ON SOME ANCIENT MONGOLIAN LOAN-WORDS IN TUNGUS

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The history of the Manchu-Tungus languages is practically unknown. With the exception of Juchen (Juch.) and Manchu (Ma.), none of them was a literary language until a few decades ago. Therefore, comparative study of the Tungus languages must be satisfied with what conclusions may be drawn from the correspondences and divergences in the Tungus languages spoken at present.

It is common knowledge that the Manchu-Tungus languages had, in the past, close contacts with Mongolian. There are numerous Mongolian borrowings in all Manchu-Tungus languages. The Mongolian elements in Manchu were studied by Sanžeev and Ligeti. However, the Mongolian loan-words in Solon, Evenki, Lamut, and other Tungus languages have not yet been investigated. A few of them will be discussed in this paper.

Mongolian language history is divided into three periods: ancient, middle, and modern. A characteristic feature of Ancient Mongolian (AMo.) is the preservation of *g in the so-called weak position, e.g., *ayūla “mountain” versus Khalkha (Kh.) ūl id. The AMo. period lasted until the XII or XIII century and was followed by Middle Mongolian (MMo.). The most characteristic feature of MMO. was the disappearance of the consonants *g, *h, etc. in weak position, e.g., aula “mountain”. All available documents from the XIII century give only such forms. Consequently, AMo. was no longer spoken in the XIII century.

1 Vide Dr. Wilhelm Grube, Die Sprache und Schrift der Juchen (Leipzig, 1896).
other hand, Written Mongolian (Mo.) was based on AMo., cf. Mo. ayula "mountain". The fact that no Mongolian writings older than the so-called Chingis Khan’s Inscription (appr. 1225) have ever been found might be an indication that script had not existed very long before that date. It might have existed for about a century or so but hardly for much longer. To be on the safe side, one might assume that the script was introduced among the Naimans and Kereits, the first literate groups of Mongols, some time in the XII century. The fact that the newly introduced written language was based on AMo. suggests that Ancient Mongolian was still spoken at that time. Precise chronology is impossible in such cases. However, one point is quite doubtless, namely, that AMo. is not a fiction. Words as ayula “mountain”, sayâ- “to milk”, sayû- “to sit”, emegêl “saddle” etc. did really exist, and were also pronounced more or less in accordance with Written Mongolian orthography, i.e., they had a consonant (g, w) between the respective vowels. Speaking of *g, one may assume that it was a deep-velar fricative in words of back vowels, but a voiced velar stop, namely, g in words of front vowels. Phonemically it was /g/, of course, its allophones [γ] and [g] occurring in strictly defined positions. This is evident from numerous borrowings in various Tungus languages, which have preserved the consonant in question. In addition to γ (g) in weak position, Tungus has also preserved alternate forms with *b in strong position which is rendered with w in Tungus, e.g., Evenki (Ev.) kewer “meadow, steppe” < AMo. *keber / *kebër > Mo. keger, Khalkha (Kh.) 7 xër “steppe”; Ev.C8 dawari- “to pass by, to call on someone” < AMo. *dabari- > Mo. dabari- “to run into, encounter, occur”; cf. the alternate form *dabâri- > AMo. *dawâri- > Mo. dayari-, SH da’ari-, Kh. da’ir-, Bur. dâri- “pass by, call on someone”, etc. A naive observer, ignorant of the situation in Tungus, might assume that such words are borrowings from Written Mongolian. There is hardly any need to point out the absurdity of such an assumption, if it were ever made, because the Tungus did not have any system of writing, and most of the ancient Mongols with whom the Tungus had contacts were also illiterate. However, those Mongols spoke AMo. which, in many aspects, was identical with Mo. In this connection let it be mention-

6 Intervocalic *b is w in Evenki, Solon, etc.
7 Монгольско-русский словарь, Под общей редакцией А. Лувсандэндэва (Москва, 1957).
8 M. A. Castrén’s Grundzüge einer tungusischen Sprachlehre nebst kurzem Wörterverzeichniss (St. Petersburg, 1856).
ed that my friend, Professor Rinchen, informed me, in his letter of January 5, 1965, that he had investigated the Mongolian dialect spoken by the Tungus living in the Kentei and Eastern district of the Mongolian People’s Republic. The dialect is very archaic and is close to MMo., e.g., xalagan дērê چîнî you हे कैँम “what is on the palm of the hand of yours, my son?”, managār ेrê yabukugū tā “will you go early to-morrow?”, etc. These few examples demonstrate that Tungus (Evenki) in question adopted a Middle Mongolian dialect which they still speak. Is it, then, surprising that numerous words were borrowed at a still earlier period directly from AMo.?

I. PRESERVATION OF γ AND g

Evenki (Ev.) Nerchinsk ( Nerch.) V¹⁰ adugun “herd of horses” < cf. Mo. aduyun, Kh. udû, Buriat (Bur.)¹¹ adûn, Kalmuck (Kalm.)¹² adûn, Dagur (Dag.)¹³ adô id. Cf. Manchu (Ma.) adun, an obvious borrowing from MMo., cf. Secret History (SH)¹⁴ adu’un “herd of horses”, Muqaddimat al-Adab (Mu.)¹⁵ adûsun / adu’un “domestic animal”.

Ev.Urulga (U) C arîwun “pure” < cf. Mo. ariyun, Mu. arî’n / ariyûn, Kh. arîn, Bur. arîn “pure, clean, immaculate, holy”.


Goldi (Go.)¹⁷ axoru “household utensils”, cf. Ma. ayahoo id. < AMo. *acyûra, cf. Mo. ayoora / ayurasun,¹⁸ Kh. īr “property, domestic utensil”.

Ev.Barguzin (Barg.) P¹⁹ hērgę “whip” < AMo. *herigê, cf. Mo. beriye

¹⁰ Г. М. Василенч, Эвенско-русский словарь (Москва, 1958).
¹¹ К. М. Черемисов, под. редакцией Ц. Б. Цыдендамбаева, Бурят-монгольско-русский словарь (Москва, 1951).
¹² Г. J. Ramstedt, Kalmückisches Wörterbuch (Helsinki, 1935).
¹³ Н. Н. Поппе, Дагурское наречие (Ленинград, 1930).
¹⁴ E. Haenisch, Wörterbuch zu Manchol un niuce tobec’än (Yüan-ch’ao pi-shî), Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen (Wiesbaden, 1962).
¹⁵ Н. Н. Поппе, Монгольский словарь Мукаддимат аль-Адаб, часть I-II (Москва-Ленинград, 1938).
¹⁶ Prof. S. M. Shirokogoroff, A Tungus Dictionary, Tungus-Russian and Russian-Tungus (Tokyo, 1944).
¹⁷ Goldi or Nanai, vide T. И. Петрова, Нанайско-русский словарь (Ленинград, 1960).
¹⁸ The suff. -sun is a “singularizer”, cf. Mo. aduyusun “beast, animal” from aduyun “herd of horses”, argasun “piece of dry cow dung” from argal “dry dung”, gutusun “boot” from gutul “boots”, etc.
¹⁹ Н. Н. Поппе, Материалы для исследования тунгусского языка, Наречие баргузинских тунгусов (Ленинград, 1927).
“stick”, Kh. berē “stick, staff”, Bur. berē / burē “handle of the whip”.


Ev.V bogorči “ladle, scoop” < AMo. *boyorči id., cf. SH bo’orči / bo’orču name of one of Chingis Khan’s aides.²⁰


Sol. dagari “saddle sore, sore on the spine of a mount” < AMo. *dayāri, cf. Mo. dayāri(n), SH da'ari, Kh. dair, Bur. dāri “a sore on the spine caused by the saddle” = Ancient Turkic (AT) yar-“to become sore”.


Ev.V idege “object, property” < AMo. *idege(n), cf. Mo. idege(n), Kh. idē, Bur. edēn “food” from ide- “to eat”.


²⁰ Some Mongolian tribes used to name their newborn children after the very first object seen by the mother after giving birth. The Kalmucks had this custom as recently as at the beginning of the XX century.
²¹ Н. Н. Поппе, Материалы по солонскому языку (Ленинград, 1931).
²² Проф. В. И. Цицинус и Л. Д. Ришес, Русско-эвенский словарь (Москва, 1952).
²³ Сангжев, op. cit., p. 674.
Ev.C jügu- “to transport, to carry from one place to another”, Lam. jügu- < AMo. *jüge-, cf. Mo. jüge-, SH jö-he, Kh. ʒʰ-i, Bur. z- id. 
Ev.C kukuwon “container for kumis” < AMo. *kökügür, cf. Mo. kökütür “skin for liquids”, Kh. xūxūr, Bur. xuxūr “skin for kumis”.
Sol. tottogó- “to establish, to make stand, to stop” < AMo. *togtayá-, cf. Mo. togoyya-, Kh., Bur. togto- id. Cf. Ev.V totko- “to stop” < Yakut or a modern Mongolian language, such as Buriat.

As both Sanžeev and Ligeti have demonstrated, there are also Mongolian borrowings in Manchu which have preserved the velar consonant in intervocalic (and weak) position.

An old borrowing is Jurchen (Jur.) medige “information”, Ma. mefiđe id. < AMo. *medigē, cf. Mo. medege, SH mede’e, Kh. medê id.24 That it is old is evident from the preservation of the syllable di in Jurchen and from the development to ji in Manchu, whereas Mo. has mede-, an assimilated form in which de < *di prior to the beginning of the development *di > ji in Mongolian. Another old borrowing is Ma. gurgu

24 Ligeti, op. cit., p. 235.
“wild animal” which goes back to *görüge, cf. Mo. görüge, Kh. gör “hunt”.\textsuperscript{25}

However, one cannot be quite sure about the age of most of the Manchu words which have preserved the velar consonant, because they might have been borrowed from Written Mongolian in the XVI-XVII century, e.g., Ma. xaixun “hot” (cf. Mo. qalayun), bolsoyon “agreement, term” (cf. Mo. bolveryan), delixun “spleen” (cf. Mo. deligün), kubuxen “border, hem” (cf. Mo. köbüğe), etc. Likewise, one cannot be quite sure whether some “Middle Mongolian” forms in Manchu are really borrowings taken at that time. Such words are Ma. deo “younger brother”, cf. SH de’ü id.; Ma. ne’ü- “to move to another place, nomadize”, cf. SH ne’ü- id., etc. They might not be Middle Mongolian borrowings but loan-words taken from Dagur, which Sanžeev might have had in the back of his mind when he regarded such forms as reflecting “the Dagur stage”.\textsuperscript{28} Therefore, one should be rather cautious as far as Manchu is concerned. However, some Mongolian words in Manchu are old. They penetrated into Manchu via Jurchen which had borrowed them from AMo.

2. PRESERVATION OF \textit{t} AND \textit{d} BEFORE \textit{i}

One of the characteristic features of Mongolian is the development \textit{\textit{ti} > či}, \textit{\textit{di} > ji}.\textsuperscript{27} Ancient Mongolian still had \textit{ti} and \textit{di}. This is evident from a few borrowings in Tungus.


\textsuperscript{25} Ligeti, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 240.
\textsuperscript{26} Sanžeev, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 610-11.
\textsuperscript{28} Ma. č is a regular development. Therefore, Ma. ačıxa could also be an AMo. loan-word taken at a period preceding the beginning of \textit{\textit{ti} > či} and \textit{\textit{di} > ji} in Manchu.
Ev.V kuptîwûn "a press for ski" < AMo. *qabtiyûr, cf. Mo. qabciyur, Kh. xawcûr "instrument for squeezing, pincers, pliers, forge-tongs".

Although the examples given are not numerous, they lead to the conclusion that preservation of ti, di and preservation of the velar consonant in weak position refer to the same period. It is of particular importance that some loan-words display both features, i.e. ti(di) and g, cf. atiga "load", gudigê "stomach", kadiwûn "scythe". This proves that the reconstructed AMo. forms *adirqa "stallion", *kedigê "when" (Mo. keʃiye, Kh. xeʃê), *gûdîqê "stomach", *artiwr "kerchief" (Mo. arciyur, Kh. aclur) are not fictitious but did really exist.

3. THE VOWELS OF THE NON-FIRST SYLLABLES

The Tungus words of Mongolian provenience have preserved the original vowels of the non-first syllables. It is known that the vowels in the non-first syllables have undergone various changes in spoken Mongolian languages. Thus, in Khalkha and Buriat they underwent assimilation by the vowel of the first syllable, e.g., Kh. amar, in precise phonetic transcription, amur "peace, rest".29 In Kalmuck, the vowels in question have become "shwa"30 or disappeared completely, e.g., ampr or amr "peace", cf. Mo., SH, Mu. amur "peace". There are only few spoken Mongolian languages in which the original vowels have remained unchanged. Such languages are Urdu31 and Mogol,32 e.g., Urdu. amur "peace", Mog. daruna "he presses", etc.

Tungus is in this aspect like Urdu: it has preserved u after a, and a

29 Poppe, Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies, pp. 53ff.
31 A. Mestaert, C.I.C.M., Dictionnaire Ordos (Peking, 1941-44).
after u, cf. Ev.V kadu- "to mow" = Mo. qadu-, Urd. xadu- id.; Ev.Barg.P buka "bull" = Mo. buqa, Urd. buxa. However, *a after o of the preceding syllable is o in Evenki, like in Urdus, e.g., Ev.V jowo- "to be in need, suffer, be mournful" = Urd. jowo-, cf. Mo. joba- < *joba- "to suffer". Assimilation of *a by o is ancient, cf. SH jobo- / joba- "to suffer", SH jobolaj "suffering" = Mo. jobalaj id.; SH noqot "dogs" = Mo. noqas id.; SH obog "family", Mo. obog / omog "clan", Urd. omog < *obag id. (if it had been *obug the Urdus form would have been *umug); SH olan "many" = Mo. olan, Urd. olon id., etc.

Consequently, Tungus has preserved the old Mongolian vocalism of the non-first syllables. This should not be interpreted, however, in such a sense that the Ev. forms of the type kadu- "to mow" were borrowed from AMo. As a matter of fact, the original vocalism of the non-first syllables was also preserved in Middle Mongolian, cf. such forms as Mu. arasun "skin", dalu "scapula", nasun "age", qabur "spring", dabusun "salt", etc. On the other hand, Urdus has preserved the old vocalism almost equally well. The conclusion from this is that u in the second or third syllable of a word having the vowel a in the first syllable cannot serve as criterion in determining whether the word concerned is a borrowing from AMo., MMo., or a newer language. However, it is important to note that the Mongolian languages spoken in the immediate neighborhood of Evenki have not preserved the original vocalism of the non-first syllables. It is quite possible, therefore, that the borrowings in Evenki reflect the older forms of Buriat or Khalkha.

On the other hand, Tungus has preserved the original Mongolian long vowels very well.\(^3\) In his valuable article on the long vowels in Mogol, Ligeti has demonstrated that Mogol has long vowels in many cases exactly in the same words as in Evenki, e.g., Mog. qarda "black" = Solon (Sol.) xarâ, Ev.Barg.P karâ id.; Mog. qehdun "hair" = Ev.V kilgahun id. = Bur. xilgahan "horse hair, hair of the tail", etc. The material presented by Ligeti is a splendid corroboration of Hattori's\(^4\) and my own findings, the best corroboration one could ever have hoped for.

Not dwelling on the subject of preservation of the Mongolian primary vowels in borrowings in Tungus,\(^5\) I shall confine myself to the reflexes

\(^3\) N. Poppe, "The Primary Long Vowels in Mongolian", JSFOu, 63:2 (1962), pp. 15ff.


\(^5\) The author of these lines hopes, however, to return to this subject and expand his previous findings in another article.
of Mongolian *u and *u in the non-first syllables in borrowings in Tungus. The discussion will be limited to *u after a and o, and to *u after e, because in the words referring to these categories *u and *u have lost their original articulations in Khalkha, Buriat, and other Mongolian languages geographically closest to the Tungus linguistic area.

The vowel *u

1. In the second syllable

After a:


After *o*:


2. In the third syllable:

After any vowel:


** Like Mo. *altan* < Ancient Turkic *altun* “gold”.

** In Evenki of Barguzin - *s* > *h*.

** Initial *s* in Ev. is a substitute for *c* (≠ *ts*) of one of the newer Mongolian languages such as Khalkha where *ç* before vowels other than *i* has resulted in *c* (≠ *ts*). Old Buriat had also *c* which is now *s*. Vide Poppe, *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies*, pp. 110-12.


Ev.Barg. gataחun “stake, pale”, cf. Mo. gadasun, Urd. gadasu, Kh. gadas, Bur. west gataחan id.40


The vowel *ū


Ev.V mendu “how are you?” (greeting), cf. Mo. mendū, Urd. mōndu Kh.. Bur. mende “healthy, how are you?”


The number of examples could be increased but those already given demonstrate that Tungus is an important source for the study of history of the Mongolian languages. There is no doubt that the above examples of the types adygun, atiga, and adirga are borrowings from Ancient Mongolian. To them Ev.Barg.P hirugeŋ “blessing” should be added which corresponds to SH and hP’ags-pa hiri’er “blessing” – Mo. irügen, Kh. yōr’il, Bur.Alar őr’il id. – Ma. firügen “blessing”. The Barguzin Evenki form is of particular interest because it has preserved the AMo. -g-. As for the initial h, it is the Tungus substitute for initial p in Goldi

39 Most of the examples given here are stems formed with the suffix -sun.

40 The Evenki form reflects the older Buriat form *gatasun. This is evident from -t- versus -d- in all the other Mongolian languages.
and initial $f$ in Manchu. Having no $p$ but only $h$ in initial position, Evenki is in no position to preserve the AMo. initial *$p$. The Manchu form *firugen*, however, reflects the AMo. form accurately: it preserves both -*g* - and $f$ - < *$p$ -. 


41 The vowel *$i$ was preserved in AMo. and in MMO. The so-called "breaking" of *$i$ began in Middle Mongolian. Vide N. Poppe, "On the So-called Breaking of *$i$ in Mongolian", UAJ, XXVIII:1-2 (1956), pp. 43ff.
45 The Evenki form proves that AMo. was *fırug*. In other words, this Mongolian word is not a borrowing from Turkic and has nothing in common with the Turkic word *york*- "to walk, to go".