REVIEW ARTICLE

TURKISH PHILOLOGY IN HUNGARY

by SIR GERARD CLAUSON

This volume has* been produced to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Chair of Turkish philology at Budapest University. Its editor is Professor Louis Ligeti, whose substantive appointment is in the Chair of "Haute Asie" (the best English equivalent is perhaps "Inner Asia"); he is also temporarily in charge of the Chair of Turkish philology. It contains thirty-nine articles, one written by two authors in collaboration, contributed by twenty-two Hungarians, three of whom hold academic posts abroad (including Professor János Eckmann whose recent death we all deplore), four Soviet scholars, three Germans, one holding an academic post in the U.S.A., three Turks, two holding academic posts abroad, two Poles and a Czech, an Englishman, a Finn, a Frenchman, an Italian, and a Japanese. Rather more articles are in English than in any other language, but there are nearly as many in French and German, four in Russian and one in Turkish.

It opens with an introductory article by Suzanne Kakuk, Professor in the faculty of Turkish philology, which she entitles "Cent ans d'enseignement de philologie turque à l'Université de Budapest", but in fact it covers a wider field, tracing the contacts between Hungarians and Turks back to the middle of the first millennium A.D. and explaining why Hungarians have always been more interested than other Europeans in Turkish philology. It is a little ironical that one of the most powerful stimuli for these studies was the discovery in the sixteenth century that there were various resemblances in the fields of morphology and vocabulary between the Hungarian and Turkish languages, which suggested that the two languages must be in some way related. In the nineteenth century Arminius Vambéry (1837–1913) went so far as to suggest that Hungarian was an aberrant form of Turkish. This was soon disproved, but the theory that morphological resemblances are a proof of genetic relationship still lingers on in other fields. One beneficial result of the controversy was the discovery that the Finno-Ugrian languages really were genetically related.

The remaining articles cover a wide field: history, folklore, various branches of philology, textual and literary criticism, and some articles covering two or more of these subjects. It was only to be expected that most of the Hungarian contributions would be in the traditional fields of Hungarian Turcology, the history of eastern Hungary during the Turkish occupation and Turkish loanwords in Hungarian, but the balance between the various subjects listed above has been successfully achieved. Chronologically the articles cover the whole period from the earliest times to the present day, linguistically from eighth, perhaps even seventh-century Türkü inscriptions in "runic" script to some modern languages, with one or two references to Turkish words of an even earlier date preserved in foreign transcriptions. It goes without saying that the scholarly level of the articles is extremely high. No one, except perhaps another Hungarian, would venture to criticize articles by such experts as Gy. Győrfi on Hungarian history or the article by Karl Czegledi on the early history of the nomads in south-east Europe; and the articles on grammatical subjects by Nikolai Baskakov and several other scholars are in fields in which they have made particularly their own. Special attention should be drawn to Louis Ligeti's article "Auteur du Sâkis Yükmek Yaruk", a masterly essay in textual criticism which adds much to our knowledge of this well-known Uyghur sûtra.

I might, however, perhaps be permitted to make some observations on points which have caught my eye in some other articles and seem to require further consideration or correction. First one general point. English scholars are always delighted when their foreign colleagues are so kind as to write articles in English, particularly such good English as that in this volume, but they do greatly deprecate the increasing use of the word "Turkish". They have always used and will continue to use "Turkish" as the generic name for all languages spoken by Turks, qualifying it when appropriate by such adjectives as early, mediaeval, modern, standard and L/R for the two great branches of the language, Republican for the modern language of the Turkish Republic and so on. They also use "Turkish" as the appropriate adjective for qualifying such nouns as "peoples, tribes, literature" and so on. They see no more justification for substituting Turkic for Turkish than they would for substituting Hungarian for English or English for Hungarian.

Pentti Aalto's most interesting article, "Iranian contacts of the Turks in pre-Islamic times", is largely based on the assumption that all the early Turkish contacts with Indo-Europeans were with Iranians and that the chiefsmen buried in the Pazyryk and other kurgans in the Altai mountains were Iranians. I think, however, that most scholars who have recently studied this question would now agree that, although these chiefsmen were certainly Indo-Europeans, they were not Iranians but ancestors of the peoples who were still speaking the Turkic languages in Chinese Turkestan in the middle of the first millennium A.D. Sergey Rudenko in Kultura naselemya Yuzhnogo Altaya v Skifskoe vremya, Moscow-Leningrad, 1960, p. 339, suggested that they were Yüeh-chih and E. C. Pulleyblank has since shown that the Yüeh-chih were almost certainly Proto-Tokharians. The Tchekhian loanwords in early Turkish seem to be an earlier layer than the Sogdian and other Iranian loanwords, perhaps even earlier than the Chinese. It is no longer safe to identify the "animal style" exclusively with the Sogdians who, on the historical evidence at present available, seem to have moved west from the original Iranian homeland when the other Iranians moved south-east, and when they moved east in the first millennium B.C. never further than Assyria.

Louis Bazin, in his article, "Note sur Angyят nom turco-mongol d'une variété de canards", has incisively accepted Gerhard Doerfer's suggestion that a "Turco-Mongolian" word aşıkt suggests behind the Turkish word aşıkt and the Mongolian word aşıkt. There are two objections to this. First, the earlier in usage of the word aşıkt, while both words begin with aşı- and are the names of water birds, they are the names of different birds. Aşıkt, first noted in the eleventh century and still in use, means "Aunus clangula, the ruddy goose (or shelldrake)". The history of aşıkt is more complicated. It occurs in the Secret History (thirteenth century) and in the Hua-li-yü of A.D. 1350 and in both it is translated by the Chinese phrase yuan yang "Aix galericulata, mandarin duck"; in Classical and modern Mongolian it means "Anas migrana, black dove", in Russian turpan. The second is that no word longer than a monosyllable in early Turkish and no word of any length in early Mongolian ended in a consonantal cluster like aşı-

Alessio Bombaci in his article, "The husbands of Princess Hsien-li Bilga" has assembled in his usual masterly fashion all the references in Chinese texts to the tragic history of this daughter of Ka'qgan Xağan, the second xügan of the Second Eastern Türkii Empire, and studied in depth the various problems which arise from them.

One of these is whether the Turks practised exogamy or endogamy. It has always been supposed that the Turks, like the Chinese and Mongols, were exogamists, but some incidents in the Princess's life, if the texts have been correctly translated, which cannot be taken for granted, must suggest the contrary. Precise evidence is scarce. There were in early Turkish two words bösük "a tribe or clan to members of which one's daughters can be given in marriage" and tünür "a tribe or clan from which daughters can be taken in marriage". The equivalent Mongolian words were quda and anda. These terms point clearly in the direction of exogamy, but it is not clear whether they were mutually exclusive, that is a tribe or clan could not be both bösük and tünür, in which case neither of the parents of a girl whom a man married could belong to his own tribe or clan, or whether it could be both in which case the girl's mother might belong to the man's tribe or clan, but on the whole the second alternative is the likelier. The A-shiñ-ña clan was the royal clan of the Eastern Türkist Empire; the next most aristocratic was the A-shiñ-ña. The A-shiñ-ña were both bösük and tünür. Ilgi, Xağan A-shiñ-ña married a daughter of the great Toqūk A-shiñ-ña and A-shiñ-ña Miša married a daughter of Ka'qgan Xağan A-shiñ-ña. One other document is possibly relevant, but it is a very late Uyghur one dating from the period of the Mongol rule in Chinese Turkistan. This document, No. 78 in V. V. Radloff's Uygarische Sprachmomente, Leningrad, 1928 is, in Radloff's edition, almost unintelligible. In the skilled hands of R. R. Arat, who published it in the records of the fifth meeting of P.I.A.C. in Helsinki (Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne LXX) p. 62, it turned out to be a testamentary document addressed by the writer to his wife, in which he instructed her not to marry again after his death, but to take over his house and bring up his son Altoq Kay, and also declared that if his sons Kosaj and Ecen Kay said "she is our step-mother and belongs to us, we will take her" they should be subject to various penalties. This could be taken as a reference to the practice that sons could marry the wives, other than their own mother, of their deceased father, but I do not think that this was a Turkish practice; it is much
more likely that the testator anticipated a possible attempt by his elder son to get hold of the old lady's money.

One word of caution is perhaps necessary. Pelliot was an unrivalled master of Chinese, but his hold on Turkish was less sure; in particular some of his reconstructions of Turkish words from Chinese transcriptions are open to criticism. For example (p. 114) tenərken "pious" is not a possible equivalent of šeng t'ien "deus sacer", though teğdir "god-like" possibly might be. I do not personally regard Ho-ľu as a possible transcription of uľaf "great"; indeed for the reasons stated below in my observations on an article by Klyashtorny and Livshitz, it is very likely that Ho-ľu is not a transcription of a known Turkish name or word.

In her interesting article, "Frühe Zeugen der Scherengitter-Jurte" Annemarie von Gabain poses the question of the age of the Turkish collapsible tent, but has very uncharacteristically overlooked two early literary references to it. In the İrk Bitigi, the Türkü fortune-telling book tentatively ascribed to the ninth century, and possibly, but probably not, translated from some other language, paragraph 18 is a series of questions about such a tent: "What is the interior of the framework (kere-kišı) like? It is [all right?]. What is the smoke-hole like? It is [all right?] What is its window like? Can it be seen through? What are its curved stays (literally, 'shoulders') like? They are good. What is its girth-cope like? It has one. Know that this is a very good (omen)." In Kâtârî's Divân et bi-turk (third-fourth quarters of the eleventh century) there is a saying which is quoted twice with slightly different translations; ‘one says of a destitute man, he was so badly off that he had to carry his tent-framework (kere-kišı) on his own back for lack of a baggage animal’" (I 404 and I 448 in Atalay's translation).

Sergey Klyashtorny in his article (in Russian), "A runic inscription from the eastern Gobi", has made a gallant attempt to translate an "inscription" on a Turkish memorial statue which was found about 180 kilometres south-east of Ulan Bator and is now in the Central State Museum in that city. Edward Tryjarski made a squeeze of it when he was there on a mission from the Polish Academy of Sciences, and showed it to me when I was in Warsaw in 1968 as the guest of the Academy. It seemed to us fairly certain that it was not a formal inscription contemporary with the statue but a series of graffiti, some of them unfinished and unintelligible, of a kind found in other places in Mongolia. What is important in it is the phrase Ėleris xağanka: Ėleris founded the Second Eastern Türkü Empire in A.D. 682 and ruled till about 693. If these words were inscribed in his lifetime they are some thirty years older than any other inscribed specimen of the "runic" script.

Perhaps I might take this opportunity to call attention to another recent article of major importance of which Klyashtorny is the joint author, since it appeared in a serial publication in which Turkish inscriptions are not often published and may have escaped the notice of many Turkologists. In an article (in Russian), "A Sogdian inscription from Bugut", Strany i Narody Vostoka, X, TURKISH PHILOGONY IN HUNGARY 213

Moscow, 1971, he and Livshitz published and commented on an inscription which was recently discovered near Bugut in the Arakhangay aimak of the Mongolian People's Republic. The inscription had originally been mounted on a figure of a tortoise on the top of a kurgan. The kurgan was found in antiquity but was obviously a royal tomb of the First Eastern Türkü Empire, the only such tomb which has so far been discovered. The inscription is very much damaged and not more than half of it can be read, and that only with frequent lacunae between the passages which are legible. The inscription on three sides is in Sogdian; that on the fourth was tentatively described in the article as Chinese, but Klyashtorny has since told me that it is almost certainly in Brahmi, and has suffered even more than the Sogdian part. From what has survived of the Sogdian part, which contains several references to Mu'n turk (Mağan, or Makano, Teğin), it seems to be the obituary of a prince of that name of the ruling family, but there does not seem to be any record of his existence in the relevant Chinese documents. There is a key sentence in II 10 "he ordered 'create the great new sarqha (ink)'", which seems to indicate that he took an active part in encouraging the spread of Buddhism among the Eastern Türkü. As regards the date of the inscription, it mentions, though not in chronological order, the first five āngona of the First Empire: Bumun, the founder of the Empire, also mentioned in the Orhon inscriptions, called Tu-mu in the Chinese histories, who died in A.D. 532, his son, called 'the brother of Muğan' in this inscription and Ko-lo in the histories, who died in 532, Muğan (U Muhammad) who died in 572, his younger brother Taspar, who died between 580 and 593, and Nitzer, his nephew, the son of "Ko-lo", who died in 587. The last three names have hitherto been known only in Chinese transcriptions, Mu-kan or Mu-kan, To-pa and Erk-fu (probably an error for -jo). The terminus post quem date is 572, the accession of Taspar, the terminus ante quem probably 580-2, since Taspar appointed his nephew 'junior xağan' during his lifetime, but in any event not much later than 587.

For some time now it has been realized that some of the highest titles of the Empire like xağan and tarxan had been inherited from earlier "Empires" and did not conform to the ordinary Turkish phonetic rules. It is also almost certain that Bagautur, which later became a common noun meaning "mighty warrior" or the like, but occurs as a personal name in the well-known "Tung-huang letter" (H.-N. Orhon, Eski Türk Yazıtları, Istanbul, 1939, p. 150) is the same as Mras-un, the name of a famous Huo-un shan-yi, but the logical conclusion has not so far been drawn that other Turkish names which occur in Chinese transcription and do not look really Turkish, might equally be of foreign origin. This is fairly certain now that we have some of these names in Sogdian transcription. None of them look really Turkish, neither initial m-, nor initial n- (except in case: "what?" and words derived from it) existed in early Turkish, and -sp- did not occur as an intervocalic consonantal cluster.

Another of the surviving isolated fragments of the text (II 2) is a list of high officials in the plural, ifọpy, trywa'nt, anywpy'nt, twuwnt. Except for the third, which has not so far been traced elsewhere, these are all familiar titles. The spelling trywa'nt kills three birds with one stone: (1) it explains the two irregular plurals in -a in Turkish tarxan—tarxan: and têgin—têgîkt; although neither word occurs in any Sogdian, the Turks used a Sogdian plural suffix for them; tarxan; it was the nearest that the Turks could get to tarxw'an; since there was no w in the language, and no Turkish word longer than a monosyllable could end in a consonantal cluster; (2) it explains why the Chinese sometimes transcribed this word as ta-huan; (3) it adds further weight to E. G. Pulleyblank's theory that the Huo-un title of the supreme ruler, shan-yi in Modern, shan-hiu in Middle and *šan-hiu in Old Chinese was the origin of the title tarxwan, see A.M., N.S., IX 295. If it is confirmed that the inscription on the fourth side is in the Brahmi script it must surely be in Buddhist Sanskrit, and the authors must be right in linking the reference to Buddhism in the inscription with the history of
Jina Gupta as related in the Chinese Buddhist texts translated in Liu Mau-tsai's *Die chinesischen Nachrichten zur Geschichte der Ost-Turken (Te-hsien)*, Wiesbaden, 1959, pp. 38–9. Jina Gupta was a native of Gandhāra who led a party of missionaries to preach Buddhism in China. He arrived at Ch'ang-an in 459 and was well received by the northern Chou Emperor; but there was a change of emperors and policy in 474 and the preaching of Buddhism was prohibited. Jina Gupta and his party received permission to leave the country and return to China. They stayed there for over ten years preaching Buddhism, until another change of policy enabled them to return to China. Indeed it is possible, and very likely, that the Brahmi text, which was probably inscribed on the monument while Jina Gupta was with the Eastern Türk, was composed by Jina Gupta himself.

Käthe Uray-Köhlim's article "Drei alte innerasiatische Namen der Waffen having" is a study of the Turkish and Mongolian names for three articles of military equipment, the belt, the quiver, and the bow-case. She rightly calls attention to the fact that in some modern languages there is a great deal of confusion between the names of the last two but has not spotted the reason for this. It is quite simply the fundamental difference between the methods of carrying the bow as a cavalry and as an infantry weapon. The mounted archer slung as much of his gear as possible from his saddle and two articles only, the quiver and the bow-case, from his belt which was high enough above the ground to give them ample clearance. The infantryman, as all of us who have served in the infantry know, slings as much as he can from his shoulders and as little as possible from his belt, which he reinforces with a shoulder strap if anything heavy is slung from it. A bow-case slung from the belt would have been an intolerable nuisance, particularly when climbing obstacles; at the worst it might get between a man's legs when he was running and bring him down. The foot-archer, whether soldier or hunter, put his left arm, and perhaps his head, between the string and the bow and carried it over his shoulder or across his back. The bow, and with it the bow-case, long ago became obsolete as a cavalry weapon; it survived much longer as a weapon for use on foot particularly by hunters chasing fur-bearing animals in the forests. Carrying a bow necessarily involved carrying also a quiver, so it is perhaps not surprising that the words for quiver and bow-case became confused.

The basic Turkish word for "belt" was kür, hence kürsand:—"to put on a belt", hence a second word for belt kürsand:—it is this word, in its L/R form kürsand:—and not kür as (see below) that is the base of the T'o-pa title (p. 273 of the article) kürsand:—(Middle Chinese you-lîh-tîen), which represents kürsand:; one of the words which proves that the T'o-pa (Tavgaz) spoke an L/R language and pronounced s as l.

There were two Turkish words for "quiver" kürsand:—, noted from about the ninth century but apparently surviving only in Keramik, which according to Kâşgari was not known to the Oğuz, and okürsand:—, derived from ok "arrow", noted from the eleventh century onwards and no doubt the word used by the Oğuz.

There are two Turkish words for "bow-case": yasik, noted only in Kâşgari, and presumably derived from yas- "to unstring (a bow)", kürsand:—, ultimately derived from kür- "to string (a bow)".
are common everywhere. There are lions on the royal arms of England, Scotland and the Netherlands. The national emblem of the United States is the eagle, and eagles figured on the arms of imperial Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Romans used the figure of an eagle as their legionary standard, a practice which was revived by Napoleon. The coins of many Greek city-states bore representations of animals, the owl at Athens, the dolphin at Syracuse, and so on. Other animals including horses, appear on many family coats of arms, on the arms of British counties and towns, and as regimental badges. The junior branch of the Boy Scouts is called “wolf-cubs”. No-one, so far as I know, has ever suggested that all the European peoples were therefore once totemists. Surely a more reasonable explanation is that early men took the names of certain animals as their personal names and representations of them as their badges because they thought, or wished, that they possessed the qualities of those animals. This would have been particularly common at a time when bravery and ruthlessness were regarded as the supreme human virtues. The use of Toğrul, which, as Németh points out, is the origin of Hungarian Turul, is a good example. Toğrul is common as a personal name, and rare as a noun; indeed it is not quite certain what kind of a bird it was. Németh has quoted the meanings given by Kâgi and Abû Hayyân; in addition Kâgi, translating singkur “gerfalcon”, says that it was smaller than a toğrul, and in the Sangâl (228.2.22 of the facsimile) it is said that zaganos in Rumi (i.e. Osmanlî) meant the same as toğrul in Çagatay. Zaganos is a Greek loanword meaning “Subo maximus, the hunting owl”, which can be trained like a falcon. The reluctance to eat an animal which was one’s badge (which is rather a taboo, a Polynesian word, than totemistic) may well have been due chiefly to the fact that beasts and birds of prey like lions, eagles and hunting owls, are not nice to eat.

I do not think that many scholars will be found to agree with D. Pais’s article “A propos de l’étymologie du nom ethnique Oyu”. His suggestion is that this Turkish tribal name, which occurs by itself and in compounds in early Byzantine and other western authorities, is not, as is generally accepted, the L/R Turkish form of Oğuz but a quite different name derived from a homophonous noun meaning “time, cause” etc. which he enumerates at length. Unfortunately he based this suggestion on the form given to this noun in various secondary and outdated authorities. In fact the noun always was, and where it survives still is, pronounced şehir and not şehir, which undermines his whole thesis. The plain fact is that nearly all Turkish names of tribes and sub-tribes, like Kılıç, Kirgiz, Oğur/Oğuz, Tavşan, Türkû, Uyuş, etc. are simply names without any connexion with any known noun or verb and therefore have no “meaning”.

Margit K. Palló in her paper “Ung, gyûl ‘sich entsenden’ und gyûl-‘anzüenden’ und ihr türkischer Hintergrund” makes rather heavy weather of what is really a very simple matter, because she has been far too conscientious in reproducing the errors of scholars who have discussed this problem in the past.

She points out that there was once a basic Turkish verb *ya-* which meant “to set fire to (something)”, but had become obsolete by the eighth century leaving numerous progeny: yâk-, intensive, “to set fire”, yâl-passive, “to be ignited, to catch fire”, yân-reflexive/intransitive, “to catch fire, blaze” and perhaps *yâl “to make something catch fire”, if that is to be taken as the origin of Chuvash śwâ. It may also be the ultimate base of yarû:- and yasû:- “to shine”.

two synonymous verbs often used in hendidaia, which a good deal later became yar- and yas-. The passive nature of yar- had been so completely forgotten by the eleventh century that, like a few other intransitive and passive verbs, it was occasionally used as a transitive synonymous with yas-. The suggestion that yar- should be severed from the rest of the family and regarded as a “lautmelendes Wort” is surely not very plausible. There can be no doubt that gyûl- is a loanword from yar-, but gyûl- is a different matter. It cannot be Turkish because the causative form of yar- was yâlur-; it could never have been yas- because the causative suffix -î is attached only to verbs ending in vowels and occasionally (but I think only in the case of syllables) -ê. Gyûl- must therefore be a Hungarian causative formed after gyûl- had been thoroughly assimilated. It is a matter for regret that the learned authoress has disintegrated from pre-scientific nineteenth century authorities two obvious false etymologies, Vambrê’s suggestion that there was a genetic connexion between yar- and yâlur “star”, and Korôš Csaná’s suggestion that there was a similar connexion between yar- and Sanskrit jû. I would add that I know of no Turkish phonetic law which would justify connecting the Uyuş (and later) noun yula: “torch, lamp” and yar-

Andras Rósa-Tâsk’s article, “On the Chuvash guttural stops in the final position”, is devoted to a searching examination of the kind which we have learnt to expect from this exact scholar of the reasons for certain inconsistencies in the evolution of the “Proto-Turkish” final guttural stops (in my terminology post-palatal k and g and velar k and ğ) in standard Turkish on the one hand and Chuvash and early Turkish loanwords in Mongolian on the other.

It is unnecessary to summarize here his ingenious explanation of these inconsistencies, but it is worth pointing out that he has shown that this explanation provides an additional argument against Ramstedt’s theory that there were in Proto-Turkish, or as Ranstedt would have said “Altaic”, no ęż and z sounds but instead two varieties of l and r sounds, the first of which became ə and z respectively in standard Turkish and l and r in Chuvash and the early Turkish loanwords in Mongolian, while the second remained I and r everywhere. He describes these earliest Turkish loanwords in Mongolian, as “Old Chuvash (properly Çavş) – Bulgarian.” I am sorry, however, that he did not take the final step and for “Old Chuvash” substitute “Taşvâc”. The last time that I discussed this with him in his home in Buda in August 1971 he said that he had some doubt whether this equation could be justified phonetically. I suggest however that the following table of known equivalences between early standard Turkish and Chuvash prove that this doubt is not justified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Early Turkish</th>
<th>Chuvash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“stone”</td>
<td>ta:z</td>
<td>ça:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“to shave”</td>
<td>titre:-</td>
<td>çître:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“mountain”</td>
<td>ta:ğ</td>
<td>tu/(dialect) tâv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“whetstone”</td>
<td>kâdrak &gt; kayrak</td>
<td>xâya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“to water” (the ground etc.)</td>
<td>-vğ-suvgâ:r-</td>
<td>şâvar-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“lion”</td>
<td>arslâ:n</td>
<td>araslán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“for the sake of”</td>
<td>üçûn</td>
<td>-şân/-şen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“interior”</td>
<td>-ç</td>
<td>ąş</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The history of the evolution of the Turkish languages and the differences which divide the L/R languages (Tavşâc in the far east and Old (Turkish) Bulgar
and Chuvash in the far west), from the rest, are most easily explained if it is assumed that the Tavşaq tribe was isolated from the rest of the Turks in the far eastern corner of Mongolia by the later Hsiung-nu kingdoms in Mongolia and during this period of isolation evolved the phonetic peculiarities of the L/R languages, that either during this period or a little later when the Tavşaq founded the northern, or Yuan, Wei dynasty which ruled northern China from A.D. 586 to 535, some ancestors of the Mongols, presumably the Kitan, emerged from the forest, made contact with them and borrowed words from them, and that a section of the Tavşaq, together with the Bulgars who spoke a similar language but are not mentioned under that name in the Chinese histories, formed part of the heterogenous hordes which were led by Attila to southern Europe in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. and somehow managed to retain their identity, their language and their name. In his concluding paragraphs Röme-Tas says that he thinks that, when this earliest layer of Turkish loanwords in Mongolian has been identified and isolated, there may still be found some words common to Turkish, Mongolian and Manchu-Tungus which will prove that these languages are genetically related. I wish him well in his search for these elusive words, but I feel bound to say that I am at present tackling this problem of genetic relationship from a different angle, calling in aid the data of vocabulary analysis, ethnoology and archaeology, and confidently hope that I shall be able to prove that he is wrong.

In “Uigurische Brieffragmente” Semih Tezcan and Peter Zieme have done a masterly job in deciphering and translating some particularly difficult texts, and I have one or two observations.

In Text A they have silently passed over the title of the writer. This is spelt quite clearly ęmğa, but I have no doubt that it was actually ınğa: translated by Kağıari (I 148) “the treasurer of public funds and supervisor of their collection”.

In Text B they have been in some difficulties with the “runic” script on the verso which has the dubious distinction of being about the most difficult and probably the latest surviving specimen of this script. I would tentatively suggest the following alternative reading: ı-2 [tenéri: 3-ı ... alınım: 4-ı 

savı: tap. Yarlı:gi: bar erdi: 5 Bolayın teğrim küşi: küç: 6-3i. Uluğ kut berzün. Tü: [n]:i: künüz yor isar t. 8 ... b'erser eş: tapser t. ...

In line 3 alınım: looks the likeliest restoration of this word. I think that the first “indecipherable” letter is identical with the letter in line 6 transcribed by the authors p with a diacritical mark, and that it is a very aberrant form of ğ; but, not ğap, is the obvious reading in line 6. The second “indecipherable” letter must surely be p, tap in line 3 and tapser in line 8 make reasonable sense. If the letter is right, bul-, which also means “to find”, is unlikely in line 3 and the nominatives küş: seem to require bul-. “His fame and strength” do not make convincingly good sense, but it is difficult to accept the authors’ suggestion of a hendiaady meaning “strength”. There is such a hendiaady but it is Küş küsusun (or kúsun); küş always comes first and kús is not a likely alternative form of küsusun. The authors are certainly right in reading the odd letter in yor isar as s; it is not unlike the usual manuscript form of that letter which is very unlike the monumental form. I think there is a dot over the letter after [b]'erser, making it éş:; the word is not obviously relevant, but it is difficult to think of an alternative. It seems reasonable to suppose that teneri: means “my (earthly) Lord”, not “my God”. The text therefore might mean something like: “... my Lord... The message which I have received(?) from him is sufficient. There has been a command from him. May I become the fame and strength of my Lord! May he grant great favours! If he goes by day and night, if he gives ... if he finds his companion...” Text D is difficult to read, but I have a hunch that the first few words are nouns and not personal names. The second word is damaged; could it be a badly written tayınka? The others seem to be erekne, ..., tariği, konakka “to the man, the monk(?), the farmer(s), the guest(s), the boys and girls led by the daughters-in-law (here, I think, kelin in its normal meaning) of the family”. The next word, if it is the name of the writer, is more likely to be Komak than Kornama, which does not look Turkish.

In “Four notes on several names for weights and measures in Uighur documents” Nobuo Yamada has brought together a very useful list of words. As he points out, although bağ “a roll of (silk) cloth”, kap “a wine skin” and batman a unit of weight which over the centuries has varied from about two pounds, the probable figure at this period, to over half a ton recently in Chinese Turkestan, are good Turkish words, several of the others are Chinese loanwords. His identification of iki bağ as “a roll of double length” is particularly shrewd. Tembini, tenplia a liquid measure, “one thirtieth of a (standard) wine skin”, is certainly a Chinese phrase; the suggestion has been made that it represents 5un 3en 5en “brass bowl”; the phonetic differences make this difficult, but in any event the word has nothing to do with the word trim (or tem) translated by Kağıari (III 135) “a skin filled with wine”, and titemi is “wine-merchant”. Some people call a wine-merchant trim but this is wrong because -c is the suffix (of nouns) for people carrying on a trade.” This is probably a mistranslation. It is likely that the word is the Chinese word téi (Middle Chinese tem) “a (wine) shop, inn”. If this is its true meaning it is easy to see that people might have used it also as the word for the man owning such a shop.

There is a stupid slip of the pen in my own article. In line 3, page 131, the words “son of the” were omitted between “the” and “Son”.

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