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THE TURKIC NAGY-SZENT-MIKLÓS INSCRIPTION IN GREEK LETTERS*

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There have been a number of attempts[1] at interpreting the inscription engraved on the underside of the little bowl from Nagy-Szent-Miklós in Hungary, which reads:

✤ΒΟΥΗΛΑ · ΖΟΑΠΑΝ · ΤΕCΗ · ΔΥΓΕΤΟΙΓΗ · ΒΟΥΤΑΟΥΛ ·
ΖΩΑΠΑΝ · ΤΑΓΡΟΓΗ · ΗΤΖΙΓΗ · ΤΑΙCΗ.

The most recent interpretation known to me is that of Pritsak, 1955: 85—90, who was the first to approach our text with a sound knowledge of the Volga-Bolgarian epitaphs. V. Thomsen, 1917, who had already held the opinion that its language must be Bolgarian, did so largely on non-linguistic grounds. Pritsak, however, uses his knowledge of Volga-Bolgarian to account only for the morphology of the verb forms. It should be noted that the Volga-Bolgarian material is now much more accessible and better understood, after the collective editing of most of it by Jusupov, 1960, and after some further publications. On the other hand, the corpus of inscriptions published by Beševliev, 1964 and particularly Beševliev, 1963 makes it possible to place the usage of the Greek script found in this little inscription in its correct setting. The fact is that research into West Bolgarian has suffered from all too wild etymologising, the usual source of the conjectures being some permissive variant of Common Altaic. I believe that, firstly, attempts at a solution should start out from the rather consistent orthographical practice and phonetic peculiarities found in the Greek material of the Bulgarian domain and, secondly, should try to base explanations on the known facts of the Turkic languages, first and foremost Bolgaro-Chuvash. I do not find the arguments put forward for the hypothesis that Bolgaro-Chuvash should occupy an intermediate

* Paper read at the 22nd session of the PIAC (Ghent, 1979). This version has benefited from criticism by A. Róna-Tas who would, however, still disagree with some of what remains.

[1] Moravcsik, 1958 I 300—303 has the most complete bibliography.

position between Turkic and Mongolian quite convincing,[2] which makes purely Mongolian etymologies for words of our inscription even weaker methodologically. It will turn out to be feasible to account for the facts of this nine-word text from within the Turkic group.

The reasons given by Vilhelm Thomsen for connecting the Nagy-Szent-Miklós treasure with the colonisation of Hungary by Omurtag, who ruled over Bulgaria between 814 and 831 and his son Malamir, who ruled for the next five years, seem well-founded. Nevertheless, our short text contains nothing which cannot be explained through what we know of Volga Bolgarian and what can be expected to have been its development prior to the end of the XIIIth century, the period of its attestation. As it makes sense paleographically and orthographically only in the Bulgarian context, one could conclude that the two groups at this point still spoke in a similar manner; but Omurtag can of course also have had Volga Bolgarians among his forces.

Among the arguments mentioned by Thomsen for locating the inscription in the reign of Omurtag, only one is not circumstantial: The form of the letter , written with a base line. It is found in nrs. 7, 14, 52, 55, 56, 60, 63, 64 and 67 of Beševliev, 1963, and a slightly different variant with base line in nrs. 59 and 75. 14, 55 and 56 show it with and without base line in free interchange, with no apparent phonetic reason. Among all these, 75 is an undatable fragment and 52 is in some language other than Greek and not understood at all. The rest were all erected by Omurtag, except 67, which was erected under Malamir. This letter form seems to be particularly significant, as it is, in the Greek-writing world, hardly ever found outside Bulgaria. According to Beševliev, 1963: 21, it otherwise appears only on coins and one inscription from the Byzantine emperor Basileios I (867—886). The forms of other letters used in our text also offer possibilities for dating. There is, first, the letter , which is nr. 4 among the 6 variants mentioned by Beševliev (the others being , , ,  and ), the letter 0, which is nr. 1 among 5 (the others being , ,  and) and the letter Y, which is also the first among his five types (the other four being , ,  and V). *Epsilon* and *sigma* have rather broad arcs in the Nagy-Szent-Miklós inscription ( and C respectively), but are elsewhere sometimes found with corners at both ends ( and ) or in square style (E and ). The sequence *omicron—ypsilon* is sometimes written in ligature, which is not the case in our text. The form of the *omega*, which has the middle part higher than the sides, is very peculiar. Beševliev, 1963: 19 writes: "In den Bauinschriften hat Ω die gerundete Form und etwas nach oben herausragende Mittelhaste wie in der ältesten Unziale . . ., was auch für die Inschriften aus der älteren Epoche (6. Jhdt.) charakteristisch ist." These "Bauinschriften" were all erected by Omurtag and Malamir. The last letter

[2] The latest formulation I know of is Poppe, 1974.

worth mentioning is  which, in the Nagy-Szent-Miklós text, has a base line sticking out on both sides. Considering these peculiarities and a few others, it turns out that 60, 61 and 64 are those among the inscriptions in Beševliev, 1963 which are most in conformity with our text. All three were erected during Omurtag's reign.

Reading through the Greek inscriptions of the Bulgarian state, one is impressed by the completely free interchange in the same inscription between *AI* and *E* in practically all of them, and by free interchange between *I* and *H* and between *Ω* and *O* in about a third throughout the ninth century. The variations *ΖΟΑΠΑΝ* ~ *ΖΩΑΠΑΝ* and *ΤΕCΙ* ~ *ΤΑΙCΙ* and the one between the different vowels in *ΗΤΖΙΓΗ* is just what one expects in that setting. I said that about a third of the inscriptions in Beševliev, 1963 freely interchange *I* and *H* and *Ω* and *O*. Among the rest, hardly any at all follow the orthography of Classical Greek: Most use either only *I* or only *H* for the phoneme /i/ and either only *Ω* or only *O* for the phoneme /o/ of the post-classical language, with the other letter not being used at all. Classical Greek *Y* and *OI* first coalesced into a phoneme /ü/, which later, but in some places even before the Christian era, joined the phoneme /i/.[3] Not, however, in Bulgaria: There are only two cases in the corpus of inscriptions from the Bulgarian state in which what should have been the sound /ü/ is written as /i/. One is the plural article *ʿOI*, which is written once with *H* and once with *I* on ls. 5 and 8 in inscription 3a, and the other the forms *ΟΡΓΗΕ* and *ΟΡΓΙΕΣ*, which come from *ΟΡΓΥΙΑΙ* and *ΟΡΓΥΙΕΣ* respectively. In the latter, *Y* has merely been assimilated by the *I* adjacent to it, as Beševliev, 1963: 254 writes. We therefore assign the first vowel in *ΔΥΓΕΤΟΙΓΗ* to the phoneme /ü/;[4] not so the vowel written *OI*.

The redundancy of *AI* versus *E* resulted in general free variation; that of *I* versus *H* and of *O* versus *Ω* in free variation only in part of the texts (to which our inscription belongs) and that of *Y* versus *OI* in no free variation in any text at all from the Bulgarian state discovered until now: No *OI* ever appears in them. The index of Beševliev, 1963 contains a form *ΠΟΙΣΑΣ* ascribed to inscription 1 I b, l. 12. This, however, turns out to be a conjecture, and an unjustified one at that. The same participle appears in two other instances: Inscr. 13 has *ΠΥΙΣΑΣ* and 55 *ΠΥΙΣΑΝΤΑ*; there are also twelve finite examples of this verb, all written with *ypsilon*. Only in one case, in inscr. 47, do we find an example written with *omicron ēta*, which, is however not *omicron iota*. Both *Y* and *OI* of Classical Greek are, in the Bulgarian inscriptions, represented only by the letter *Y*. Examples of the Verb *ΠΥΕΙΝ* for *ΠΟΙΕΙʿΝ* have already been mentioned. Others are *ΑΝΥΚΟΔΟΜΕΩ* for *ΑΝΟΙΚΟΔΟ-*

[3] See e. g. Jannaris, 1968: 48—49.

[4] Unlike Mladenov, 1927: 331—7, who quotes these words as corroboration for his view that the first five letters in *ΔΥΓΕΤΟΙΓΗ* represent common Turkic *yigit*.

ΜΕ'Ω (54), *ΕΡΙΝΟΠΥΟΣ* for *ΕΙΡΗΝΟ'ΠΟΙΟΣ* (95), *ΕΚΥΜΙΘΙ* for *'ΕΚΟΙΜΗ'ΘΗ* (87), *ΛΥΠΑ* (2) and *[Λ]ΥΠΟΝ* (41) for *ΛΟΙΠΑ'* and *ΛΟΙΠΩ'Ν* and *ΥΚΟΝ* (thrice in 55) for *ΟΙ'ΚΟΝ* and *ΟΙ"ΚΩΝ*. Nor is there a single example of classical *Υ* written as *ΟΙ*. But if the Bulgarians, throughout their rule, did not have the practice of writing *ΟΙ* for the sound /ü/, there is no reason why they should have reintroduced such a redundancy when writing Turkic. What could *ΟΙ* have represented, then? I shall here transcribe it with *ö*. This transcription seems to me the most natural one: /o/ and /ö/ have the same aperture and the same degree of rounding, /ö/ being a front vowel as /i/. The Greek alphabet has nothing to offer for this sound and hardly could have developed any conventional transcription, the Greeks not having come into any earlier contact with a language using it. Beševliev, 1963: 38 thought that /ö/ might underlie those cases of *Ι* versus *Η* and of *Ο* versus *Ω* in free variation in which *Ο* (or *Ω*) alternates with *Υ* in Bulgarian names in his texts. Transcribing *ΟΙ* as /öy/ would have been equivalent in our case, as the only instance of *ΟΙ* in this text is followed by *ΓΗ*.

If the language of our inscription had the phoneme /ı/, one could expect it to appear at the end of what is written as *ΤΑΓΡΟΓΗ*. In this case, the Greek alphabet would have had even more difficulty in finding an adequate transcription. I leave this as *i*, because we do not know whether the language of our text distinguished between /ı/ and /i/. This in view of the well-known facts that the 3rd person possessive suffix does not follow palatal-velar harmony in Chuvash, and that consonants are often written in their front-vocalic version when adjacent to what one could expect to be /ı/ in the Old Turkic inscriptions.

Greek *Γ* was pronounced as a voiced guttural spirant before consonants and /a/, /o/ and /u/ and as /y/ before /e/ and /i/ at least since the beginning of our era. Jannaris, 1968: 60 quotes e.g. the Latin name *Traianus* written as *ΤΡΑΓΙΑΝΟΣ* and classical *'ΥΙΟΥ'* written as *'ΥΓΕΙΟΥ'*. Inscr. 119 l. 8 in Beševliev, 1964 also writes *ΥΓΗΩΣ*. The letter *Γ* was used to show that a front vowel and the vowel preceding it formed two syllables and not one. In our inscription, this is so in the case of *ΔΥΓΕΤΟΙΓΗ* (second *Γ*) and *ΗΤΖΙΓΗ* etc. It could not be used, however, to show that two vowels did not belong to the same syllable if the second vowel was not *e* or *i*. Thence the possibility that *ΒΟΥΤΑΟΥΛ* was trisyllabic. Concerning the pronunciation of *Γ* before consonants as a spirant and not as a stop we can quote *ΕΓΜΑΛΟΤΟΝ* from inscr. 41, 13 in Beševliev, 1963. This comes from *'ΑΙΧΜΑΛΩ'ΤΩΝ*, with voice assimilation. I shall use *γ* to transcribe the one instance appearing before consonant, and a raised *ʸ* to transcribe the instances found before /i/. The instance before /ä/ will be left untranscribed, being considered a mere glide. Since *Γ* was not /y/ before consonants, this phoneme could not be written with that letter in that position. In Greek, the consonant /y/ can appear

as *Ι* or *Η*, on condition that no diaeresis be indicated, which was done in the case of *ΒΟΥΗΛΑ*. This I shall transcribe as *buyla*, then.

Β and *Δ* were probably spirants already in Medieval Greek, but were also used to represent voiced stops in foreign words. Here they appear only in initial position, and we shall transcribe them as *b* and *d* respectively. In the Bulgarian inscriptions in Greek, *Β* appears for the sound /b/ in *bayatur*, *bayan* and in the name of the Bulgarians themselves.[5] Initial *Δ* is used for the sound /d/ e.g. in the Slavic name *ΔΑΡΓΑΜΗΡΟΣ*. The only other phonemes worth discussing are those written *Ζ* and *ΤΖ*. The former will be discussed in connection with the word *ΖΟΑΠΑΝ* ~ *ΖΩΑΠΑΝ*, in which it occurs; it will be left as *z* in the transcription. *ΤΖ* can be expected to have reflected /č/, as which it will be transcribed here. The Greeks pronounced the phoneme /č/, which they met e.g.; in Slavic names, as [ts], a sound which they did possess. Thus, e.g., Тыча is written as *ΤΟΥΤΖΑ* in the inscriptions of Beševliev, 1963. Moravcsik, 1958 has examples of the *Păčănäk* being referred to as *ΠΑΤΖΙΝΑΚΙΟΙ*. Common Turkic /č/ is written with *ǰīm* in the Volga-Bolgar monuments; this can be read either as [tš] or as [dž], as the Arabic alphabet did not have any generally used letter for the former. Since both the common Turkic and the Chuvash representatives of this diaphone are voiceless, one can expect the Bolgar examples and the one in this text to be so too. We suggest the following transcription, then:

buyla zoapan täsi düätōʸi butaul zoapan tayroʸi ičiʸi täsi

This was arrived at without any considerations about the possible meaning of the text or about the identification of its elements.

The least controversial word in this inscription is the first, which is attested as a title already in the Orkhon inscriptions. Forms found in other Bulgar monuments are *ΒΟΪΛΑΣ*, *ΒΟΛΙΑ*, *ΒΟΗΛΑ(Σ)*, *ΒΩΥΛΕ*, *ΒΟΙΛΑ* and *ΒΟΥΛΗΑ*. The last form, with a metathesis as in *ΒΟΛΙΑ*, is only understandable on the basis of ours, *buyla*. The word was in wide use among the Bulgarians as title, and several papers have appeared on the function of the *ΒΟΙΛΑΔΕΣ* in their state.[6] It seems to have been used also as the name of a particular social status, however, and then occupies the first part of what a man is called. This is the case in our text, and also in some composite apellatives which the Greek-Bulgarian inscriptions offer, as *ΒΟΗΛΑ ΚΑΥΧΑΝΟΣ*, *ΒΟΓΟΤΟΡ ΒΟΗΛΑ ΚΑΥΧΑΝΟΣ*, *ΒΟΓΟΤΟΡ ΒΟΗΛΑ ΚΟΥΛΟΥΒΡΟΣ*, *ΚΑΝΑ ΒΟΙΛΑ ΚΟΛΟΒΡΟΝ* and *ΒΟΙΛΑ ΤΖΙΓΑΤΟΣ*. The examples using Greek writing have been collected in Moravcsik, 1958 II: 93; see also

[5] See Moravcsik, 1958 II: 32 etc.
[6] Cf. Beševliev, 1963: 41 a. o.

Beševliev, 1958. *Buyla Bayγa Tarqan* in the Toñuquq and Bilgä Qaγan inscriptions[7] also has his status in the beginning and his title at the end, as does *Buyla Qutluγ Yaryan* in the Suji inscription. The fact that most instances of this word in Greek characters have an /o/ has made Clauson, 1972 : 385 assume this to have been the vowel also of the Eastern examples, although our text, with its careful vocalisation and early dating, can make *buyla* appear as the original form.

butaul, on the other hand, probably *is* a proper name. If this is to contain the word originally signifying "son", [γ] must already have disappeared or have become [w] between back vowels. Spirantic [γ] would have been represented perfectly adequately by the Greek *γ*, but that script offered no possibility for representing a bilabial glide. *a^{w}ul* or *awl* or *aul* is more or less identical with the form this word has in the Volga-Bolgarian epitaphs. The form **ıvıl*, posited by Benzing, 1959 : 693, has not been seen, I think, on any of the stones. While no certain vowel sign is discernible in most of the instances (as usual), numbers 20, 29 and 42 seem to have a *fatḥa* on the *alif* both according to Jusupov and according to what can be seen on the facsimile. Some instances of *awlı* are visible also in subsequent publications. As for the first part of the name, two witnesses named *But Qaya*[8] and *Qutluγ Qaya* are mentioned in *Uigurische Sprachdenkmäler* 70. A certain *Qutluγ Oγul* appears in TT IX 115 and the epitaph of Kül Tegin[9] has an *Oγul Tarqan*. In HamTouen 7,4 and 15,2′ we find the proper names *Tun Oγul*, *Baš Oγul* and *Oγul Saŋun*. Considering also *Buyla Bayγa Tarqan* and *Buyla Qutluγ Yaryan* mentioned above, we can say that our text is onomastically completely within the frame of common Turkic. **But Oγul* was *not* "the son of But" (which would have given **but awlı*).

The two gentlemen bear the title *zoapan*, concerning which quite a lot has been said on the Turkological side. In Indoeuropean studies, the relevant discussion started in the eighteen-seventies. Brugmann, 1900, who is the first still worth reading on this matter, derived it from Church Slavonic *župa* "Bezirk" which, in turn, was said to come from a stem *geup-* or *g^{w}eup-*; this was supposed to have given, beside *župa*, Greek *ΓΎΠΗ* (a hapax of Hesychios translated "vulture's nest"), Av. *gufra* "deep, hidden" etc. Above all, he took the Skt. verb *gōpāyáti* to have come from this noun and not from *go* "cow" and *pā-* "to guard". All this, and some more, was attacked by Brückner, 1908—9 in a paper called "Über etymologische Anarchie". Etymological anarchy still reigns in this matter, although many views have been uttered about it. The formulations of Doerfer, 1967 : 108—110 for modern languages and of Menges,

[7] I West 6 and South 14 respectively.
[8] According to Malov in his supplement, this may have been *qara*.
[9] North 12.

1959 for the possible historical development are those I find best informed. What I can add to the material are Middle Iranian forms, which seem to have gone unnoticed by non-Iranists; these make the Iranian origin of the word independent of a reconstructed Avestan prototype, beside Afghani and Baluchi forms quoted also by Doerfer. Gershevich, 1954 : 48 mentions Soghdian *xwšp'ny*, apparently from **xšupane*, which he derives from Avestan **fšupānaka*, with Khotanese cognates. The Parthian form is *šubān*, which is discussed in Ghilain, 1939 : 86, and Pahlavi (Nyberg, 1974 : 187) has *šupān*. All three Middle Iranian forms signify "shepherd". In the opinion of Clauson, 1972 : 397—8, it is unlikely that *čupan* "minor official, village headman" is connected with Persian *čūpān* "shepherd". I will not attempt to reconstruct the involved wanderings of this word through central Eurasia, although it seems to me that these two meanings cannot be kept apart. This particularly in view of the uses to which *gopa* was put to in the Ṛgveda, which range from "shepherd" through "guardian, protector" to "lord". An isogloss divides the Indo-Aryan *gopa* from Avestan **fšupāna(ka)*, but beside having an identical second part, the two seem to have gone together semantically. The shepherd-of-men metaphor is probably universal, and a historical connection between the two semantic developments may or may not have existed. Nor can the Slavic forms be separated from the Indo-Iranian material, be it as cognate, which the authorities seem disinclined to accept, or as a loan. The fact that Proto-Turkic did not have initial *š-* can explain the initial consonant of *čōpān*, the form posited by Doerfer, but not the vowel *ō*, which differs from the original Iranian vowel both in aperture and quantity. The explanation is a contamination with *čo-* which, like all monosyllabic stems ending in a vowel, is sure to have had this vowel long. Till now this verb has turned up only in the couple *čo- ämgät-* in a fragment quoted in Zieme, 1970 : 231, but its derivates are much better attested: *ämgäktä čonup* . . . (*ETŞ* 9,76), *čo-l-* several times in the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa* as quoted by Nadeljaev et al., 1969, *čo-l-oq* "crippled", *čo-γ* translated "Treibstock", *čo-maq* "cudgel, mace" and *ču-q-* "to be hurt" (TT VIII C 5); there is however no Turkic nominal suffix '*-pan*', of course. Now let us return to our *zoapan*. Volga-Bolgarian *wan* < **oan*, *bal-* < **bwal-* < **boal-* and *töätim*, from *ōn-* "ten", *bōl-* "to become" and *tōrt* "four" with the ordinal suffix show that a diphthong *oa* or *ua* and *öä* or *üä* corresponded to what we call long *ō* and long *ō* respectively in Old Turkic. To my mind there is no doubt that the diphthong in *zoapan* also continues this long *ō*, whether *oa* was identical to what the Volga-Bolgar representation stands for, or whether it preceded it in development. But if there was a long *ō* underlying what we have here, our form must be a continuation of the Turkic blend *čōpān*, which alone contained this vowel. From this it follows that the opening consonant should represent a development of *č-*. Whether this is indeed so, or whether what we have here is a re-contamination with some form with an initial spirant, is a question

which can be answered only after the etymological relationships have been unraveled.

täsi (twice in our little text) appears also in Ostyak Samoyed as *tessi*, with more or less the meaning *täwsi/täpsi* had in Turkic; see Pritsak, 1955 : 89. Róna-Tas, 1980 has shown that the Samoyed took their Turkic loans from a Proto-Chuvash type language. Common Samoyed *ker-* 'to dress' from Turkic *käd-* (same meaning) is an excellent proof for this, for /d/ > /r/ is a *purely* Khazar-Bolgar development. Samoyed *tässi* must have been just such a borrowing. The word appears as *täwsi* in Kāšγarī fol. 213, as *täpsi/tepsi* in BT VII 363 and 365, the Codex Comanicus and Ottoman. Doerfer, 1963 : 249—251 has treated this word extensively; cf. also Clauson, 1972 : 445—6.[10] There is also the possibility that *täsi* be read as *tässi*: At least in their inscriptions written in Greek, the Bulgarians do not seem to have distinguished between simple consonants and geminates. We have, on the one hand, *ΟΜΟΣΣΑΝ* (43, 12) for *ϗΩΜΟΣΑΝ*, *ΟΠΙΣΣΩ* (5,3), (Lat. *castra* >) *ΚΑΣΣΤΡΑ* (2,10) and *ΕΣΣΤΗΝ* (47,14), and on the other hand, *ΤΑ ΓΡΑΜΑΤΑ* (55), *ΠΑΠΟΣ* (13), *ΠΟΛΑΚΗΣ* (57) for *ΠΟΛΑΑΚΙΣ*, *ΤΕΣΑΡΙΣ* (56) for *ΤΕΣΣΑΡΕΙΣ* and *ΥΠΟΤΑΣΟΝΤΑ* (56) from the verb *ϗΥΠΟΤΑ'ΣΣΩ*, all written with one consonant instead of the correct two. *None* of the examples of simple *Σ* and double *Σ* appearing in Beševliev, 1963 is spelled correctly.

In the second instance in our text, *täsi* appears without case ending, qualified by *ičiγi*. Thomsen, 1917, Németh, 1932 and Pritsak, 1955, who all read this as *ičigi*, thought that it represents the verbal noun which appears as *ički* in Ottoman and *ičgü* in Old Turkic. Such a word is in fact attested in Chuvash: Ašmarin, 1928—50 IV : 47 has the expressions *ĕškĕ śikĕ* and *ĕšü śiyü*, the latter, according to Benzing, 1959 : 719, with an ending borrowed from Tatar. *ičgü* cannot be the origin of what we have in our text, as the vowel of the suffix would have had to be rounded. It was still rounded in the 13th—14th centuries, as *bälü* from *bälgü* in the Volga-Bolgarian epitaphs shows. The vowel of our text fits the *-XG* derivate; then *ičči* comes from *ičig*. *ičiγi täsi* appears to be similar in structure to *ärnäγi küän*, an expression which can be read in epitaph nr. 14 in Jusupov, 1960.[11] Here, as there, only the first word in the izafet group is marked.[12] The ending in *ičiγi* already possesses

[10] The place where Clauson wanted to read this word in M I 16, 20 in fact has *tä(r)isi quγqası* "its skin and husk", as can be seen quite clearly on the facsimile. The same phrase appears three lines earlier, as Bang, 1931 : 19 realised. There, the meaning is made clear by the context.

[11] Benzing, 1959 : 693 writes ايرن كوان and reads *irnä küän*, probably mistakenly.

[12] It has never been stated very clearly that the head of the izafet construction could dispense with the possessive suffix also in Old Turkic: *yegän silig bägiŋ kädimlig toruγ at binip* . . . , (KT South 12) "he mounted the armoured bay horse of Yegän Silig bäg and . . .".

the broad range of functions as general relativiser which it has in Chuvash.[13] Whether this is the 3rd person possessive suffix, as generally assumed, or perhaps a development of *+ki* is still, I think, an open question.

If *ičči* had lost word-final /G/, the original accusative must also have become identical to the stem if the latter ended in a vowel. In other words, *täsi* (or *tässi*) could be the accusative as well as the nominative, if no new accusative had emerged as yet, or no other suffix taken over its functions. Nor does Bulgaro-Chuvash seem to have had a buffer-*y* for the accusative, as Ottoman Turkish did.

We are now left with the forms *ΔΥΓΕΤΟΙΓΗ* and *ΤΑΓΡΟΓΗ*. These were thought to be verb forms already by Thomsen, 1917 : 21—24, but it was only Pritsak 1955 : 87 who realised that they both correspond to the common Turkic ending *-doq-/-dök-*.[14] Vilhelm Thomsen considered this a possibility, only to discard it as improbable for reasons now known not to hold. Pritsak connects the two suffixes etymologically, but assigns to this one a peculiar use which we shall discuss below. If *-roγi* is the same suffix as *-töγi*, the passage *d* > *r* must already have taken place. Poppe says somewhere that the passage *δ* > *r* must have occurred in historical times, as loans like Persian *āδīna* also participated; cf. also *xura* from Mongolian *qaγda* mentioned below. But then, some sound changes could go on being effective for many centuries. It was also Pritsak who realised that the stem of *dügätägi*, as he writes it, or *düätöγi* in my transcription, had to end in /r/, which is the only consonant which causes our suffix to begin with /t/ in the Volga-Bolgarian inscriptions and then disappears. We cannot accept the purely Mongolian etymology offered by Pritsak, 1955 : 88, for reasons already mentioned. Initial *d°* in the language of this text is likely to correspond to *y°* of common Turkic; this is what it corresponds to in the famous *ΔΟΓΙΑ*, the Graecisized earlier form of inscriptional *yoγ*. There was hardly any other initial *d°* in early Turkic than the one corresponding to common Turkic *y°*; initial *t°* rarely acquired voicing. The sequence *üä* continues Old Turkic long *ū*, as we see in Volga-Bolgarian *küän* "day". /r/ can have corresponded to common Turkic /r/, /z/ or /d/. Anything like *'yūz-'* does not seem to have existed. *yügür-* "to run" would perhaps have corresponded to *düär-* in the language of this text, but does not quite fit semantically.[15] *yūd-* "to carry", on the other hand, fits both the form and the context very well. The disappearance of /r/ before /t/

[13] These have been described in detail by Benzing, 1940 : 251—267.

[14] See K. Thomsen, 1963 for the original vowel of this suffix.

[15] *yügür-* would correspond to Chuvash *śüre-*, were it not for the latter's final vowel. As it stands, it *may* be a contamination with Old Turkic *yorı-*. According to Ašmarin, 1928—50 XII, 300 ff., the central meaning of *śüre-* was "to walk, to go, to drive or to move" but also, among other things, "to be used, employed". Even this does not fit the context as well as *yūd-*.

seems to have taken place after /d/ coalesced with /r/:[16] The °*r*- in *xur*- "to place", *šăr*- "to urinate" and *yar*- "to send, leave, release, let" disappears in verb forms with -*t*° even though it originally was °*d*-: These verbs come from *qod*-, *sid*- and *īd*- respectively. That the passage $\delta > r$ was already taking place at this time was already assumed for the suffix -*roγi*. If the identification of this stem with *yūd*- is correct, it would lend further strength to that claim. Kāšγarī fol. 27 has been frequently quoted for his statement that the Bulġār, among others, are to have pronounced Turkic *d* as *z*. One can only conclude that he mixed up his dialects, as he occasionally does, or that there were different Bolgar dialects, or that he heard Bolgarian /r/ (which may e.g. have been retroflex) as somehow similar to his *z*.

The form *taγroγi* was thought to be from a verb *tayur*- by Thomsen and Németh; this was supposed to come from *taq-ur*-, causative of *taq*- 'to fix, attach, fasten". Needing the *r* for the suffix, Pritsak decided on *taq*-. This invites a rather fanciful interpretation, as a result of which Pritsak translates *taγroγi ičiγi tăsi* as "hängte [sie auf dem Grabe des Buila Zoapan ?] als [zeremonielle] Trinkschale auf." Even this, however, does not attain the meaning of *taq*-. Moreover, [q] remains voiceless at the end of monosyllabic stems in Chuvash, e.g.; in *yγx*- < *āq*- "to flow" and *păx*- < *baq*- "to look". Seeing that this text conforms with Chuvash developments in everything else, this phoneme would be unlikely to have become voiced in it. What *would* be mentioned on such a bowl beside its owner is the man who made it. "to make" in Chuvash is *tu*- (*tăv*- with suffixes starting with vowels), which was connected already by Ramstedt, 1912 : 25 with *toγ*- or *tuγ*-. In Old Turkic and in most Turkic languages *tuγ*- signifies "to be born" and, of the sun, "to rise"; but in others, e.g. in Özbek, Eastern Turki and some Altay dialects, it has taken over the meaning of *tuyur*- and signifies "to give birth".[17] The Chuvash verb has also undergone this change of valency, and some phrases in the dialects preserve this archaic use.[18] In general, however, the meaning was broadened into "to make, to do".[19] The common Turkic sequences *aγ* and *oγ* seem to have given the same result in Chuvash when preceded by a consonant and followed by either a consonant or the end of the stem. *tγră* from *taŋrı* through **tayrı*

[16] With the limitation discussed by Clark, 1978.

[17] This may show a common isogloss but, more likely, is due to parallel foreign influences. Cf. the Germanic languages, in which "to bear children" is the simplex, "to be born" the derived form.

[18] Cf. the expressions quoted by Pritsak, 1959 : 298, in the *Anmerkung*.

[19] A similar broadening of meaning took place in Mongolian *tuγurbi*-, which was borrowed from Turkic *tuyur*-. It is attested from the Secret History on and in Khalkha and Kalmuck, and is by Lessing, 1960 given the translations "to undertake, attempt, occupy oneself with; write, compose, compile, plan, prepare, endeavour, exert oneself" and "intend".

has the same first vowel as *tγra*- "to cut to pieces" from *toγra*- (both followed by /r/. *tu* "mountain" from *taγ*, *xura* "dry grass" from Mongolian *qaγda*, *śu*- "to rain" from *yaγ*-, *su*- "to milk" from *saγ*- etc. have the same vowel as *tu*- "to make" from *toγ*- or *tuγ*-. The sequences *aγ* and *oγ* of these surroundings seem to have coincided before the Nagy-Szent-Miklós inscription, as we here find *taγ*- with the probable meaning "to make". In this same text we had found that *oγul* had already become *aul*, which shows additional loosening of the velar constriction between vowels. In both cases, the vowel *o* has become *a*, bringing about a common fate for the sequences *oγ* and *aγ*.

There is a mysterious verb in the Volga-Bolgarian epitaphs, which has, among other things, been read as *tanduʷı*, *tunruʷı*, *tanruʷı* and even *kindüʷi*;[20] *kāf* and *ṭā*, which look similar in Kūfî writing, have often been mistaken for each other. It appears in inscriptions 9, 23 and 48 in Jusupov, 1960, in Benzing, 1959 : 692, in the 4th inscription in Bulatov, 1963 and elsewhere, also as quoted by Pritsak, 1959 : 298—9. Pritsak demonstrates that it signifies "to do, to make" and thinks it should be read as *itin*-. The latter cannot be correct, however. Firstly, because nobody has ever seen any *alif* at the beginning of any of the instances; secondly, because *ṭā*, with which it always appears, is consistently used for back-vocalic words and *tā* for front-vocalic ones: *altı* and *altıš*, *batuʷı*, *toxur*, *watur* etc. with *ṭā* on the one hand, *jiγäti* and *jiγätiš*, *töätim*, *äti* etc. with *tā* on the other. I would not be surprised if a close inspection of the stones would show that these examples represent the verb we have been discussing, in exactly the form found in our text. A stem ending in /n/ would have demanded the suffix to start with *ṭā* and not with *rā*, as it can be seen to do even on facsimiles of inscriptions in which *dāl* has been read. *nūn* and *ghain* can be quite similar when joined both to the preceding and the following letter. On the other hand, I frankly see no letter at all after the *ṭā* in the facsimile of Jusupov's epitaph nr. 48, the clearest among the ones available to me; this is also what Kaare Thomsen told me several years ago. It may be, then, that by the fourteenth century, the voiced velar spirant had been weakened so much as not to be written at all in part of the inscriptions, a point which should be decided by an inspection of the stone itself. The Nagy-Szent-Miklós inscription is still unequivocal in this matter, of course. I. R. Meyer in *AOH* XLII (1988) has an alternative explanation.

Let us return, for a moment, to the suffixes of these forms as they appear in the Volga-Bolgarian inscriptions. Arabic orthography allows us to read the vocalic part of روى- and طوى- (in one variant of vowel harmony) as *ü'ī* (ﺮُﯗِﻯ), *üwi* (ﺮُﯗﻯ) or *ūyi* (ﺮُﻭِﻯ), but we find that the last is the only possibility left to us by Bolgarian practice: There, non-final suffix-vowels are written with *matres*

[20] This last found even in Benzing, 1959 : 692, quoted from Ašmarin, *Bolgary i Čuvašy*, Kazan, 1902, p. 100.

lectionis, final suffix vowels without them: طنطرم in Jusupov's 3 and 50 with the suffix of verbal negation, the dative suffix in آجرة, the 3rd person possessive suffix in زيارت or زيارة and in هير (passim) always without, the ablative suffix always with *mater lectionis*. Thence, I believe, بلوى should be read *bälüyi*, and the suffix we are discussing end with °*üyi* etc., or better, since the form in the Nagy-Szent-Miklós inscription would look the same in Arabic writing, *-royi*, *-röyi*, *-toyi* and *-töyi*.

We have now discussed all the words in our little text, and also the nominal phrases *buyla žoapan*, *but aul žoapan* and *ičiγi täsi*, and come to the overall constructions. Pritsak, 1955 : 87 maintains that the verb-forms *-tügi*, *-ruγi* etc. found here and in Volga Bolgarian are instances of a Bolgarian preterite and not participles; as far as Volga Bolgarian is concerned, he justifies his view in Pritsak, 1959. It will not be fair to counter his arguments here, as he had to depend on less texts in publications of quality inferior to what we have now; he may, for example, have taken lacunae for the ends of sentences. I agree with the necessity of using the Arabic and non-Bolgarian Turkic epitaphs of the area as explanatory parallels, but think one should refer to complete sentences and not to truncated ones. The first example I shall give is Jusupov's nr. 14: *väfāt baltuyi tārīx ǰiγāti ǰür wān altıš ǰāl muḥarräm ayxı ǰiγārmiši ärnäγi küʷän äti*. This can be translated as "The date on which she died", or "The date of her dying", "was the year 716, the 20th in the month of Muḥarram, a friday." If, as Pritsak says one should, one reads *tārīxa* with a rather elusive *fatḥa*, one still need not render *baltuyi* as a finite verb. It then becomes a nominalised participle, to be translated as follows: "Her dying was on the date of the 20th of Muḥarram in the year 716." Now an example without *tārīx* (Jusupov nr. 3): *āḫirätä batuyi ḥiǰräträn altı ǰür toxur wānım ǰāl šaʿbān ayxı bälinči küʷän äti*. "Her going to the world to come was in the 690th year from the *Ḥiǰra*, in the month of Šaʿbān, on the fifth day." *All* such examples are cleft sentences, in which the verb, being non-predicative, is nominalised. The focus is on the date; the fact that the person mentioned has *died* is the only thing that need not be told to a person looking at an epitaph. A less word-to-word translation, in more idiomatic English, would be: "It was on the fifth of Šaʿbān that she died." Such cleft sentences cannot be expected in the Arabic version, which was not spoken, but are found also in epitaphs written in the non-Bolgarian language of the area. Jusupov nr. 54: *tārixā toquz yüzdä mubārāk rabīʿu 'l-äwwäl ayının āḫirindä ärdi kim Molla Šah ʿAli Därwīš hälāli Nāzī Mälik Xātūn dāru 'l-fänādın dāru 'l-bäqāʿa rıḥlät qıldı*. "It was at the end of the blessed month Rabīʿu 'l-Awwal, the date of 900, that the lady Nāzī Mälik, the wife of Molla Šah ʿAli Darwīš passed from the house of the transient to the house of the everlasting." Back to our text again, it is obvious that the bowl has been made and that it belongs to someone. The information to be in focus is *who* it belongs to and *who* made it, and apparently

also *what* it was supposed to be used for. None of the verbs having to be predicative, none are finite. I translate: "It is Buyla Žoapan who carries the bowl. Drinking bowl, made by But Aul Žoapan." Notice that the *-dOK-* form could refer both to the present and to the past. In his paper on this inscription, Vilhelm Thomsen, 1917 : 22 quotes a passage from Toñuquq as a parallel example: *El Teriš qaγan Bilgä Toñuquq qazγanduq üčün Qapγan qaγan yorıduqı bo* (II North 3). I would slightly change his translation to read: "C'est parce que Elteriš kaγan et le sage Tonyoukouk ont fait des conquêtes que Kapγan kaγan et le peuple turc sir ont ainsi prospéré."[21] In the other Turkic languages I have come across, *-dUK-* is used in this fashion to refer only to participants other than the agent. Its reference to the agent remains to be documented further. It should be remembered, however, that usage concerning the participles varies immensely between the dialects precisely on this point.

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[21] Cf. also KP LXI: "*tirig oztum. kältüküm bo*" *tep ötünti.*, translated ". . . et voilà comme je suis arrivé". The fact that he has arrived is not predicative, of course, as he wouldn't otherwise be there. In the inscription Uluγ Kem Elegeš C 17, *är ölürmädüküm yoq* is "I have never failed to kill a man", i. e. when fighting against one. Here it is *yoq* that is predicative.

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