

A MONGOL (YÜAN) CALENDAR FRAGMENT FROM TURFAN
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Chinese cultural penetration in the border areas is a process that has been going on since the earliest times of Chinese civilization. Mongol culture and folklore in particular have received many influences from China. Divination and astrology in Mongolia, as they were practised until recent times, show a strong admixture of Chinese elements. Chinese calendars giving the lucky and unlucky days for various actions have, at various dates, been translated into Mongolian. The oldest surviving specimen of these calendars in Chinese seems to be the calendar for 877 A.D., a printed scroll from Tunhuang preserved in the Stein Collection, London (L. Giles, Descriptive Catalogue, No. 8099; discussed and partly reproduced BSOS IX, 4 (1937-39) p. 1033-34). The custom is, of course, evidently much older than T'ang. Fragmentary Sung calendars are described by H. Maspero, Les Documents chinois de la 3e exp. de Sir Aurel Stein, London 1953, Nos. 566-571; they cannot, however, be dated with any certainty, with the exception of No. 566 (either 1157 or 1195 A.D.).

Among the Mongolian documents found in Turfan by the Preussische Turfan-Expeditionen and recently published by E. Haenisch (Mongolische Texte der Berliner Turfan-Sammlung in Faksimile. II. Berlin 1959. ADAW Jg. 1959, Nr. 1) there are a number of fragments (T II D 31 and T II M 166 502a-d) which belong to a Mongolian version of a Chinese calendar giving the auspicious days throughout the year. A study of the Mongolian text is made difficult by the bad state of preservation of the fragments; on the other hand many emendations are obvious because the actions which one should or should not carry out at a certain day are limited in number and moreover frequently repeated. It can be shown that the Mongolian fragments from Turfan must be a faithful translation of a Chinese

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calendar. Practically all the actions listed in Mongolian language have their counterpart in the Chinese calendars. A comparison of the T'ang calendar of 877, of the Sung calendars of uncertain date in Maspero's work and of a late Ch'ing trilingual (Mongolian-Manchu-Chinese) calendar for the year 1910 (Hs Or 275a of the Staatsbibliothek Marburg; Heissig, Katalog Nr. 135) shows a quite remarkable continuity and even the popular calendars produced today in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Nan-yang area are hardly, as far as the system and the actions listed got, distinguishable from earlier calendars. Of 38 actions in the 1910 calendar, not less than 18 occur verbatim already in the Sung fragment Maspero No. 569. The Chinese parallels to the Mongolian expressions in the Turfan fragments are, as a rule, obvious and present no problems. Only what the expression *qaš debter uqaγulbasu* « to teach the Jade Books » means, remains a mystery. The meaning « Imperial genealogy » given for *qaš debter* in the usual dictionaries does not fit in this context.

The Mongolian Turfan fragments do not contain the date of the calendar. They can, however, be dated indirectly. First of all orthography and vocabulary show that the language is Middle Mongolian (*Joqiγu* for mo. *Jokiyu, uqiya-* for mo. *ugiya-*, *ödür* for mo. *edür etc.*). The script is Uigur and very similar to the other known specimens of Middle Mongolian block prints. Secondly, the datable Mongolian Mss from Turfan discovered together with the calendar fragments have dates ranging from 1326 to 1369 (see H. Franke, Oriens vol. 15 (1962) p. 399-410), and a Buddhist printed fragment of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* from the same place shows the date of 1312. Our calendar fragments date therefore in all probability also from the 14th century, and it is a safe assumption to state that the calender is a translation from an official Chinese calendar issued in Yüan China. The production of such divination calendars was, under the Yüan, a sort of state monopoly (cf. the relevant edicts in the *Yüan tien-chang*). Now fragment T II M 166 502a contains, in a rather destroyed but still decipherable context some data which allow to calculate the year for which the calendar was issued. Some words and phrases give the general astronomical and calendary description for a certain month, namely, the 8th. Line 1 of the fragment reads... *qorin Jirγuγan a gi taulai ödür. morin...* « on the 26th, a *gi* hare day, the horse... ». The hare,

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mo. *taulai*, corresponds to the Chinese cyclical sign *mao*; this combination of the ten celestial stems with the duodenary animal cycle where the stem is given in transcription from the Chinese, the name of the animal in Mongolian, is very frequent in Mongolian chronology. The 26th of the 8th month was, therefore, a *chi-mao* day. The 1st of the 8th month is correspondingly a *chia-yin* day. As shown by Huang's Concordance Neoménique there is between 1260 and 1448 only one year where the 1st day of the 8th month was a *chia-yin* day: the year 1324. It might be added that the general description of the 8th month as given in this fragment tallies almost verbally with the wording of the *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu* which was later incorporated in the various *Yüeh-ling*. For comparison, the text of the *T'ang yüeh-ling* (Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng ed.) has been used.

Another interesting feature of the Turfan fragment is the diagram for fixing an auspicious day for marriage (502d). It seems that this is so far the oldest recorded example of this curious divination method, unless there are Sung calendars preserved somewhere (suggestions welcome!) where it may occur too. It should be added that there are some unpublished Mongolian calendar texts among the Kozlov finds. It would be worth while to compare them with the Turfan fragments of 1324 which, at the present state of our knowledge, are the oldest surviving specimens of Mongolian calendars and therefore of great linguistic and historical value.

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