the ruler. Satuk Buğra Han started to spread Islam in the Turkish Country, while the fire coming out of his mouth burned the non-believers, his sword extended forty steps when he turned to the enemy. When Satuk Buğra Han reached the age of ninety, everyone in the country became Muslim and he fought with China and spread Islam there.

Satuk Buğra Han returned to Kashgar with a divine order and died there. One of Satuk Buğra Han's daughters was

named Alanur. One day Alanur faints in front of her house, frightened by a lion she sees. When she wakes up, she realizes that she will have a child. They named the child Ali. They gave this name because he was a lion of Allah like Hazrat Ali. According to another manuscript, Alanur became pregnant when a light brought by Gabriel flowed into her mouth. She named her son Seyyid Ali Arslan Han because he was the lion of Allah like Hazrat Ali (Sepetçioğlu, 1998).

Conclusion

In this study, animals, which have an important place in the life and meaning of Turks, are examined in the context of Turkish Mythology and the history of veterinary medicine.

As a result of living a life in a long historical interval and a wide geography, Turks have been in contact with many civilizations, cultures, and religious beliefs. These abstract concepts have been partially changed and passed down from generation to generation. As a result of placing great value on nature in general and animals in particular, many concepts such as philosophy of life, belief, literature, art, architecture, medicine, and veterinary medicine have been shaped in this direction.

Turkish Mythology contains many nature and animal figures in connection with the life of Turks. In this context, the gods and helper spirits in Turkish Mythology were found in the form of formations that helped or persecuted the shaman, humans, and animals, and mediated between the shaman and humans and the Sky God.

Animals have a special importance in the mythology of the Turks. Among these animals, the wolf undoubtedly takes the first place. According to myths, legends, and folklore, the wolf has often become taboo and the object of people's fear. On the other hand, the wolf has been the leader and guide in the figure of mother-father in legends. The wolf adorned the flags, pennants, and banners of the Turks. In our recent history, it has maintained its importance and has been included in the emblems of various institutions and organizations (such as the Institute of Turcology, Turkish Hearths and Petrol Ofisi). The horse, which is defended as "the wing of the Turk", appears as a friend and companion of the Turk. Horses, which were the riding animals of the Shaman on his journey to the sky, were buried in Kurgans with their saddles and harnesses in order to be a companion to their owner after death. The horse and ram, which were also sacrificial animals, also adorned tombstones. The deer, which is in a similar position to the horse, did not lose its value after Islam and became a riding animal for dervishes and scholars. The Yak, a symbol of power and strength, was considered a sign of alliance and sovereignty, and the tail of the yak was frequently used on tughons. The snake, which has an important place in folk beliefs as well as mythology, has been the representative of continuity, immortality, and healing and has represented health both in Turkey and in the world. The bear, on the other hand, was a totem animal like the wolf, and as a result of this taboo, it was considered inconvenient to say its name even today, so the expression "Karaoğlan-Kocaoğlan" was preferred instead of a bear. Sometimes the wolf was replaced by a lion, while the turtle

took its place on the basis of the inscriptions as a symbol of permanence and longevity.

Flying animals were likewise important and among them, the eagle positioned itself close to the gray wolf. The eagle symbol is still influential today and as a symbol of power, it has been included in many architectural works as well as in the emblems of various institutions and organizations. The goose, who was a companion and mentor to the shaman on his journey to the sky, was also the representative of principality and sovereignty. The crane, on the other hand, is the animal that Hodja Ahmet Yesevi used to wear, and it is not seen frequently in folk art and practices today.

Other mythological figures are generally mixed with world mythology. Examples include the Huma Bird, known as the bird of state, the Phoenix Bird, the Simurg, known as the Blackbird in Turkish, and the Griffin, which has the characteristics of many animals. The Wyvern or Dragon is a figure that occupies a large place in Asian mythology. This figure has also gained an important place in Turks.

Placing animals at the center of life, the Turks also used animals in their divination and calendars. Each animal in the Twelve Animal Turkish Calendar was attributed a meaning. According to the characteristics of those animals, the Turks predicted what would happen that year and what awaited them.

Although there are many Turkish Legends, certain legends were analyzed in this study. It is possible to encounter many animal figures in the legends included in the study. The animal figures described in the legends show parallel characteristics with the characteristics of animals. In these legends, it is possible to see various land animals (dog, snake, horse, cattle, camel, bear, sheep, lamb, calf, foal, ox, squirrel, wolf, sable, rhinoceros, deer, silver chicken, golden chicken, black sheep and white sheep, lion, elephant, crocodile, pars, rabbit, frog, mule) and winged animals (bird (kordoy, yalban), hawk, goose, duck and stork, eagle).

During excavations and archaeological investigations, saddles and harnesses with animal figures, various animal figurines, human corpses with animal figures, the world's first known carpet, the Pazyryk Carpet with animal figure embroidery, and many other remains were found. In the relic known to the world as the Man in the Golden Robe, a corpse covered with gold plates embroidered with numerous animal figures was found. While turtles are found on the bases of the Göktürk Inscriptions, in the geographical areas where Turks lived, especially in Anatolia, these animal figures have found a place in many architectural works. In addition to these, in Yücel and Sanal's (2021) study on Seljuk Period artifacts, it can be said that Turks prioritized animals in their works even after the adoption of Islam.

Turks used products obtained from animals (such as wolf teeth, nails, hair, and bones; bear nails, teeth, eagle claws, and horse hair) both in human medicine and veterinary medicine. In addition to these, they also used the products obtained from animals for fortune telling to obtain information about the disease status (Bayat, 2002).

Not limited to these, Turks, who spent their lives on horses, slept on horses, ate and drank on horses, designed a

unique saddle and won many battles, and conquered many places with this saddle. This saddle has found its place in the scientific world with the name "sella turcica" based on the Turkish saddle.

As a result, animal figures as an indispensable part of the life of Turks; Turkish culture, daily life, beliefs, written, oral, architectural, and artistic works, and archaeological finds have been examined in the context of Turkish Mythology and the history of veterinary medicine, and the importance of nature and animals for Turks has been emphasized.

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