

The Bull and the Letter B

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There have been several waves of migration from Central Asia towards the north-west of Europe. During the last 2 millennia Altaic and Uralic tribes were the first inhabitants of the Baltic region. Later on Indo-European tribes moved in to northern Europe, but their original homeland was the west-central Asiatic territories. The Finno-Ugric language group, which belongs to the Uralic languages, includes Finnish, Hungarian, Estonian and Samoyedic. There are claims linking Finnish to a Proto-Finnic language of Asia, which is no other than the Central Asiatic Proto-language (see **2-Diversification of Languages**).

Uralic languages share many common features with Altaic languages. For example, both language group are agglutinative and form new words with the help of suffixes. Furthermore, both language group lack grammatical gender and use one pronoun for both “he” and “she”. Examples are: In Finnish **haen**, in Estonian **tema**, in Hungarian **oo** and in Turkish **o**. In the Indo-European Swedish language the Finnish **haen** has changed to **han** for male and **hon** for female (pronounced as hoon). The grammatical gender differentiation did not exist in the Proto-language but started much later, with the Indo-European languages. We can substantiate this claim from the fact that both man as well as women could be the leaders of ancient societies.

It has been mentioned in Chapter 5, **Climatic changes** that the early title of the Eurasian ruler was **Khang**. On the other hand we saw in Chapter 15, **The sacred horn**, that most ancient societies were matriarchal. The ancient **Khang** title became vulgarized in time and changed gradually to “haen” in Finnish and “han” in Swedish.



Sumerian bull



Bull-men and winged Onkh



Standard of bulls and stag

As the leadership passed from women to men, the bull symbolism replaced the ibex symbolism to a very large extent (see **7-The Minoan Culture**). Although the ibex figure did

not disappear altogether, we see that the bull has been the favorite symbol of the male-dominated societies. On the left above, a bull head is on a Sumerian harp found at Ur. On the next picture we see two bull-men lifting a winged **Onkh** symbol (1) (see Chapter 6, **Universal Symbols**). The winged disk is clearly the symbol of the sun-god and the + sign in the center of the disk is the central Asiatic **Okh**. The tree between the two bull-men is the symbol of longevity, known as “the tree of life”. The standard on the right with a deer and two bulls is the symbol of the Hittite nation. We have already seen that the symbolism hidden in the number three is an indication of leadership (see Chapters 12 and 17).

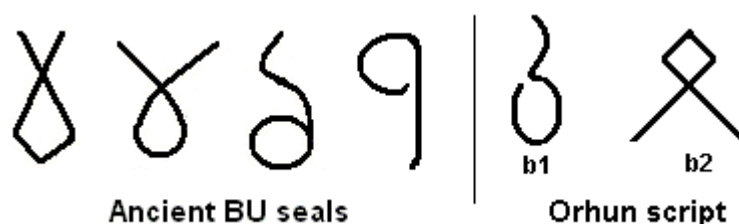
The Vikings and the Celts on the north-west as well as the Japanese on the east of Asia used helmets with bull horns as a sign of power and strength. Below we see three such helmets symbolizing the powerful bull. The Japanese helmet is called **kabuto**, and reminds us of “**kab / kap**”, mentioned in Chapter 12.



It is generally accepted that “Taurus” literally meaning bull, has its origin in Latin. Generally linguists stop investigating the etymology of a word once they reach the Latin origin. In my opinion the original form of “Taurus” was **Tur-uz**, which changed in time to Tur-us and Taurus, meaning “**we are the Tur people**” as mentioned in Chapter 8, **The double-edged ax**. Taurus entered, most probably, into Latin from Etruscan which is a Ural-Altai language. But even if it came from Anatolia with the Greek influence, its origin is still connected to the Asiatic Tur people.

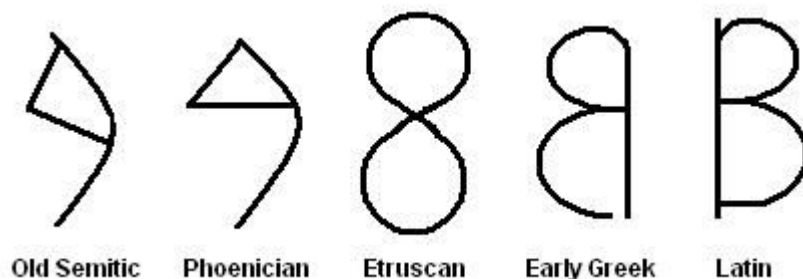
Not only **taurus** but also the origin of the word **bull** can be traced back to the Asiatic root culture. We find **bufalus** in Latin, **buffalo** in Italian, **buffle** in French, **bucca** (stag, he-goat) in Old English, **bukk** in Old German, **bock** in Swedish, **bouc** and **bouquetin** in French and **buck** in modern English. But, we have also **boğa** (adult bull), **buzagı** (young bull) and **buğra** (male camel) in Turkish, which did not originate from Latin. Arabic **bukra**, **bakara** and Mongolian **buha** also cannot be traced back to Latin. Furthermore, in the Asiatic Kirghiz language which is a Turkish dialect **buka** means bull and **bukachar** means calf.

Therefore, we have to conclude that all these words originated from the monosyllabic root word **bu** (pronounced as boo). “Bu” was the name of the mountain goat, the ibex, in the ancient Asiatic Proto-language. This word has been one of the earliest pictographic seals drawn by the Central Asiatic Uighur culture. Below left we see some versions of the early **bu** seal. On the right side the two forms of B in the Turkish Orhun script are shown. The Orhun script is a syllabery and therefore each sign stands for certain syllables containing phonetic harmony. The b1 sign can be read as: **bu, ba, bo, bi** or **ub, ab, ob, yb**. These syllables have the thick-sounds harmony, while the b2 sign has the thin-sounds harmony and can be read as: **bü, be, bö, bi** or **üb, eb, öb, ib**.



The ancient BU seals shown above are found carved on rocks, next to petroglyphs in the Yenisei and Orhun valleys of Central Asia. The first and second seals are stylized front-view appearances of the mountain goat and the bull. Several different but similar forms of the “Bu” seal has been found in Asia. This is because during the early period in the evolution of writing the ideograms were not standardized and different versions of the same seal could exist simultaneously (2). We will see that the Orhun alphabet is not borrowed or transformed from the Phoenician script, as many believe, but followed its own development within the early Central Asiatic Turkic culture. This claim needs further proof and therefore will be elaborated extensively in the future chapters.

When the nomadic tribes from the north met the southern tribes from the Indus Valley on the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, the “bu” seal became more or less a standard consonant in the Old Semitic syllabic writing system (see the map in Chapter 18, **Towards Sumer and Elam**). The BU seal underwent further transformations as the seafaring Phoenicians carried it far north. The third sign looking like an 8 (below) is accepted by most scholars to represent the F sound. This is because it stands for the F sound in the Lydian alphabet (3). But since Etruscan is still unintelligible and cannot be read correctly, the sound connected to the figure 8 is debatable. It seems that the two legs of the b2 seal were joined to form the rounded Etruscan as well as the early Greek B. This is how the capital B came into being, while the miniscule “b” in the Latin alphabet evolved from the b1 seal of the Orhun script.



References

- (1) **Hitit Güneşi**, Sedat Alp, TUBITAK publication 179, page 27, 2002, Ankara - Turkey.
- (2) Ref. 1 of Chapter 10, page 287.
- (3) **The Story of Writing**, Andrew Robinson, Thames & Hudson, page 170, 1995, London.

