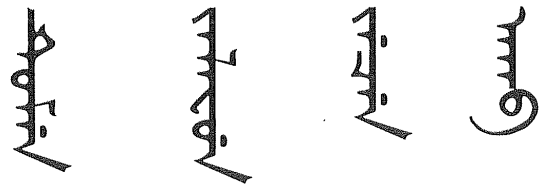
TUNGUSO
SIBIRICA

Herausgegeben von
Michael Weiers und
Hans-Rainer Kämpfe

Band 20

2006
Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

Tumen jalafun jecen akū



Manchu Studies in Honour of Giovanni Stary

Edited by Alessandra Pozzi,
Juha Antero Janhunen, and Michael Weiers

2006
Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

focus) structures built. The origin of these grammatical means is transparent and well motivated both syntactically and semantically.

Abbreviations

ABL – ablative, ACC – accusative, AUX – auxiliary, CAUS – causative, COND – conditional, CV – converb, COP – copula, DAT – dative, EXCL – exclusive, FOC – focus, GEN – genitive, IMP – imperative, IMPF – imperfect, INCL – inclusive, NEG – negative, NR – nominalizer, NP - nominal (phrase), OPT – optative, P – predicate, PART – participle, PR – predicative, PASS – passive, PAST – past (tense), PERF – perfect, PL – plural, PN – proper name, SG – singular, S(UB) – subject, SBSTR – substantivizer, TOP – topic, TN – place name, Tv – verbal stem.

Juha Janhunen (Helsinki)

From Manchuria to Amdo Qinghai: On the Ethnic Implications of the Tuyuhun Migration

It is a well-known pattern in Central Eurasian ethnic history that political, cultural, and linguistic expansions tend to be directed from the centre of the continent towards the margins in the east (China), the west (Europe), the north (Siberia), and the south (India). Much of Chinese dynastic history, for instance, involves a series of threats and conquests originating in the west (eastern Central Asia), while much of European history, up to the rise of Russia as a Eurasian power, has been dominated by recurrent invasions and intrusions from the east (western Central Asia).

On the other hand, there is a distinct pattern suggesting that the place of origin, or 'epicentre',[1] of the great Central Eurasian expansions has gradually moved towards the east, at least as far as the geographical movements of languages and language families are concerned. This is, in particular, true of the four concretely identifiable linguistic expansions that are connected with the westward spread of Iranian (2nd to 1st millennia BZ), Oghur (Bulghar) Turkic (first half of the 1st millennium AZ), Oghuz (Common) Turkic (second half of the 1st millennium AZ), and Mongolic (first half of the 2nd millennium AZ). Before the Iranian expansion, several other expansive waves connected with the spread of other Indo-European branches (Germanic, Celtic, Balto-Slavic) had taken place from a source region located even farther to the west, though perhaps not necessarily as far west as is commonly assumed.[2]

It is also an established fact that ethnic expansions often trigger new expansions, the impact of which is gradually accumulated towards the margins of the continent. A case in point is the Minusinsk Basin in southern Siberia,[3] which once (1st millennium BZ) is likely to have been predominantly Samoyedic speaking. The expansion of Samoyedic towards the north was triggered by the Yeniseic (Ancient Kirghiz proper) 'arrival'

1 In the terminology of Nichols 1997.
2 Nichols 1998.
3 Janhunen 2003.

into the Minusinsk Basin (the last centuries BZ), which was immediately conditioned by the rise of the Oghur Turks (Eastern Huns). Finally, the subsequent Oghuz Turkic expansion initiated the dispersal of Yeniseic, again mainly towards the north.

Recent development in human genetics suggests that expansions of languages, like the movements of cultural spheres and political boundaries, is not necessarily connected with massive migrations of actual human populations. Rather, it seems that human populations in any given location are characterized by a relatively stable genetic continuity, while their cultural patterns, political affiliations, and languages can undergo profound and multiple changes and replacements. One of the best examples of this in the Central Eurasian realm is Anatolia, where a basically stable local population has spoken an entire succession of documented languages, among which Turkish is the most recent newcomer (only from the first half of the 2nd millennium AZ).[4]

Manchuria as a Linguistic Homeland

In the system of Eurasian historical regionalization, Manchuria has a dual position. On the one hand, it may be seen as the easternmost extremity of the Central Eurasian belt. In this framework, it is natural that Manchuria became the source of a major political expansion only after Turkestan and Mongolia. Without the antecedent provided by the Yuan empire of the Mongols (1206-1279-1368), the Qing empire of the Manchu (1616-1644-1911) could hardly have been able to accomplish the 'unification' of Greater China under a single government. Similarly, the Mongols could hardly have risen to their position without the model provided by the Turks and their empires in Mongolia and Turkestan.

On the other hand, Manchuria is a member of the cyclic power triangle in East Asia that also comprises China proper and Mongolia.[5] The role of Manchuria in this triangle is to become 'strong' only when its two neighbours are 'weak'. This has happened several times in the past, as is shown by the Northern Wei (386-534), Khitan Liao (907-916-1125), and Jurchen Jin (1115-1125-1234) states. In this context, it is important to note that Manchuria, unlike Turkestan and Mongolia, has never been a source of

4 Janhunen, *forthcoming*.
5 Barfield 1989: 8-16, 229-231.

nomadic conquerors but, rather, of regular armies. This also partially explains why the Manchu bannermen, unlike the Mongols, were destined to remain in the conquered territories and to merge both culturally and linguistically with the ethnic Chinese, without a chance to retire to their old homeland and traditional way of life.

On a more limited regional scale, however, Manchuria has been the source of ethnic expansions that are only marginally connected with the macroscopic patterns of East Asian and Central Eurasian history. Most importantly, Manchuria is the homeland of the Tungusic language family, which apart from Jurchen-Manchu comprises a dozen distinct idioms spoken in the Sungari-Amur basin and all over Siberia. The fact that the huge Siberian realm of Tungusic (from the Ob basin in the west to Sakhalin in the east, and from Lake Baikal in the south to the Arctic Ocean in the north) is covered by two closely-related 'Northern Tungusic' languages (Ewenki-Ewen) suggests that the underlying linguistic expansion is of a very recent date (from the 2nd millennium AZ).

Most probably, the geographical history of Tungusic involves a gradual expansion towards the north from a primary centre somewhere in southern Manchuria and/or northern Korea (Proto-Tungusic) to a secondary centre in the Sungari-Amur basin ("Amur Tungusic") and finally to a tertiary centre on the Middle Amur (Northern Tungusic).[6] In particular, there is no evidence that Jurchen-Manchu would ever have spread to its historical homeland in southern Manchuria due to a conquest from the north, which means that the Manchu homeland must have been Tungusic speaking since protohistorical times (1st millennium BZ). From this point of view it seems inevitable to assume, in spite of opposite opinions,[7] that the protohistorical Manchurian states of Koguryo (1st century BZ to 668 AZ) and Bohai (698-926) had a Tungusic component and were possibly even dominated by a Tungusic-speaking elite.

There are, however, two other language families whose homelands are also located in Manchuria: Amuric and Mongolic. There are indications that Amuric may have played a much more prominent role in pre- and protohistorical Manchuria than its single marginalized modern descendant (Ghilyak *alias* Nivkh) would suggest. Unfortunately, Amuric has in historical times been a consistently regressive language family, which has gradually receded towards its last northern refuge in the Amur Delta and

6 Janhunen 1996: 153-158, 167-172.
7 Most recently Beckwith 2004; cf. also Vovin in this volume.

on northern Sakhalin under the pressure of Tungusic. By contrast, Mongolic has been an expansive language family with an areal history very similar to Tungusic. The original Mongolic homeland is likely to have been located in southern Manchuria, while a secondary homeland was formed in western Manchuria and/or eastern Mongolia (the Onon-Argun basin), from where the historical Mongols expanded.

Judging by the historical situation, the borderline between Tungusic and Mongolic may originally (as still in the Qing period) have run along the Liao basin, with the Liaoxi region in the west being Mongolic and the Liaodong region in the east Tungusic.[8] While the Koguryo-Bohai political lineage in the west may well be seen as anticipating the rise of the Tungusic Jurchen Jin, the Northern Wei is likely to have been a predecessor to the (Para-)Mongolic Khitan Liao. The subsequent linguistic expansion of both Tungusic and Mongolic was certainly stimulated by the political developments in southern Manchuria.

Linguistic Expansions and Ethnic Migrations

Although it has been traditionally assumed that the Turkic and Mongolic linguistic expansions in Central Eurasia were caused by nomadic migrations, in which entire populations moved on the map carrying with them their cultures and languages, it is today increasingly obvious that this was basically not the case. Nomadism was certainly a factor that increased the mobility of the early Turks and Mongols, but even nomadic populations rarely move as coherent masses. What did move on the map were armies and, with them, political spheres and boundaries, which were able to change the linguistic orientation of local populations far away from the original homelands of the conquerors.

What is even more important to stress is that the nomadic conquests in the history of Central Eurasia never meant the complete eradication of previous populations. Even peoples that had suffered a total political defeat, normally survived both culturally and linguistically until, ultimately, they changed their language and adopted that of the conquerors. An example is offered by the Tangut Xixia, defeated by the Mongols in a series of invasions (1209-1227) often claimed to have led to the total devastation of the Tangut population. In reality, the Tangut as an ethnic group

8 Janhunen 1996: 216 map 6.

survived, many in the service of the Mongols,[9] and even some of the extant sources in the Tangut language date from the period following the Mongol conquest. The Tangut did, of course, change their language, and in a few generations their descendants were speaking Mongol (Ordos), Tibetan (Amdo), or Chinese (Northwest Mandarin).

The Siberian expansion of Tungusic is also best explained as involving a minimum of population movements. In this case, there was no coherent political force that came to comprise the whole of Siberia, but the Tungusic language spread in parallel with the social structures that had originated in the Northern Tungusic homeland on the Middle Amur. For reasons not properly understood, these structures were regarded as 'superior' by the native populations of Siberia, which therefore rapidly became Tungusic speaking. The native populations of Siberia were not exterminated, and their mutual physical and cultural differences are still visible behind the linguistic uniformity, as is most obvious in the case of the Cis-Baikalian Ewenki of the Katanga region.[10]

It cannot, however, be denied that languages are occasionally also spread by actual population movements. This is the case when an ethnic group, or a section of an ethnic group, is militarily strong enough to enter a new territory in a distant location, but demographically too small to maintain a permanent connection with its original homeland. In such a case we are dealing with a linguistic intrusion. A typical example of a relatively recent (17th century) linguistic intrusion is offered by the Volga Kalmuck, who transferred not only their language but also their physical type and cultural complex (including religion) from Jungaria to the Caspian region without ever fully controlling the intermediate territories of Turkestan. A similar but much older (second half of the 1st millennium AZ) example in the Central Eurasian realm is the relocation of Hungarian from the Volga-Ural region to Pannonia, though in this case the physical and cultural correlations of the linguistic intrusion have already become synchronically more or less indistinguishable.

A Central Eurasian region with particularly many intrusive languages is Amdo Qinghai (Tibetan *xA.mdo*) at the intersection of Tibet, China, Mongolia, and Turkestan. Structurally, the languages today spoken in Amdo Qinghai form a typical example of a Sprachbund,[11] whose mem-

9 Dunnell 1994: 214.
10 Doerfer 1985: 262-273.
11 Janhunen 2005.

bers since several centuries have been approaching a common goal of typological uniformity. Of the languages present in Amdo Qinghai, the local forms of (Amdo) Tibetan (Bodic) and (Northwest) Mandarin (Sinitic) still retain a geographical connection with their respective families, while the Turkic and Mongolic languages in the region have become more or less completely cut off from their genetic contexts, making them fully nativized in their new environment.

Just how many linguistic intrusions there were into the Amdo Qinghai region is difficult to specify, but it seems that at least the two Turkic languages today spoken in the region (Salar and Sarygh Yughur) represent two separate 'arrivals', while the Mongolic languages of Amdo Qinghai (also known as Shirongolic) may, in fact, descend from a single massive intrusion dating back to the times of the Mongol expansion (13th to 14th centuries). Even so, the original intrusive populations seem to have been relatively small, and the fact that they have survived linguistically must be due to their political and cultural weight, rather than their demographic potential. Obviously, a large proportion of the modern speakers of, in particular, the Mongolic languages of Amdo Qinghai represent assimilated sections of old local populations.

Linguistic Intrusions to and from Manchuria

The issue of linguistic intrusions leaves us with the basically unsolvable question as to how large an intrusive population has to be in order to leave a long-term linguistic trace in a given region. The situation obviously depends on the ethnic and political power relations in the region. Empirical experience tells us that most linguistic intrusions tend to be erased as soon as their original presuppositions have disappeared. The process may take centuries, however, as is shown by, for instance, the Moghol intrusion into Afghanistan, which survived the fall of the Mongol empire by more than six hundred years.

The problem is also illustrated by Manchuria. After the incorporation of Jungaria into the Manchu empire (1760), several small populations were exchanged between Manchuria and Jungaria. In this context, Oirat and Yenisei Kirghiz (Khakas) speakers were transferred from Jungaria to the Nonni basin in Manchuria, while Manchu (Sibe), Dagur, and Ewenki (Solon) speakers were moved from Manchuria to the Ili region of Jungaria.[12] None of the linguistic groups transferred comprised more than a few thousand (in some cases just a few hundred) people. The first group to be lost as a linguistic entity was that of the Ewenki (Ongkor Solon) speakers in Jungaria, but by the present day the Yenisei Kirghiz (Fuyu Kirghiz) speakers in Manchuria have also come to the end of their road.[13] Even so, in spite of the small size of the original populations, these processes of extinction have taken almost two and a half centuries to be completed. At the same time, both Manchu (Sibe) and Dagur today still remain living languages in Jungaria, albeit they are already seriously endangered, possibly even moribund.

Although the ethnic exchange between Manchuria and Jungaria in the Qing period took place in the context of a relatively developed centralized state, the possibility of linguistic intrusions along the same trajectory earlier cannot be ruled out. Of particular interest in this context is the speculation that the Tungusic language family might have entered the Eurasian steppe zone already in the time of the Avar confederation (5th to 8th centuries AZ), providing an offshoot as far west as Pannonia.[14] A general problem with this speculation is that there is otherwise no evidence of the presence of Tungusic anywhere west of Manchuria before the Manchu. It is certainly true that even the earliest nomadic confederations in the steppe were multiethnic, but the entrance of Tungusic speakers to the west may have been effectively blocked by Mongolic and Turkic, which were the main actors in the steppe zone.

A concrete example of a relatively early intrusion from Manchuria to Turkestan seems to be offered by the Kara Khitai (12th to 13th centuries AZ), whose origin is connected with the westward escape of a small section of the (Para-)Mongolic Khitan after the destruction of the Liao empire by the Jurchen Jin (1125). It is well known that the Kara Khitai established a new state (Xiliao), which for some time became an important regional factor in Turkestan until it was defeated by the Mongols (1218). However, the original troops of the Kara Khitai may have comprised only a few thousand warriors,[15] and they had no significant numbers of dependents with them. Since, moreover, the Khitan were not true nomads,

12 Janhunen 1996: 110-113.
13 Salk & Turdu 1998: 49-50.
14 Helimski 2000, 2003.
15 Sinor 1998: 234-242.

the Kara Khitai must, indeed, have involved an essentially military phenomenon, rather than a migrating ethnic group.

Under such circumstances, the linguistic impact of the Kara Khitai in Turkestan is likely to have remained minimal. Although the first generation of the conquerors certainly included some actual Khitan speakers, it is questionable whether there ever existed a functioning Khitan speech community in the Kara Khitai state. By all tokens, Chinese was the dominant dynastic and administrative language of the state and probably also the native language of most of the immigrant Kara Khitai individuals.[16] However, even Chinese did not leave any permanent trace in the Kara Khitai territory. As in all of its earlier intrusions into Turkestan, Chinese was destined to be lost under the impact of the local languages, which in Kara Khitai times included various forms of Mongolic, Turkic, Iranian, and even Arabic. The fact that Khitan was apparently distantly related to Middle Mongol (Proto-Mongolic), as spoken by the historical Mongols, was probably of no consequence in this context.

The Case of the Tuyuhun Migration

Starting from the premises discussed above we may now take a look at the Tuyuhun migration. The Tuyuhun are a typical example of a protohistorical ethnopolitical entity of which little else is known but their name and an outline of their history. Even the reading of their name is controversial, and the claim that the final syllable would have something to do with the name of the Huns (Xiongnu)[17] is not supported by any historical or linguistic evidence. What is, however, relatively certain is that the Tuyuhun 'migrated' from their 'original' base in southern Manchuria to the region now known as Amdo Qinghai. The migration took place a few decades after the fall of the Han dynasty of China (late third century AZ) from the context of the Xianbei tribes that later founded the Northern Wei state of the Tabgach (Tuoba).[18] The development may have been conditioned by personal or tribal controversies; in any case, it did not involve a centrally controlled political expansion.

In Amdo Qinghai the Tuyuhun, also known by the name Achai (Chinese) or Azha (Tibetan *vA.zha*), came to have a long history as a regional

16 Wittfogel, Karl A. & Fêng Chia-shêng 1949: 669-670, 672-673.
17 Maenchen-Helfen 1959: 225-227, 236-238.
18 Molè 1970: xii-xxi.

power, which at times extended its sphere of influence into eastern Turkestan and even Afghanistan. As a political entity the Tuyuhun were, however, surrounded by enemies from all sides: the Chinese in the east, the Tibetans in the south, the Turks in the west, and the Tangut (Dangxiang) in the north. The main cause behind the decline of Tuyuhun power seems to have been the Tibetan expansion into Gansu and eastern Turkestan, countered by the Chinese efforts to control the west. For the Tibetans, the Tuyuhun formed the principal obstacle on their way towards the north and the main political entity separating Tibet from China.[19] After the fall of the Tibetan empire in Central Asia (mid ninth century), the Tuyuhun were only a diffuse trace of the past, and it is increasingly difficult to distinguish between them and various other groups in different parts of eastern Central Asia using the same ethnonym.[20]

As a politically conditioned phenomenon, the migration of the Tuyuhun resembles the history of the Kara Khitai. It may therefore be asked whether the Tuyuhun migration really involved a movement of an ethnic group from an original homeland to a new location. The early history of the Tuyuhun is more reminiscent of a military operation, and although it seems to have introduced a new dynastic lineage and military elite into Amdo Qinghai it did not necessarily introduce a new ethnic group. In any case, it did not eradicate the earlier ethnic groups in the region, but only temporarily increased the local ethnic diversity. The later history of the Tuyuhun suggests a multiethnic small empire in which the dynastic lineage may or may not have spoken an imported language, while the masses in any case spoke a variety of local tongues, whose origin was not connected in any way with the Tuyuhun migration.

Even so, it is worth while to ponder upon the question as to what the original language of the Tuyuhun might have been. The identification of the Tuyuhun language is to some extent complicated by the fact that the homeland of the Tuyuhun eponymic ancestor is said to have been Liaodong, while the immediate source region of the migration was Liaoxi (Liaoyou).[21] The problems become more substantial if 'Liaodong' is assumed to imply the actual peninsula of Liaodong, which is one of the most obscure regions in Manchurian ethnic history and the only serious blank spot on the linguistic map of ancient Manchuria. Ruled successively

19 Beckwith 1987: 11-36.
20 Molè 1970: xxi-xxv.
21 *Bei Shi*, as quoted by Molè 1970: 1-2.

by the states of Yan, Koguryo, Liao, and Jin, with intermediate periods of Chinese dominance, the Liaodong peninsula is likely to have been multilingual for long periods of time, involving the parallel presence of at least Tungusic, Mongolic, and Sinitic speakers (with the additional possibility of Koreanic, Japonic, and Amuric presence, depending on what position is taken with regard to the linguistic prehistory of the neighbouring Korean peninsula).

However, if the historical information mentioning the existence of a tribal link between the Tuyuhun and the ancestors of the Tabgach of the Northern Wei is taken at face value, the most likely identification for the language of the Tuyuhun is (Para-)Mongolic, which must have been the dominant language family in Liaoxi since at least Xianbei times (late first millennium BZ). This assumption is, at least superficially, confirmed by later Chinese claims of an ethnic connection between the Tuyuhun and the Khitan, but these claims should be taken with caution. In the more than six hundred years that separated the rise of the Khitan in southern Manchuria from the 'arrival' of the Tuyuhun in Amdo Qinghai, the possible original identity of the two languages would in any case have become obscured to a level not immediately recognizable for linguistically naïve outsiders speaking a totally different language.

The Linguistic Heritage of the Tuyuhun

It may be concluded that the linguistic impact of the Tuyuhun in Amdo Qinghai remains impossible to verify with any certainty. Although the Tuyuhun migration may have involved a linguistic intrusion of some permanence, its background would have been very different from, for instance, that of the Mongol invasion of Amdo Qinghai roughly a thousand years later. The fact that the Mongol invasion was able to leave a long-term linguistic trace in Amdo Qinghai was certainly conditioned by the circumstance that it also involved the temporary political incorporation of the region into the Mongol empire. The Tuyuhun, on the other hand, separated from their original political context, seem to have been basically in search of a refuge, rather than of a conquest.

However, the possibility that the Tuyuhun did, indeed, transplant a Manchurian language, in that case most probably a form of (Para-)Mongolic, into the Amdo Qinghai region is to some extent supported by the general typological picture of the modern Amdo Sprachbund. The areal properties of the Amdo Sprachbund may be described in terms of three

typological spheres and chronological layers, which may be termed Altaic (Turko-Mongolic), Bodic (Tibetan), and Sinitic (Chinese).[22] While the Bodic and Sinitic properties are easy to link with the modern Bodic and Sinitic languages of Amdo Qinghai, it is less clear whether the Altaic properties, which seem to represent the deepest substratum all over the Sprachbund, can simply be due to the direct effect of the Turkic and Mongolic languages today present in the region. These properties could also derive from some more ancient local language of the Altaic type, which in such a case could have been Tuyuhun.

On the other hand, even if there had been a more ancient language of the Altaic type in the region, this language was not necessarily that of the Tuyuhun. Already some centuries prior to the Mongol invasion, a group of Turkic speakears known as the Shatuo Turks entered Amdo Qinghai and apparently left a linguistic intrusion in the region.[23] The Turkic linguistic identity of the Shatuo Turks seems considerably less controversial than the presumable (Para-)Mongolic identity of the Tuyuhun. Of course, it cannot be ruled out that the strong underlying Altaic typological orientation of the Amdo Sprachbund is actually due to the combined effect of at least three separate linguistic intrusions, corresponding to the Tuyuhun, the Shatuo Turks, and the historical Mongols, respectively.

Whatever the linguistic role of the Tuyuhun may have been in the early stages of the Amdo Sprachbund, one thing is certain: the Tuyuhun as an ethnopolitical entity must have incorporated older local populations of the region, which may or may not have changed their language, or languages, in the process. In the same way, when the Tuyuhun disappeared from the political scene, the erstwhile Tuyuhun population continued its physical existence in the genetic and cultural composition of the later ethnic groups of Amdo Qinghai, which at this stage did certainly adopt a number of new languages, ancestral to the modern languages of the region. It is important to note that all the languages spoken today in Amdo Qinghai represent the results of intrusions, introductions, and invasions that took place only after the time of the Tuyuhun.

It is often assumed that a particularly direct lineage links the Tuyuhun with the modern 'Monguor' people, generically known to the Chinese as *Turen* 'locals'. Although linguistically incorrect, and although partly based on a mistaken folk etymological confusion between the two eth-

22 Janhunen 2005: *passim.*
23 Schram 1954: 130-135.

nonyms, this identification is actually likely to be correct as far as the continuity of local genes is concerned. There is no doubt that the modern 'Monguor' speakers only partially descend from those historical Mongols who brought the Mongolic language to the region. Apart from Mongols, the Monguor speakers quite certainly incorporate the genetic and social traces of individuals, lineages, and groups that once belonged to the composition of other ethnic groups with different languages, including the Tuyuhun and the Shatuo Turks. This is how ethnic history works: the direct continuity of ethnicity in time is an impossibility.

Acknowledgement

The present paper has been produced within the framework of the project "Patterns of Ethnic Adaptation and Interaction in Amdo Qinghai", supported by the Academy of Finland (No. 210192) and the Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters (*Societas Scientiarum Fennica*).

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