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THE TURKIC LOAN WORDS IN MIDDLE MONGOLIAN

by

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The Mongols received their script from the Uighurs at the beginning of the XIIIth century or a little earlier. The earliest Turkic influence upon the Mongolian languages probably dates from the time of the Orkhon Turks, i. e. from the VIIth century A.D., but we have no facts corroborating this hypothesis.

The oldest Mongolian translations of Buddhist books were made from Uighur. These translations contained numerous Turkic (Uighur) words, e. g. *sümbür tay* "the Mountain Sumeru" (*tay* "mountain"), *čaw* (*čau* or *čab*) "fame", *ayay-qa tegimlig* "śramaṇa" (*ayay-qa* is a dative of the Uighur word *ayaq* "honour"), *quvaray* "monk, clergy", etc. Many proper names and titles of historical persons were of Turkic origin as far back as the XIIth century, e. g. *buyuruy*, *küliig*, etc.

So far very little has been done to investigate the Turkic loan words in Mongolian. There is an old article by Vladimirtsov,¹ but at the time of its publication so little was known about the relation of Mongolian to the Turkic languages that Vladimirtsov had almost no criterion for deciding whether all the words he discussed were borrowings or were words of common Turco-Mongolian origin.² The inevitable result was that his article contains many words which are not borrowings at all. Therefore, the whole problem must be examined anew.

This article is devoted to the Turkic loan words in Middle Mongolian as known on the basis of the *Secret History* (1240),³ the documents

¹ B. Ya. Vladimircov, 'Tureckie elementy v mongol'skom yazykѣ,' *Zapiski Vostočnago Otdeleniya*, XX (1911), pp. 153–184.

² At that time the affinity of the Turkic and Mongolian languages was still hypothetical; cf. Julius Németh, 'Die türkisch-mongolische Hypothese,' *ZDMG*, LXVI, pp. 549–577.

³ Erich Haenisch, *Wörterbuch zu Manghol un niuca tobca'an* (*Yüan-ch'ao pi-shi*), *Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen*, Leipzig, 1939 (SH). The numbers refer to the pages. The transcription used in this article is that of Pelliot and the Reverend Antoine Mostaert.

written in the *hPags-pa* script (1269–1368),⁴ and the *Hua-i-i-yü* (1389).⁵ Some Turkic words common to these texts occur also in the Moslem sources on Middle Mongolian, i.e. in the Leyden manuscript (1245),⁶ the dictionary *Muqaddimat al-Adab* (XIVth century),⁷ and the glossary of Ibn Muḥannā.⁸ The latter sources contain many more Turkic as well as Arabic and Persian words, but it is questionable whether all of them really occurred in the colloquial language. The authors of these dictionaries and glossaries included many words of this kind, because their informants were polyglot and when asked to translate a word into Mongolian they often took an Arabic or Persian word which occurred to them more or less at random. Therefore, the only words from the Moslem sources that are discussed in this article are those which corroborate the data of the *Secret History* and the other documents mentioned above.

The Turkic borrowings in Middle Mongolian are among the most ancient Turkic loan words in Mongolian. Most of these words can be traced in Ancient Turkic (AT),⁹ Middle Turkic (MT),¹⁰ Kuman (K),¹¹ and other old languages. Some words taken from Turkic are Persian or Arabic in origin. Nevertheless they are treated here as Turkic borrowings, because they penetrated into Mongolian through a Turkic medium. In this connection may I remark that Vladimirtsov devoted one article to the Indo-European and another to the Arabic loan words in Mongolian.¹² However, most of these words were borrowed by the Mongols from Turkic and not directly from Tokharian, Sogdian, or Arabic. Therefore, the Arabic and Persian words are not separated from original Turkic

⁴ N. N. Poppe, *Kvadratnaya pis'mennost'*, Moskva-Leningrad, 1941 (P). The numbers refer to the pages of the glossary.

⁵ Erich Haenisch, 'Sino-mongolische Dokumente vom Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts,' *Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Klasse für Sprachen, Literatur und Kunst, Jahrgang 1950, Nr. 4*, Berlin, 1952 (H). The numbers refer to the pages of the glossary. The transcription used in this article is that of the Reverend A. Mostaert.

⁶ N. Poppe, 'Das mongolische Sprachmaterial einer Leidener Handschrift,' *Bulletin de l'Académie des Sciences de l'URSS*, 1927, pp. 1009–1040, 1251–1274, 1928, pp. 55–80 (L).

⁷ N. N. Poppe, *Mongol'skii Slovar' Mukaddimat al-Adab*, Čast' I-II, Moskva-Leningrad, 1938 (Mu.).

⁸ *Spisok mongol'skix slov iz glossariya Ibn-Muxanny po izdaniyu Muallima Rif'ata* (Istanbul, 1921), Appendix IV to the work quoted in the preceding footnote (I).

⁹ S. E. Malov, *Pamyatniki drevneturkskoi pis'mennosti, Teksty i issledovaniya*, Moskva-Leningrad, 1951.

¹⁰ C. Brockelmann, *Mitteltürkischer Wortschatz nach Mahmud al-Kāṣīrīs Divān luyāt at-turk*, Budapest-Leipzig, 1928.

¹¹ K. Grønbech, *Komanisches Wörterbuch, Türkischer Wortindex zu Codex Cumanicus*, Kopenhagen, 1942.

words in this article. Such Arabic or Persian words occur also in modern Mongolian languages, e.g. Mo. (Written Mongolian) *gindan*, Kh. (Khalkha) *gindaj* “jail” < Turk. (e. g. Özbek) *zindan* < Pers. *zindān* “jail”; Kalm. (Kalmuck) *zembl* “basket” < Tatar < Pers. *zanbil*; Kalm. *asχpn* “evening” < Tatar *aχsam* < Arabic *aqšam* id., etc. There is no reason to separate such words from Turkic, because their immediate source was a Turkic language.

The Turkic loan words in Middle Mongolian are as follows:

al “red, dark-red” SH 4, cf. P 145, cf. Mo. *al* id., Bur. (Buriat) only in *al šara* “reddish yellow”, Kalm. *al* “light-red”, *al ulān* id. < Turk.: MT *al* “red”, K *al* “light-red”.

alačuq “tent” SH 4 < Turk.: MT *alaču* id., K *alačuq* “hut” > Russian *lačuga* “hut”.

alan “the bottom of a cart” SH 4 < Turk.: Alt., Tel., Leb., Shor.¹² *alīn* “bottom, the lower part of an object, the place under an object”, Yak. *alīn* “the lower part,” MT *alīn* “the front side”, K *alīn* “front, forehead”.

alašas “a particular breed of horses” SH 4 < Turk.: Kas., Krm. *alaša* “gelding”, Osm. *alaša* “horse”.

aral “island” SH 8, as a place name H 59, cf. Mu. 104 “island”, Mo., Kh., Ord. (Ordos), Bur. *aral*, Kalm. *arł*, Mong. (Monguor) *arā* id. < Turk.: AT *aral* “forest, grove” (“an island in the steppe”), Kirg. *aral* “island”.

ariy “pure” in *ariy usun* “clean water” (a place name) SH 9, cf. Mong. *arag* < Turk.: AT, MT *ariy* “clean”. The Mongolian forms are Mo. *ariyun*, MMo. *ari'un*, Bur. *ärūñ*, Kh. *ar'üy*, Ord. *arūn*, Kalm. *ärūn* “pure, clean, immaculate, holy”, Mong. *arāñ* id.

baq “garden” P 146, cf. Mu. 109 *bay* < Turk.: MT *bay* “vineyard”, K *bay* id. < Pers. *bāy* “garden, vineyard”.

bars “tiger” SH 13, P 146 *bars* id., L 1265 *bars* id., Mo. *bars*, Kh. *baras* ~ *bars* ~ *bar*, Ord. *bar*, Kalm. *bars* id. < Turk.: AT, MT *bars* “tiger”.

bezirget “merchants” (a plural from *bezirgen*) H 50 < Turk.: K *bazar-gan* “merchant” < Pers. *bāzārgān* id.

¹² B. Ya. Vladimircov, ‘Mongolica I, Ob otnošenii mongol'skogo yazyka k indoeuropeiskim yazykam Srednei Azii,’ *Zapiski Kollegii Vostokovedov*, I, pp. 305–341; ‘Arabskie slova v mongol'skom yazyke,’ *ibid.*, V, pp. 73–82.

¹³ The abbreviations of the names of the Turkic languages here are: Alt. - Altai, Chag. - Chaghatai, Kas. - Kasan Tatar, Kirg. - Kirgiz, Krm. - Crimean, Leb. - Lebed, Osm. - Osmanli, Shor. - Schor dialect, Tel. - Telengit, Yak. - Yakut.

bor “wine” SH 19, Mu. 121 < Turk.: MT, K *bor* id.

buqa'u “k'ang, a torture instrument consisting of a board fastened to the neck of a criminal”, SH 21, cf. Mu. 222 *buqa'u* “ring”, Ord., Kalm. *buyū* “bracelet” < Turk.: MT *buqayu* “pillory”, Tob. *buqayu* “fetters”, Osm. *boqayı* id.

bulya “feud, fight” SH 21, cf. H 50 “uprising”, I 434 *bulya* “battle”, L 1266 *bulyaq* “feud” < Turk.: MT, K *bulyaq* “disturbance, upheaval”, Chag. *bulyay* id.

čačir “tent” SH 25, cf. Mu. 130 *čadur* id. < Turk.: MT *čačir* ~ *čatır*, K *čatır* id. < Pers. *čādar* “tent, pavilion”.

čöl “a place name” SH 174, H 59, cf. Mu. 136 *čöl* “desert” < Turk.: AT, Chag., Osm., Krm., Tel., Alt., Leb. *čöl* “steppe”.

dašmad “Muhammadan clergy” P 148, cf. Mu. 383 *danišmand* “savant” < Turk.: East Turki *danišmän* “savant, wise” < Pers. *danišmand*.

érdeni ~ *értini* “jewel” P 150, cf. Mo. *erdeni*, Kh. *érdeni*, Ord. *erdeni*, Bur. *erdeńi*, Kalm. *erdəń* id. < Turk.: Uig. *erdeni* ~ *erdini* ~ *ertini* < Sanskr. *ratna* id.

erťinčü “world” H 51, cf. P 159 *yěrt'injü* id., Mo. *yirtiŋčü*, Kh. *yörtömcö* id. < Turk.: AT *yirtinčü* id. > Tibet. *hjig-rten* id.

ed “goods, products” SH 47, cf. Mu. 115 *et* “goods”, Mo. *ed*, Kh., Bur. *ed* id. < Turk.: MT *ed* “fabric”.

inay “favourite” SH 82, *ina'ud* plur., cf. Mu. 196 *inaq* “locum tenens”, Mo. *inay* “intimate friend”, Kh. *yanag*, Kalm. *inəg* “friend” < Turk.: AT *inaq* “friend”, K *inaq* ~ *inay* “faithful”, cf. AT *inan-* “to trust”.

ingirčay “pack-saddle” SH 82, cf. Kalm. *yangrcvng* id. < Turk.: Alt., Tel. *injirčaq* id., Sag. “the wooden parts of a saddle”, Kir. *injiršaq* “pack-saddle”, cf. Yak. *injir* “saddle”.

jada “magic, the ability of the sorcerers to make rain” SH 84, cf. Mu. 200 *jadu* “magic” < Turk.: Chag., Osm. *yada* < Pers. *jàdū* “magic”.

jarliy “edict” SH 86, H 53, cf. P 151 *jarlıq*, Mu. 202 *jarlıq* “order”, Mo. *jarliy*, Kh. *żarlig*, Ord. *żarlig*, Bur. *zarlıq*, Kalm. *zärləq* id. < Turk.: AT, MT *yarlıq* ~ *yarlıy* “order, edict”.

jad “stranger, foreigner” SH 87 (the translation “people” given in the Wörterbuch is not correct), cf. Mu. 203 *yat* id. < Turk.: AT, MT, K *yat* “strange, foreign”.

k'ebid “shop” P 152 < Turk.: MT, K *kebit* “shop, store” > Russ. *kibitka* “yurt”.

kibča'ut “the Kipchak Turks” SH 179, a plural from *kibčay* < Turk.: MT *qifčaq*, K *qipčaq* id.

kirgisüd “the Kirgiz” SH 179, a plur. from *kirgis* < Turk.: AT, MT

qırızı id. Cf. also Kh. *χerχis* id. and *χergsür* < *kirgis egür* “an ancient tomb”, lit. “a Kirgis nest”.

kisilbaşı name of a lake SH 179 < Turk. *qızıl* “red” and *baş* “head”.

kişilig a personal name SH 179 < Turk. *qişlıq* “pertaining or referring to the winter”.

körşis “the neighbours” H 54, cf. I 440 *körši* “neighbour”, Mo. *körsi*, Bur. *χürši* < Turk.: MT *körši* “friend”, Yak. *körsü* “lover” from *körüş-* “to see each other”.

külüg “hero”, plur. *külüyüd* SH 105, P 153 *küüleg* name of an emperor, cf. Mo. *külüg* “a good horse, steed”, Bur. *χüleg*, Kh. *χülig*, Kalm. *küülg* “steed” < Turk.: AT *kü* “fame”, *külig* “famous”, MT *küüleg* “famous”, Uig. *küüleg* “a race-horse”, KKir. *küük* id., Chag. *küük* “a big dog”.

nayud or *naqud* “money, coins” SH 113 (the translation “gold ore” given there is not correct), cf. Mu. 245 *naqd* “cash” < Turk.: Osm. *naqıt* “cash”, K *naqt* id. < Arab. *naqd* “cash”.

nal “ruby” P 154, cf. Mo. *nal* id., Kh. *nal erdeni* “corundum”, Kalm. *nal* name of a precious stone < Turk.: K, Osm.. Krm. *läl* < Pers. *läl* “ruby” > Russ. *lal'* id.

orto'ud “merchants”, a plur. from *ortay* H 56, cf. Mu. 271 *ortaq* ~ *ortay* “merchant” < Turk.: MT *ortaq* “companion”, K *ortaq* id., Chag. *ortaq* “merchand”.

ölög “dead”, *ölümlegü* “to be engaged in a life or death struggle” SH 124 < Turk.: MT *ölög* “dead”, K *ölü* id., MT *ölüm* “death”, K *ölüm* id.

örög “rest, peace, quiet” SH 128, cf. Mo. *örög* id.¹⁴ < Turk.: MT *örüük* *bol-* “to take a rest”.

qablan “tiger” SH 54 (the translation “the name of a predatory animal” is not accurate), cf. L 62 *qablan* “tiger” < Turk.: Kir., KKir. *qablan* id.

qačır name of a river SH 176, cf. *qačidud* “mules” SH 55, cf. L 61 *qačır* “mule”, Mu. 130 *qačır* id. < Turk.: Chag., Kir., Kaz. *qačır* id.

qalibai soltan “the Calif, the Sultan” SH 176 < Turk. *χalīfa* < Arab. *χalīfa* “Calif”.

qan melig a personal name SH 176 < Turk.: Osm. *melik* “king” < Arab. *malik* id.

qarşı “palace” SH 62, Mo. *qarşı*, Kh. *ordo χarşı* id., Kalm. *χarşı* id. < Turk.: MT, Chag. *qarşı* id. < Kučan *kerciye* or Sanskrit *griha* “house”.

qoş “tent, a travel tent” SH 68 (the translation “house” is not quite

¹⁴ N. N. Poppe, ‘Zolotoordynskaya rukopis’ na bereste,’ *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie*, II (1941), p. 108.

correct), cf. Kalm. *χoš* „a temporary tent” < Turk.: Kir. *qoš* “a temporary dwelling, a hut”, Chag. *qoš* “camp”.

goşlıy “tent” SH 68, cf. the preceding word.

qulan “wild horse”, plur. *qulad* SH 71, cf. Mu. *qulan* id., Mo. *qulan*, Kh. *χulan*, Ord. *χulan*, Kalm. *χulŋ* id. < Turk.: MT *qulan*, Kir. *qulan* id.

sarqud “meat for sacrifices” SH 132 < Turk.: Kir. *sarqit* “the left overs of food given to inferior persons”, Chag. *sarqut* id., Chag. *saryud* “grace, favour, food”; Mo. *sarqud* and Kh. *sarxad*, Ord. *sarxud* “wine” is probably the same word, although its meaning is different.

şirge “vinegar” S 60,¹⁵ cf. Mu. 323 *sirke* (or *sirge*) id. < Turk.: MT, K *sirke* id.

soltan ~ *sultan* “king” SH 135 < Turk.: K *sultan* < Arab. *sulṭān* id.

tana “a great pearl” SH 145, cf. Mo. *tana*, Bur. *eržej tana* “mother of pearl”, Kh., Ord. *tanv*, Kalm. *tanv* id. < Turk.: MT *tana* “grain” < Pers. *dāna* “grain, pearl.”

tegirmed “mills” P 157 < Turk.: Chag. *tegirmen* “mill”, K *tergirmen* (*tegirmen*) id.; cf. Mo. *tegerme*, Kh. *tērem*, Kalm. *tērmŋ* “mill”.

teygis name of a big body of water SH 148 < Turk.: MT *tey়iz* “sea”, K *teyiz* id., cf. Kalm. *teygəs* “sea” < Turk.

toyin “a buddhist monk” H 57, cf. P 149 *doyid* “monks”, cf. Mo. *toyin*, Kh. *toiy*, Kalm. *tōn* “a buddhist monk of noble origin” < Turk.: AT *toyin* “monk”, Yak. *toyon* “master, chief” < Chinese *tao-jēn*.¹⁶

toyi “front line, battle line” SH 152 < Turk.: MT *toy* “military camp”.

toyila- “to dance” SH 152 < Turk.: Kir. *toylo-* “to celebrate, to make a festival”.

tuy “banner” SH 153, cf. Mo. *tuy*, Ord., Kh., Kalm. *tug* < Turk.: AT, MT *tuy* id.

turas “quadrangular shields” SH 154, a plural from *tura* < Turk.: MT *tura* “shield, parapet.” Mo. *tura* “building”, Bur. *tura* “house, town, city”, Bur. *burχan tura* “church”, Kh. *tura* “city” is the same word and is also a loan.¹⁷

turyay “watch, guard”, plur. *turya'ud* SH 155 < Turk.: Uig., Chag. *turyaq* “night watch, night guard, sentry” from *tur-* “to stand”.

¹⁵ Erich Haenisch, ‘Steuergerechtsame der chinesischen Klöster unter der Mongolenherrschaft, Eine kulturgechichtliche Untersuchung mit Beigabe dreier noch unveröffentlichter Phagspa-Inschriften,’ *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-historische Klasse*, 92. Band, 2. Heft, Leipzig, 1940, S. 58.

¹⁶ A. von Gabain, *Alttürkische Grammatik*, Leipzig, 1950, S. 343.

¹⁷ Aulis Joki, ‘Die Lehnwörter des Sajansamojedischen,’ *Mémoires de la Société Finno-Ougrienne*, CIII (1952), p. 339–340.

uluy tay a place name SH 183 < Turk.: AT, MT *uluy* “big, great” and *tay* “mountain”.

uruy “relatives” SH 167, cf. P 158 *uruqut* “seeds”, Mu. 248 *uruq* “in-laws”, Mo. *uruy*, Kh. *urag*, Kalm. *urug* “relatives” < Turk.: AT *uruy* “relatives, seeds”.

uruy tariy “relatives” H 56 < Turk.: MT *uruy tariy* id.

yalavači a personal name SH 184 < Turk.: AT *yalabač* “messenger”, MT *yalavač* “messenger, prophet”.