ON THE TERMINATIVE CASE IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE MONGOLS

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The terminative case /I/ is known as a rare one in Mongolian languages. This case indicates the height of an object or the degree. It is found in Middle Mongolian (e.g. Muqaddimat-al Adab), Written Mongolian and some modern dialects. Prof. N.Poppe shows the following examples. (N.Poppe, Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies, Helsinki, 1955, p.206)

Mo. -ca, -cava, e.g., ebüdügcege 'on a level with the knees',
M.Mo.: Mu. -ca, e.g., cisuca 'till blood' (i.e., 'until blood came'),
Urd. -tsē -*cai, e.g., öwödöktsē 'on a level with the knees',
Kh. -tsā/tsē, -tsā, e.g., id.,
Bur. -sā/-sē, e.g., erjisē 'on a level with the bank'
Kalm. -ts e.g., öwd kts 'on a level with the knees'

Prof. N.Poppe regards this case form as an adverb, but it should be noted that in fact this case functions almost as an adjective; e.g., евдегцее ус 'water on a level with the knees' евдегцее цас 'snow on a level with the knees' in Khalkha.

In the Western dialect of Middle Mongolian e.g. Muqaddimat-al Adab, the suffix -ca is found in the following example, tamtulba dēli cisuca ' разорвал шубу по крови ' /2/ (Н.Н.Поппе, Монгольский словарь Мукаддимат Ал Адаб, часть 1-П, Москва-Ленинград, 1938, стр. 340)

On the other hand in the Secret History (=S.H.) that represents the Eastern dialects, no scholar has ever indicated the existence of the terminative case. The present author indicates some examples below that can prove the existence of the case. (S.H.§ 57)

Qutula-yi qa ergu'ed Qorqonaq-un saqlaqar modun horcin qabirqa-ta qa'uluqa ebudug-te olkeg bolutala debseba.

The suffix -ta/-te should be noted in the examples: qabirqa-ta, ebudug-te. It goes without saying that -ta/-te shows the alternation by vowel harmony. I will show the following opinions ever advanced on this case ending -ta/-te. E.Haenisch states as below, "-te, suffix für Dativ u. Lokativ,..., ebuduk" bis zum Knie "(E.Haenisch, Wör-

terbuch zu Monghol-un Niuca Tobca'an, Wiesbaden, 1962, p. 147);" -ta, -te (suffix) zu, bis zu, habirha bis zu dem Rippen " E.Haenisch, op.cit., p.143). On the other hand, Prof. J.C.Street classified the various functional meanings of the dative particles (endings) and indicated a function of Distance or Extent among them. qabirqa-ta qauluqa ebüdüg-te ölkeg ('rib-for path knee for dust') ' a path up to (their) rib(s), dust up to (their) knee(s)' (J.C.Street, The language of the Secret History of the Mongols, New Haven, 1957. pp.34-35). They look upon those examples as ones of dative-locative, but the present author considers this form -ta/-te a different morpheme. It should be mentionted that the suffix -ta/-te occurs only with the much restricted forms. It is for this reason that the above examples contain the form ebüdüg "knee". If the suffix -ta/-te is interpreted as the dative ending, the form in -ta should usually appear not as qa'uluqa-ta but as qa'uluqa-da. The sentence does not also show the exact meaning to us in that case. From this point of view the author considers the suffix -ta/-te of ebüdüg-te, qa'uluqa-ta is not the dative but the terminative one. Then what is the reason why not -ca/-ce but -ta/-te appears here? The author considers it as below. The terminative case suffix -ca/-ce can probably go back to the form *-ta/*-te. If this assumption is valid, one can assume that the phonological change *-ta *-t'a *-ca occurred in this ending at a certain time. In other words, it is supposed that the palatalization occurred there at a very early stage in Mongolian. The suffix -ta/-te in S.H. may be looked upon the archaic form going back to "Proto-Mongol or Pre-Mongol(?)". We must also note the alliterative expression: qabirqa-ta qa'uluqa ebudug-te olkeg bolutala. I think this phrase had already become a customary expression long before the period in S.H.

In general Proto-Altaic *-ca has been presumed as the terminative case (Casus aequativus) suffix. G.J.Ramstedt also shows the following examples.

Kor. cipchai (-katta) 'gross wie ein Haus (aussehen)'
Mo. ebüdügcege; bis an die Knie, 'kniehoch' amacai' 'bis zum Munde',
Kalm. öwdöktsä, amtsä, tamv tsä 'bis zum Stempel (des Pferdes)'
atü. tavca 'berghoch',
Kir. tausa,
Osm. davca, usw. (G.J.Ramstedt, Einführung in die Altaische Sprachwissenschaft II, Formenlehre, Helsinki, 1952. p.48)

If *-ta is attested in a Turkic dialect in the terminative case and the like, then we can reconstruct Turco-Mongolian *-ta as was expected /3/. Finally according to my new opinion I add that the suffix *-ta in question may be related to the comparative case suffix -däg/-täg in Turkic. (on this suffix vid. A. von Gabain, Alttürkische Grammatik,

Leipzig, I950, p.I46; K.H.Menges, The Turkic languages and Peoples, Wiesbaden, I968. p.I57.

In short we must examine very carefully the suffix -ta/-te of qabirqa-ta and ebudug-te appearing in S.H. from the Altaic comparative linguistic point of view.

Notes:

I W.Kotwicz states that the terminative suffixes -ca/-ce, -cava/-cege go back to cav 'время, единица времени'(тюрк.,монг.) 'мера,единица чего-нибудь'(тюрк.)in origin. But it is problematic whether his opinion is valid or not. (cf. В.Котович,Исследование по Алтайским Языкам. Москва. 1962, стр. 191-193)

2 Here the form in -ca is used adverbially.

3 In this connection I add that Ramstedt compares the suffix -ta/-te with ta 'until, till, up to' in Korean appearing in tadatta (:-dara darin), ta darida 'to meet,to advance toward, to reach to (Sic), to arrive and so on. (cf. Ramstedt, Studies in Korean Etymology. Helsinki, I949. p.245. Prof. Murayama was kind enough to inform me of the comparison by Ramstedt in a private communication some years ago.)