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K. CZEGLÉDY, A. DOBROVITS, L. FEKETE, J. NÉMETH, S. TELEGDI

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L. LIGETI

HOC VOLUMEN REDEGIT
K. CZEGLÉDY

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CHINESE GLOSSES IN UIGHUR TEXTS WRITTEN IN BRAHMI

BY

B. CSONGOR

The items dealt with in this paper are all taken from the *Türkische Turfantexte VIII (TTVIII)* by A. v. Gabain (Berlin 1954). Although scanty in number, they still reveal something worth our attention.

All of these words are already well-known from the Uighur texts written in Uighur script[1] (cf. my *Chinese Glosses in the Uighur Script . . . : Acta Orient. Hung.* II, p. 73—121 *(ChGU)*). As however the Brahmi alphabet embraces a much wider range of phonetic distinctions than the Uighur script, there is a possibility for discovering this time some phonetic features of the Chinese glosses that the Uighur script was unable to reveal. Brahmi has e.g. letters to denote both the aspirated and unaspirated character of both the voiced and voiceless plosives respectively while Uighur — in the case of dentals and labials at least — has no means to distinguish even between voiced and voiceless ones. Chinese 弟子 ancient Chinese (aCh.) *d'iei tsi* is to be met with in Uighur script as *titsï*. The same word is written in *TTVIII* either as *thetse (lāri)* (A3), or *tethtse* (E5), *. . . thse (lari)* (E33), *tethsela . . .* (E35), *tethsila . . .* (E39), *tethse* (N3). It is obvious that the original form of the Brahmi gloss is identical with the first occurrence mentioned above *(thetse)* and the other cases are to be put down to metathesis, which, in turn, was due to the influence of the Uighur basis of articulation. Now it turns out that in this case 1. aCh. *d'* has changed into an aspirated voiceless initial, in accordance with the facts stated in my *A contribution to the history of the ch'ing yin : Acta Orient. Hung.* IX (1959), p. 79, *i.e.* the first syllable is stressed; 2. the vowel of the first syllable is an *e* and not an *i* ;[2] 3. the vowel of the second syllable has developed already into a mixed *ɿ*, which is confirmed by the velar vowel of the Turkish plural suffix *-lar* added to the word.[3]

[1] The gloss *hoytsi* (A39) is precluded from further investigation as its equation with Chinese 薑子 seems to be very poor in view of the fact, that in the original text it stands parallel to Sanskrit *cūmandā* "Baumwolle (?)".

[2] It is not impossible that also Uighur *titsï* has to be read as *tetsï*, cf. *ChGU*, p. 80.

[3] The same with the Uighur form in *titsïlarïγ*.

It is curious to note, besides, that in these texts, Brahmi *th* is to be met with in this word only.[4]

As regards, however, some other Chinese glosses contained in *TTVIII*, one cannot help to feel somewhat uneasy while casting a glance upon them: 博士 aCh. *pâk dẓ'i* is *pahśi* (A3, C19, D19), *pāhśi* (F4), *bhāhśi* (H4); 佛僧 aCh. *b'i̯uət səng* is *pū* . . . (E32), *pursu* . . . (G9), *bhursūṅ* (H2), *bursūṅ* (H5), *būrsūṅ* (H9). Their orthography is apparently too inconsistent for a detailed phonological evaluation. Nevertheless, if we examine the orthography of the texts A, C, D, E, F, H in which our glosses occur, we find the following:

In A, Uighur *b-* is marked throughout by *p-*, with the exception of *burhāṃ* in l. 26, in front of which we find, nevertheless, *pūrhāṃ* in ll. 30, 31, — and of *phāg*, l. 35. We may take, therefore, the initial in *pahśi* for a *b-*, or for a *p-* as well.

In C we find exclusively *p-*, but, at the same time, Uighur *qapïγ* is rendered (ll. 15, 19) as *qaphəg*. It is but natural to assume that in this text, Brahmi *p-* stands for *b-* while *-ph-* for *-p-*. Chinese *pahśi* has then a *b-* initial in this text, which, in turn is obviously due to the influence of Uighur phonetic system.

The text D offers for Uighur *p-* Brahmi *p-* and *b-* as well. Inconclusive.

In F, on the contrary, we find only *b-* and *bh-* in Uighur words *(pinwādh*, l. 11, is a loan-word from Tokharian and preserved therefore its original written form). Chinese *pāhśi* must then be read with a *p-* in this text.

In E Uighur *b-* is represented by a *p-*, with *b-*/*p-* alternations in the word *burhāṃ*.

In G, there is everywhere Brahmi *p-* for Uighur *b-*.

In H, Uighur *b-* is marked throughout by Brahmi *bh-*, *b-*; the *b-*s and *bh-* in *bhursūṅ*, *bursūṅ*, *būrsūṅ* are therefore not due to aCh. *b'-*.[5]

The initial in *cchiṃ* (A12, 16, C16) 眞 aCh. *tśi̯ĕn* is rather puzzling. (A regular *ciṃ* is to be met with in H3.) Above this, in *TTVIII cch-* occurs only in *cchohi* (A33, "sein Treibstock (?)") the identification of which seems rather uncertain. There is, moreover, *cchū* (∼ 住 aCh. *ɖ'i̯u)* in the Chinese Vajra-prajñā-pāramitā written in Brahmi *(ZDMG* vol. 91, l. 39), beside the *chū*, *kṣū* variants of the very same 住. With the exception of C16, all these cases occur at the head of a sentence.

The glosses *leṃ hvā* 蓮花 aCh. *lien χwa*, D36), *yāṅ* (樣 aCh. *i̯ang*, A2), *mir* (蜜 aCh. *mi̯ĕt*, I13, 19) do not offer anything new as regards Chinese

[4] Another occurrence is G5 *thoytim toyqā* in which *th-* obviously stands for Uighur *t-*.

[5] *TTVIII* p. 3.: "Einige Handschriften haben ein *p-* statt eines *b-*, . . . Neben diesen Kennzeichen, die auch für den heutigen altaischen Dialekt typisch sind . . ." — It seems to me that the majority of the *p-*s in *TTVIII* is of orthographic origin.

phonetics. There is still, however, a number of Chinese glosses in the text P, which deserve a separate examination. They are as follows (in the sequence of aCh. initials):

甲 *kap* ~ *qyap* (2 cases); 庚 *kvng* ~ *qe* (2 cases); 建 *kịvn* ~ *kheṃ* ; 癸 *kjwi* ~ *kvu*,[6] 己 *kji* ~ *ki* (2 cases);

危 *ngjwiẹ* ~ ɡ*ü*[7] (2 cases);

乙 *·ịět* ~ *ir* (2 cases);

知 *ťiě* ~ *ci* ;

除 *ď'ịwo* ~ *cü*[8] (3 cases);

執 *ťśịəp* ~ *cip* (3 cases);

壬 *ńźịəm* ~ *śim* (2 cases);

龍 *lịwong* ~ *lu* (3 cases);

丁 *tieng* ~ *dhe* ;

通 *t'ung* ~ *tuṅ* ;

定 *d'ieng* ~ *dhe* (2 cases);

辛 *sịěn* ~ *siṃ* (2 cases);

丙 *pịwvng* ~ *pe* ; 閉 *piei* ~ *pi* ;

破 *p'uâ* ~ *pa* (3 cases);

平 *b'ịwvng* ~ *pe* (3 cases);

戊 *mạu* ~ *pu* (2 cases); 滿 *muân* ~ *maṃ* (2 cases).

One may note at the first glance the inconsistency in the transcription, chiefly in the case of the initials. This inconsistency can by no means be shown as reflecting Chinese dialectal peculiarities. The explanation must be looked for elsewhere.

As regards the finals of these glosses, one may easily discover a number of features which are common with the very same glosses written in Uighur script. The most convincing are 癸 aCh. *kjwi* ~ *kvu*, 危 aCh. *ngjwiẹ* ~ ɡ*ü*, which show a dialectal peculiarity, and the absence of final *-ng* before palatal vowels. It seems that all these glosses contained in P were simply taken over from texts written in Uighur script, which, in turn, involves the possibility that the Uighur documents written in Brahmi were written more or less on the basis of documents written in Uighur script. Otherwise one could not account for the striking inconsistency in the transcription of the original plosive initials *e.g.*: Uighur script has no means to distinguish between *k* and *g*, *t* and *d*, *p* and *b* respectively, while the Brahmi alphabet contains adequate letters for all these sounds. At the same time, the Uighur language

[6] Or perhaps a slip instead of *kyu*, in which case the proper reading would be *kü*; in accordance with ɡ*ü* and *cü* below, and with the Chinese glosses in Uighur script. Unfortunately *TTVIII* does not give the fac-simile of the text.

[7] In *TTVIII* ɡ*yu*, the proper reading of which is ɡ*ü*.

[8] In *TTVIII* *cyu*, see above.

had no *g, d, p* initials, therefore, while adopting the Brahmi alphabet to denote Uighur sounds, it was probably taken at random only that Uighur *b-* should be marked e.g. by Brahmi *b-*, *p-* or even by *ph-*, *bh-*.

There is however one phenomenon that cannot be simply attributed to the uncertainty in Uighur-Brahmi orthography. I mean the cases *qyap* (甲 aCh. *kap)*, *qe* (庚 aCh. *kvng)*, in front of *kheṃ* (建 aCh. *kiɐn)*, *ki* (己 aCh. *kji)* and *kvu* (癸 aCh. *kjwi)*. The letter *q* is unknown in Brahmi proper and apparently specially created for denoting Uighur velar *k̲*. I took note, already during my examination of the Chinese glosses in Uighur script, of the fact that aCh. guttural plosive and fricative initials in words belonging to the I—II. divisions were rendered by Uighur *q-* while in those belonging to III—IV. by *k-*.[9] I also pointed out then that this fact cannot be due simply to the well-known law of vowel-harmony prevailing in Uighur as at the same time Sanskrit words contained in Uighur texts escaped this way of writing, having *k* in all cases. Turning now to our present glosses we find here the same phenomenon. It would be easy to take this without much ado as one more sign of the influence of original Uighur orthography upon that of the Brahmi — but there remains still a fact that needs explanation, *i.e.* the vowel in *qyap*.

The word occurs in Uighur script also, in the form *qab*. In *TTVIII*, a similar way of notation may be found e.g. in *asqya* „wenig" (B6; variant, *āzqyā* A9, 17, F12), *quṣqyā* "Vögelchen" (C14). The endings in these words in turn are equal to original Turkish *-qïa*, and in the present way of notation the *-y-* cannot represent anything but a semi-vocalic *-ï̯-*.

This case involves the problem of the development of the so-called *a* "aigu" from ancient Chinese onward. It was stated by Karlgren that the Ch'ieh yün contained two kinds of *a* ; the so-called *â* "grave" in the I. division and the *a* „aigu" in the II. In the case of the latter, "after gutturals there appeared a palatalization phenomenon already in T'ang-time; between *k* and *a* there cropped up a parasitic *i* : 家 ka $>$ *kʲa* $>$ P. *tśia*". (*Grammata Serica* p. 50.) Now, this intermediary *kʲa* is not to be found anywhere in T'ang-time to my knowledge. On the contrary, the data mentioned above seem to point in somewhat another direction:

1) T'ang-time Chinese language possessed two kinds of guttural initials, those belonging to the I—II. divisions having been formed further back than those belonging to the III—IV. divisions.

2) These velar initials were followed in the II. division under certain rimes by an *a* "aigu" the quality of which was rather palatal, at any rate more palatal than that of the *â* "grave". In this case, a certain tension arose,

[9] *ChGU*, p. 86.

owing to the difference in the height of formation of the initial and the subsequent vowel.

3) This tension brought about the splitting up of the vowel into a diphthong, something like *(k̯)ïa*.

4) After some time — probably at the time of Yuan or Ming — the velar guttural initials disappeared from the Chinese phonetical system and consequently the subsequent semi-vocalic member of the diphthong was changed into a palatal semi vowel: *k̯a* > *k̯ïa* > *kia*.

It seems to me that the relatively late appearance of the palatalizing effect of the *a* "aigu" upon the preceding guttural may be explained in this way.