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Kirill V. Alekseev

The *Varṇārhavarṇa* in the Mongolian Manuscript Kanjur

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Abstract: The *Varṇārhavarṇa* is an ample eulogy to the Buddha composed by the eminent Indian poet Mātr̥ceta not later than the 4th c. AD. The work has survived to the present day in a number of Sanskrit fragments as well as Tibetan and Mongolian translations. Generally, the Tibeto-Mongolian canonical tradition places the *Varṇārhavarṇa* in the Tanjurs. Nevertheless, the Phugbrag Kanjur contains the incomplete text of the work (ch. 2–12). Notably, the Mongolian manuscript Kanjur compiled in 1628–1629 encloses chapters four and five of the hymn. Both renditions in the Tibetan and Mongolian Kanjurs have characteristic structural features indicating that they could ascend to one and the same Tibetan version of the *Varṇārhavarṇa*, different from the one in the Tanjurs.

Key words: *Varṇārhavarṇa*, Mātr̥ceta, Phugbrag Kanjur, Mongolian manuscript Kanjur, Tanjur

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The *Varṇārhavarṇa* (hereinafter referred to as VAV) belongs to the extensive class of Buddhist poetical eulogies, commonly labelled in Sanskrit literature as *stotra* or *stuti*.¹ It is believed to be the work of Mātr̥ceta, who ranks among the greatest poets of the Buddhist tradition. Despite the existence of some legendary accounts of his life in Chinese and Tibetan literatures,² little is known about the real circumstances of his being. According to scholars, he must have been floruit between the 2nd and the 4th cc. The earliest reliable *terminus ante quem* of his life and hence his works is the

¹ On the Indian *stotra* literature in general, see: for example, GONDA 1977: 232–270; ZORIN 2010.

² On the sources of Mātr̥ceta's life, see: HARTMANN 1987: 12–22; 2019.

beginning of the 5th c., when he is quoted in a datable translation of the *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-upadeśa* into Chinese.³

The Sanskrit text of the *stotra* has survived to the present day in a number of fragments from Central Asia, where it was remarkably popular,⁴ as well as quotations in some other Buddhist texts. By now, about 80 percent of the VAV original have been reconstructed with the use of these sources.⁵ Its complete text is available in Tibetan and Mongolian translations. While the Tibetan versions became an integral part of the VAV studies,⁶ the Mongolian ones were almost routinely overlooked by academia.

The complete VAV was translated into Tibetan by Sarvajñadeva and dPal brtsegs rakṣita at the beginning of the 9th c.⁷ The text is mentioned in the *Hymns* Section (Tib. *bstod pa sna tshogs*) of the *lHan kar ma* catalogue.⁸ The fully fledged Tibetan canonical tradition places the text in the Tanjurs (Tib. *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la bstod pa bsngags par 'os pa bsngags pa las bstod par mi nus par bstod pa zhes bya ba; bstod tshogs, ka*).⁹ J.-U. Hartmann notes that the readings of the Derge Tanjur oppose to those in the Cone, Narthang, and Peking collections,¹⁰ which implies the existence of at least two Tibetan versions of the text. The Tanjurs include an additional hymn entitled *dPe las bstod pa* and marked as the thirteenth chapter of the VAV. It was translated by Padmākara and Rin chen bzan po in the eleventh century. The hymn does not have any counterpart among the Sanskrit fragments of the VAV and seems to be a later appendix to the Mātrceta's work.¹¹

³ HARTMANN 1999: 122; 2019.

⁴ S. van Schaik suggests that Buddhist hymns were favoured along the Silk Road because they were used for group recitation within some rituals VAN SCHAİK 2020: 52–54.

⁵ HARTMANN 1987: 48; 2002: 305.

⁶ The poem was brought to notice by F.W. Thomas, who cited the Tibetan text of the opening verses of the poem, and later on published the first four chapters together with English rendering THOMAS 1903: 346–348; 1905. The following succession of academic works on the subject was crowned with the fundamental research of the then available Sanskrit fragments and the Tibetan translation of the *stotra* by J.-U. HARTMANN 1987. Since then, however, new fragments of the VAV have been published, and hopefully some more to be discovered. See the detailed account of the VAV studies in HARTMANN 1987: 11–12; ZORIN 2010: 12–13, 251–252. See also the VAV Sanskrit text based on HARTMANN 1987 together with some additional materials at <<https://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/index.php?page=volume&vid=1127>> (Accessed 07.07.2025).

⁷ HARTMANN 1987: 22.

⁸ HERRMANN-PFANDT 2008: No. 455.

⁹ On the VAV location in the Tibetan Tanjurs, see RKTs <<http://www.rkts.org/cat.php?id=29&typ=2>> (Accessed 07.07.2025).

¹⁰ HARTMANN 1987: 45

¹¹ HARTMANN 1987: 22–23, 47.

Apart from the Tanjurs the VAV is included twice in the Phugbrag Kanjur preserved in the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives (LTWA), Dharamshala.¹² This manuscript collection was compiled in the late 17th — early 18th cc., but seems to be a conflation of at least two earlier Kanjurs belonging to different groups.¹³ The VAV duplications are located in the *mDo sde* Section, Vols. *la* (401r3–423v4) and *sa*¹⁴ (358b4–377b8) (further on F1 and F2 correspondingly).¹⁵

Structurally both texts in the Phugbrag Kanjur are quite different from those in the Tanjurs. The Tanjur versions begin with the combination of titles of the whole work and its first chapter — *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la bstod pa bsngags par 'os pa bsngags pa las bstod par mi nus par bstod pa zhes bya ba*, sanskritised as *varṇārhavarṇe bhagavato buddhastotre śakyastava nāma*.¹⁶ The Tibetan title is repeated at the end of the first chapter with the addition *le'u dang po'o*, 'first chapter'. The following chapters do not have the initial titles, only the final ones with the addition *le'u* labelled with the number of the chapter.¹⁷

Both F1 and F2 do not contain the first, as well as the additional thirteenth chapter of the *stotra*. All chapters (2–12) have the initial titles both in Sanskrit, each time introduced by the formula 'in the Indian language' (Tib. *rgya gar skad du*), and Tibetan, in the same way as the first VAV chapter in

¹² First described in HARTMANN 1996: 70–71. We also have evidence, that during the early period of Tibetan canonical history, when the distinction between the Kanjur and Tanjur texts was not so precise, the VAV was included in some other Kanjurs. Thus, for example, the incomplete VAV (ch. 3–11) is mentioned in the *gZungs 'bum* Section of the catalogue of the Early Mustang Kanjur EIMER 1999: No. 430. Similarly, the VAV was included in the *mDo sde* Section, Vol. *ca*, of the Orgyan (Tawang) Kanjur. See the handlist for the Tawang Kanjur in the old rKTs database (O16): <<http://www.rkts.org/rktsneu/handlist/index.php?coll=O>> (Accessed 07.07.2025). Due to the preservation in the Lithang ('Jang sa tham, 1621) edition of some earlier colophons, we know that the editors of the Kanjur produced at Tshal Gung thang monastery in 1351 shifted the VAV, together with some other *stotras*, to the Tanjur: *...sang-rgyas bcom-ldan 'das la bstod-par bsngags-par 'os-pa bsngags-pa la sogs-pa'i bstod-pa rnam dang/ ...bstan-bcos gyur-ro-cog gi nang du dris-pas...* SAMTEN 1987: 31. See the translation of the fragment in SAMTEN 1987: 22–23, and the alternative translation in HARRISON 1994: 299.

¹³ TAUSCHER 2015: 209. On the structural peculiarities of F, see: for example, LAINÉ 2009: 15–17; SAMTEN 1992: i–xxv.

¹⁴ *Ngī* in SAMTEN 1992: 137.

¹⁵ SAMTEN 1992: Nos. 249, 399. See: also rKTs <<http://www.rkts.org/cat.php?id=1117&typ=1>> (Accessed 07.07.2025).

¹⁶ The sanskritised title is given according to HARTMANN 1996: 73.

¹⁷ HARTMANN 1996: 72–73.

the Tanjurs. J.-U. Hartmann notes that the Sanskrit titles “can hardly be derived from a reconstruction based on their Tibetan translation”; they probably go back to a Sanskrit original.¹⁸ The Tibetan titles are repeated in the end of the chapters; at that the chapters are not numbered or marked as *le’us*. Superficially, the Phugbrag duplications reveal a plethora of variant readings and can be regarded as two separate versions in addition to those included in the Tanjurs. Certainly, a final opinion on this issue can only be formed after a complete textual-critical collation of the extant Tibetan versions, which is beyond the scope of the current study.

The Mongolian translation of the *stotra* by Tendzin Chödar (Tib. *bstan ’dzin chos dar*), the *ḡasay blam-a* of the Longfu Temple (Chin. 隆福寺),¹⁹ is included in the 1749 xylographic edition of the Mongolian Tanjur²⁰ (Mong. *ilaḡu tegüs nögčigsen-e mayḡaysan sayisiyaqu jokistu-yi sayisiyaqui-ača mayḡan ülü čidaqui-da mayḡaysan kemegdekii; mayḡayal-un čiyulyan* (= Tib. *bstod sna tshogs*), *ka*, 112v–135r) (hereinafter MT).²¹ As the Mongolian Tanjur mirrors the 1724 Peking blockprint of the Tibetan Tanjur, the Mongolian VAV meticulously follows the same pattern.

Remarkably, the fourth and fifth chapters of the VAV are included in the volume *ba, Sūtra* (Mong. *eldeb*) Section, of the copies of the Mongolian manuscript Kanjur compiled in the years 1628–1629, under the patronage of the last all-Mongolian Khan Ligdan (r. 1604–1634). The text is extant in the manuscript Kanjurs preserved in the St. Petersburg State University Library (80v–81r, 81r–81v), the Library of the Academy of Social Sciences of Inner Mongolia (226r–227r, 227r–228v), the Center of Oriental Manuscripts and Xylographs of the Institute for Mongolian, Buddhist and Tibetan Studies of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (312r–314r, 314r–316r), and the Mongolian National Library (171v–172v, 172v–173v). Regrettably the volume with the text is missing in the *Golden Kanjur* — to all appearances the oldest extant copy of the Mongolian-language canonical collection. No fragments of the VAV have been discovered so far amongst the preserved folios of the Kanjurs from Dzungaria.²² The text was not

¹⁸ See the list of the Sanskrit chapter titles in HARTMANN 1996: 73–74.

¹⁹ On the Longfu Temple, see: for example, USPENSKII 2011: 74–75.

²⁰ The phototype edition of the Mongolian Tanjur was published in ALTANORGIL 2007–2014.

²¹ CMGD 2002, II: No. 1191; RINTCEN 1964: No. 1190 (29).

²² On the Golden Kanjur, see: ALEKSEEV & TURANSKAYA 2013. On the Dzungar fragments, see: for example, ALEKSEEV 2019; ALEKSEEV, TURANSKAYA & YAMPOLSKAYA 2016.

included in the xylographic edition of the Mongolian Kanjur, implemented in 1717–1720 in Beijing under the auspices of the Qing dynasty's Emperor Kangxi (1654–1722).

This study was carried out on the basis of the St. Petersburg manuscript (hereinafter PK), the only complete set of the Mongolian manuscript Kanjur known so far.

In PK, the initial parts of both VAV chapters are arranged in the same way as in the separate texts in the Mongolian Kanjur²³. They start with the *Triratna* worshiping formula followed by the transcriptions of the titles in Sanskrit and Tibetan introduced by the corresponding formulae ('in the Indian language', 'in the Tibetan language') and the title in Mongolian.

Chapter 4 (PK 715): [eldeb, ba, 80v23]²⁴ *namò bud'd'ha-à-y-a:: : ::* [24] *namò d'harma-à-y-a:: : ::* [25] *nam-aḥ sanggha-à-y-a:: : ::* [26] *enedheg-ün keheber: bran raahè barṇa bhagavati bhud'd'ha s'do'r-a pala baša bhaša rad'hi-y-a s'd'aṇa* [27] *nam-a:: töbed-ün keheber: gsang* [sic, = Tib. *sangs*] *rgyas býom*²⁵ *ld'an á'das pa bsag bar osba bcang balas: mongyol-un keheber:* [28] *ilaḷu tegüs nögčigsen burqan-i maytaḡad sayisiyaḡdaqui yosutu sayisiyaqui-ača küčün kiged ayul ügei maytaqui* [29] *kemegdekü*

Cf. F1: [mdo sde, la, 406v8] F2: [ngi, sa 363v7]²⁶ //@@@/ /rgya gar skad du/ bar NA^{Na} ra ha bar Ne b+ha [8] ga ba to [407r1] bud+d+ha^{bud d+ha} stud tre pa (la pai)^{l+bai} sha rad dya sta pa^{bo} nA^{na} ma/ bod skad du/ sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la bstod^{stod} pa/ bsngags par 'os^{ongs} [2] pa bsngags pa las/ stobs dang mi 'jigs pa la [364v1] bstod pa zhes bya^{abs.} ba/

The title in the end of chapter four, PK is: [81r18] *ilaḷu tegüs nögčigsen burqan-tur maytaqui* [19] *sayisiyaqui yosutu: sayisiyaqui-ača küčün kiged ayul ügei-tür maytaqui neretü tegüsbe:: : ::*

Cf. F1: [mdo sde, la, 408v2] F2: [ngi, sa 365r5] //sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la bstod pa/ bsngags [3] par 'os pa^{ba} bsngags pa las/ stobs^{stogs} [sic] dang mi 'jigs^{jig} pa la bstod pa zhes bya ba rdzogs sho//

Chapter 5 (PK 716): [eldeb, ba, 81r20] *namò bud'd'ha-à-y-a:: : ::* [21] *namò d'harma-à-y-a:: : ::* [22] *nam-aḥ sanggha-à-y-a:: : ::* [23] *enedheg-ün*

²³ In the same way they are represented in the PK catalogue by Z.K. Kas'ianenko (KAS'IANENKO 1993: Nos. 715, 716).

²⁴ In the transcription of the Mongolian text the following symbols are used for the *Galig* letters and editorial marks: á — ʿ; à — *orkiča* with a dot; d' — ʿ; è — ʿ; ħ — ∞; ñ — *orkiča* with a dot; ñ — ʿ; ò — ʿ; p — ʿ; t^h — ʿ; ý — ʿ; <...> — glosses and interpolations.

²⁵ Here the *Galig* letter ý generally denoting Tib. *y* is rendering Tib. *c*; *býom* < Tib. *bcom*.

²⁶ Here the superscript text marks the variant readings in the F2 duplication.

*keleber: nar nar habar ni bhagavad'o bud'd'ha sd'od'ri bhabisud' d'hi st^h [?] buqas [?] ma: töbed-ün [24] keleber: gsaṅ rgyas byom²⁷ ld'an ád'as ma sd'od'pa bčaṅ par nos pa bčaṅ balas: mongyol-un keleber: ilaju [25] tegüs nögčigsen burqan-i maytaṅad sayisiyaqui yosutu sayisiyaqui-ača: **jarliy teyin büged ariluṅsan maytaṅal neretü**: Cf. F1: [mdo sde, la, 408v4] F2: [ngi, sa, 365r6] @@//rgya gar skad du/ bar Nar ha bar Ne b+ha ga ba^{abs.} to bud d+ha stod tre pa^{ba} ga bi (shud+d+hi)^{bi shud} sto^{sta} pa^{bo} nA ma/ bod skad du/ sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la bstod pa/ bsngags [5] par^{bar} 'os pa^{+las} (bsngags pa las)^{abs./} **gsung rnam** [7] **par dag pa la bstod** ^{bsto<d>} pa^{ba} zhes bya ba/*

The title in the end of the fifth chapter reads: [81v17] *ilaju tegüs nögčigsen-tür maytaqui* [18] *sayisiyaqui yosutu sayisiyaqui-ača jarliy-i teyin büged ariluṅsan neretü tegüsbe*: : : :

Cf. F1: [mdo sde, la, 410r7] F2: [ngi, sa, 366v5] *sangs* [6] *rgyas bcom ldan 'das la bstod pa/ bsngags par 'os pa* (bsngags pa)^{abs.} *las/* [8] **gsung rnam par dag pa la bstod pa zhes bya ba rdzogs sho//**

The collation of the Mongolian and Tibetan texts reveals that, similarly to F1 and F2, PK preserves the Sanskrit titles of the chapters (highlighted in bold in transcription): the *Balavaiśāradyastava* ‘The Praise to the Powers and the Fearlessness [of the Buddha]’ and the *Vāgviśuddhi* ‘The Speech Purification’. The titles of the chapters are also given in Mongolian translation: *küčün kiged ayul ügei maytaqui* and *jarliy teyin büged ariluṅsan maytaṅal*. At the same time, in the transcription of Tibetan titles in PK the names of the chapters are missing, preserving, nevertheless, the ablative marker *-las* ‘from’.

At present it is not quite clear why only two chapters of the VAV were included in the Mongolian manuscript Kanjur. The fourth chapter describes the ten abilities and four confidences as the characteristics of the Tathāgata’s omniscience, while the fifth chapter characterizes the qualities of Buddha’s words.²⁸ The obvious explanation is that the Tibetan Kanjur taken as a model by the Mongolian editors included these two chapters alone. However, such interpretation only pushes the solution of the problem back a step. We can ask the same questions about the hypothetical Tibetan original. It seems possible that the compilers of both collections interpreted the chapters as separate texts rather than parts of some bigger work.

²⁷ See fn. 25.

²⁸ For a more detailed description of the chapters’ contents see HARTMANN 1987: 153, 169; 2015: 534–535; SHOMAKHMADOV & HARTMANN 2022: 62; ZORIN 2010: 118.

Outlining the Tibetan translation of the VAV J.-U. Hartmann notes that, although generally literal, it is understandable without consulting the Sanskrit text.²⁹ In no way this characteristic can be applied to the translation of two chapters in the Mongolian manuscript Kanjur. If the Tibetan text is versified in quatrains of seven-syllable lines, the Mongolian version is prosaic. The translation is essentially literal, at times unclear and contains a plethora of inaccuracies. Notably, in some cases the Tibetan ergative marker *kyis* used with the agent is rendered as the instrumental case *-iyar/-iyer* in combination with the subject designator *ber*. E.g., F1: [407r5] /*khyod kyis mkhyen gyi gzhan gyis min/* ‘...you know but no one else does’ > PK [80v32] *či-ber-iyer medeküi öber-e busu*. The same peculiarity occurs in the Mongolian translation of the *History of the Cycle of Birth and Death* (PK 714) placed in the same volume of the manuscript Kanjur.³⁰ It is possible that both chapters were translated by one and the same person. As the analysis of some parts of the Mongolian manuscript Kanjur reveals that its translators were working on large clusters of texts,³¹ there is a chance that both texts were rendered by Erdeni dai güsi nangsü, the only translator mentioned in the colophons of the volume *ba* in the *Eldeb* Section.³²

I will give an example of the stanza 14, chapter four in the Phugbrag, PK and MT to illustrate the characteristic features of the translation in the Mongolian manuscript Kanjur.

F1: [407v6] ^{F2: [364v3]} /*khyod kyis bar du gcod gsungs [7] gang/* /^{des}nges par ^{bar}de dag bar du gcod/ /*khyod*^{abs.} *kyis lam bstan gang lags pa/* /*de cig*^{gcig} *kho nar*^{na} *nges par ’byin/*

‘Those whom you call obstacles are indeed obstacles, and the way shown by you is the only way out’.

PK: [81r1] *ken či ber jaγuradu tasulun nomlaysan mayad tede jaγur-a-du tasuluyči: činu ab [2] ali nomlaysan mör-i tere γaγča imayta mayad γaγabasu::*

MT:³³ [118r16] *čiber alimad nomlaysan [17] jedkeridügči: tedeger mayad jedkeridügči bui: [18] či ber alimad üjügülügen mör: imayta γaγča kü [19] tegüber mayad γaγamui:*

²⁹ HARTMANN 1987: 46.

³⁰ For details, see ALEKSEEV 2025.

³¹ For details, see ALEKSEEV 2017: 41–46; 2021: 131.

³² See KAS’IANENKO 1993: Nos. 704–705, 707, 709–710, 723.

³³ ALTANORGIL 2007–2014, *maytaγal-un čiyulyan, ka*.

The given example shows that text in PK is blurred with the excessive literalism. Here Tib. *bar du gcod* (< Skr. *vibandha*) ‘hindrances, obstacles’ is calqued as *ḡayuradu tasulun* and *ḡayur-a-du tasuluyči*. In contrast, the Mongolian translation in MT is clearly understandable without the Tibetan original.

At present it is difficult to ascertain which Phugbrag version of the VAV the Mongolian translation of the two chapters is closer to. In some cases, the Mongolian texts correspond with F1, and in the other — with F2. For example, in chapter 4, stanza 23 PK follows the inaccurate reading in F1: [408r7]^{F2: [365r2]}: *bag chags thams cad gtan nas blangs^{spangs}*. Here the correct translation should be ‘completely abandoned all habitual tendencies’, but F1 gives *blangs* (< *len pa*) ‘to take, to accept’ instead of *spangs* (< *spong ba*) ‘to abandon’, giving the phrase a completely opposite meaning. PK follows the erroneous reading: *qamuy abiyas-un oron-ača abuyšan*.³⁴ In another instance, the Mongolian text supports F2. F1: [410r3]^{F2: [366v2]} /’*jig rten dag gis mngon^{sngon} thos nas/* ‘As soon as those in the worlds [of men and gods] clearly^{F2: previously} heard this ...’ > PK: [81v11] *yirtinčü-nuyud-taki [sic] urid-i sonosču*.³⁵ The answer to this question is complicated by the ambiguity of the Mongolian text and can be given only after the textual-critical collation of the extant Tibetan versions.

In any case the VAV versions in the Phugbrag Kanjur and the translation of two chapters in Mongolian manuscript Kanjur have characteristic structural features allowing to suggest that they ascend to the same Tibetan recension of the VAV, different from the versions included in Tanjurs.

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³⁴ Besides the Mongolian translator probably took *gtan nas* ‘completely, utterly’ for *gdan nas* ‘from the seat/place’ and inaccurately translated it as *oron-ača*.

³⁵ According to J.-U. Hartmann, the Derge Tanjur gives the same reading as F2 (HARTMANN 1987: 186).

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Comparative Study of Galdantseren Khan's Oirat Letter Sent to a Khalkha Nobleman Tseren in 1737

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Abstract: The present article deals with an Oirat letter, which was sent from Galdantseren (1694–1745) to the Eastern Mongol nobleman Tseren (1672–1750) in 1737 during the border-line negotiation between the Dzungar Empire (1671–1755) and the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912). The letter is examined from two aspects. The first compares the original Oirat letter and its Manchu translation of that time, attempting to find distinctions in the content or sentences. The second is to analyse the Oirat letter's colloquial elements and speech act. Academics generally agree that the precise sound marking capability of the Oirat script makes it easier for components of that time's spoken language to infiltrate into the written form.

Key words: The Dzungar Empire, the Qing Dynasty, an Oirat letter, Manchu translation of that time, colloquial elements in the Oirat letter, perlocutionary speech act

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Introduction

The prominent Oirat Buddhist monk, — a prince of the Khoshuut tribe, — Rab'byam Zaya Pandita (1599–1662) invented the Oir. *Todo üjüq* “Clear script” in 1648. This writing system is one of the more than ten scripts developed by Mongols based on the Uighur-Mongolian script and is intended to eliminate its deficiencies and is suitable for all Mongols (yet, due to primarily political reasons, it was never accepted by the Eastern Mongols); for instance, it has separate letters for marking short and long vowel phonemes, voiced and voiceless consonants, and reduces the number of positional al-

lographs.¹ Subsequently, the Oirat script has been used as the official written language of the Dzungar Empire established by the Tsoros clan² that held a leading role in the left wing of the Oirat Confederation³ in the seventeenth century. Despite being limited in use following the collapse of the Dzungar Empire, the writing system has survived among the Oirats in contemporary Western Mongolia, Kalmykia, and Xinjiang.

A remarkable publication that includes huge Manchu, Chinese, Uighur-Mongolian, and Oirat script archive documents, 清代新疆满文档案汇编 *Qingdai Xinjiang Manwen dang an huibian* ‘Collections of the Manchu Language Archival Materials on the Qing Xinjiang’,⁴ contains significant pieces of information to study the history of the Oirat Mongols from 1730 to 1911. Co-edited by China Border History and Geography Research Center and the First Historical Archives of China, the 283 volumes consist of several types of documents namely 奏折 *zouzhe* ‘palace memorials’, 上谕 *shangyu* ‘edicts’, 寄信 *jixin* ‘court letters’ and 附件 *fujian* ‘attachments’. The publishers selected the documents based on the Chinese catalogue of 清代边疆满文档案目录 *Qingdai bianjiang Manwen dang’an mulu* ‘Catalog of Frontier Manchu Archives in the Qing Dynasty’,⁵ published in 1999. The present Oirat letter that provides a chance to investigate the colloquial influence on the written language of the eighteenth-century Oirats was included in volume 4 of this collection,⁶ together with the Manchu translation of that time.⁷ The brother-in-law of the emperor, — Man. *Jecen be toktobura hashū ergi aisilara jiyanggiyūn*, Chin. 定邊左副將軍 *Ding bian zuo fu jiangjun* ‘vice-general of the left side of the Pacification of the Frontier’, — Khalkha nobleman Tseren reported it to the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1735–1796) on April 9,

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Ágnes Birtalan and Attila Rákos for their valuable feedback on my article.

¹ The above definition is based on Rákos (2015 A): 103.

² For a detailed study of the ethnogenetic myth of the Tsoros clan cf. BIRTALAN 2002. In the paper, the author elucidates several salient issues, including an examination of the mythological underpinnings and mythological personages within the Tsoros myths, an exploration of the disparities existing between the oral and literary traditions, an evaluation of the extent to which Buddhist influence permeates the mythical tradition, and an investigation into the purported function of Oirat myths in substantiating their legitimacy.

³ Further reference regarding the Oirat confederation and its ethnic component cf. OKADA 1987.

⁴ WU YUANFENG 2012.

⁵ WU YUANFENG 1999.

⁶ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 339–340.

⁷ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 336–338.

1737, and the emperor commented on it in red handwriting on April 16. The present study sheds light on issues such as speech act, colloquial elements in the Oirat letter which is based on the methodology of Hungarian morphologist Attila Rákos,⁸ dialect words and their contemporary usage, and the differences between the Manchu translation and the original Oirat letter.

Historical background

Galdantseren Khan (r. 1727–1745), the third ruler of the Dzungar Empire, was the first son of Tseveenravdan Khan (r. 1697–1727) and his Khoshuut wife Gungeravdan (d. 1723). During his 18-year reign, he achieved an important border-line treaty between the Qing Dynasty and the Dzungar Empire in 1739 which sacrificed Tuva and the Great Lakes Basin,⁹ ending inconclusive military engagements with the Qing Dynasty since the 1680s. The tribal appellation Dzungar, also known as Man. *Jun gar*, Oirt. *Jöün yar* ‘Left wing’, Mong. *Jägün yar*, Chin. 準噶爾 *Zhun gaer*, Rus. *Джунгар*, Khal. *Зүүнгар* appeared in the first document in the seventeenth century as an integral component of the Oirat confederation with the Tsoros clan. The geographical location of the Tsoros lineage, on the left wing of the Oirat confederation ultimately became the empire designation when Galdan (1644–1697), the leader of the left wing effectively consolidated their power and united the right wing, establishing an empire renowned as the last independent Mongol state with a non-Chinggisid bloodline. In the winter of 1678, the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngagwang Lobzang Gyatsho (Tib. ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho; 1617–1682) bestowed on him the preeminent honorific title, Tib. *dga’ldan bstan ’dzin bo shog thu khang*;¹⁰ Oirt. *Galdan Bošoqtu xan*; Man. *šajin be jafara g’aldan bošoktu han*;¹¹ Khal. *Шайныг баригч Галдан Бошогт хан* ‘Galdan Boshogtu Khan, patron of religion’. After five successors, namely Tseveenrabdan, Galdantseren, Tseveendorzhnamzhil (r. 1745–1749), Lamdarzhaa (r. 1749–1752), and Davaach (r. 1752–1755), the empire was conquered by the Qing Dynasty in 1755 which resulted in uprisings against the Qing authority from 1755 to 1758.¹²

⁸ RÁKOS 2015a.

⁹ ATWOOD 2004: 194.

¹⁰ ISHIHAMA 2015: 175.

¹¹ JIANG FUCONG 1982: 534.

¹² Several researchers, namely Bawden (1968) and Ishzhams (1962), focused on this rebellion. The latest studies present the following problems: its influence on the emergence of a rebellion among Khalkha Mongols under Qing control, the significance of Manchu and

Galdantseren Khan held the throne in an unstable political situation when his father, Tseveenravdan Khan died of a poisoned meal from his second wife Seterzhab (?–1727) in her fellows' attempt to turn the Dzungar Empire's political rule. Meanwhile, the Yongzheng emperor (1678–1735) carefully investigated Galdantseren's situation and devised a brilliant plan to conquer the Dzungar Empire. The plan consisted of three main strategies:¹³ to make an alliance with the surrounding pivotal political strengths like the Russian Empire, Khazaks, and Kalmyks; to persuade Luvsanshunu (1695/6–1732), son of the Tseveenravdan and Seterzhab, to become an opponent of Galdantseren; and to mobilise armies to the significant border locations of Khovd and Barkhol. As for the first two plans, Qing Dynasty minister Tushi (托时, ?–1760) was in charge of it, under the guise of dispatching a delegation to the Russian Empire to congratulate Peter II Alexeevich (r. 1727–1730). In addition to delivering the imperial letter to the Russian authorities at the beginning of 1731, he also brought four oral messages:¹⁴ First, to inform the Russian authorities of the Qing Dynasty's war against the Dzungar Empire, and to inform Russia that if the Qing army fought near the Russian border, Russia should not have any suspicions; Second, if the empress had any interest in the adjacent lands with the Dzungarian territory, please inform the Qing envoys about it when the Qing Dynasty conquered the Dzungar Empire, and these lands could be ceded to Russia; Third, if the Dzungars fled into Russia during the war, Russia could accept and restrain them, but hand over their noblemen to the Qing dynasty. The last was a request to dispatch Mantai's (满泰, ?) team to the Kalmyks smoothly. It was intended to receive support from the Kalmyks in the war with the Dzungarians together with cooperating with Lubsanshunu who refuged in Kalmyk to destroy Galdantseren's political power. Russians accepted the request but informed them that if they needed to contact the Kalmyks in the future, they must do so through Russia because "these Kalmyk people were becoming the subject of her Imperial Majesty and could not do anything without her will and permission". Despite their offers, the Russian Empire held a neutrality and Luvsanshunu politely refused to join.

In addition to the above two envoys, the assistant minister of the Board of Ritual, Hangilu (杭奕祿, ?–1748) was dispatched to the Dzungar Empire in

Russian archive materials, and the role of Amarsanaa (1723–1757) and Chingunzhav (1710–1757), both of whom were famous leaders of the Oirat and Khalkha Mongols (cf. ed. by SUKHBAATAR 2018).

¹³ OYUNBILIG 2017: 8–10.

¹⁴ BANTYSH-KAMENSKY 1882: 178–181.

August 1730 to persuade them to accept the Qing Dynasty's authority.¹⁵ At the same time, the Qing government mobilised 60,000 men to build the fortress of Khovd City. Due to these circumstances, the Dzungarians suddenly attacked the Qing border guards in the Barkhol region at the end of 1730, which resulted in two well-known battles, Khoton Khurga Lake¹⁶ in 1731 and Erdene Zhuu¹⁷ in 1732. The main purpose behind the attack was Galdantseren Khan's intention to manipulate the second Zhevtsundamba Khutughtu (1724–1757) to make an alliance with the Dzungar Empire and to unite Mongols under his reign, however, the Yongzheng Emperor noticed it and issued an order to move the Zhevtsundamba Khutughtu from the Erdene Zhuu monastery to Dolonnuur monastery in September 1731.¹⁸ General Tseren's letters in 1737¹⁹ indicate that the Dzungarians recognized the strength of the Qing in the Erdene Zhuu battle and that the Qing acknowledged the strength of the Dzungarians in the Khoton Khurga battle. Due to the significant military losses on both sides during these battles, the Yongzheng emperor decided to ensure all beings lived in harmony and sent the assistant minister of the Board of Justice, Funai (傅鼐, 1677–1738) to the Dzungar Empire in 1734 to negotiate a peace treaty with them by determining the border lines between the two sides. During the negotiation, a difficult point for both sides was due to its strategically beneficial location, who the Altai Mountains belonged to. In the Dzungar's view, the Altai Mountains belonged to them, while the Khangai Mountains belonged to Khalkha. In contrast, the Qing Dynasty stated that the past should be left in the past and it should be discussed in the current situation. The successor of Yongzheng, the young Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–1796) was quite stringent in the negotiation period. Choi Namki, Galdantseren Khan's envoy left the capital city in February 1736, and was given two choices: accept the suggestion of the Qing Dynasty or stop dispatching envoys and be guarded.²⁰ Under

¹⁵ Man. *Jun gar-i ba be necihiyeme toktobuha bodogon-i bithe* 'Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzungarian Territory', 20th book in the Central Collection. The Yongzheng emperor issued an order on Fire Cow Day (May 10), the 8th year (1730) of Yongzheng.

¹⁶ Khoton and Khurga Lakes are located in Bayan-Olgii province, Mongolia.

¹⁷ Erdene Zhuu monestary in Ovorkhangai province, Mongolia.

¹⁸ *Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzungarian Territory*, 26th book in the Central Collection. The Yongzheng emperor issued an order on Female Metal Goat Day (September 11), the 9th year (1731) of Yongzheng.

¹⁹ ZHAO LINGZHI 2009: 396–397. General Tseren's letter was addressed to Galdantseren Khan.

²⁰ ZHAO LINGZHI 2009: 353–360. The Qianlong Emperor's letter to Galdantseren Khan on February 15, 1736.

the situation, Galdantseren Khan attempted to seek assistance from General Tseren by capturing the border guardsman named Zhamba (Man. *Jamba*) from Khalkha in June of the same year and releasing him with a letter addressed to Tseren in January — of the next year.

Form and Content of the Oirat Letter

Zhamba, a subject of the *gung* (in Manchu) Minzhuur (?–1740) of the Chin Achitu wang banner in the Zasagt Khan province was in charge of border guarding duty at Khamar Shaazhgai station²¹ and his station was attacked by the Dzungars in June 1736. As far as his time at the Dzungar and the true intention of Galdantseren Khan were concerned, General Tseren interrogated Zhamba in detail and clarified his one-year background from when he was captured until his release by the Dzungarians. The following table is based on General Tseren's letter sent to the Qianlong Emperor on April 9, 1737,²² to illustrate Zhamba's track.

Date	Definition
June 28, 1736	The Dzungars attacked Khamar Shaazhgai station where Zhamba was serving
July 8, 1736	Zhamba captured by the Dzungars
July 10, 1736	Zhamba attempted to escape when they reached Khada Chingil ²³
July 11, 1736	They arrived at Arugtai
August 8, 1736	Zhamba entered the Ili Valley where Galdantseren Khan lived
January 9, 1737	Zhamba first time met Galdantseren Khan and was set free with Oros who belonged to the same banner as Zhamba
January 20, 1737	Oros died at Sari

²¹ Shaazhgai Lake is located in Khovd sum, Uvs province, Mongolia. This border guard station seems to have existed near the lake.

²² WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 340–345. General Tseren's memorial was sent to the Qianlong emperor on April 9, 1737, about interrogating Zhamba.

²³ *Qing ge li he* 青格里河 (or *Qing he* 青河) river is located in the northeast of Qinghe County, Altay Prefecture, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China. This border guard station seems to have existed near the river.

Date	Definition
March 7, 1737	Zhamba went forward alone since coming at Khad Chingil, and the Dzungarian soldiers returned to their land
March 10, 1737	Guardsman <i>Kamci</i> (in Manchu) at <i>Bodohoni hošoi</i> (in Manchu) station reported to <i>hebei amban</i> (in Manchu) Tsengunzhav (?–1771) who led one thousand Khalkha soldiers at Uliastai that Zhamba crossed the border
March 13, 1737	Zhamba arrived at <i>Bodohoni hošoi</i> station
March 14, 1737	Zhamba arrived at <i>Bodohoni holo</i> (in Manchu) ²⁴ station and was delivered to General Tseren
April 9, 1737	General Tseren sent his letter to the Qianlong Emperor about interrogating Zhamba
April 16, 1737	General Tseren’s letter was introduced to the Qianlong Emperor

Zhamba was released after half a year of living in the Dzungar Empire with the letter and Galdantseren Khan’s oral statement, which exactly repeated the letter’s content. The Oirat letter’s content can be divided into the following parts:

Inscriptio

to the wise prince [Tseren], [it is] given.

*Arenga*²⁵

You know the previously discussed matters, so [we] don’t need to talk [about] them [again]. In the first imperial [Qianlong] letter that my envoy Choi Namki recently brought [is indicated that], to establish the borderline as [the Qianlong] mentioned earlier: do not touch my territory in the Altai; the [Eastern] Mongols should stay in their previous land; and if you [Galdantseren] will not do it this way, don’t dispatch your envoy [again].

Narratio

Although you not only said not to send an envoy, but also that you would go to war, it is difficult to give you the territory where [we have been] living

²⁴ A gorge named Botgon khavtsal is located in Mankhan sum, Khovd province, Mongolia. This border guard station seems to have settled down at the gorge.

²⁵ Arenga expresses in general terms the motive for the issue of the document. Cf. *Diplomatics* 2015.

ever since [our] ancestors. The person who brought up such words is you Mongols. If we are in Altai, you suspect that it will cause harm to you. Seems you talk to admonish ministers of the board. If such words are going on, it will eventually be as inharmonious as before, and it will cause suffering to all living beings, I think. If a conflict occurs, it does not matter how far or near [we live], there is no place where we can't reach out to each other. Let's stop talking about this word, and if we become peaceful, regardless of how far and near, I will not harm you and won't deceive you. This year your patrol came to Altai and watched over my land, so my border folks [were worried about] why you located your border guard station in our land and caught your two men. If we keep watching each other like this closer now, my border folks will be doubted since we become closer now, and [it might] lead to unpleasantly. [Hence,] retreat your station [slightly inwards] is better. Previously, all living beings suffered because the [Qing] government and ministers had taken conflict actions which resulted in conflict. Don't you [Tseren] know everything [about it]? Even now, [I] think prohibiting us from settling down at the Altai is that the border edge leads to a conflict like before. Therefore, you [Tseren] and Outer Mongol's noblemen [first] tell the government ministers and inner ministers [and then] report to the emperor [about it] for expanding yellow [hat] Buddhism and making all beings happy. Respond [Tseren] to my word before the first mount of autumn of the snake year, and the circumstance is talked by Zhamba and Oros's mouths.

Datatio

Fire Snake [1737] year, the first mount, the eighth day.

In the above letter as a first step, Galdantseren Khan presented his suspicions as to why the Qianlong Emperor had taken such a stringent stance during negotiations (he believed that Tseren was responsible for all those incidents), later recalled the previous hardships and explained the current worries, and finally shared his true intention of solve the matter peacefully by saying that making all beings happy.

Comparison of the original Oirat letter and its Manchu translation

The main question concerning who translated the Oirat letter into Manchu: Was he a Mongolian fluent in Manchu or a Manchu fluent in Mongolian? Is there any clue in the letter to answer this question? Throughout the comparison, we can see morphological and lexical cases which imply that the

translator could be a Manchu person because he couldn't understand or read some expressions in the Oirat letter properly.

a. Morphological cases

Oirt. *odō mini elči čoi namki eseyigēr /1–3/ ireqsen qāni bičiq tü* ‘in the first imperial [Qianlong] letter that my envoy Choi Namki recently brought’

Man. *ne mini elcin coi nam'ka isigei deri* [sic!] *jihe /1–5/ han i bithede* [id.]

An expression in the Oirat letter, *ešeyigēr*²⁶ was translated separately into Manchu text: *isigei deri* period. Its writing looks identical to the Oirat writing and this expression couldn't be found in any Manchu dictionary. Nevertheless, the translator seems to understand the instrumental case suffix in the Oirat letter *-gēr*²⁷ and translated *ešeyigēr* in two sections using the prolative case suffix *-deri*²⁸ in Manchu.

Oirt. *mani ǰaxayin kümün, mani nutuq tu xaroulān /1–15/ you* [sic!] *kekē soulyaxu belei gēd xoyor kümüyiten bariji ireji* ‘my border folks [were worried about] why you located your border guard station in our land and caught your two men’

Man. *meni jecen i niyalma, meni nuktei /2–18/ tanggū* [sic!] *karun be tebumbi sehei juwe niyalma be jafafi ganjihabi* [id.]

It appears that the translator was confused between Oirt. *you* ‘why, what, how’ and Mong. *jou* ‘hundred’ because of their identical appearance, and translated Oirt. *you* into Manchu as *tanggū* ‘hundred’ which doesn't make sense in the sentence. The next case illustrated that the translator was confused between the several meanings of an expression.

Oirt. */1–3/ xāni bičiq tü ǰajariyin ǰāgi urdaki* [sic!] *yosōr šiyidēd* ‘In the imperial letter [indicated that] to establish the borderline as mentioned earlier’

Man. */1–5/ han i bithede, ba na i julergi* [sic!] *hešen be toktobufi* ‘In the imperial letter [indicated that] to establish the south borderline’

The expression *urdaki* has general meanings that are previous (or before, earlier) and south (or southern) two. It seems that the translator misinterpreted *urdaki* and translated it as south. Furthermore, the translator misinterpreted the means of “previous” again and translated *urdaki* as ‘*te an-i*’ (Mon. *edüge keb iyer*) ‘ordinary like now’.

²⁶ This expression is not included in Krueger's Oirat dictionary, but there are indicated synonyms such as *ešendü* ‘in the beginning’ and *ešeni* ‘originally, at first’ cf. KRUEGER 1978, part I: 66–67.

²⁷ RÁKOS 2015b: 59.

²⁸ GORELOVA 2002: 331.

Oirt. /1–4/ *mongyoliyin arosun* [sic!] *urdaki oron dōn bayituyai* ‘the [Eastern] Mongols should stay in their previous land’

Man. *monggosoi* /2–1/ *fejergi urse te an i bikini* ‘the people under the [Eastern] Mongolians should stay in their current [land]’

There is another questionable translation related to the word *arosun* [sic!], which was written unclearly in the original Oirat text. The reason why the translator did it is still unclear even so it leaves so many questions behind: why did he translate with two words *fejergi urse* (Man. *dour_a du arad*) ‘people under’ and what is the original Mongolian word that could have those meanings or was it also misinterpreted? In addition to the most common suffix for expressing conditionality in the written language, adverbium conditionale’s *-wl*,²⁹ the original Oirat letter has introduced an interesting variant of the adverbium conditional suffix *-bo\ba\be gem* which was translated with the *-ci* suffix in Manchu.

Oirt. /1–5/ *öü=gēr ese bol=bo gem* ‘if can’t do it this way’
this way=inst neg to become=adv.fin part

Man. /2–1/ *uttu akū o=ci* [id.]
this way NEG to become=con

Oirt. *odō eyimi* /1–16/ *šadar xara=ji bayi=ba gem* ‘If we keep watching each other like this closer now’

now like close to see=adv.imper to be=adv.fin part

Man. *te ere gese hanci kara=me* /3–2/ *bi=ci* [id.]
now this like close to see=adv.fer to be=con

b. Lexical cases

An interesting difference between the Manchu and Mongolian languages can be seen in the next case, in which the Mongolian lexeme *ečige öbökösö* ‘father and grandfather’ was translated into Manchu in the reverse order³⁰ as *mafa ama* ‘grandfather and father’. Moreover, the translator made more classical translations and added a Manchu expression *gebu=de* ‘name (or fame)=dat’.

²⁹ RÁKOS 2015b: 92.

³⁰ Although the author couldn’t find a detailed study on the present case yet, Mongolian philologist Bayrsaikhan has mentioned two cases that illustrated differences between the Mongolian and Manchu languages in his study: the first one is that if Mongols said *egün-eče qoyisi* ‘hereafter’ it is going to express oppositely in Manchu *ereci julergi* ‘here before’. The next one is, that Mongols said *bi arbun nasutai* or *bi arbun nasun-du kürbe* ‘I am 10 years old or I reached 10 years old’ while in Manchu *bi juwan se oho* ‘I become 10 years old’ cf. BAYARSAIKHAN 2003: 50.

Oirt. *ečige öbököšö nārān /1–7/ nutuqlaqsan nutuγān tabiji ögüčči mini kečöü* ‘it is difficult to give the territory where we have been living ever since our father and grandfather’

Man. *mafa /2–4/ ama i gebu de daci nuktembihe nuktei babe /2–5/ anabume burengge manga* ‘it is difficult to give the territory where we have been living hitherto by the fame of our grandfather and father’

The translator seems familiar with the Oirat dialectal terms of *uralān* ‘previously’³¹ and *nāru čāru* ‘to-and-fro’.³² The first is less commonly used (almost forgotten) among the Oirats in contemporary Western Mongolia, where the author comes from, while the second is still regularly used.

Oirt. *uralān nāru čāru kelelčēji bayiqsan ügeyiği čī /1–2/ medē tölö* ‘you know the previously discussed matters to-and-fro’

Man. *neneme ebsi casi gisureme /1–3/ bihe gisun be si donjiha saha ofi* [id.]

Colloquial elements and perlocutionary speech act in the Oirat letter

The appearance of colloquial elements in written Oirat texts can be found easily in documents concerning everyday activities or informal topics, particularly personal and business letters, more than in monuments with formal or religious content.³³ The present Oirat letter is a diplomatic text but contains colloquial elements in some aspects: a dialectal term (a), the colloquial form of the reflexive possessive suffix (b), the colloquial form of the ablative case suffix (c), dropout of vowels (d), fronted vowels spelling directly reflects the new vowel quality (e), the colloquial form of the instrumental case marker (f), the colloquial form of the long vowel (g) and non-harmonising form (h).

- a. Oirt. /1–6/ *nāru čāru* ‘to-and-fro’, WM. *inaysi činaysi*
- b. Oirt. /1–4/ *oron dōn* ‘country/land=loc.ref.poss’
WM. *oron du ban* or *oron dayan*
Oirt. /1–8/ *beyi=den* ‘body=loc.ref.poss’, WM. *bey_e dü ben*
- c. Oirt. /1–6/ *öbököšö* ‘ancestor=abl’, WM. *ebüge eče*
Oirt. /2–9/ *sar=āsa* ‘month=abl’, WM. *sar eče*

³¹ Multiple variants of this expression are documented: *urālān* ‘previously, prior’ and *urālan* ‘ahead, forward, in front’ cf. KRUEGER 1978, part II: 179.

³² Krueger translated this expression separately: *nāru* ‘hither, this way, within, since, before’ and *čāru* ‘thither’ cf. KRUEGER 1978, part II: 212 and part III: 621.

³³ RAKOS 2015a: 104.

- d. Oirt. /2–1/ *urda* ‘before/previously’, WM. *urida*
- e. Oirt. /2–3/ *bese*³⁴ ‘other/different/anything’, WM. *basu* or *busu*
- f. Oirt. /1–3/ *yos=ōr* ‘custom/manner=instr’, WM. *yosu bar*
Oirt. /2–2/ *ebdereldüqs=ēr* ‘to conflict=instr’, WM. *ebdereldügsen-
iyer*
- g. Oirt. /2–3/ *jāq* ‘to demonstrate’, WM. *jīyaqu*
- h. Oirt. /1–10/ *jobouritai* ‘painful’, WM. *jobayritai*

A perlocutionary speech act aims to change the listener’s feelings, thoughts, or actions by persuading (or convincing), inspiring (or insulting), or scaring (or deterring).³⁵ Galdantseren Khan made clear in his letter that he intended to change the Qing Dynasty’s decisive action by persuading General Tseren by giving reasons. As mentioned in the letter, from Galdantseren Khan’s perspective the main fear of the Khalkhas during the negotiation was that if the Dzungars were in the Altai, it would cause harm to them. That’s why Galdantseren Khan gave his first promise “It does not matter how far or near [we live], and if a conflict occurs, there is no place where we can’t reach out to each other. Let’s stop talking about it. Regardless of distance, if we become peaceful, I will not harm you and won’t deceive you”. Despite this, Galdantseren Khan’s primary concern was that conflict like before could occur again, and that is repeated three times in the letter.

Oirt. /1–10/ *urdaki du adali ebderel bolji olon amitan du jobouritai bolxu beyije* /1–11/ *geji sananai* ‘I think that it will eventually be as inharmonious as before, and it will cause suffering to all living beings’

Oirt. *ebdereltei šinggi bolxu tölö, xaroulān čāru* /2–1/ *tataji xaraqsan tan sayin* ‘[it might] lead to unpleasantly. [Hence,] retreat your station [slightly inwards] is better’

Oirt. *töün šinggi ebderel bolxo beyije geji* /2–5/ *sananai* ‘[I] think it leads to a conflict like before’

At the end of the argument, Galdantseren Khan attempted to remind General Tseren about all those harsh times by asking, Oirt. *yamar bese učiri či medē bišöü* ‘Don’t you [Tseren] know everything about it?’. Based on the Manchu archive materials, Galdantseren Khan’s perlocutionary speech act fulfilled its purpose and the two sides established borderlines in 1739. As a response to Galdantseren Khan’s letter, General Tseren dispatched nobleman

³⁴ KRUEGER 1978, part II: 338.

³⁵ BIRTALAN 2012: 90–105. She has conducted the first study of the perlocutionary speech act on Mongolian materials.

Emgen, his close relative, and he reached Galdantseren Khan's place on September 7, 1737, and headed back from there on the additional month of September 5, the same year³⁶.

Conclusion

Galdantseren Khan wrote an Oirat letter to Khalkha nobleman Tseren in 1737 for assistance during the borderline negotiation between the Qing Dynasty and the Dzungar Empire when the Qianlong Emperor stood firm on his statements. The original Oirat letter contains colloquial elements with the perlocutionary speech act, and the translator who translated the letter into Manchu could have been a Manchu person.

Abbreviations

Man.: Manchu
Oirt.: Oirat
WM: Written Mongolian (i.e., Classical Mongolian)
ABL: ablative
ADV: adverbium
ACC: accusative
DAT: dative
FIN: finitum
IMPER: imperfecti
INST: instrumental
NEG: negative
LOC: locative
PART: particle
PER: perfecti
POSS: possessive
REF: reflexive

³⁶ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 384–388. General Tseren's memorial to the Qianlong emperor on November 9, 1737, about nobleman Emgen's return from the Dzungar Empire.

Appendix

Transcription of the Oirat letter³⁷: /1–1/ čečen vang du öqbö, uralān nāru čāru kelelčejī bayiqsan ügeyigi či /1–2/ medē tölō töüni keleji kereq ügei, odō mini elči čoi namki eseyigēr /1–3/ ireqsen xāni bičiq tü, ʒaʒariyin ʒāgi urdaki yosōr šiyidēd, mini nutugi /1–4/ altai-du bitegei kür, mongyoliyin arosun [sic!] urdaki oron dōn bayituʒai, /1–5/ öügēr ese bolbo gem elči čigi ilgem kereq ügei geji irebe, elči /1–6/ ülü ilgekü bayituʒai dayin bolonai bi gem čigi ečiḡe öbököšö nārān /1–7/ nutuqlaqsan nutuʒān tabiji ögüčči mini kečöü, öüni eyigöülji bayičiyigi /1–8/ ta mongyol mani altai du bayiyād, beyeden xor kikü geji sejiqlēd ʒuryān /1–9/ bitü sayidoudi kökögöd eyigöülne bololtai, eyimi üge utudaba gem adaqni /1–10/ urdaki du adali ebderel bolji olon amitan du ʒobouritai bolxu beyiḡe /1–11/ geji sananai, kerbe ebdereltei üyile bolumaqča xolo oyiro geji kürči /1–12/ yadaxu ʒaʒar ügei, eyimi ügeyigi ourād sayin sayixan bayiba gem, xolo /1–13/ oyiro bolbočigi mekeleji xor kekü mini ügei, ene ʒil tanai xaroul altai /1–14/ du ireji xaraʒi bayiqsayigi mani ʒaxayin kümün, mani nutuq tu xaroulān /1–15/ you kekē soulyaxu belei gēd xoyor kümüyiten bariji ireji, odō eyimi /1–16/ šidar xaraʒi bayiba gem, mani ʒaxayin kümün šidardaqsan tölō xoriqlōd /1–17/ xorixuyitai bolbo gem, ebdereltei šinggi bolxu tölō, xaroulān čāru /2–1/ tataji xaraqsan tan sayin, urda ʒuryān bolōd sayidoud ülü bolxu üge /2–2/ üyile keji ebdereldüqsēr: olon amitan du amur ʒobouritai boluqsan, /2–3/ yamar bese učiri či medē bišöü, odō čigi bese ʒaʒariyin ʒāq gēd /2–4/ altai du bitegei nutuqla gebe gem töün šinggi ebderel bolxu beyiḡe geji /2–5/ sananai, teyimi tölō či bolōd ʒaʒādu mongyoliyin noyodoud, ʒuryān /2–6/ bolōd dotoriyin sayidoud tu čigi keleji, yeke xān du čigi ayiladxaji /2–7/ ebderel ügei šarayin šajin delgereji olon amitan ʒiryaxu üyile keqsen /2–8/ sayin, ene ügeyinni mini xariugiyini moyoi ʒiliyin namuriyin türüün sarāsa /2–9/ nāru kele, basa učiriyini ʒimba oros xoyoula amār kelekü, /2–10/ ʒal moyoi ʒiliyin 1 sarayin 8 ödür.

Transcription of the Manchu letter:³⁸ /1–1/ cecen /1–2/ wang de ungihe, neneme ebsi casī gisureme /1–3/ bihe gisun be si donjiha saha ofi gisure /1–4/ baitakū, ne mini elcin coi nam'ka isigei deri jihe /1–5/ han i bithede, ba na-i julergi hešen be toktobufi /1–6/ mini nukte be altai de ume

³⁷ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 339–340.

³⁸ WU YUANFENG 2012, IV: 336–338.

isinara, monggosoi /2-1/ fejergi urse te an i bikini, uttu akū oci /2-2/ elcin unggire inu baitakū seme jihebi, elcin /2-3/ unggirakū sere anggala dailambi secibe mafan /2-4/ ama i gebu de daci nuktembihe nuktei babe /2-5/ anabume burengge mangga, erebe uuntu oburengge /2-6/ suweni monggoso, membe altai de bifi biyede /2-7/ koro isibumbi seme kenehunjeme jurgan i jergi /2-8/ ambasa be huwekiyebufi uttu obumbi dere, /2-9/ uttu bihei goidaha manggi aici nenehe /2-10/ gese efujen banjinafi geren ergengge de /2-11/ suilacun ombi dere seme gūnimbi, aika /2-12/ ehereci acara baita tucici, goro hanci /2-13/ seme isiname muterakū ba akū, ere gese /2-14/ gisun-be nakafi, sain saikan-i bici goro /2-15/ hanci seme arga deribume koro isibure ba /2-16/ akū, ere aniya suweni karun altai-de jifi /2-17/ karame bihe be meni jecen-i niyalma meni nuktei /2-18/ tanggū karun be tebumbi sehei juwe niyalma be /3-1/ jafari ganjihabi, te ere gese hanci karame /3-2/ bici meni jecen i niyalma hanci oho turgunde /3-3/ kenehun-jeme bašara de isinaci efujen banjinara /3-4/ gese, suweni karun be casi tatame gaici /3-5/ sain, neneme jurgan i ambasa banjinarakū baita be /3-6/ deribuhei geren ergengge de jobocun obuha, yaya /3-7/ baita be sini sahangge, te sehe seme ba i /3-8/ jecen altai de ume nuktere seci tere gese /3-9/ efujen banjinambi dere seme gūnimbi, uttu /3-10/ ofi sini beye monggoi taiji sa jurgan, /3-11/ jai dorgi ambasa de alafi /3-12/ amba han de seme wesimbufi, efujen akū suwayan-i /3-13/ šajin be badarambume geren ergengge be jargabure /3-14/ baita be deribuci sain, mini ere gisun-i /3-15/ karu be meihe aniya i bolori ujui biyade /3-16/ ebsi ungu, turgun be jimba, oros juwe /3-17/ nofi anggai alambi, meihe aniya aniya biyai /4-1/ ice jakūn.

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A Study on the Siddham Fragments Housed in the British Library

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Abstract: In 1909, the Kozlov expedition discovered two volumes of Siddham xylographs at Khara-Khoto, which are currently housed at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Fragments overlooked during the initial excavation were subsequently collected by Stein five years later and are now preserved in the British Library. This paper confirms that the two *dhāraṇī* fragments in the Stein collection, dated 1194 CE, represent missing pieces from the volumes held in Russia.

Key words: Sanskrit, *dhāraṇī*, Siddham, Tangut, Xixia

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1. Introduction

In 1909, the Kozlov expedition uncovered a substantial corpus of written monuments from a *stūpa* located outside Khara-Khoto. Among these, two volumes of Siddham *dhāraṇī* fragments are currently preserved at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Initially cataloged under inventory numbers 6619 and 6620 alongside contemporaneous Xixia materials, they were subsequently reclassified into the Institute's Central Asian collection as SI 6563 and SI 6564. This recataloging led to their prolonged scholarly neglect, with only a brief mention in a 1960s registration card by E.I. Kychanov, who described them as “protective *dhāraṇī* incantations”.

Both the xylographs are in butterfly binding and exhibit varying degrees of damage. Surviving folios lack paratextual information, such as colophons or printing records. Although written entirely in Siddham script with 70 *akṣaras* per folio, discrepancies in textual orientation and page layout con-

firm their distinct compositional origins. These collections were subsequently published and analyzed by Shomakhmadov,¹ who significantly advanced the study.

Recent examination has identified British Library fragments Or.12380/628 and Or.12380/2880C as missing pieces from the corresponding Russian collection, thereby resolving longstanding textual discontinuities in the IOM materials.

2. Or.12380/628 + SI 6564 + Or.12380/2880C

SI 6563 features white margins (*bai kou* 白口) with double border lines on all sides, although its initial, middle, and concluding sections are partially lost. The extant 30ff. retain Chinese pagination marks ranging from 3–20, 24–27, and 35–42. Each folio contains ten lines of Siddham *akṣaras* arranged vertically from left to right, with seven *akṣaras* per line. Apart from the untitled.

Mahāpratisarā-dhāraṇī and subsequent abbreviated mantras, such as the *ṣaḍakṣarī-vidyā* (*oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*), *trimūrti-vidyā* (*oṃ āh hūṃ*), and *dvyakṣarī-vidyā* (*oṃ raṃ*), all other *dhāraṇīs* are accompanied by abbreviated Chinese titles: *Jing Fajie Zhou* 淨法界咒, *Jing Chu Ye Zhang* 淨除業障, *Shijia Xin Zhou* 釋迦心咒, *Dabei Zongchi* 大悲總持, and *Zunsheng Zhou* 尊勝咒.²

SI 6564 lacks margin markers and is framed by single borders, with both its beginning and ending sections missing. On the surviving seven folios there display Chinese paginations (10–12, 32–34), along with one fragment bearing illegible numbering. This imprint exhibits an unusual layout: Siddham *akṣaras* are written horizontally from left to right, with seven lines per folio and ten *akṣaras* per line. Besides the untitled *Mahāpratisarā-dhāraṇī*, there are other texts include Chinese headings such as *Fa Sheli* 法舍利, *Bao Huoge Zhou* 寶獲閣咒, and *Bai Sangai Zhou* 白傘蓋咒.³

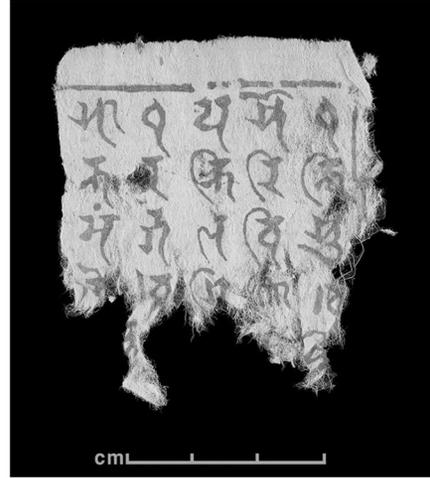
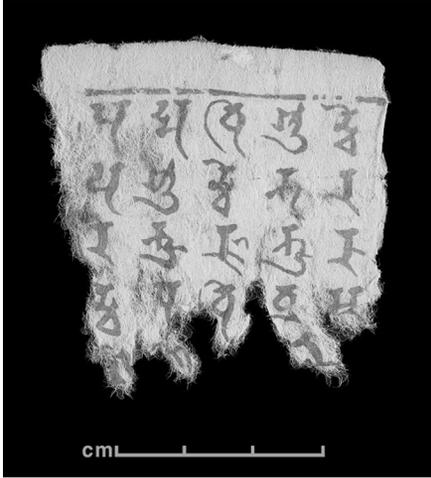
¹ SHOMAKHMADOV 2017; 2019.

² The Chinese version of *Jing Fajie Zhou* can only be found in *Xianmi Yuantong Chengfo Xinyao Ji* 顯密圓通成佛心要集 and *Mizhou Yuanyin Wangsheng Ji* 密咒圓因往生集. The following four *dhāraṇīs* were identified by Shomakhmadov as *Jingchu Yezhang Tuoluoni* 淨除業障陀羅尼, *Shijia Xinzhou* 釋迦心咒, *Dabeixin Tuoluoni* 大悲心陀羅尼 and *Foding Zunsheng Tuoluoni* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼.

³ Shomakhmadov identified these *dhāraṇīs* as *Dasuiqiu Tuoluoni* 大隨求陀羅尼, *Yiqie Rulai Suixin Tuoluoni* 一切如來隨心陀羅尼, *Yinyuan Zhou* 因緣咒, *Guanzizai Pusa Ganlu*

Through comparative analysis of Sanskrit originals and Chinese transcriptions of parallel content, Shomakhmadov conclusively demonstrated that these *dhāraṇīs* were not directly transcribed from Sanskrit sources but instead reflect Tangut pronunciation based on a Chinese version. Although the compilers had a basic understanding of Sanskrit-Chinese transcription conventions, certain graphemic irregularities reveal limited familiarity with Sanskrit pronunciation.

The *Mahāpratisarā-dhāraṇī* held significant prominence during this period, as evidenced by its inclusion in both versions SI 6563 and SI 6564, albeit in fragmented states. During the Kozlov collection from the *stūpa* outside Khara-Khoto, numerous fragments were overlooked. These neglected remnants were later retrieved by Stein five years later and are now primarily housed in the British Library. Among these is a fragment, Or.12380/628 (Pl. 1),⁴ originally part of a butterfly binding folio that is split into two pieces. Despite damage to its margins and lower section, the fragment preserves 40 Siddham *akṣaras*, with the content conclusively aligning with the *Mahāpratisarā-dhāraṇī*.



Pl. 1

Or.12380/628 in the British Library

Zhou 觀自在菩薩甘露咒, *Dabao Louge Genben Zhou* 大寶樓閣根本咒, *Dabao Louge Xinzhou* 大寶樓閣心咒, *Dafoding Shoulengyan Xinzhou* 大佛頂首楞嚴心咒, *Baisangai Zhou* 白傘蓋咒.

⁴ http://idp.bl.uk/database/search_results.a4d?uid=103878470111;random=21671.

These fragments have thus far escaped scholarly attention. Below, we present the Romanization of the text alongside a comparative analysis with Amoghavajra's Chinese transcription (*Taishō* 20: 618), while also referencing the *DQ* (All Mantras in Mahāpīṭaka) compiled during the Qing dynasty.

Or.12380/628:	𑖔𑖩	𑖔𑖩𑖩	𑖔𑖩𑖩	𑖔𑖩𑖩	𑖔𑖩
Transliteration:	<i>padma</i>	<i>viśuddhe</i>	<i>śādhaya</i> ⁵	<i>śodha-</i>	
Amogavajra:	鉢納麼二合	尾秣第	戌引馱野 ⁶	戌引馱	
<i>DQ</i> :	<i>padma</i>	<i>biśuddhe</i>	<i>śodhaya</i>	<i>śodha-</i>	
Or.12380/628:	𑖔	𑖩𑖩	𑖩𑖩	𑖩𑖩	𑖩𑖩
Transliteration:	<i>ya</i>	<i>śuddhe</i> ⁷	<i>bhara</i>	<i>bhara</i>	<i>bhiri</i> <i>bhi-</i>
Amogavajra:	野	舜入第	跋囉	跋囉	鼻哩 鼻
<i>DQ</i> :	<i>ya</i>	<i>śuddheśuddhe</i>	<i>bhara</i>	<i>bhara</i>	<i>bhiri</i> <i>bhi-</i>
Or.12380/628:	𑖔	𑖩𑖩	𑖩𑖩	𑖩𑖩𑖩	𑖔𑖩
Transliteration:	<i>ri</i>	<i>bhūrū</i>	<i>bhūru</i> ⁸	<i>maṃrgala</i> ⁹	<i>viśu-</i>
Amogavajra:	哩	步嚕	步嚕	嚕去馱囉	尾舜入
<i>DQ</i> :	<i>ri</i>	<i>bhuru</i>	<i>bhuru</i>	<i>maṅgala</i>	<i>biśu-</i>
Or.12380/628:	𑖩	𑖔𑖩𑖩	𑖩𑖩	𑖩𑖩𑖩	𑖩
Transliteration:	<i>ddhe</i>	<i>pavitra</i>	<i>mukhe</i> ¹⁰	<i>khagini</i> ¹¹	<i>kha-</i>
Amogavajra:	第	跋尾怛囉二合	穆棄	渴祛藥反儼拈	渴
<i>DQ</i> :	<i>ddhe</i>	<i>pabitra</i>	<i>mukhi</i>	<i>khāgini</i>	<i>kha-</i>

⁵ *śādhaya*, should be written “*śodhaya*” as in inv. № 6563.

⁶ *Xu* 戌, should be corrected as *shu* 戌.

⁷ *Śuddhe*, the same as in inv. № 6563, but in the Cixian's version and *DQ* it reads repeatedly.

⁸ *bhūrū-bhūru*, exhibits differently in various edition. The most similar form is “𑖩 (bhū) 部嚕部嚕” in *Pubian Guangming Qingjing Chisheng Ruyibaoyinxin Wunengsheng Damingwang Dasuiqiu Tuoluoni* 普遍光明清淨熾盛如意寶印心無能勝大明王大隨求陀羅尼 (*FS*, 28:54).

⁹ *maṃrgala*, “*rga*” should be corrected as “*ga*”.

¹⁰ *khe*, reconstructed according to the stroke remaining.

¹¹ Phonetical inconformity with *DQ*.

This folio represents a missing leaf from the SI 6564 in the Kozlov collection. Although there are differences in textual orientation (read horizontally versus vertically), each butterfly-binding folio consistently comprises 70 *akṣaras*. Based on this standardization, the damaged portion of Or.12380/628 can be inferred to lack three lines totaling 30 *akṣaras*.

Furthermore, comparative analysis with corresponding content in SI 6563 reveals a textual gap of 100 *akṣaras* between Or.12380/628 and SI 6564. This lacuna corresponds to one complete folio (70 *akṣaras*) plus the missing three lines (30 *akṣaras*) from Or.12380/628, which is equivalent to the content spanning from line 5 of f. 8 to line 9 of f. 9 in the SI 6563 imprint.¹²

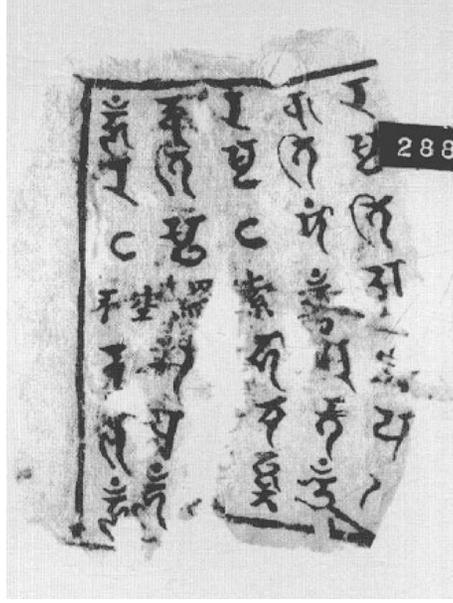
(*kha*) *gīṇi khara-khara jvalitaśi-khare samantaprasa- <ri>tāvabhāṣi-taśuddhe jvala-jvala sarva{ñū}devagaṇāsamantā karṣaṇi satyavrate tara-tara tāraya māṃ nāgavilokite lahu-lahu hurū-hurū kṣiṇi-kṣiṇi sarva grahabhakṣaṇi piṅgale-piṅgale cumu-cumu sumu-sumu suvicare tara-tara nā (gavilokini)*

This fragment can be seamlessly joined to f. 10 of SI 6564. Consequently, British Library fragment Or.12380/628 is identified as the missing folio 8 of SI 6564.

In addition to Or.12380/628, another Siddham *dhāraṇī* fragment, Or.12380/2880C (*YHW*, 3:261), is preserved in the British Library collection (Pl. 2). This fragment exhibits an identical typographical structure and script style to SI 6564, confirming its origin from the same imprint. Although severely damaged, the fragment retains the left half of the folio, with Siddham *akṣaras* arranged horizontally from left to right. Each complete folio originally consisted of 7 lines with 10 *akṣaras* per line, but only 5 *akṣaras* per line remain legible. The content encompasses at least three *dhāraṇīs*: the first three lines represent the concluding portion of the initial *dhāraṇī*, which corresponds to Amoghavajra's Chinese version, *Chishengguang Daweide Xiaozai Jixiang Tuoluoni Jing* 熾盛光大威德消災吉祥陀羅尼經 (*Taishō*, 19:337).

Below, we compare the text of Or.12380/2880C with Amoghavajra's transcription and the *DQ* (9: 194–195), proposing reconstructions for the damaged sections (in brackets).

¹² Romanization of the *akṣara* is suggested by Shomakhmadov.



Pl. 2

Or.12380/2880C in the British Library

Or.12380/628:	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	[𠄎	𠄎
Transliteration:	<i>hūm</i>	<i>jvara</i> ¹³	<i>vāra</i> ¹⁴	[<i>prajvara</i>	<i>prajva-</i>]
Amogavajra:	𠄎	入𠄎二合囉	入𠄎 ¹⁵ 囉	鉢囉二合入𠄎二合囉	鉢囉入𠄎 ¹⁶
DQ:	<i>hūm</i>	<i>jvala</i>	<i>jvala</i>	<i>prajvala</i>	<i>prajva-</i>
Or.12380/628:	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	[𠄎	𠄎
Transliteration:	<i>ra</i>	<i>tiṣṭha</i>	<i>tiṣṭha</i>	[<i>cchiri</i>	<i>cchiri</i> <i>spho-</i>]
Amogavajra:	𠄎	底瑟姪二合	底瑟姪二合	瑟致二合	瑟致二合 薩普二合
DQ:	<i>la</i>	<i>tiṣṭha</i>	<i>tiṣṭha</i>	<i>cchiri</i>	<i>cchiri</i> <i>spho-</i>

¹³ *ra* is written as “*la*” in DQ.

¹⁴ A *ru* 入 (*j-*) is missed here in the Chinese original.

¹⁵ Two characters *Erhe* 二合 (binom) are missed here.

¹⁶ Two characters *Erhe* 二合 (binom) are missed under *boluo* 鉢囉 and *rufu* 入𠄎 respectively.

¹⁷ Chinese *sezhi erhe* 瑟致二合 is used to transcribe Sanskrit 𠄎 *ṣṭi* that unsimilar to DQ.

Or.12380/628:	𑀓	𑀧𑀢	𑀢𑀤[𑀢]	𑀢𑀤	𑀢𑀤
Transliteration:	<i>ta</i>	<i>sphoṭa</i>	<i>śāṃti[ka]</i>	<i>sriye</i>	<i>svāhā</i>
Amogavajra:	吒	薩普二合吒	扇底迦	室哩二合曳	娑嚩二合賀
DQ:	<i>ta</i>	<i>sphoṭa</i>	<i>śantika</i>	<i>śrīye</i>	<i>svāhā</i>

The beginning of line 4 retains a four-character Chinese title: *Bukong Juansuo* 不空羂索, which corresponds to the *dhāraṇī* in Amoghavajra's Chinese version, titled *Bukong Juansuo Piluzhenafu Daguandingguang Zhenyan* 不空羂索毘盧遮那佛大灌頂光真言 (*Taishō*, 19:606). This *dhāraṇī* also appears in the Liao dynasty compilation *Xianmi Yuantong Chengfo Xinyao Ji* 顯密圓通成佛心要集 by Daoshen (*Taishō*, 46: 1005).¹⁸ Drawing on these sources, we align the fragment Or.12380/2880C with Amoghavajra's transcription and the DQ (9: 157–158) as follows:

Or.12380/628:	不空羂索	𑀓	𑀢[𑀢𑀤]	𑀢𑀤 ¹⁹ 𑀢
Transliteration:		<i>om</i>	<i>a[mogha]</i>	<i>vairoca-</i>
Amogavajra:		唵	阿謨伽	尾嚩左
DQ:		<i>om</i>	<i>amogha</i>	<i>bairoca-</i>

Or.12380/628:	𑀢	𑀢𑀤𑀢𑀤 ²⁰	𑀢𑀤	𑀢𑀤 ²¹	𑀢
Transliteration:	<i>na</i>	<i>mahāmu[pro]</i>	<i>maṇi</i>	<i>padme</i>	<i>jvā-</i>
Amogavajra:	囊	摩賀母 ²² 捺囉二合	麼拏	鉢納麼二合	入嚩二合
DQ:	<i>na</i>	<i>mahāmudra</i>	<i>maṇi</i>	<i>padme</i>	<i>jva-</i>

Or.12380/628:	𑀢	𑀢𑀤𑀢𑀤 ²³ 𑀤	[𑀢𑀤]
Transliteration:	<i>la</i>	<i>pravardaya</i>	[<i>hūm</i>]
Amogavajra:	囉	鉢囉二合鞞哆野	吽
DQ:	<i>la</i>	<i>pa²⁴ravardaya</i>	<i>hūm</i>

¹⁸ In addition, there is another sample of *Xianmi Yuantong Chengfo Xinyao Ji* housed at the IOM RAS: TK 270, xylograph, accordion binding, seven and a half fold surviving. The Chinese transcription characters are contrasted by Ranjana Sanskrit (*EHW*, 4: 358–359).

¹⁹ *ro* is written as “𑀢 ru 嚩” in *Xianmi Yuantong Chengfo Xinyao Ji*.

²⁰ “𑀢 (dra) 捺囉二合” according to *Xianmi Yuantong Chengfo Xinyao Ji*.

²¹ “𑀢 (dma) 納麼二合” according to *Xianmi Yuantong Chengfo Xinyao Ji*.

²² The Siddham form is missing. It may be complemented as according to “𑀢 (mu) 母” as in *Xianmi Yuantong Chengfo Xinyao Ji* and Or.12380/2880C.

²³ “𑀢 (rta) 哆” according to *Xianmi Yuantong Chengfo Xinyao Ji*.

²⁴ The *akṣara* “a” seems to be excrescent.

The bottom line of fragment Or.12380/2880C preserves only four ritual particles: *hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ oṃ*. A caesura is likely required between the third and fourth *akṣara*, as the final particle (*oṃ*) is uncommon in *dhāraṇī* terminal positions according to mantric conventions. The lack of critical lexemes in this line prevents definitive identification of its textual source. Nonetheless, it can be conclusively established that, although they cannot be physically rejoined to the extant portions of SI 6564, the colophon immediately following it unequivocally identifies this as the concluding folio of the *dhāraṇī* collection.

3. Or.12380/2880 Chinese Votive Text

The fragment Or.12380/2880 comprises three folios. In addition to the aforementioned *dhāraṇī*, two folios contain a relatively well-preserved Chinese votive text (*fayuan wen* 发愿文). Unlike the Siddham *dhāraṇī*, this text adheres to traditional Chinese scribal conventions, written in vertical columns from right to left. The complete text reads:

The *dhāraṇī* is the quintessence of all Buddhas and the core of Bodhisattvas. Its efficacy is boundless, bestowing inexhaustible blessings. Those who recite it swiftly fulfill the Six Pāramitās; those who carry it eradicate the Three Poisons. Like an alchemical elixir that transmutes iron into gold, a single *mantra* transforms the mundane into the sacred. Indeed, it is the expedient path to transcend worldly suffering and the essential ferry across the sea of anguish. With such supreme merits, we engaged artisans to engrave these woodblocks. Through this merit, we repay the Fourfold Benevolence above and nurture the beings within the Three Realms below. May all sentient beings in the Dharma Realm collectively attain rebirth in the Pure [Land].

Printed and distributed on the 17th day of the 10th month, Tianqing 1st year.²⁵

This colophon definitively establishes the printing and distribution of the *dhāraṇī* collection in the first reign year of Tianqing (1194 CE). Sho-

²⁵ Chinese original: 夫陀羅尼者，是諸佛之頂，乃菩薩之心，功能廣大，利益無窮。誦持者速圓六度，佩戴者殄滅三毒。其猶還丹一粒，點鐵成金；真言一字，轉凡成聖。寔可謂脫塵勞之捷徑，越苦海之要津。有斯勝益，命工鏤板。□此功德，上報四恩，下資三有，法界含靈，同生淨□。時天慶元年十月十七日印施。

makhmadov, although overlooking this dedicatory inscription, nonetheless accurately dated the two *dhāraṇī* collections to the late 12th c. However, his subsequent conjecture that they were commissioned by Empress Dowager Luo during the reign of Emperor Huanzong (r. 1193–1206), remains questionable, as it does not fully align with historical records of her patronage activities.²⁶ Shomakhmadov based his hypothesis on Empress Dowager Luo's exile to Khara-Khoto during this period, where she eventually passed away. He argued that her political marginalization would have driven her to use low-quality, inexpensive paper for printing, despite her devout Buddhist commitments.

However, as is widely acknowledged, Empress Dowager Luo's withdrawal from political affairs did not occur until after Emperor Xiangzong's ascension to the throne in 1206. In 1194, when the *dhāraṇī* collection was printed, she still firmly held power as regent. Emperor Renzong passed away on the 20th day of the 9th month of the 24th reign year of Qianyou (1193). Following his death, for the subsequent three annual death anniversaries, Empress Dowager Luo commissioned large-scale printings and distributions of Buddhist scriptures. Among the Khara-Khoto materials, there are three such texts documented.

1. *Renwang Huguo Bore Boluomiduo Jing* 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經 (*Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra for Benevolent Kings Protecting the State*), printed and distributed on the 20th day of the 9th month, the 1st year of Tianqing (1194).

2. *Zhuan Nüshen Jing* 轉女身經 (*Sūtra on the Transformation of Female Form*), distributed on the same date in the 2nd year of Tianqing (1195).

3. *Dafangguang Fo Huayanjing Puxian Xingyuan Pin* 大方廣佛華嚴經普賢行願品 (*Chapter on Samantabhadra's Vows from the Avataṃsaka-sūtra*), printed in the 3rd year of Tianqing (1196).

Each colophon concludes with the dedication: "Respectfully offered by Empress Dowager Luo".²⁷

The votive postscript accompanying the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra for Benevolent Kings* states:

²⁶ The assertion that Empress Dowager Luo embraced Buddhism following her exile to Khara-khoto originates from an unverified hypothesis proposed by Men'shikov (MEN'SHIKOV 2005: 240).

²⁷ NIE 2016: 129, 176.

Preaching 61 sets of *Mahāyāna sūtras* in Tangut and Chinese, as well as 1.149 Mahāyāna repentance ceremonies.

All private hashslingers in the Empress Dowager's palace are liberated to be functionaries, and 70.779 sheep were released for meritorious liberation. One general amnesty was proclaimed.³⁰

The grandeur of the merits generated from the three *dharma* assemblies increased progressively each year, making it financially unsustainable for anyone outside the Xixia imperial household due to the economic constraints of that era. Notably, these ceremonies were temporally aligned with the production of the manuscript SI 6564 and Or.12380/2880. This fact confirms that Empress Dowager Luo was not so impoverished as to be unable to afford printing paper, thus suggesting that she was not the patron responsible for the publication of the *dhāraṇī* collection.

Existing Xixia monuments indicate that the court's adoption of Buddhism was primarily aimed at "safeguarding the state" and pursuing "eternal imperial sovereignty" through exoteric teachings, such as the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. In contrast, esoteric *dhāraṇīs* are seldom featured in royally commissioned texts.

By contrast, commoners and officials sought "personal protection", aiming to alleviate suffering from calamities (especially illness) and secure rebirth in the Pure Land.

This marked distinction is vividly reflected in the Xixia votive inscriptions, including those composed by high-ranking officials. A quintessential example is the 1167 CE votive inscription authored by Ren Dejing 任得敬, the highest Imperial preceptor and supervisor of significant military and political affairs.³¹ While battling an illness, he commissioned the printing of the *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*.

In the spare time from official affairs, I have consistently upheld this *sūtra* with unwavering sincerity, cultivating profound faith. Now, suffered from

³⁰ Chinese original: 大法會燒結壇等三千三百五十五次，大會齋一十八次。

開讀經文：藏經三百二十八藏，大藏經二百四十七藏，諸般經八十一藏。大部帙經並零經五百五十四萬八千一百七十八部。

度僧西番、番、漢三千員，散齋僧三萬五百九十員，放神幡一百七十一口。

散施：八塔成道像淨除業障功德共七萬七千二百七十六幀，番漢《轉女身經》《仁王經》《行願經》共九萬三千部，數珠一萬六千八十八串。

消演番漢大乘經六十一部，大乘懺悔一千一百四十九遍。

皇太后宮下應有私人盡皆捨放並作官人。散囚五十二次，設貧五十六次，放生羊七萬七百七十九口，大赦一次。

³¹ Chinese original: 太師上公總領軍國重事。

persistent misfortunes and unrelenting illness, where days pass without reprieve and medicinal remedies prove ineffective, I hereby resolve to commission woodblocks for its printing. Through this meritorious act, I seek divine assistance: If my remaining years are still allotted, I hope to swiftly recover. If fate proves inexorable, I hope to attain rebirth in the Pure Land.³²

In the seventh reign year of Tianqing (1200 CE), a high-minister He Zongshou 賀宗壽, while suffering from illness, commissioned the compilation of *Mizhou Yuanyin Wangsheng Ji* 密咒圓因往生集 (*A Collection of Esoteric Mantras for the Causes of Rebirth*). This work systematically gathered *dhāraṇīs* from canonical sources and presented them in a bilingual format, featuring Chinese characters alongside Siddham transcriptions. The preface explicitly connects his Buddhist piety to his physical ailment, suggesting a profound interplay between religious devotion and personal well-being.

Zongshou, long afflicted by illnesses, sought solace in Śakyamuni during periods of medical treatment. Through praying to the Buddha, I repented for my past misdeeds and gained numerous benefits that purified my mind and body. I carefully compiled efficacious esoteric mantras from various *sūtras* into this collection, naming it “Esoteric Mantras for the Causes of Rebirth”. To ensure its accuracy and widespread dissemination, benefiting both the living and the departed, I invited eminent saṃghas from the Western Regions and authentic monks from the Eastern Land to meticulously collate the texts three times. The version was then engraved and printed in both Chinese and Sanskrit scripts for eternal circulation.³³

Regardless of their motivation, sponsoring such large-scale textual projects necessitated considerable financial resources. This observation leads to such a plausible hypothesis that although anonymous, the patron behind the year 1194, Siddham *dhāraṇī* collection likely belonged to the same socio-political elite as figures like the “King of Qin and Jin” and He Zongshou, officials who possessed not only the means but also personal incentives to fund Buddhist publications.

³² Chinese original: 予論道之暇，恒持此經，每竭誠心，篤生實信。今者災迭伏累，疾病纏綿，日月雖多，藥石無效。故陳誓願，鏤板印施，仗此勝因，冀資冥佑。倘或天年未盡，速愈沉痾；必若運數難逃，早生淨土。(NIE 2016: 168).

³³ Chinese original: 宗壽夙累所鍾，久纏疾瘵，湯砭之暇，覺雄是依。爰用祈叩真慈，懺摩既往，虔資萬善，整滌襟靈。謹錄諸經神驗密咒，以為一集，遂命題曰“密咒圓因往生”焉。然欲事廣傳通，利兼幽顯，故命西域之高僧、東夏之真侶，校詳三復，華梵兩書，雕印流通，永規不朽云爾。(NIE 2016: 178).

Abbreviations

- DQ* — *Dazang Quanzhou* 大藏全咒 [All Mantras in Mahāpīṭaka]. LIN Guangming 林光明 newly ed., Taipei: Jiafeng Publishing House, 2001.
- EHW* — *Ecang Heishuicheng Wenxian* 俄藏黑水城文獻 [Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia] 4. St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Nationality Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House ed., Shanghai: Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, 1997.
- FS* — *Fangshan Shijing* 房山石經 [Stone Scriptures in Fangshan]. China Association of Buddhism & China Library of Buddhism ed. Beijing: Huaxia Publishing House, 2000.
- YHW* — *Yingcang Heishuicheng Wenxian* 英藏黑水城文獻 [Documents from Khara-Khoto in the British Library]. The Second North-west Minzu College, Chinese Classics Publishing House, the British Library ed., Shanghai: Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, 2005.

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Kirill M. Bogdanov

“Six Yogas” Practice in Text from IOM RAS Tangut Fund. Preface, Translation from the Tangut Language and Commentary

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Abstract: This article presents a Russian translation, commentary and brief textual research of the Tangut manuscript (10th–13th cc.) describing a tantric practice possibly related to the doctrine of “Six Yogas” of the famous Indian tantric master Nāropa. Since the handwriting of this manuscript is nearly illegible, I have published here only part of this text which is more or less comprehensible due to its general meaning and structural completeness. Considering that this research aimed at the identification of the original specific traits of Tangut Buddhism which make it distinct from the neighboring Buddhist traditions that had, in their time, had a strong impact on its formation is a most important trend in this field, the publishing of this textual source could be helpful in this context.

Key words: Tangut Fund of IOM RAS, Tangut Buddhism, Tantra, “Six Yogas”

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Introduction

The Manuscript Tang 1872 (IOM RAS, Tangut Fund) is a text on Buddhist tantric tradition, which despite the absence of title and the author’s or compiler’s name could be related to the *Six Yogas* tractate mostly associated with the name of famous Buddhist Tantric master Nāropa (Skt. Nāropāda).¹ Here on should be precise that teachings similar to *Six Yogas* existed in India around this historical period. Their authorship was associated with the different Tantric teachers. Nāropa has compiled some 10 practices, later, they

¹ Nāropa was born in India, the data of his life — end of 10th — early 11th cc.

have been transformed in 6 yogas.² Glenn Mullin in his “Readings on The Six Yogas of Nāropa” gives the description of these 10 yogas, and also of the 6 yogas which were transmitted orally to Nāropa by his teacher, legendary Tantric master Tilopa.³ Therefore, it means that *Six Yogas* doctrine in some form is already existed in Tantric tradition before. It should be also added that Guenther in his book on Nāropa did not ever mention this practice under the *Six Yogas* name but treated it as “Walking the path of freedom by suffering the torments of the acts of self-denial”, and suggested that in consisted of 12 parts.⁴

Fragment described in this article was discovered in Khara-Khoto suburgan by Piotr Kozlov expedition in 1907–1909. Therefore, it should be confirmed that this text date as a most part of Kozlov collection as 9th — early 13th cc. On should be remarked here that in IOM RAS Tangut Fund there are some writings of Nāropa, commentaries to these writings.⁵ Most of these texts are different size fragments written in hard cursive — trait that makes these texts’ interpreting difficult. On contrary, a text Tang 1872, despite its illegible writing, attracted attention by clear structure that supposed the logical consequence of a whole narration. The text’s language, grammar’s and lexica’s characteristics, appeared to be quite understandable. On should be supposed that this is original Tangut text, not translation from other languages. I can assume that it was composed on some personal practice experience based on Nāropa teachings. Text was checked by scribe or compiler; all comments and corrections were written in illegible cursive near to text’s line. These commentaries also could be the evidence that text was re-recorded from another source.

Originally, manuscript existed as scroll, now it consisted of two separate fragments: the first one — 23×58.5 cm, and the second one — 23×58 cm. The first fragment (Pl. 1), contained 22 lines of text with text’s beginning and complete meaning. It contains the description of three practices: yoga of the transference of mind (tib. ‘pho-ba), yoga of the radiant light (tib. ‘od-gsal), yoga of the dream state (tib. rmi-lam), the description of another yogas from this group (three or more?) is lost. The second fragment describes the concrete dreaming practice. I think its correct interpretation on

² ANDROSOV 2011: 296, 388.

³ MULLIN 2009: 23–31.

⁴ GUENTHER 1986: 41–81.

⁵ N.A. Nevsky, first, distinguished these texts in Tangut collection and gave first common description. See: NEVSKY 1960: 82.

should seek in context of local indigenous believes.⁶ Moreover, despite the grammar and meaning compatibility of the end of the 22nd line of the first fragment and the 1st line of the second fragments, a small part of text joining the meaning of these two fragments, is also lost.⁷

Not being a specialist in Tantric Buddhism, I suppose there being of some incontinence in description of practices and theirs' "secret" meaning comparing to the similar ones in canonic texts on Six Yogas.⁸ Because of the incompetence in this field, I shall not even try to analyze probable differences, and just hope that some interested in this subject specialist will decide to do it. However, I am sure that this text is a significant source, because it is the evidence of practice experience of some Tantric, who lived around time of *Six Yogas* written fixation, i.e. 10–11th cc. when the principal school of Tibetan Buddhism has been established.⁹

I did not succeed to read or correctly interpret some characters, so this translation is preliminary one. All punctuation is made according me interpretation, for easy reading lines of translation are numerated according to Tangut text's structure. I didn't comment some basic Buddhist terms assuming that more likely specialists in Buddhism would read this translation.

Translation

1. Praise to all Gurus!

2. There are three types of transference of mind:

First type — transference in accordance with wisdom.

Second type — transference in the moment of violent death or disastrous occurrence.

Third type — transference according to acquired knowledge [about it].
First type transference

3. [could be accomplished] as a result of special teaching.

Second type — forced transference happens when Buddha while giving the freedom [from this world], shows mudra,¹⁰

⁶ Therefore, I consider this part's publication as a premature.

⁷ In the second fragment the description of experience during yoga practice begins from the 4th dreaming, but logically the initial three should be described.

⁸ See: GUENTHER 1986; MULLING 2009.

⁹ KYCHANOV 1999: 31.

¹⁰ Literally "hand — seal" in the text (KYCHANOV 2006: 464).

4. In this moment on should concentrate on pure Sanskrit family,¹¹ and looking up on land of joy that on the [mount] Sumeru crown transfer [mind there].

5. Third type — transference according to acquired knowledge consists of three [types]:

the first, highest — transference into the Radiant light; the second, intermediate — transference into the corpse;¹²

6. the third, last one — transference according to the increased [merits].

The highest type — transference into the Radiant light¹³ [occurs] when [you] have been taught this [sādhana] beforehand, then [while practiced it, the Radiant light] appeared.

7. [A capacity] of this sādhana's accomplishment [points that] there was no past life rebirth.

If meditating on the Reality or the Radiant light emptiness, you will transfer mind [there], so the very center of [the emptiness you] are see and not see in the same time,

8. [this moment] attain Dharmakaya. Those who acquired firmness in dharma and do appropriate worship, should perceive the law of this transference.

The intermediate type —

9. transference of mind in moment of rebirthing in new body. This very moment [you] do visualize:

10. there is Shri Vajra-van holding vajra on the mountain Sumeru crown; in meditation go around him. When you will stay right before his face, your body will become radiant like Buddha's body.

11. Do realize this! As rules demand: in the state of dreaming make a vow. If in state of dreaming [you] can this sādhana fulfill,

12. then in the moment of death due to the teaching received in past [life], transference [of mind] will take place and in next life you will get a new body.

13. The last type — transference of [mind] according to the increased [merits] happens while due to the Three Jewels worship Bodhicitta arises.

14. In past life the backbone of Buddha body — a stone — arose.¹⁴

¹¹ Probably, this phrase signifies some mantra's Sanskrit syllables.

¹² Here the reference to secret tantric practice — the transporting into the dead body that strongly differs from transference of mind practice.

¹³ Or acquisition of Radiant light.

¹⁴ Maybe it refers to Trikaya — three Buddha bodies.

When [you] will endure the entrance of downward whirl into the center of stomach¹⁵ and when upward whirl will overtake downward whirl,

15. then AH syllable will enter the center of stomach¹⁶ and a syllable HUM will enter into the center of the heart.¹⁷ When Hum syllable will rise up to highest spheres and will seal the pure Sanskrit family,¹⁸ this time in deep concentration and with joy this [sādhanā] fulfill.

16. In this moment when consequence of cloth¹⁹ is interrupted, Hum syllable is in the heart center, AH syllable is in the center of the stomach. When consequence of transference [will recover],

17. [you] should visualize before yourself the center of emptiness — Buddha's essence. Mediating on [the syllable] consequence from Sanskrit family [you] should seal the center of head crown with syllable KHI from Sanskrit family and [thus] destroy it. If caught in the Hell, [you should] meditate on Sanskrit family too.

18. Two elbows, head and two ribs [should be] chosen. Downward whirl will stop upward whirl, syllable AH in syllable HUM will enter.²⁰

19. A HI KA — while say [these syllables], obtained from highest spheres and syllable HUM will leave pure Sanskrit family,²¹ then in meditation [you] should contemplate as [this syllable] enters into the heart's center — Buddha's essence.

End.

20. And then according to Dharma the transference [will take place], the body will radiant. [In this moment] the essence of Buddha's body in meditation you should contemplate. In the heart center you should visualize syllable HUM.

21. The mind will transfer in to the vessel of light that gives a freedom. In all spheres the white beautiful dakinis' palaces will materialize,

22. You do collect them in your body. And syllable HUM do place in your body. That is why you...²²

¹⁵ Navel cakra.

¹⁶ I succeed to read a commentary near to this line: "Red syllable Ah, a secret one — in the corner of [triangle]. On should meditate on it, beforehand".

¹⁷ Heart cakra.

¹⁸ Literally "close up". Maybe it means "to complete a mantra".

¹⁹ Maybe metaphorically it means "tantric ritual".

²⁰ It means "join together".

²¹ Maybe it means "to form some mantra".

²² Here first fragment is cut.

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Bolshoy-Yaloman III Inscription — A New Reading and Interpretation

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Abstract: Mountainous Altai inscriptions have a special place and importance among the Turkic Runic inscriptions. There are more than a hundred inscriptions in the territory of the Republic of Mountainous Altai of the Russian Federation. Work on these inscriptions continues. The Bolshoy-Yaloman III complex, discovered by A.A. Tishkin, contains one text in Old Uyghur script and three texts in Turkic Runic script. There is only one proposed reading and interpretation of the three Turkic runic texts, published by Tugusheva, Klyashstorny and Kubarev. However, the authors were not able to read most of the inscription and only provided a transliteration. This article presents a new reading and interpretation of three rock inscriptions found in the Bolshoy-Yaloman III complex. After reading and interpretation, explanations were made about the words in the inscription.

Key words: Old Turkic, Old Turkic Inscriptions, Mountainous Altai Inscriptions, Bolshoy-Yaloman III Complex, Bolshoy-Yaloman III Inscription

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Introduction

As the first written documents of the Turkish language, the studies on the Old Turkic inscriptions with Turkic Runic letters are now expressed in thousands since the day they were first discovered and the letters were deciphered. On the one hand, reading and interpretation studies on the newly found inscriptions continue, on the other hand, new reading and interpretation suggestions are presented on the previous inscriptions. A significant part of these inscriptions, which are found in many different regions of Central and Inner Asia and number nearly six hundred today, are located

within the borders of the Republic of Mountainous Altai in the Russian Federation.

The studies on the Turkic Runic inscriptions found in the Republic of Mountainous Altai were published by G.I. Spasskiy, *Sibirskiy Vestnik, chast I: Drevnosti Sibiri*, published in 1818. In 1865, during the excavations of a grave near the village of Katanda, a silver flask was found with a Turkic Runic text, but V.V. Radlov did not pay attention to it, and it was later published by P.M. Melioranskiy.¹

Studies on the inscriptions of the Mountainous Altai are relatively few compared to the inscriptions of other regions. One of the main reasons for this is that most of the inscriptions were written on rocks. Most of the inscriptions are Qalbaq-Tash, Bichiktu-Boom and Tuekta texts. As in the Yenisei inscriptions, the lack of tombstone-shaped obelisks and similar monuments explains the scarcity of studies on the inscriptions of this region. In fact, it is difficult to clearly distinguish between the inscriptions of Mountainous Altai and those of Tuva and Khakassia. Archaeological data and written documents in the Altai Mountains, also known as the Mongolian Altai, which fall to the west and northwest of Mongolia, are considered within the same framework as the Mountainous Altai inscriptions.

In 2012, the Mountainous Altai Inscriptions project conducted by L.N. Tybykova, I.A. Nevskaya and Marcel Erdal, and the catalog containing the transliteration, transcription and translation of the inscriptions into Russian, led to an increase in studies on the Mountainous Altai inscriptions. Thanks to Gorno-Altaysk Gosudarstvennij Universitet publishing all the material in the form of a catalog² and Goethe Universität, also a stakeholder of the project, posting the inscription texts on its website along with high-resolution photographs, it was possible to access photographs of the inscriptions of the region.³ D.D. Vasil'ev's⁴ book on the goal of publishing the Mountainous Altai inscriptions in 2013 and also worth mentioning the work by Kadyrali Konkobaev, Nurdin Useev and Negizbek Shabdaneliev published in Astana in 2015.⁵

¹ NEVSKAYA 2011: 10; ERDAL & KUBAREV 2019: 230.

² TYBYKOVA et al. 2012.

³ <http://www.altay.uni-frankfurt.de>.

⁴ VASIL'EV 2013.

⁵ KONKOBAEV et al. 2015.

1. Bolshoy-Yaloman III Complex and Discovered Texts

The joint expedition of the Institute of Archaeology of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the State Research Institute of Linguistics of the Altai Mountains began work in 1989 to study archaeological monuments in Mountainous Altai and conduct research in the river basin. In the course of the work, a number of burial structures in the Bolshoy-Yaloman I and II cemeteries in the Urkosh region and rock paintings in the Bolshoy-Yaloman III complex were analyzed.⁶

According to the catalog of Tybykova et al.⁷ the inscription was discovered by A.A. Tishkin in 2004 in the archaeological site of Bolshoy-Yaloman III with petroglyphs. However, for some reason, the authors of the catalog did not provide information about the whereabouts of the text in Turkic Runic script. Therefore, there is no information in the catalog except that it was written in Turkic Runic script in the 8th or 9th cc. See also.⁸

The material from the Bolshoy-Yaloman III petroglyph complex has attracted the attention of researchers, and G.V. Kubarev of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences studied the Bolshoy-Yaloman III site during his work in the Altai Republic in 2013. According to A.A. Tishkin et al. the GPS coordinates of the Bolshoy-Yaloman III complex are: North-50°33.017'; East-086°34.162' and the altitude is 803 m.⁹

On one side of the rock is text in Old Uyghur script, written with black paint and brush, and on the other side are two texts in Turkic Runic script. Tishkin states that there is an animal figure in red paint on the Turkic Runic text on the left, but this animal figure is very difficult to make out. According to Tishkin et al.,¹⁰ the scribe of the Old Uyghur script, which is written in black paint, saw the Turkic Runic script and therefore took care not to confuse it with the Uyghur script. In addition, a few indistinguishable signs to the left and right of the Runic script can hardly be distinguished.

⁶ BORODOVSKIY et al. 2016: 22–23.

⁷ TYBYKOVA et al. 2012: 65.

⁸ KONKOBAEV et al. 2015: 268.

⁹ TISHKIN et al. 2016: 18–22.

¹⁰ TISHKIN et al. 2016: 25.



Pl. 1:
TUGUSHEVA et al. 2014: 78



Pl. 2:
TUGUSHEVA et al. 2014: 78

Tishkin et al.¹¹ state that upon the discovery of writing in the research area, the Turkic Runic and Uyghur texts were first sent to the St. Petersburg branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences and presented to S.G. Klyashtorny and A.M. Sherbak. He states that the first impression was that the inscriptions may date from the 8th or 9th cc., and thus correspond to the period of the Uyghur Khaganate. There are also researchers who believe that the Mountainous Altai region did not fall within the borders of the Uyghur Khaganate. G.V. Kubarev,¹² for example, holds this view. Another important fact is that no text written with black paint and brushes has ever been found within the borders of the Altai Republic.¹³

V.A. Kocheev¹⁴ also states that it is the only example among the Mountainous Altai inscriptions written in paint without carving and that it can be dated to the 8th or 9th cc., but does not include any drawings showing the inscriptions.

The first publication on the texts was made in 2014 by L.Yu. Tugusheva, S.G. Klyashtorny and G.V. Kubarev. The first part of the article is devoted to the text in Old Uyghur script; the second part is devoted to the text in Turkic Runic script. Tugusheva read the text written in Old Uyghur script with black paint, which is claimed to be Old Uyghur, while Klyashtorny read the text in Turkic Runic script.¹⁵

1.1. Old Uyghur Written Text

The text in Old Uyghur script is not the subject of this article, but it is worth mentioning briefly because of the controversy over its language. Tugusheva, believing that the text is written in Old Uyghur script and that its language is Old Uyghur, reads and interprets it as follows:

1. *q(a)gan birläki*
2. *yaguqi-da erkin*
3. *öz bildgärip ö[z?]*

¹¹ TISHKIN et al. 2016: 61.

¹² KUBAREV 2005: 143.

¹³ TISHKIN et al. 2016: 62.

¹⁴ KOCHEEV 2006: 14.

¹⁵ TUGUSHEVA et al. 2014: 80.

4. *élingä y(a)na bičig*

5. *bičidi*

“Эркин, когда они вместе с каганом, возвращаясь в свой эль, подошли близко (~ приблизились), чтобы известить о себе, сделал (букв. написал) надпись”.¹⁶

The authors note that the orthography of the Uyghur text is in the same form as its counterparts in East Turkestan (Xinjiang). They states that the text was written by a person with the name or title of *erkin*, that the title of *erkin* was frequently used in the period of the inscriptions, and also compares it with the name *Uluγ Erkin* in the Kōl Tegin Inscription.

The article discusses why the verb *biči-* exists. They suggest that the verb *biči-* emerged under the influence of the dialects of this region, which may have appeared as early as the 10th c. Another issue that the authors draw attention to is that Uyghur script has been used in many Turkic-speaking areas.¹⁷

Ts.B. Natsagdorj suggests that the language of the text written in Old Uyghur script is Mongolian, not Old Uyghur. Natsagdorj’s reading is as follows:¹⁸

1. *qayan-u jrlγ-iy[ar]*

2. *jaruγal-du[r] iregsen [ejen]*

3. *noyan bulteger ji ōn-ü*

4. *ilčīn an-e bičig*

5. *bičibei*

Natsagdorj gives the meaning and interpretation of the text word by word. States that he is certain that the text is in Mongolian, although there is some doubt about some of the words because it is very worn, and suggests that it can be dated between 1291 and the middle of the 15th c.¹⁹ The opinions of experts in Old Uyghur and Mongolian will be of great importance as to whether this issue will be discussed or not. It is fortunate that no one who wrote a text in Old Uyghur script saw the Turkic Runic script and wrote on it or very close to it because of the possibility of confusion.

¹⁶ TUGUSHEVA et al. 2014: 80.

¹⁷ TUGUSHEVA et al. 2014: 80–81.

¹⁸ NATSAGDORJ 2019: 18.

¹⁹ NATSAGDORJ 2019: 22.



Fig. 3:
TISHKIN et al. 2016: 128

1.2. Turkic Runic Text

The Turkic Runic text is written above and below the left side of the Old Uyghur script. Except for Tugusheva et al., no readings have been identified for Turkic Runic texts. The number of inscriptions, their reading and interpretation given by Tugusheva et al. are as follows:²⁰

Inscription I

el teŋrikenim “(мой) эль, мой тенгрикен”

Inscription II

1. *teŋrikenim* “мой тенгрикен”

2. *sl²...a l¹...l¹ad²..n'r².*

It is stated that the text was read and interpreted by Klyashtorny, that there is one line on one side and two lines on the other side, that it was probably written by the same person, but that it is difficult to identify the letters due to the lack of depth of the lines, that the first letter of the single-line inscription is written slightly outside, and that the last letter cannot be identified. The second text consists of two lines, with 8 characters in the first line and 18 or 19 characters in the second line, but the second line is difficult to read. The authors state that it is dedicated to a person called *täŋrikänim*, and that this name or title is frequently used in the Ongi Inscription and Buddhist and Manichaean manuscripts; as a result, he concludes that first the Runic script and then the Uyghur text were made with a brush.²¹

2. A New Reading and Interpretation of Turkic Runic Texts

The author of this article disagrees with the researchers who first published the number of texts in Turkic Runic script. There are three inscriptions on the rock, the first is a single line, the second is two lines and the third is also a single line. These three inscriptions are given below under separate headings:

Inscription I

täŋrikän¹ “blessed!, sainted!” or *täŋrikän¹im* “my blessed!, my saint!”

²⁰ TUGUSHEVA et al. 2014: 81.

²¹ TUGUSHEVA et al. 2014: 81–82.

Inscription II1. *täñrikän*¹ “blessed!, sainted!” or *teñriken*¹*im* “my blessed!, my saint!”2. *käšlig el*¹ “sable homeland”**Inscription III***äl*¹*ik*¹*ig äylädim kän*¹<ç> *är* “I hunted the gazelle (~ watching the gazelle hunt?) young man”**2.1. Notes**

The character shapes in all three inscriptions are similar, but more evidence is needed to say that they were written by the same person. However, the fact that the word *täñrikän* is written with *n*¹ when it should be written with *n*² and that this is the same in all three inscriptions cannot be explained by coincidence. Either the same person wrote it, or we can speak of a writing culture in which the distinction between *n*¹ and *n*² is unknown. In such difficult-to-read texts, if there is a different spelling in one place, the same spelling is expected on the same rock or in the surrounding texts. In other words, if it is written differently in one place and differently in another, it is not a matter of a writing culture, but of a misidentified letter. It is therefore possible that it was written by the same person, and it is also possible that the letter was known in this way. Especially in the letters *n*¹, *n*², *n* and *z*, there are such writing culture artifacts. The writing system and letter culture of the Gurvan Mandal Inscription in Mongolia is a clear example of this issue. For a new reading of the inscription and notes on the letters *n* and *z* in particular, see.²²

In inscriptions I and II, it is possible that there is an *m* after the word *täñrikän*, since it is not clear whether there is an *m* or not. The title *täñrikän* is one of the most important issues to be emphasized. Because there are different opinions about the scarcity of the word and, more importantly, whether it has an identity belonging to the Old Uyghur dialect. This word is not found in multi-line inscriptions such as Kōl Tegin, Bilge Qagan and Tonyuquq. Except for the Qarabalgasun Inscription I, it is not found in the khaganate inscriptions of the Uyghur Khaganate. W. Bang²³ states that it is *täñri qan* in his epistles. A. von Gabain²⁴ ‘göttlich, Majestät’; Clauson²⁵

²² AYDIN 2023.²³ BANG 1980: 17.²⁴ GABAIN 1950: § 48²⁵ CLAUSON 1959: 185.

states that it is not a proper name but a title, meaning ‘His sacred majesty’. The view of S.G. Klyashtorny and E. Tryjarski²⁶ is somewhat different and interesting: After giving the meaning of ‘His sacred majesty’ for *täñrikän* in the Arkhanen Inscription, they point out that this word is a witness of Uyghur dialect; he argues that *täñrikän* is found in Uyghur inscriptions and *täñritäg* in the inscriptions of the Second Turkic khaganate. In addition, it is one of the words used by those who want to date the inscription, as it is found four times in the Ongi Inscription. For example, V. Rybatzki²⁷ argues that the inscription in the *täñrikän* testimony may have been erected close to or in the early years of the Uyghur khaganate, most likely in 744 or 756. The word is found only twice in the Yenisei inscriptions, in “An Inscription from the Adrianov Collection” see.²⁸

Mahmud Al-Kashgari’s definition of *täñrikän* as *cālimu'n-nāsiku bilugati'l-kafarati* is given by Dankoff & Kelly²⁹ as ‘A wise man, a pious man. Dialect of the infidels’. See also³⁰. The author of this article disagrees with Klyashtorny and Tryjarski’s view on *täñrikän*. However, it is important that it is not detected twice in an inscription from the Adrianov Collection from the Yenisei region and in the inscriptions of the Mountainous Altai except in the Bolshoy-Yaloman III Inscription. The inscriptions where the title *täñrikän* has been identified are as follows: Ongi Inscription East 5, 6, 6, 8; Qarabalgasun I Inscription line 1; Hangiday Inscription line 3; Olon-Nuur Inscription 3; An Inscription from the Adrianov Collection line 2 and 4. Also for these witnesses used as personal names see.³¹ In conclusion, this title from the Mountainous Altai inscriptions has been identified only once so far and is therefore very important. However, as mentioned above, more evidence is needed to say that the word belongs to Uyghur dialectology. At least the Ongi Inscription seems to preclude this argument.

The word *kiš* in line 2 of the Inscription II also has not many witnesses. Known as ‘sable’, this animal’s fur coat is very valuable. It is possible to imagine that the area where the Bolshoy-Yaloman III complex is located is famous for its sable. The word was found in the following inscriptions in the Old Turkic inscriptions: *Qara kiš* ‘Black sable’ (Bilge Qagan Inscription North line 11 and South line 12); *kiš* Telee Inscription (E 46) line 3. The

²⁶ KLYASHTORNY & TRYJARSKI 1990: 66–67.

²⁷ RYBATZKI 2000: 209.

²⁸ ERDAL 1998: 92; AYDIN 2019: 244.

²⁹ DANKOFF & KELLY 1985: 185.

³⁰ AYDIN 2018: 178.

³¹ AYDIN 2024: 156.

total number of witnesses for the word is four, of which ‘Black sable’ in Bilge Qagan Inscription and ‘sable’ in Telee and Bolshoy-Yaloman III inscriptions. Clauson³² gives the meaning of ‘sable’ and states that both the animal itself and its fur coat are mentioned. G. Doerfer³³ refers to ‘Zobel’ and states that the animal is *Mustela zibellina*. He cites the view that the word is derived from the Uralic languages and mentions the connection between Turkic and Samoyed: *kil’i>Urtü.*kilvi>kiši>kiš; -i: possessive suffix. He also states that the word has a short vowel in Samoyedic but a long vowel in Turkic: Turkic>Samoyed. I. Hauenschild³⁴ Lat. *Martes zibellina*. See also cf.³⁵ The fact that the word *el* meaning ‘province, homeland’ in the line is written as *el^l* with *ä* and *l^l* is a characteristic feature of such rock inscriptions.

The 3rd inscription, as Klyashtorny notes, is very difficult to read. but Klyashtorny must have found it more difficult to read because he thought in single lines. However, the letter height of the top two lines is not the same as the letter height of the bottom line, and the line alignment is also different. The line below must therefore have been written by a different person. The main reason for the illegibility of the line is the confusion of consonants waiting for back and front vowels. When writing a word, writing front instead of back consonant and back instead of front consonant is a common orthographic feature in rock inscriptions. The spelling of the first word is strange and can be read as *älik*, suggesting that it must be a game animal. Apart from this inscription; the word is found three times in total, twice in line 4 of the Abakan Inscription (E 48) and once in the Bichiktu-Boom IV Inscription (A 54) from Mountainous Altai. Tybykova et al.³⁶ also believe that *älik* should be read in Inscription A 54. The author of this article agrees. Since it was found twice in Abakan Inscription (E 48) among the Yenisei inscriptions, the following views can be mentioned about the word. S.E. Malov³⁷ *ilki* ‘внутренней земли’; D.D. Vasil’ev³⁸ *l²k²i*; Barutçu Özönder³⁹ *älki* ‘the people’; I.V. Kormushin⁴⁰ *äliki* ‘косули’. In Old Uyghur texts it appears

³² CLAUSON 1972: 752b.

³³ DOERFER 1967: No. 1698.

³⁴ HAUENSCHILD 2006: 98.

³⁵ PELLIOU 1931: 562; HAUENSCHILD 2003: 111; AYDIN 2019: 154–155.

³⁶ TYBYKOVA et al. 2012: 60.

³⁷ MALOV 1952: 94–95.

³⁸ VASIL’EV 1983: 32.

³⁹ BARUTÇU ÖZÖNDER 1998: 179.

⁴⁰ KORMUSHIN 2008: 139–140.

in two forms as *älik* and *elik*⁴¹; In the 63rd omen of Irq Bitig⁴² and detected once in the 79th couplet of Qutadgu Bilig⁴³. Clauson⁴⁴ ‘roe-buck’; Räsänen⁴⁵ gives the meaning ‘wildziege’. This animal name is *Ehlyk* in Pallas’ *Zoographia* and *älik* in Pekarskiy. The Latin name of the animal was given as *Cervus capreolus* by Pallas, but L. Károly⁴⁶ corrected it to *Capreolus capreolus*. However, it is more likely to be *Capreolus pygargus*, known in English as ‘Siberian roe deer’, whose homeland is the Siberian steppes. Another interesting note is that the name of this subspecies of the animal, known as *Cervus elaphus canadensis* ‘elk’, is derived from the English *elk*, German *Elkh*, Swiss *älg*, Italian *alce*, Norwegian *elg*, Greek *älkes*.⁴⁷ See also cf.⁴⁸

The second word of third inscription is thought to be the verb *äñlä-*. The verb, of which only one witness is found in the 5th line of the Bay-Bulun I inscription (E 42), is given by Aydın⁴⁹ with the meaning ‘to hunt’. Wilkens,⁵⁰ on the other hand, gives the meaning of the verb ‘nach Beute Ausschau halten, (einer Sache) nachspüren’.

The third word of the third inscription is thought to be *känč*. The word is written with *n*¹ and the letter *č* at the end of the word must have been forgotten. The reason for this reading is that the word *är*, meaning ‘man; male’, should be preceded by an adjective.

3. Evaluation and Conclusion

Four texts were identified in the Bolshoy-Yaloman III complex. One of them is a text written in Old Uyghur script, probably Middle Mongolian, and is not related to the three Turkic Runic texts. As for the Turkic Runic texts, the general opinion is that there are two texts. However, from approximately the middle of the letters designated as the second line of the 2nd text, it was revealed that it was not a continuation of the same line in terms of both letter

⁴¹ WILKENS 2021: 103 and 256.

⁴² YILDIRIM 2017: 48.

⁴³ ARAT 1979: 146.

⁴⁴ CLAUSON 1972: 142a.

⁴⁵ RÄSÄNEN 1969: 40.

⁴⁶ KÁROLY 2008: 311.

⁴⁷ AYDIN 2019: 158.

⁴⁸ HAUENSCHILD 2008: 13.

⁴⁹ AYDIN 2019: 257.

⁵⁰ WILKENS 2021: 110.

heights and line alignment. Accordingly, there are three texts in Turkic Runic script. The first is a single line, the second is two lines and the third is also a single line.

Once the doubt about whether the word *tāñrikān* has a dialectal identity is removed, it will be possible to identify the influence of the Uyghur Khaganate period. By title, we mean an influential ruler in the region. The frequent mention of hunting animals in the inscriptions of the South Siberian region, and even the wish for their reproduction in a few inscriptions, should be considered normal due to a life dependent on the existence of hunting animals. In addition, although there is no definite information that they were consumed as food, the fact that animals such as sable, whose fur is valuable, are native to this geography, and that gazelles are hunted and therefore named after these animals is an important piece of evidence. Therefore, there is a more solid basis for the reading of the second and third texts of the Turkic Runic script.

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The Danishmendname Epic: Conceptualization of ‘Sacred’ in the Scope of the ‘Holy War’¹

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Abstract: The large Turkic epic Danishmendname, which tells us a story about the conquests of Danishmendid dynasty in Asia Minor in the 11th c., retained its popularity in the Ottoman empire up until its collapse. At the same time, current public discourses in modern Turkey reveal the new wave of popularity of warrior epics about the legendary Turkic conquerors. Despite the Danishmendname has been fruitful topic of research, by and large, there are generally comprehensive historical, literary and linguistic commentaries to the manuscripts and its published facsimiles. Recent studies on the topic, though, address the Danishmendname in a broader context of Late Medieval frontier epics as an informed source for cultural and political environment of that milieu. Following this latter approach, we assume that Danishmendname constitutes an excellent case study for investigation of cultural memory of Muslim conquests in Asia Minor for several reasons. This epic not only records multiple layers of complex Muslim-Christian interactions in Anatolia, including the accounts of the First Crusade, but also could shed light on the way the lay people, who transmitted the lore, assigned meaning to the world in which they lived. This world, being very unstable with its flexible identities and no tangible allegiances, was imagined as a ‘house of war’ (dār al-ḥarb), where any means of Islamization were tolerable. So, the Muslim conquerors build/ rebuild mosques in newly captured cities, demolish and desacralize the Christian places of worship (so do their Christian counterparts with the mosques), and even perform a miracle to convince ‘infidels’ to convert to Islam. Similar supernatural deeds of Christian monks, however, are perceived as a sorcery, thus, being desacralized. Given the context, the category of ‘sacred’ becomes observable wherever group identities are challenged and put at stake. Thus, by means of discourse analysis, this paper explores how this certain category was manifested both spatially and spiritually in the scope of the ‘holy war’, which is in the center of the plot.

Key words: Danishmendname, Islamization of Asia Minor, Muslim-Christian interactions, the First Crusade, sacralization/re-sacralization/desacralization of space

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Introduction

In the aftermath of the Battle of Manzikert (1071), which inaugurated mass penetration of Turkic tribes to Asia Minor, two powers among Turko-Muslims were able to acquire prominence and enjoy some longevity — the Danishmendid state (1067–1180) in the southeastern part of the peninsula and the Seljukid sultanate of Rum (also Konya sultanate, 1077–1307) in its central part. The conquests of the Danishmendids in Anatolia became the subject of a large Turkic epic called the *Danishmendname*.

This epic, originally oral, was first written down at the behest of the Seljuk Sultan ‘Izz ad-Dīn Kaykāwus II (1246–1262) by his secretary Ibn Alya in the 13th c. What we have in hand of this epic today is a version edited by warden of the Tokat fortress Arif Ali in the 14th c.² Currently, there are about 18 known manuscripts, preserved in libraries and private collections in St. Petersburg, Paris and various cities of Turkey.³ The earliest one is dated 1577, while the latest — to early 20th c.⁴

Naturally, the *Danishmendname* has been fruitful topic of research. Still, the studies on its narrative are limited to comprehensive historical, literary and linguistic commentaries to the manuscripts and its published facsimiles.⁵

Relatively recent studies address the *Danishmendname* in a broader context of Late Medieval⁶ Turkic frontier epics (usually along with the *Battalname* and *Saltukname*) as an informed source for cultural and political environment of that milieu.⁷ However, there are some loose assumptions based on generalization of several literary sources. Thus, M. Božovich⁸ and Z. Aydo-

² GARBUZOVA 1959: 40–45.

³ NECATİ 2006.

⁴ ANIKEEVA 2018: 28.

⁵ GARBUZOVA 1959; MELIKOFF 1960; NECATİ 2006.

⁶ The chronological classification of *Danishmendname* as a “late medieval” epic is attributed to the period of its written record by Arif Ali in the 14th c., as the only known version which came down to us.

⁷ KAFADAR 1995; AYDOĞAN 2012; KAYAALP 2012; ANIKEEVA 2018; ANIKEEVA 2019.

⁸ BOŽOVIC 2019: 253.

ğan,⁹ exploring the ethno-geographical scope of such epics, assumed that old Russians (*Uruslar*) as a subcategory of *infidels* [along with Greeks (*Rumiler*), Franks (*Firenkler*), Armenians (*Ermeniler*), Georgians (*Gürçiler*) and Circassians (*Çerkesler*)] revealed as late as in the storyline of *Saltukname* for this hagiography depicts the most recent period and covers the broadest geographical area. Indeed, *Uruslar* were mentioned at least thrice in the *Danishmendname*, even though the plot is geographically limited to Asia Minor.¹⁰

In either way, following this comprehensive approach of the latter group of scholars, we imply that the *Danishmendname* constitutes an excellent case study for investigation of *cultural memory*¹¹ of Muslim conquests in Asia Minor for several reasons.

First, as the latest manuscript of *Danishmendname* dates to the beginning of the 20th c., it can be safely assumed that the epic retained its popularity in the Ottoman empire for all this long period. Besides, in modern Turkey there are enough compelling examples of growing interest in the history of early Turkic conquests in Asia Minor. So, there is an active process of publishing translations of medieval Turkic epics into modern Turkish,¹² researching the history of this period,¹³ as well as filming of top-rated TV series and movies about these conquerors,¹⁴ etc.

And even though the epic was written down at least 200 years after the reported events, it was produced and told within milieux that were conscious of earlier layers of Muslim-Christian struggles, embodied in the legends such as those of Melik Danishmend or Battal Ghazi.¹⁵

Certainly, we couldn't even assume how much different was the narrative, transmitted through multiple oral retellings, before it came to us in a written form. It would take us too far afield to deal with the problem of authenticity here, given that such issues have been already addressed to some extent in two

⁹ AYDOĞAN 2012: 109.

¹⁰ (P, 37b) (“*Sāmiya ve Sinōbiya Mihriyānōs ve İstefānōs altmış bin erile gelürler, kamu çerisi Firenkdür ve Urusdur ve Çerkezdür*”).

¹¹ The term “cultural memory” was introduced by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs in 1920s, and further reconsidered by German Egyptologist Jan Assmann. According to J. Assmann, cultural memory is based on fixed points of the past, which he calls ‘*figures of memory*’, whose ‘*memory is maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance)*’. See: ASSMANN 1992: 129.

¹² NECATİ 2006; NECATİ & MEHMET DURSUN 2006; etc.

¹³ TESCAN 2014: 263–296; ADAK 2022: 673–697.

¹⁴ E.g., “Alparslan: Büyük Selçuklu” (Alparslan: The Great Seljuk), “Uyanış: Büyük Selçuklu” (Awakening: The Great Seljuk), “Kuruluş: Osman” (Foundation: Osman) series, etc.

¹⁵ KAFADAR 1995: 69.

comprehensive monographs on the topic.¹⁶ Rather than focusing on the real historical figures and events depicted in the epic, we engage with the idea that perceptions of the past are no less, and sometimes even more important for understanding the modern history of different peoples and regions.

Indeed, the legendary accounts of Melik Danishmend could shed light on the way the lay people, who transmitted the lore, assigned meaning to the world in which they lived. This world, being very unstable with its flexible identities and intangible allegiances, was imagined as a ‘house of war’ (*dār al-ḥarb*), where any means of Islamization were tolerable.

In the circumstances of the permanent military clashes between Muslims and Christians and continuous Islamization of the region, the category of ‘sacred’ becomes observable wherever group identities are challenged and put at stake. This category most vividly manifests itself both spatially and spiritually in such instances as sacralization/desacralization of holy sites and rituality (categorized either as a miracle or a sorcery), as we will explicate further by implementing discourse analysis.

Thus, the idea under this paper is to investigate through the lens of *cultural memory* how certain category of ‘sacred’ was conceptualized by narrators in the scope of the ‘holy war’.

The primary sources used in this paper are Saint-Petersburg manuscript of *Danishmendname* from the Russian National Library¹⁷ and Parisian manuscript published on the website of the National Library of France in a digitized form.¹⁸

The ‘holy war’ and its conceptualization

“*Hey, Nestor and hey, Shattat, know and be aware that I did not come to Rum to go back after gathering property and treasury, but I came to conquer these lands and cities, to convert their inhabitants to Islam*”.¹⁹ These words

¹⁶ GARBUSOVA 1959; MELIKOFF 1960.

¹⁷ *Danışmendname*. In: Manuscript department of Russian National Library (RO RNB), F. 578 (Fond Dorna-578). [*Hereinafter referred to as sigla S*].

¹⁸ *Kıssa-i Melik Danişmend Ghazi Ahmed ibn Ali (Danishmendname)*. In: Manuscript department of National Library of France (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des manuscrits), Turc 317 (R 24950). [*Hereinafter referred to as sigla P*].

¹⁹ (P, 125b) [*Ey Nestör ve ey Şattât, bilünj ve ağâh oluj kim ben Rûma anuj için gelmedüm ki mâl ve ḥazîne cem’ edem daḥi gerü dönem, anuj için geldüm ki bu elleri ve bu şehirleri fetḥ edüb ḥalkını imāna getürem*].

of Melik Danishmend clearly state that the idea of his conquests in Anatolia is not just a military raid (*ghazawāt*) but Islamization of the region.

The epic describes the initial stage of Islamization of Asia Minor, which proceeded slowly, given the quantitative predominance of Christians (Greeks, Georgians, Armenians, etc.) and feudal fragmentation of the land, as no political unity was established there up until the second half of the 15th c. under the Ottoman rule.

There is no denying that the epic records multilayered relations between Muslims and Christians, which were not constantly war inclined,²⁰ as could be explicated by multiple instances in the plot (e.g., “*A small group of people, who had escaped the mud-rock flow, came from the city of Sisiye, they joined Melik and embraced the new faith*”²¹). Still, the central theme of the *Danishmendname* is the ‘holy war’ along with Islamization as one of its most desirable outcomes.

Generally this ‘holy war’ is imagined as *ghazawāt* and its participants as *ghāzī*. Though, there are several instances, where the storyteller introduces a certain concept of *jihād*:

“*So, the people of Islam gathered together,
They have come willy-nilly for the Ghazawāt,
All of them, young and old,
Everyone came to fight the Jihād*”,²²

As could be explicated from this line, the *jihād* (in a common sense, a military jihad is a campaign against the infidels sanctioned by the Caliph) was conducted by a ‘united Muslim world’, even though this image of Muslim unity didn’t correspond to reality.

Additionally, it is worth spelling out, that despite the *Danishmendname* clearly addresses the concept of *jihād*, this epic has not been considered in fundamental works on the history of this concept.²³

As the narration goes from both sides of the story — Muslims and Christians, — the former commonly address their rivals as infidels (*kāfirler*) or sorcerers (*cazūlar*), while the self-denomination of the latter is the ‘people of

²⁰ KAFADAR 1995; BOŽOVIĆ 2019.

²¹ (P, 161a) [Ol Sisiyadan bir nice qavm sël elinden qurtulub Melik qatına gelüb tecdîd-i imân êtdiler].

²² (P, 41b) [Bu dem kim cem' olubdur ehl-i Islâm| Ğazâ için gelibdür kām ve nākām| dahi bunlaruñ uvağı irisi| cihād êtmeğe geldi her birisi].

²³ BONNER 2006.

the cross' (*ehl-i şalīb*). In this sense, Muslim-Christian combats are conceptualized, from the one hand, as legitimate military campaign against those who must be Islamized (namely, non-believers), even if “*from the fear of the sword*”,²⁴ and at the same time as a ‘holy war’ between two great religious communities (‘*ehl-i İslam*’ vs. ‘*ehl-i şalīb*’).

One of the episodes, which accompanied the early stages of Islamization of Asia Minor in the 11th c., was the First Crusade (1096–1099), as one of the motives for its beginning was the appeal of the Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118) in 1094 to the Pope Urban II to provide military assistance to recapture the territories seized by the Turks after the battle of Manzikert (1071). So, it should come as no surprise that these events were recorded in the *Danishmendname* in the line with the historical events of the earlier period.

From the lens of *cultural memory*, it’s not critical whether the leading character Melik Ahmed Danishmend took part in the First Crusade or were it only his descendants who did, as in legendary accounts a certain person or event could be imagined as a mixture of several characters or historical layers respectively.²⁵ In this sense Melik Danishmend embodies a generalized image of the heroic warrior, who conquered Anatolia and Islamized it, naturally fighting with enemies of Islam, including crusaders.

We could not agree with I. Melikoff in that, as she puts it, “*the Crusade is barely mentioned at the beginning of the book, in a vague sentence listing the main events of the First Crusade*”.²⁶ Actually, in this “*vague sentence*” the Caliph articulates literally the following:

“*‘May Allah fulfill your praiseworthy wish!’ — he said, — ‘But the Franks have captured Antakya in Syria, and Akka (Acre), and Tarabalus (Tripoli), and Safet, and Nablus, as far as Kudus (Jerusalem); therefore, the Muslim army, first of all, must move to this direction, and if Allah Almighty grants the Muslims a victory and they return unharmed after recapturing these areas from the Franks, then we will send them to the lands of Rum’*”.²⁷

²⁴ Literally, “*kılıç korkusundan Müsülmân oldılar*” (They became Muslims from the fear of the sword).

²⁵ ASSMANN 1992: 39–42.

²⁶ MELIKOFF 1960: 134.

²⁷ (P, 4b–5a) [*hayır murādınuzı Allah yetiştüre inşā’Allah! dedi.- Amma Şām elinde Antākiya ve ‘Akka ve Tarabalūs ve Şifāt ve Neblūs ve Kudūs kenarına deġin Firenk tutmuşdur, pes Müsülmānlık çerisi gerekdür kim ol yaña varalar, Haķ Te’āla Müsülmānlara fursat vere ol eli Firenk elinden alalar, selāmatlıġ ile gerü geleler, Rūma verbiyemüz, dedi*].

Only after the Caliph learns that the future leaders of the military campaign in Asia Minor, Melik Danishmend and Sultan Turasan, are the grandsons of Emir Omar and Seyyid Battal-ghāzī respectively, he orders his vizier to read the stars about their future, which turns out to be favorable, then he issues an order (*ferman*) for the campaign and provides them with the resources.

The abovementioned episode manifests a sacral significance of the Syria-Palestinian region for Muslims, as a high-priority of reclaiming of this domain “*as far as Jerusalem*” from the Crusaders was articulated by Caliph himself. What is more, being mentioned in the very beginning of the plot, the First Crusade thus contextualizes further Muslim conquests in Asia Minor. Namely, Melik Danishmend obtained a permission to wage his campaign in Anatolia as a ‘*head of soldiers of Islam*’ amid the understanding that somewhere not so far there are crucial Muslim-Christian combats for the ‘holy lands’.

Even though there are no clear denomination of the Crusade and its participants in the epic, as special terms (*haçlı seferleri/savaşları* for the Crusades, *haçlılar* for the Crusaders) emerged much later, it could be safely assumed that the image of the Crusades could be explicated from series of battles with the Franks. The latter, thus, are the prototypes of the crusaders as could be concluded by their appearance, which reflects the cliché images of medieval knights in a heavy uniform and with the crosses on their clothes (“*His horse and his clothes were adorned with crosses*”,²⁸ “*a thousand horses of the infidels and they themselves were (armored) in a blue iron*”,²⁹ etc.)

So, the Franks are those who come to the rescue of the Greeks (“*Franks and Russians and Circassians <...>, armies of 72 nations gathered together, and came to the help of Nestor*”³⁰). Their armies are great in number and come from somewhere afar (“*Thus Selahil-frank came from the country of Franks with a countless army*”³¹). There are also some certain characters such as Atos-frank, about whom it is said that the world has not known such a champion before.

Even though the ‘infidels’ are usually demonized in the epic as arrogant and immoral people, the generalized image of the Franks could be qualified

²⁸ (S, 118b) [*atını ve tınnı tamamet hāçlar ile bezemişler*].

²⁹ (P, 77a) [*biş Kāfir atı ve kendüsi göm gök demür idi*].

³⁰ (S, 219b) [*Firenkler ve Uruşlar ve Çerkezler <...> yetmiş iki milletten çeri cem’ olmuş, Nestōra yardımcı gelür imiş*].

³¹ (S, 204a) [*üşde Firengistāndan Selāhil Firenk hēsābsuz çeri ile êrdi*].

as a mixture of appreciation and fear. Interestingly, the Crusade Chronicles imagined proto-Ottoman Turks likewise, as Europeans acknowledged them as great warriors.³²

In some instances the indigenous inhabitants of Anatolia are depicted as great warriors as well, as they are referred to be a warrior hero (*bahadur*) or a wrestler (*pehlivan*), but the greatest heroes among them are those who are already converted to Islam (e.g., Artuhi, Efrumiye, Serkis-Ahmed, etc.).

Although infidels in general were imagined as a common enemy of Islam, they obviously composed only tactical, temporary alliance against the Muslim conquerors of Asia Minor, as there are clear ethnical differentiation of the hostile forces (Franks, Greeks, Armenians, etc).

In contrast to their enemies, Muslims themselves are represented in the narrative as a consolidated power. Appealing to Caliph's authority and receiving his sanction to wage *ghazawāt* in Asia Minor is of crucial importance in sense of imagining this unity. So, the Muslim *ghazawāt* even has its clear nerve-center — the Baghdad, the city where the Caliph locates as a spiritual leader of Muslims. There are also several self-denominations of Muslims such as people of Islam (*ehl-i İslam*), people of faith (*ehl-i İman*) and people of God (*ehl-i Allah*),³³ which also emphasize their internal unity.

The category of 'sacred' in the scope of the 'holy war'

In the circumstances of *ghazawāt* with its immediate outcome of Islamization, Asia Minor was imagined as a 'house of war' (*dār al-ḥarb*), where any means of conversion were tolerable. Given the context, the category of the 'sacred' gained its crucial value, as the group identities were continuously challenged and put at stake.

The cultural and social importance of the spatial manifestation of the category of 'sacred', which was initially theorized in the works of M. Eliade, lies in demarcation of the space, both real and imagined, into 'our own' and 'alien'. That is the community asserts its rights to possess a sacred space, as well as justifies the significance of this space for collective memory.

Accordingly, it was crucial for the warlords to manifest their power by demolishing the holy sites of their opponents. So, there are multiple examples, where Muslim conquerors, capturing the new city, first and foremost,

³² MURRAY 2018: 83.

³³ The latter denomination used only in the St. Petersburg manuscript.

destroyed Christian churches, monasteries and temples, subjecting them to desacralization:

*“They arrived at the monastery of Derianos, Melik ordered and they destroyed this monastery”.*³⁴

So did the Christian warlords with the cities, recaptured from Muslims, with the only difference that their deeds were imagined as those to be reclaimed:

*“They killed Muslims, slaughtered their children and wives, destroyed the mosque of Battal Ghāzī and burned the corpses”.*³⁵

Each new conqueror, whether Muslim or Christian, according to the narrative, immediately after conquering a certain city and destroying its places of worship, built preaching-houses for his co-religionists. While Muslim conquerors build the mosques (*“And so, having destroyed the churches, they made mosques instead of them, assigned there an imam and a hatip”*³⁶), there are the ‘mirroring’ actions of Christian lords for their subjects (*“Then the infidels recaptured Sisiye [Gömenek], enslaved the wives and sons of Muslims, destroyed the mosques, and founded monasteries instead”*³⁷).

In the scope of continuous Islamization, desacralization of Christian places of worship and their substitution by mosques was imagined as an essential measure of Muslim conquerors in order to prevent new converts from renegadism:

*“He converted the people of Anatolia to Islam,
Turned their common churches into mosques”.*³⁸

Indeed, flexible identities and intangible allegiances of Anatolian population, revealed many instances, where the new converts become renegades. The narrators even use special term ‘*münafıklar*’ (literally, hypocrites) for these forcibly converted Christians.

The epic details the process of desacralization of former Christian places of worship by looting valuables, desecration of relics, etc. For instance, after

³⁴ (S, 60b) [*Deryānösün deyrine geldiler, Melik buyurdu ol deyri ħarāb eylediler*].

³⁵ (P, 7a) [*Müsülmānları helāk etdiler, ehlin ‘iyālin kılıçdan geçürdiler, Baḡḡāl Ġāzī mescidini ħarāb etdiler*].

³⁶ (P, 139a) [*Andan keliseleri yıķub yerine mescidler yapıdular, imām, ħaḡīb dıkdiler*].

³⁷ (P, 127b) [*Çünkim kāfirler gerü Sisiya’i aldular Müsülmānların ‘avratın oğlanın esir etdiler, mescidlerin yıķub yerine deyr bünyād etdiler*].

³⁸ (S, 265b) [*Ehl-i islām eylemiş Rüm elini | Mescid eylemiş ķamu kilisesini*].

capturing the Derianos monastery, Muslims removed the crosses (made of gold, silver and iron) and burn them out.³⁹

In this very episode, the monks have been rushed themselves to rescue the great cross after it was taken out of the monastery and burned out by Muslims.⁴⁰ That is Muslim narrators clearly define what is 'sacred' for their counterparts. In this attitude of self-sacrificing of the monks they depicted the Cross (*haç, salib*) as the key sacrality of Christendom. Still, for Muslims these are just ordinary objects, which should be demolished.

Such cases clearly illustrate how spatial manifestation of the category of 'sacred' demarcate boundaries between 'us' and 'them'.

What also serves as a demarcation line between these two religious communities are their rituals and supernatural deeds, categorized either as a miracle or a sorcery, depending on who performs it. So, in the scope of the 'holy war' the category of 'sacred' becomes observable not only through its spatial manifestation, but also through spiritual one.

Thus, there are several instances, where the Prophet Muhammed or his companions came to dreams or revealed themselves before the leading Muslim characters and instructed them how to act against infidels in a complex circumstances. These instructions usually consist of prayers and symbolic actions, and result in a defeat of Christians, thus being perceived as a 'miracle'.

For instance, in chapter 15, Melik Danishmend captures eight thousand Christians and invites them to accept Islam. One of the captives, Tariq, declares that all captive Christians will accept Islam if Melik Danishmend performs a miracle similar to those performed by Christian saints, namely, slice the river and stop its flow. Danishmend promises to perform such miracle in the morning or, failing that, to release all the captives. Before going to bed he prays a lot, fasts, and in his dream, he sees the Prophet Muhammed, who tells him the exact prayer and explains the ritual for the miracle to be performed with the God's help. In the morning Danishmend-ghāzī wakes up with a prayer in his hand, written in green letters, and performs the miracle in front of the captives. Afterwards all eight thousand Christians were willingly converted to Islam.⁴¹

So, the narrators qualify a certain 'miracle' as one immanent to Christian saints, that was articulated directly through the Tariq's speech. Still, being

³⁹ (S, 60b–61b).

⁴⁰ (S, 61a).

⁴¹ (S, 231a–232b; P, 159a–160b).

performed by Muslim conqueror Melik Danishmend, this miracle becomes a valid argument for mass conversion of Christians.

It worth spelling out that the supernatural powers were also attributed to Christian monks, but from the eyes of Muslims, their miraculous deeds are perceived as a sorcery:

*“Do not be afraid of the dragon, it is a sorcery, it is produced by monks. Take the prayer, which the Prophet Khidr conveyed to Artuhi,⁴² reach the monastery with him, recite this prayer in front of the monastery, magic and sorcery will be dispelled”.*⁴³

Again, here we can see, how one of the Muslim prophets prescribes a ritual, which helps Muslim characters to defeat Christians, whose actions were desacralized by qualifying them as ‘magical’. Thus, the category of ‘sacred’ in its spiritual manifestation by rituals and supernatural deeds, once again demarcates the boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’.

As the narration goes in two ways giving the chance to hear both sides of the story, the Muslim storyteller cites imaginable ‘direct speeches’ of Christians, in which they, on their turn, labeled certain deeds of Muslims as a ‘sorcery’:

*“On that day, it was such a time that the whole world was seized with a fog, it became dark, the thunder rumbled, lightning struck, and rain fell. The people of Sisiye saw this and said: ‘Melik has committed a sorcery’”.*⁴⁴

Being articulated by infidels, these words didn’t gain any legitimacy. Though, such lines of Christian characters serve as a ‘reflection’ of Muslim deeds in the eyes of Christians, which helps narrators to better contextualize the juxtaposition of these two struggling religious communities, and thus, emphasize the ‘otherness’.

⁴² The prophet Khidr appeared to Artuhi and Efrumiye before the battle and conveyed them a prayer to be recited before battles with Christians. The words of the prayer are as follows: «*Bism-illāhi-r-rahmāni-r-rahīm Allāhumma inni as'aluka b-ismika yā Rahmān yā Rahīm yā Karīm yā Cannān yā Mannān yā Muhyi-l-mawta yā Zī-l-amāni yā Zī-l-fazli wa-l-ihsāni subhānaka lā ilāha illa anta al-amānu al-amān wa birahmatika yā arham ar-rahīmīna wa-l-hamd-ullāh Rabbi-l-'ālamīn*».

⁴³ (S, 58b) [*Ol ejderhādan korkmağil kim sihirdur, ol rühbānlar ederler. gerekdur kim yarın deyre varasız, ol du'a'i kim Hızır Peygamber Artuhiya vermiş idi ol du'a'i deyre karşu okuyub, ol sihir ve cāzılık bātül ola*].

⁴⁴ (P, 161a) [*Ol gün öyle zamāni kim oldu 'ālemi tumān tutdı, karanlık oldu, gök gürlledi, yıldırım şak idi, yağmur yağdı. Sisiya kavmi anı görüb, 'Melik Cāzuluk eyledi' dediler*].

The ‘miracle’ as a phenomenon was attributed not only to certain actions or events, but also to certain sacred sites, such as a common grave of martyrs (*shahids*). So, there is an episode, where their tomb (*türbe*) emanated the light up to the sky and, upon seeing this, the local Christians scattered and abandoned the town of Sisiye.⁴⁵ Thus, through exemplifying the miraculousness of the tomb of Muslim martyrs, resulted in a mass exodus of Christians, the narrators justify the right of Muslims to possess this sacred space.

Additionally, some miraculous instances, such as apparitions of the Prophet Muhammed or his companions in the dreams of infidels, result in their conversion:

“He said, ‘I saw Muhammed in my dream, he invited me to his religion, and I became a Muslim in his presence’”.⁴⁶

So, the ‘miracles’ of Muslims are followed either by willing conversion of infidels to Islam (private or mass), or by their defeat/mass exodus, which is finally also resulted in conversion. That is, the epic, depicting the initial stage of Islamization, addresses a ‘miracle’ as an efficient tool to convert Christians, who are imagined as those predisposed to Islam but gone astray.

In this sense, the ‘miraculousness’, being attributed to Muslims, justify their supernatural actions as those tolerable in the scope of all three Abrahamic religions. At the same time, the ‘mirroring’ actions of Christians, being qualified as ‘sorcery’, thus, are condemned and desacralized in the eyes of Muslims.

Conclusion

The *Danishmendname* is usually qualified as a warrior epic. However, as C. Kafadar puts it, “It is not always easy to distinguish between these warrior epics and hagiographies of holy men, just as it is at times difficult to differentiate a warrior from a dervish or vice versa”.⁴⁷ Thus, the lead character Melik Danishmend himself performs a miracle in a presence of infidels to convince them into conversion to Islam. This exactly what makes the boundaries between two genres so blurred and once more actualizes the importance of rationalization of the category of ‘sacred’.

⁴⁵ (P, 8a).

⁴⁶ (P, 56a) [Düşümde Muhammedi gördüm, beni dînine da’vet eyledi, ben dahî Muhammed öñinde müsülman oldum dedi].

⁴⁷ KAFADAR 1995: 65.

The epic unfolds a story about Danismendids' conquests in Anatolia of the 11th c., which was divided into numerous principalities of different allegiances (Byzantine empire and its vassal domains, Danishmendid Beylik, Seljukid Sultanate, etc.). The narrative, though, is of quasi-historical nature, as it records the accounts of the Crusades along with the events of earlier periods. In this sense, Melik Danishmend is represented as a generalized image of Muslim hero, who conquered the land and islamized it, fighting with the enemies of Islam, including crusaders.

The Crusades is, perhaps, one of the most notorious examples of Muslim-Christian interactions in the Middle East. So, introduction of these events to the plot even better contextualizes the Turko-Muslim conquests in Asia Minor, given the fact that the Caliph authorized Melik Danishmend to wage his campaign in Anatolia, supplying him with human and material resources, amid the 'holy land' being in the hands of Franks. Even after Melik Danishmend died, the Caliph re-sanctioned new conquests in the region by Danishmend's descendants, again granting them the aid, including the military one.

Though the epic records multilayered relations between Muslims and Christians, which were not constantly war inclined, the center theme of the *Danishmendname* is the 'holy war' along with its most immediate outcome of Islamization.

In this sense, Muslim-Christian clashes are conceptualized as both legitimate military campaign against infidels, who must be Islamized, and a 'holy war' between two struggling religious communities.

Although infidels in general were imagined as a common enemy of Islam, they obviously composed only tactical, temporary alliance against the Muslim conquerors of Asia Minor, being divided into certain ethnical groups (Franks, Greeks, Armenians, etc).

In contrast to their enemies, Muslims themselves are represented in the narrative as a consolidated power. Appealing to Caliph's authority and receiving his sanction to wage a '*holy war*' in Asia Minor is of crucial importance in sense of imagining this unity. What is more, the Muslim 'holy war' even had its clear nerve-center in Baghdad, as a capital of imaginary 'united' caliphate.

Indeed, juxtaposition between Muslims and Christians is one of the literary techniques used by narrators to better contextualize their interreligious confrontation. To give a chance of hearing two sides of the story, the narration goes in two ways, involving, — what is imagined to be, — 'direct speeches' of Christian characters.

In the context of continuous interreligious combats, the category of the 'sacred' becomes sizeable wherever the group identities were challenged. In this sense, the processes of sacralization, desacralization and re-sacralization of space are of crucial importance, as they demarcate the space into 'our own' and 'alien'.

Naturally, each new conqueror, whether Muslim or Christian, according to the narrative, immediately after capturing a new city and destroying its places of worship, built preaching-houses for his co-religionists. In doing so, conquerors asserted their rights to certain territories.

At the same time, desacralization of Christian places of worship and their substitution by mosques was imagined as an essential measure of Muslim conquerors in order to prevent new converts from renegadism.

In the scope of the 'holy war' the category of 'sacred' becomes observable not only through its spatial manifestation, but also through spiritual one. So, what serves as a clear demarcation line between two struggling communities are their rituals and supernatural deeds, categorized either as a 'miracle' or a 'sorcery', depending on who performs it. Aside from this, the narrators also address a 'miracle' as an efficient tool for Islamization.

To sum up, the studying of aforementioned processes and imaginations are one of the keys to deconstruct the nature of interfaith relations in Asia Minor or, even more, in a broader region of the Middle East. By explicating attitudes toward such crucial concepts as a 'sacred space' or a 'miracle' in the scope of the 'holy war', this article, hopefully, provides a better understanding of the origins of contemporary regional religious-political conflicts.

Given that the Turkic and Arabic folk literature reveals compelling examples of how similarly Muslim-Christian interactions and their competing for 'sacred space' was perceived by lay people, it is surprising that there are still no comprehensive works, dealing with such comparative analyze.⁴⁸ Further investigations on the topic, thus, may imply a comparative study of the obtained results with the materials of Arabic or Persian epics/ hagiographies of that period.

Abbreviations

S: St. Petersburg manuscript of the Danishmendname.

P: Parisian manuscript of the Danishmendname (Kıssa-i Melik Danişmend Ghazi Ahmed ibn Ali).

⁴⁸ SOKOLOV 2022: 172–181.

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**Confessional Perception of Historical Memory:
Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi through the Eyes of the 18th c.
Sunni Author
(Based on Manuscript B720 from the IOM RAS Collection)**

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Abstract: This article examines contradictory assessments of the activities of Shiite preacher Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi (1441–1526) in the religious history of medieval Kashmir. The study analyzes fundamental differences in interpretation of his role between contemporary Iranian historiography, which presents him as an outstanding religious reformer, and 18th c. Kashmiri Sunni sources that critically evaluate his missionary activities. Based on a comparison of the manuscript “Waqi‘at-i Kashmir” by Muhammad A‘zam Didamari from the IOM RAS collection with works written by contemporary Iranian researchers, this study demonstrates how authors’ confessional affiliation influences the formation of historical memory regarding religious figures of the past.

Key words: manuscript, “Waqi‘at-i Kashmir”, Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi, medieval Kashmir, Shiism, Nurbakhshiyya, religious history, historical memory

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Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi (1441/1442–1525/1526 CE) stands as one of the most controversial figures in the religious history of medieval Kashmir during the 15th–16th cc. This Shiite preacher, whose activities unfolded during a period of intense confessional conflict in the region, receives markedly different assessments across various historiographical traditions. Contemporary Iranian scholarship consistently depicts him as an outstanding religious reformer who made significant contributions to the spread of Shiite teachings and the spiritual development of Kashmiri society.

However, such unambiguously positive assessments contrast sharply with substantially different testimonies recorded in local Kashmiri sources. The mid — 18th c. manuscript titled “Waki’at-i Kashmir” authored by a Sunni writer, demonstrates a fundamentally different perspective on Mir Shams’ personality and activities, expressing clear disapproval of his religious endeavors. This divergence in evaluations presents researchers with an important methodological problem: to what extent does confessional affiliation of historical source authors influence the formation of historical memory regarding religious figures of the past.

Muhammad, son of dervish Ibrahim, known as Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi, was born in Iran in the 9th c. AH (15th c. CE). His epithet “Iraqi” has misled scholars to classify him as originating from Iraq. However, during the Seljuk era, the mountainous provinces including Kermanshah, Hamadan, Ray, and Isfahan were called “*Iraq-i Ajam*” (Persian Iraq) to distinguish them from Arab Iraq.¹ There are disagreements regarding Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi’s exact birthplace, but the epithet “Iraqi” may support the hypothesis centered on the village of Kan, belonging to Solgan. Today Solgan is a part of Kan district in Tehran, and in ancient times it was considered a part of Ray and the *Iraq-i Ajam* region.²

Scholars differ in their opinions regarding ‘Iraqi’s religious affiliation. Some consider him a Shiite.³ Others suggest that he was both a preacher of Shiism and a follower of the *Nurbakhshiyya*⁴⁵ tariqa. Still others view him exclusively as an adherent of the *Nurbakhshiyya* tariqa.⁶

Nevertheless, contemporary Iranian researchers agree on one point — Mir Shams al-Din played a key role in spreading Shiism throughout Kashmir.

Mir Shams al-Din traveled to Kashmir twice. He made his first journey in 882 AH (1477–1478 CE) as an envoy of Sultan Husayn Bayqara⁷ to the court of Kashmir rulers, and after eight years in Kashmir he returned to Khorasan. Since he served as an ambassador during this trip, he engaged

¹ DEHKHODA 1998: 15786.

² MATU 1389: 170.

³ RIAKHI 2014: 11.

⁴ *Nurbakhshiyya* is a Sufi brotherhood of Shia orientation that emerged in the early 15th c. from the Kubrawiyya brotherhood as its Shia branch. See: PROZOROV 1991: 193.

⁵ MATU 1389: 171.

⁶ DAVARPENAH 1397: 6.

⁷ Sultan Husayn Bayqara was a ruler of Khorasan (1469–1506) from the Timurid dynasty.

little in religious activities. However, when he arrived to Kashmir twelve years later, in 902 AH (1496–1497 CE), Mir Shams al-Din began active missionary work.⁸

The Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies at the Faculty of Literature and Humanities of Bu-Ali Sina University (Hamadan, Iran) ‘Abd Allah Atayi, the specialist in Iranian history and the spread of Shiism Muhammad Husayn Riahi, and the Kashmiri author Ghulam Muhammad Matu analyze in their works activities of Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi in the context of spreading Shiism.

‘Abd Allah Atayi writes that Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi embarked on his journey to Kashmir to assume leadership of the *Nurbakhshiyya* Sufi order there. ‘Iraqi remained in Kashmir until the end of his life, and his activities became the main factor in spreading Shiism in this region: “To this day, the influence of his activities is evident in the beautiful land of Kashmir”.⁹

Muhammad Husayn Riahi reports that Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi converted influential figures and statesmen of Kashmir to Shiite Islam.¹⁰

According to Ghulam Muhammad Matu, Mir Shams al-Din established friendly relations with local population after arriving in Kashmir, introduced them to Islamic teachings, and called for conversion to the Shiite *madhab*. Since he had previously lived in Kashmir for eight years, Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi studied the tribal lifestyle of the Kashmiris and understood that decisions of tribal leaders were unquestioningly accepted by society. Considering that Kashmiri society had deep mystical traditions and spiritual inclinations, he focused his preaching activities precisely on these aspects.¹¹

The specialist in Persian literature Dr. Gulara Davarpanah, while considering Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi a follower of the *Nurbakhshiyya* tariqa, notes that Shiism in Kashmir also spread through efforts of Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi: “During his second journey, ‘Iraqi more openly and seriously engaged in calling people to his madhab and was able to convert influential figures from the rulers of the local Chak dynasty to his faith. With their support, he openly engaged in spreading Shiism”.¹²

⁸ MATU 1389: 171.

⁹ ATAYI 1392: 228.

¹⁰ RIAKHI 2014: 10.

¹¹ MATU 1389: 173.

¹² DAVARPENAH 1397: 9.

It should also be noted that Iranian researchers compare these activities of Mir Shams Iraqi with those of Mir Sayyid ‘Ali Hamadani,¹³ whose role in spreading Islam in Kashmir has never been questioned. The same epithets and praises are addressed to ‘Iraqi: “Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi was an influential religious, mystical and political figure in the Kashmir region, who lived in the 9th and early 10th cc. AH and, like Sayyid Muhammad Hamadani, he played an important role in spreading Islam, especially the Shiite madhab and the *Nurbakhshiyya* tariqa”.¹⁴

Thus, research of contemporary Iranian scholars shows a clear tendency to emphasize the exceptional significance of Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi in the context of spreading Shiism. Researchers consistently present him as a key figure in religious transformation, focusing attention on his missionary activities and his role in forming the region’s Shiite identity.

However, such a persistent tradition in Iranian historiography makes the existence of texts with fundamentally different assessments of Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi’s activities all the more remarkable. In the context of universal praise, the mid — 18th c. Kashmiri manuscript “Waki‘at-i Kashmir” appears particularly surprising. Its author, being a Sunni and adherent of the Sufi tradition, forms a critical narrative about the Shiite preacher’s activities. This source does not merely supplement the established narrative, but radically overturns it, presenting Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi not as an enlightener, but as a figure who provoked serious criticism and dissatisfaction among the local religious community.

The creator of this work is Muhammad A‘zam Didamari (died 1765). The work’s full title is “Waqi‘at-i Kashmir” (Events of Kashmir) or “Tarikh-i A‘zami” (A‘zami’s Chronicle). Biographical data about Muhammad A‘zam is extremely limited. It is established that his father was Khayr al-Zaman (B720, f. 3.b), and he himself belonged to the Naqshbandi Sufi order and showed interest in poetry. His main *murshid* (spiritual guide) was the *Mujaddidi* sheikh Muhammad Murad.¹⁵ According to the data provided by the author, he started working on the manuscript in 1735–1736 CE and completed it in 1747–1748 CE.

¹³ Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani was a Persian Sufi philosopher from the Kubrawiyya tariqa. In Kashmiri historiography, he is known as one of the main Iranian theologians who spread Islam in Kashmir in the 14th c.

¹⁴ DAVARPENAH 1379: 20; MATU 1389: 180.

¹⁵ Muhammad Murad is the author of “Hasanat al-Abrar”. See: AKIMUSHKIN 2001: 62.

The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences holds a manuscript copy of “Waqi‘at-i Kashmir” under call number B720, dated 1171 AH (1757/58 CE). The manuscript has cardboard covers bound in dark brown leather on the outside and white leather on the inside, without a flap. Both covers show identical decorative tooling: a central medallion (*turunj*) with diamond shapes above and below, corner decorations, border frames, dotted patterns, and plant motifs within the stamped areas. The 298 ff. text is written in black ink using *nastaliq* script with no decorative elements. Red ink is used for proper names, poetry, and Arabic quotations. The work is structured into Introduction (*muqaddima*) describing Kashmir, three main sections covering the origins of Hindu rulers, the history of Muslim kings, and Kashmir under the Timurids, followed by Conclusion (*khatima*).

In describing the activities of Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi, the manuscript “Waqi‘at-i Kashmir” represents an analytical reworking of sources, methodologically comparable to contemporary studies of this historical figure. Muhammad A‘zam, like present-day historians, carried out critical selection of information from various testimonies, chronicles, and possibly oral traditions, forming an understanding of ‘Iraqi’s role and influence in Kashmiri history.

In the manuscript “Waqi‘at-i Kashmir” a significant section is devoted to the activities of Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi (B720, f. 76a–76b; 85b–87b), with Muhammad A‘zam demonstrating a critical stance toward this figure. When describing ‘Iraqi’s character and methods, the author portrays him as a “cunning” deceiver and conspirator who employed diplomatic methods to realize his religious designs. Emphasis is placed on his duplicity: outwardly ‘Iraqi appeared as a Sufi and follower of Sheikh Isma‘il, but secretly he implanted Shiite views among the Kashmiri population.

The author begins his narrative with a formulation that immediately sets the tone for the entire subsequent exposition: Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi arrived in Kashmir “ostensibly on a diplomatic mission” on behalf of Sultan Husayn Mirza (Husayn Bayqara). The use of this phrase casts doubts on the official status of the visit and the legitimacy of ‘Iraqi’s presence in Kashmir. This opening of the narrative programs the reader’s perception: everything that ‘Iraqi did in Kashmir should be viewed through the lens of initial deception and malicious intent. The narrative reaches its culmination in the episode of exposure: “When Sultan Husayn Mirza learned of his treachery and inner depravity, he dismissed him from service” (B720, f. 76a). The author legiti-

mizes his accusations through an appeal to the authority of Husayn Bayqara, an outstanding ruler and patron of the arts. The use of the term “treachery” (خیانت — *khiyanat*) points to a breach of trust and betrayal of one’s patron. Even more significant is the accusation of “inner depravity” (فساد باطنی — *fasad-i batini*) — a term that in Sunni polemics is associated with heretical movements practicing esoteric teachings. The dismissal from service represents a public acknowledgment of ‘Iraqi’s moral bankruptcy and his expulsion from the circle of worthy individuals. The concluding touch to the portrait is added by the phrase: “...and for this reason he returned to Kashmir” (B720, f. 76a). Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi’s second journey, which in Shiite historiography is presented as a missionary vocation, is here completely stripped of heroic motivation and interpreted as a forced flight following a disgraceful exposure.

According to Muhammad A’zam’s assessment, Mir Shams al-Din ‘Iraqi undertook deliberate actions to legitimize his status in Kashmir through a falsification of his spiritual lineage. Having preliminarily studied the religio-political situation in the region, he established contact with the local spiritual elite, claiming affiliation with the Sufi tradition and reception of *khilafat* (spiritual succession and the right to transmit Sufi teachings) from Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh.¹⁶ The author qualifies these assertions as conscious deception, substantiating his position by pointing to the absence of any genuine spiritual succession between ‘Iraqi and Nurbakhsh. The accusation is reinforced with a Quranic citation (24:16), which indicates that these actions were perceived as a religious transgression.

The author raises serious accusations regarding the destruction of state unity. ‘Iraqi is accused in spreading “skillful intrigues and sedition” among Kashmiri emirs, which provoked confessional conflicts and weakened central authority. From the Sunni chronicler’s perspective, ‘Iraqi’s activity is interpreted as “religious delusion” and “corruption” of the popular masses. The narrative abounds with negative characteristics: “inner depravity”, “treachery”, “heretical views”, “maliciousness”. The author includes poetic fragments to emphasize condemnation and create emotional impact on the audience.

¹⁶ Mir Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh (1392–1464) was a mystic (Sufi) who laid the foundation of the Noorbakshia school of Islam. See: PROZOROV 1991: 193.

For example:

از ره مرد بظاهر هموار مردمان
در خاکهای نرم بود دام بیشتر

On the path that seems smooth for people,
In soft lands there are more traps¹⁷ (B720, f. 85b)

or:

بود عده های تو دل بسته ام چه ساده دلم
که آب خضر طمع دارم از سراب غلط

I attached my heart to your promises, how naive I am
That I thirst for Khidr's¹⁸ water from a mirage by mistake¹⁹ (B720, f. 86b)

Consequently, Muhammad A'zam interprets the activities of Mir Shams al-Din 'Iraqi as a destructive factor that, under religious cover, disrupted the political stability and spiritual harmony of Kashmir. This position reflects a characteristic Sunni assessment of Shiite missionary work in a region where Shiism was viewed as a challenge to the existing religious order.

Regarding the comparison between Mir Shams al-Din 'Iraqi and Mir Sayyid 'Ali Hamadani in terms of their roles in spreading Shiism in Kashmir, Muhammad A'zam deliberately avoids drawing any parallels between these two historical figures. In his historiographical framework, Mir Sayyid 'Ali Hamadani is presented as a significant figure within the context of Sunni Islam, whose activities in Kashmir were legitimate in nature and contributed to consolidation of mainstream religious traditions. Hamadani is positioned by him as an authoritative Sufi master and exponent of Sunni doctrine who made a constructive contribution to the Islamization of the region (B720, f. 48b, 50a-b).

In contrast, Mir Shams al-Din 'Iraqi is characterized by Muhammad A'zam exclusively as a disturber of religious order, whose activities were directed toward undermining established Sunni traditions and imposing Shiite views (B720, f. 85b–87b). The author sees no similarity between them in

¹⁷ Translation by A.M. Smirnova.

¹⁸ Khidr (variants: Khidir, Khizir, Khizr, Khyzyr, al-Khadir) is a character in Islamic mythology who incorporates features of various mythological figures from the pre-Islamic Near East. Sufis believe that Khidr, like Muhammad in his time, inherited divine knowledge directly from Allah, and since then the spirit of Khidr teaches this divine knowledge to Muslim mystics. See: PROZOROV 1991: 262.

¹⁹ Translation by A.M. Smirnova.

terms of status, historical role, or religious legitimacy. This demarcation reflects the historiographer's confessional bias and his effort to represent Shiite influence in the region as a destructive, marginal phenomenon, opposed to the "true" Sunni tradition embodied by the figure of Hamadani.

It should be noted that for studying the biography of Mir Shams al-Din 'Iraqi, both the 18th c. author and contemporary researchers use approximately the same list of sources. Among them are:

The anonymous text "Baharistan-i Shahi" (1614) — the first dated work on Kashmir's history in Persian that is extant in its entirety;²⁰

"Tarikh-i Haydar Malik Chadura" (1618–1621) — one of the most famous local Kashmiri chronicles. Its Shiite author, Haydar Malik, wrote impartially, criticizing religious intolerance of local rulers;²¹

"Tarikh-i Rashidi" by Mirza Muhammad Haydar Dughlat, written in the 16th c. Being an independent study, the work focuses mainly on the history of Moghulistan and Eastern Turkestan, as well as adjacent territories of Central Asia in the 14th–16th cc. Kashmir in this context only appears as one of many regions the author visited during his travels.²²

Moreover, some contemporary Iranian researchers also cite the work of Muhammad A'zam, but do not take into account his negative assessment of Mir Shams al-Din 'Iraqi's personality and activities.²³

Thus, it can be said that although using the same source base, contemporary Iranian Shiite researchers and the 18th c. Sunni author Muhammad A'zam Didamari present diametrically opposite assessments of Mir Shams al-Din 'Iraqi's activities.

In conclusion, it should be said that confessional affiliation of source authors does, indeed, fundamentally influence historical assessments of religious figures, as vividly demonstrated by the example of Mir Shams al-Din 'Iraqi. The contrast between his image as an enlightener in contemporary Iranian Shiite historiography and a destructive figure in the 18th c. Sunni Kashmiri tradition confirms the relativity of historical memory.

However, it is important to note that confessional assessments are not static and can transform over time. Despite the historically negative perception of 'Iraqi in the 18th c. Sunni environment, contemporary discourse shows a tendency toward more positive interpretation of his activities.

²⁰ PANDIT 1991: 27.

²¹ HASAN 1959: 8.

²² KHAYDAR 1996: 632–537.

²³ MATU 1389: 171; DAVARPENAH 1397: 7.

Such evolution of assessments demonstrates not only the necessity of critical analysis of sources' confessional perspectives, but also the importance of considering the historical context in which these assessments were formed when studying medieval religious history.

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Ramil M. Valeev, Roza Z. Valeeva,
Gennadiy R. Sharafutdinov

S.E. Malov's Unpublished Letters to Academician V.V. Radlov from Chinese Turkestan (1910–1915) and Kazan (1917) Kept at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences¹

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Abstract: January 2025 marks the 145th birthday of Professor Sergey Yefimovich Malov (1880–1957), Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, a renowned expert in ancient Turkic runic and Uighur texts, history, language, and culture of Turkic-speaking peoples, as well as an outstanding educator in the field of Turkology. His early academic biography and classical legacy are associated with two famous research expeditions to Western China (1909–1911 and 1913–1915). In addition, 110 years have passed since the end of his Turkestan expedition and 104 years since his planned third trip to Central China. The scholarly expedition of S.E. Malov is organically woven into the history of Russian and foreign academic and humanities research and discoveries in the important geopolitical and historico-cultural space of Central Asia in the late 19th — early decades of the 20th cc. This article presents a part of the epistolary legacy of S.E. Malov: four letters written to his teacher Academician V.V. Radlov during two periods of Malov's research journey to Qing China (1910–1915) as well as the last, fifth, letter from Kazan dated January 17, 1917. These letters belong to the Academician's personal collection kept at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Fund 177, Inventory 2, File 161). The letters, originally written in Russian, are given in the article in English translation.

Key words: Russia, East, Central Asia, Chinese Turkestan, Turkic studies, S.E. Malov, research expedition, letters.

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Introduction

The epistolary legacy of Russian Orientalists is a unique phenomenon of culture and scholarship. Letters and correspondence of those who created the academic field focused on the study of Asia, including the Turkic world, have high research value as a source on the history of science and as intellectual legacy of these eminent scholars that reveals their views and perceptions. Letters of Russian Orientalists in many ways reveal the phenomenon of creative personality of a scholar and thinker, preserve their memory and popularize their legacy.

Among eminent classics of Soviet and modern Russian and Eurasian Turkology, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences Professor S.E. Malov (January 4 (16), 1880 — September 6, 1957)² is recognized as a unique specialist in the field of Turkic languages, who conducted extensive research and contributed greatly to the study of written and material monuments of the Turkic civilization.

In the first half of the 20th c., S.E. Malov, a Russian and Soviet linguist, Orientalist and Turkologist, a major specialist in the field of Turkic linguistics and written monuments, played an invaluable role in the history of Russian, European, and classical Turkic studies.

Throughout the main stages of his research career, the study of the Turkic civilization and its intellectual and material components in ancient, medieval and modern times, was the basis of his academic and humanistic creativity. He was one of the founders of Soviet classical Turkology and comprehensive Uighur studies in particular. S.E. Malov fulfilled his high humanitarian mission in the Turkic linguistic socialist construction, writing and literary lan-

² UBRIATOVA 1957; MALOV 1989; MILIBAND 1995.

guage, as well as in the development of new writing and culture of Turkic-speaking peoples of the USSR, Russia and modern Central Asian states.

The origins of the scholar's legacy, key stages, results and features of the development of S.E. Malov's professional activity and his personality can be objectively assessed only in the broad socio-political and historico-scientific context of the historico-cultural and civilizational space of Eurasia, especially when one relies on his archival complex of the late 19th c. and the first half of the 20th c., preserved to this day, but not yet systematically introduced into scientific and educational circulation.

Of particular interest are unique letters written by the outstanding Turkologist and his correspondents that are kept in his personal and other collections at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences as well as in other Russian archival and cultural centers.

The scholar's epistolary legacy in his personal collection kept at the St. Petersburg Branch includes more than 300 letters from various correspondents: scholars, writers, government officials and public figures of the pre — 1917 period and the Soviet era.

The study of the epistolary legacy of S.E. Malov and his correspondents is conducted by using a comprehensive approach involving a combination of various principles and research methods: search, review, systematization, analysis, analogy, comparison, structural and functional analysis, classification, etc.

The topic of academic and social legacy of S.E. Malov remains relevant in the first quarter of the 21st c. His closest disciple, Turkologist E.R. Tennishev, expressed it as follows: "This is a subject for a monographic study which should include both an analysis of the scholar's career and an unhurried reflection on the era and the scholar, his character, interests and inclinations".³ Regrettably, modern Turkology lacks a comprehensive academic biography of S.E. Malov and a complete collection of his published and unpublished works and correspondence.

Results

One area of significant research potential is the search, systematization and introduction into scientific and public circulation of collections and materials, kept at Russian scientific, cultural and archival centers, that are tied

³ TENISHEV 1978: 26–33.

to the biography and legacy of S.E. Malov, his teachers and students, fellow orientalist and contemporaries.

Both published works and manuscripts of the prominent Turkologist have not lost their scientific and social relevance. Archival collections and materials, including the epistolary collection of S.E. Malov and his correspondents, retain their scholarly, documentary and social significance in the history of Russian science and culture.

In recent decades, there has been a noticeable trend of historical and archival studies with publications of S.E. Malov's epistolary legacy. We can especially mention several publications by the well-known Turkologist G.N. Blagova⁴ and by the historians M.V. Ponikarovskaya and M.D. Bukharin.⁵

In their fundamental work, our colleagues rightly noted: "Previously unpublished letters of S.E. Malov to some extent shed new light on the course of linguistic and ethnographic study of East Turkestan. Results of the archaeological study of East Turkestan, however, were so significant that they 'eclipsed' all other aspects of research work in the region".⁶

Three letters S.E. Malov sent to academician V.V. Radlov, published in this article's appendix, are chronologically tied to the first period of the expedition (1909–1911) and they are dated January 14, 1910, May 14, 1910, and November 24, 1910, respectively.⁷ They were sent from "the city of Su-zhou"⁸ and "Liang-hua-si"⁹ in Qing China. The fourth letter from Yarkand, dated January 3, 1915, is linked to the final stage of the second expedition (1913–1915).

These personal messages from expeditions are original unpublished materials that complement S.E. Malov's brief reports published in "Proceedings of the Russian Committee for the study of Central and Eastern Asia with regard to Historical, Archaeological, Linguistic and Ethnographic Aspects"¹⁰ and other published and archival documents.¹¹

⁴ BLAGOVA 2002; BLAGOVA 2008.

⁵ MALOV & OLDENBURG 2017.

⁶ BUKHARIN 2018: 17.

⁷ St. Petersburg Branch of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences (hereinafter — St. Petersburg BARAS). F. 177, Inv. 2. D. 161, f. 1–6 rev.

⁸ Jiuyan (Chinese: 酒泉; pinyin: Jiǔquán) is currently located in northwestern Gansu Province, People's Republic of China, and it was formerly known as Suzhou.

⁹ Buddhist shrine Liang-hua-si in the steppe southeast of the city of Suzhou.

¹⁰ MALOV 1912; MALOV 1914.

¹¹ St. Petersburg BARAS. F. 148. Inv. 1. Proceedings of the Russian Committee for the study of Central and East Asia with regard to Historical, Archaeological, Linguistic and Ethnographic Aspects (1903–1921). Documents on Scholarly and Organizational Activities (1900–1923). F. 90. Expedition reports of A.V. Adrianov, D.B. Dolbezhev, S.M. Dudin,

In general, S.E. Malov's letters written during his expedition to China provide original information about routes, research events, and his opinions.

The last extant letter after Malov's arrival in Kazan is connected with congratulating his mentor V.V. Radlov on his 80th birthday. In this crucial year S.E. Malov wrote: "I have already submitted an application to the Kazan University for permission to give trial lectures, and therefore I am staying here for now. If there will be any proofs of the 'Golden Light', I can read them here...¹² I am correcting the translation and systematizing all my collected materials on the new Uighur language".¹³

Conclusion

Epistolary legacy of S.E. Malov contains original materials related to the Turkologist's biography and research, as well as the history of Russian and foreign Turkestan expeditions of the early decades of the 20th c. There is a possibility of conducting a comprehensive search and then publishing previously unknown documents. Of special interest is the epistolary legacy of the scholar and public figure S.E. Malov and his colleagues who were prominent in the history of Russian Turkic studies, scholarship and culture of the 20th c.

The epistolary materials comprehensively fill the gaps in our understanding of the scholar's expeditions to Chinese Turkestan, results of his explorations, personal opinions and much more. His letters reveal some aspects of his everyday life and research in 1910–1917. The letters shed light on a remarkable page of Russian Turkology in the early 20th c.: formation of classical foundations of Turkestan studies and comprehensive Uighur studies in particular.

These letters written before 1917 are a vivid example of S.E. Malov's research abilities and his dedication to Turkic studies at the beginning of his scholarly career.

K.G. Zaleman, S.E. Malov, F.A. Muromsky. Summer 1908 — May 23, 1909. 41 files; F. 94. Expedition reports of A.V. Adrianov, A.V. Anokhin, S.E. Malov, E.D. Polivanov. October 1914 — October 27, 1915. 91 pages.

¹² Author's punctuation.

¹³ St. Petersburg BARAS. F. 177. Inv. 2. D. 161, f. 9–9 rev.

Appendix

S.E. Malov's letters to Academician V.V. Radlov from Chinese Turkestan and Kazan. January, 1910 — January, 1917.

No. 1

January 14, 1910
the city of Suzhou.

Dear Vasily Vasilyevich!

On January 6th, I finally arrived safely in the city of Suzhou¹⁴. I have not yet seen any Uighurs with the Turk[ish]¹⁵ language here (I have met Uighurs at the bazaar but they were completely Mongolized).¹⁶

I am learning the Salar-Dungan dialect here.¹⁷ In February, with the onset of warm weather, I will set off from Suzhou to the mountains in search of the Uyghurs.

On the way to Su-zhou (September 1909 — January 1910), during stops in the cities (of Chuguchak, Urumchi, Turfan and Hami), I collected some linguistic materials on the Turkish dialects of Chinese Turkestan.

I am not sending my travel diaries just yet: I want to check some of them and supplement my notes on the way back. I apologize for not writing letters to you sooner: there is postal service only from Su-dzhou to Beijing and Harbin, which I am now using. I feel well; I am healthy.

I wish you good health and all the best. With deep respect and gratitude,
Ser. Malov.

Just in case, my address is: China¹⁸, via Harbin, Beijing. Chaina, Kan-su. Su-chow. S.E. Malov.

Saint Petersburg BARAS. F. 177. Inv. 2. D. 161, f. 1–2.

¹⁴ Currently, Jiuquan (Chinese: 酒泉, pinyin: Jiǔquán) is a city in the northwestern part of the Gansu Province, People's Republic of China (PRC), it was formerly known as Suzhou.

¹⁵ With the Turkic language, to be precise.

¹⁶ The Mongolized Yellow Uighurs refer to themselves as Shira Yugur, using the term "Yellow Uighur" in Mongolian translation. See: TENISHEV & TODAEVA 1966.

¹⁷ The Salar language is a Turkic language of the Oghuz group, spoken in the PRC, primarily in the provinces of Qinghai and Gansu. See: TENISHEV 1963; DWYER 2007, and others.

¹⁸ Underlined by the letter's author.

1

14 янв. 1910г.
г. Су-джоу.

Многоуважаемый? Василий?
Васильевич!

6^{го} Января я, наконецъ,
благополучно прїѣхалъ въ
г. Суджоу. Уйгуровъ съ
турецк. языкомъ пока здѣсь
не видалъ (на базарѣ встрѣ-
галъ чуйгуровъ, но совершен-
но омонголившихся).

Занимаюсь здѣсь изученіемъ
саларско-дунганскаго нарѣ-
чїя. Въ февралѣ же мѣ-
сяцѣ - съ наступленіемъ
теплаго времени - отпра-
влюсь изъ Су-джоу въ

Архив
АН СССР
Ф. 177
сп. 2
№ 161

St. Petersburg Branch of the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

F. 177. Inv. 2. D. 161, pages 1-2.

The first letter from S.E. Malov to Academician V.V. Radlov from Sudzhou.

January 14, 1910.

105

горы в поиски за чигурами.

Дорогой кь Су-дэоу (сентябрь 1909г. - январь 1910г.) во время остановок в городах (Тузгакь, Урчи, Турфань и Хали) собрал небольшой лингвистический материал по турецким наречиям Китайского Туркестана.

Свои путевой дневник пока не посылаю: хочется частью провить, частью дополнить свои записи при проезде обратно.

Извиняюсь, что до сего времени не писал Вам письма: только

2

отъ Су-джоу на Пекинъ и
Харбинъ есть пошта, тѣмъ
я теперь и пользуюсь.
Чувствую себя хорошо;
здоровъ.

Желаю Вамъ здоровья
и всего наилучшаго.
Остаюсь глубоко уважа-
ющей Васъ и благо-
дарной Сер. Маловъ.

На всякій случай мой адресъ:
Китай, черезъ Харбинъ,
Пекинъ. China, Kap-su.
Si-show. S.E. Malov.

Архив
АН СССР
Ф. 174
оп. 2
№ 164

No. 2.

China.

May 14, 1910

Uighuria, near Su-zhou.

Dear Vasily Vasilyevich!

I hasten to please you with my discovery of Uyghur manuscripts. At the beginning of May I went to the Chinese village of Wunshigu ('inshan', in Uighur)¹⁹ located 12–15 verst²⁰ south of the city of Su-zhou. Here in the mountains there are many Buddhist Chinese and Uighur temples. It was in one of those temples that I found a considerable stack of old Uighur manuscripts. All the manuscripts are of Buddhist religious content; very well preserved. Here they are:

1) Book 2, ff. 4–10, 14–16 and one folio without markings; a total of 11 folios.

2) Book 3, ff. 4–37, the last 37th folio bears a date: 26th year of the reign of Kangxi. A total of 34 folios.

3) Book 4, ff. 3–26, 41–50, 54–55, 59–65. A total of 43 ff.

4) Book 5, ff. 1–3, 5–30; only the 4th folio is missing, ½ of the 5th; on the first folio there is a miniature, a seated Buddha. A total of 29 folios.

5) Book 6, ff. 2–18; 24–30; 24 folios in total. The 30th folio bears a date: the manuscript was completed on the 22nd day of the 6th month of the 26th year of the reign of Kangxi.

6) Book 8, ff. 16, 31–34, 36(?); 6 folios in total.

7) Book 9, ff. 1, 3–8, 24–31; 15 folios in total; on the first folio there is a miniature of a seated Buddha.

8) Book 10; ff. 22–39. 18 folios in total.

9) A complete manuscript of 5 folios. Date: 27th year of the reign of Kangxi.

10) ff. 25–28 and 5 fragments.

The length of each manuscript folio is 60 centimeters; the width is 23 centimeters; there are 22–24 lines on a folio.

Smaller manuscripts:

11) manuscript ff. 49–51, 53, 55–57, 61–63; 10 folios in total.

12) three folios; one with a full-page picture.

¹⁹ Wunshigu (Injian) is a Chinese village in East Turkestan (Gansu Province), located near the city of Suzhou.

²⁰ Verst, versta — an obsolete Russian unit of length equal to 1.067 km.

13) 28 various folios and fragments.

In total, 235 folios of Uyghur manuscripts (and, in addition, 29 folios of Tibetan ones).

I'm thinking of visiting Wunshigu again in September.

The process of learning the Yellow Uyghur language continues.

I wish you, Vasily Vasilyevich, good health and all the best.

Respectfully, Ser[gei] Malov.

Address: Via Chuguchak to Suzhou.

St. Petersburg BARAS. F. 177. Inv. 2. D. 161, f. 3–4 recto

No. 3.

November 24, 1910

China.

Liang-hua-si²¹.

Dear Vasily Vasilyevich!

I am sending you four photographs of the Uighur manuscript. I apologize for the small number, but the other photographs did not turn out well and therefore are not worth sending. I think the photographs are quite legible, but perhaps I am deceiving myself, since I am reading not the photographs, but rather the originals lying here in front of me. When I get tired from lessons with the Uighurs, occasionally, as a form of relaxation, I read Old Uighur texts and understand very much. But I hasten to disappoint you: the vocabulary of the new Uighur language is unlikely to provide any insight into obscure passages of Old Uighur texts, but the phonetics of *this language*²² will help a little in terms of transcription of Old Uighur (and Orkhon) written monuments. I did not send you reports or collected materials, I apologize for this; but the fact is that the conditions here are very unfavorable for copying or finishing materials or writing reports for printing. All this can be done well sitting in the study in St. Petersburg. Things are going well here and I am making some progress to the best of my ability and knowledge. At first I thought that I would stay here in Uighuria until mid-February, but now I see that there is still much to be done here, and therefore I will likely set off from here on my return journey at the end of March — beginning of April, and after slowly travelling through East Turkestan, I will arrive in St. Peters-

²¹ Liang-hua-si Buddhist shrine in the steppe southeast of the city of Suzhou.

²² The words are added above the line.

burg only in the middle of June 1911. I will go through Hami, Guchen (where I plan to rummage through the temples in the vicinity of Bibalik), Urumqi and Chuguchak. Your plan regarding my visit to Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan and other cities in the western part of East Turkestan is very tempting, but in order to carry it out, another year or two are needed, and when I arrive in St. Petersburg in June, I will thus have stayed (including travel time) in China for two years (without two months), and my journey was supposed to last two years. In the autumn of 1911, I expect to take the state exams.

I see that two years here is very, very insufficient, but...²³ what can be done...²⁴ Perhaps I will have an opportunity to visit Uighuria again some-time later.

If you receive this letter around January 20th and if you need anything, write to me immediately so that I can receive your letter in Suzhou (Kansu, Su-chow) just before I leave on the return journey.

I wish you good health and all the best.

Respectfully. Ser[gei] Malov.

St. Petersburg BARAS. F. 177. Inv. 2. D. 161, f. 5–6 recto.

No. 4.

January 3, 1915

Yarkand.²⁵

Dear Vasily Vasilyevich!

I congratulate you and your entire family on the New Year 1915!

I wish you health, health and more health!

I am writing this letter from the city of Yarkand. As you can see, my journey is already drawing to a close. Now only Aksu,²⁶ Maralbeshi²⁷ and Kashgar²⁸ remain to be visited. I expect to be in St. Petersburg in early May.

²³ The author's punctuation.

²⁴ The author's punctuation.

²⁵ At present, an oasis city in the southwest of the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, China.

²⁶ Aksu is currently a city in the Aksu Prefecture of the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, People's Republic of China.

²⁷ Now a city in the Kashgar Prefecture of the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, China.

²⁸ Kashgar is currently a city in the Kashgar Prefecture of the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, China.

I think that primarily you would like to hear from me about the Uyghur manuscripts. Yes, and on this journey I have nothing to complain about in this regard, although not in such quantity as before...²⁹ As you already know from the report that I sent you the other day, I have a small collection of Uyghur manuscripts and xylographs from Turfan.³⁰

In Hotan³¹ I recently acquired another collection of manuscripts, but not Turkish, they are Brahmi³² and, it seems, also “Kharoshthi”.

You already know about my activities from the reports. In total, I have sent two reports: one from Hami³³ about the work with the Uighurs and the other one recently from here, i.e. from the cities of Yarkand, Hami, Turfan, and Lop-Nor.³⁴

A. Stein³⁵ is now living in Turfan, in May he plans to be in Kashgar; I have not met with him. He has found some ancient route from India to...(?).³⁶

I have sent a letter to Ser[gei] Fed[orovich] Oldenburg³⁷ to Dunhuang,³⁸ but have not received a reply yet.

On this journey I feel very well, in good health.

Yes, last summer at Lob-nor I have received a copy of the Proceedings of the Russian Committee (series II, No. 2), for which I thank you. This book

²⁹ The author’s punctuation.

³⁰ Turfan is currently a city in the Uighur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, China.

³¹ Now an oasis town, the administrative centre of the Hotan Prefecture, Xinjiang, China.

³² Ancient variety of Indian syllabic script. The earliest samples of Brahmi date back to the third century BC.

³³ Now, prefecture-level city in eastern Xinjiang, People’s Republic of China.

³⁴ Lop Nor is a lake in the southeastern fringe of the Tarim Basin, Uighur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, China.

³⁵ Sir Mark Aurel Stein (1862–1943) — Hungarian traveller, archaeologist, ethnographer, and orientalist. Famous explorer of East Turkestan. Between 1900 and 1916, he conducted three expeditions to East Turkestan and Central Asia. His well-known works include “Ancient Hotan” (1907), “Serindia” (1921), “Inner Asia” (1928) and others. For more information. See: MIRSKY 1977.

³⁶ The author’s sentence structure.

³⁷ Sergei Fedorovich Oldenburg (1863–1934) — the Permanent Secretary of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences (1904), Russian Academy of Sciences (1917), USSR Academy of Sciences (1925–1929), Director of the Asiatic Museum (Institute of Oriental Studies (since 1930) (1916–1934). The head of the Turkestan expeditions (1909–1910 and 1914–1915), Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences (1908).

³⁸ Now an oasis city in the northwestern Gansu Province, Western China. Since the beginning of the 20th c., in the history of Central Asian studies, it has been associated with research on historical and cultural heritage of the Chinese civilization. In 1914–1915, S.F. Oldenburg’s expedition worked in Dunhuang.

has travelled all over China and finally fell into my hands in Charkhlyk (at Lob-nor).

I am very glad that I managed to collect a large amount of material on previously unknown dialects (Hamian, Lob-nor) and on shamanism in Chinese Turkestan.

I wish you all the best!

Sincerely yours, Ser. Malov.

Address: Via Andijan. To the city of Kashgar. The Consulate of the Russian Empire. To S.E. Malov.

St. Petersburg BARAS. F. 177. Inv. 2. D. 161, f. 7–8.

No. 5.

January 17, 1917

Kazan. Poperechno-Akademicheskaya st., 16.

Highly respected and dear Vasily Vasilyevich!

Congratulations on your 80th birthday (January 5)! I hope that both you and my father will continue for a long time to affirm my desire to live to 105 years. One of my ancestors lived to 104 years, but I want to live a year longer...³⁹

I wish you all the best! I live and feel very good here, at my father's home.

I have already submitted an application to the Kazan University for permission to give trial lectures, and therefore I am staying here for now. If there will be any proofs of the 'Golden Light',⁴⁰ I can read them here...⁴¹ I am correcting the translation and systematizing all my collected materials on the new Uighur language. I will personally bring some of the material for printing in late February or early March. I met with Nik[olai] Iv[anovich] Ashmarin⁴² and gave him your books.

As always, I have been treated very well by Nikolai Fedorovich Katanov⁴³.

Once again I wish you and your entire family good health and all the best.

³⁹ The author's punctuation.

⁴⁰ A sutra text written in Old Uyghur.

⁴¹ The author's punctuation.

⁴² Ashmarin, N.I. (1870–1933) — Russian Turkologist and expert in Chuvash studies.

⁴³ Katanov, N.F. (1862–1922) — Russian Turkologist, professor at the Kazan University.

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17 Января 1917-
Казань.
Поперечно - Академическая
ул. д. 16.

Высокоуважаемый и дорогой Василий Василь-
евич!

Поздравляю Вас со исполнившимся 80 лѣтием
Вашей жизни (5 января)! Я надеюсь, что и
Вы, и мой отецъ еще долго будете житъ
вередать мое желаніе прожить до 105
лѣтъ. Одно мое преданіе дошло до 104
лѣтъ, а те хочу прожить годовъ болѣе.
Желаю Вамъ всего, всего наилучшаго!
Живу и чувствую себя здѣсь, у отца, очень
хорошо.

Подаю уже прошеніе въ Казанскій Университетъ
о допущеніи къ пробнымъ лекціямъ, а по-
тому пока задерживаюсь здѣсь. Если бу-
дутъ какія либо корректуры по „Золотому
Гречку“, то могу зятать ихъ здѣсь...
Выражаю переводъ и привожу въ из-
вѣстность весь свой собраніи ма-
теріалъ по ново-уилурскому языку.
Часть матеріала для погати привезу

APKED
AU OPEP
ф. 177
св. 2
№ 161

St. Petersburg Branch of the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

F. 177. Inv. 2. D. 161, pages 9-9об.

Letter from S.E. Malov to Academician V.V. Vasilyev from Kazan. January 17, 1917.

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самъ въ концѣ февраля или въ началѣ марта.
Видѣлся съ Ник. Ив. Аммаринскимъ, передалъ
ему Ваши книги.
Очень хорошее отношеніе, какъ и всегда, встрѣ-
таю со стороны Николая Сеодоровича
Катанова.

Желаю еще разъ Вамъ и всему Ва-
шему семейству здоровья и всего
добраго.

Всегда благодаренъ и ува-
жающъ Васъ

Сергей Маловъ

Казань.

22 Января 1917.

28 Января 1917.

Always grateful and respecting you,

Sergei Malov.

Kazan.

January 22, 1917

January 28, 1917

St. Petersburg BARAS. F. 177. Inv. 2. D. 161, f. 9–9 verso.

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Ilya V. Zaitsev
Tatiana A. Anikeeva

Thesaurus of Islamic Literacy and Scribes of Russia: Historical Background and Contemporary Approaches¹

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Abstract: Arab-Muslim scholars had come up with a well-developed system of classification of sciences (from the Middle Ages and Abu Nasr al-Farabi and to Hajji Khalifa in 17 c. in the Ottoman Turkey). Later attempts have been made to create bibliographic collections of Muslim scholars in Russia, primarily in the Volga region and Dagestan (by Sh. Marjani, R. Fakhreddin, Nadir al-Durgeli). Recently, the process of cataloguing the rich manuscript heritage kept in state and private collections in our country has accelerated significantly. Despite the fact that this cataloging and the accompanying digitization process are still far from complete, it is possible to see a unified space of Muslim culture in our country's history. Such unity, manifested in a shared, close written culture, has not been fully appreciated. This is due to the fragmentation of materials: texts copied by one person can be found in repositories in several cities in the Russia and other countries. The same applies to many prominent authors. The “Thesaurus of Islamic Literacy and Scribes of Russia: electronic version” (work on the project is currently underway) in the form of an electronic database, will compile data on numerous monuments, collections, scribes, *madrasas*, authors of original works and translations, as well as on major centers of manuscript production in Dagestan, Crimea, the Volga-Ural region, Siberia. The Thesaurus will reflect the dynamic exchange of knowledge and texts between the Russian Empire, neighboring Islamic regions, and countries, emphasizing the cultural and religious unity of Russia's Muslim communities through the interconnection between the written cultures.

Key words: Muslim Scholars, Islamic written culture, literary monuments, scribes, bibliographies, biographies, libraries and manuscript collections, electronic catalog

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By the 10th c., Arab-Muslim scholars had come up with a well-developed system of classification of sciences. Abu Nasr al-Farabi (c. 870–950) in the first half of the 10th c. created treatises “On the Origin of Sciences” and “Classification of Sciences”.² Another author of 10th c., Abu Abdullah Muhammad al-Khwarizmi also touched upon this issue in his treatise “Mafatih al-‘Ulum”.³ At its first stage, the issue of the classification of sciences presupposed the systematization of very significant data in Arabic manuscripts, which means that it inevitably led to the appearance of bio-bibliographic collections compiled according to the categories of sciences.

The first extant monument of this kind was “The Catalog” (“Kitab al-Fihrist”) by Ibn al-Nadim (d. 995).⁴ As we know, his work was not popular for about two centuries before bio-bibliographic collections appeared at the beginning of the 13th c., using al-Nadim’s methodological and factual achievements. Among them, first of all, it is necessary to mention “The History of the Sages” (“Ikhbār al-‘Ulamā’ bi Akhbār al-Hukamā’”, or “Ta’rikh al-Hukamā’”) by Ibn al-Qifti, “The Book of the News in the Classes of Physicians” (“Uyūn al-Anbā’ fī Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭibbā”) by Ibn Abi Usaibia, “The Dictionary/Encyclopedia of Learned Men” (“Irshad al-arīb ilā ma’rifat al-adīb...”) by Yaqt al-Hamawi, “Obituaries of Eminent Men and History of the Sons of the Epoch” (“Wafayāt al-’a’yān wa-’anbā’

² AL-FARABI 1970.

³ *Liber Mafatih al-Olum...* 1895.

⁴ POLOSIN 1989.

'abnā' al-zamān") by Ibn Khallikan et al. These writings absorbed such a biographical genre as *tabaqat* (literally "layers"), which developed in parallel within the Arabic written tradition, which consisted of collections of biographies of people of the same generation (at first, they were mainly transmitters of hadith) who lived at the same time.

Islamic culture reached a new stage of information synthesis in the era of the Turkish Ottoman scholar Hajji Khalifa (or Katip Çelebi, 1017–1067H/1608–1657), who created the grandiose bio-bibliographic corpus titled "The Removal of Doubt from the Names of Books and the Arts" ("Kashf az-Zunūn 'an 'asāmī al-Kutub wa'l-funūn"), which is a bibliographic and encyclopedic dictionary written in Arabic. This work covered scholarly literature in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, and was arranged alphabetically, containing 14.500 titles and 10.000 names of authors and commentators. The materials for this work were collected by Mustafa Abdullah over a period of almost 20 years. Comments on the works of individual authors provided information about the time they were written, their content and structure, as well as biographical details about the authors.⁵

Attempts have been made to create bio-bibliographic collections in our country, primarily in the Volga region and Dagestan. It is important to note that the collections owners were not only aware of the great work of their predecessors, but they also directly relied on their achievements.

In Tatar historical literature, the emergence of historical and biographical studies is closely associated with the name of the prominent Tatar historian Shihab al-Din (Shigabutdin) Marjani. This is especially true for two of his most notable works, "Wafiyyat al-Aslāf wa-Naḥiyyat al-Akhlāf" and "Mustafād al-Akḥbār fī Aḥwāl Qazān wa-Bulghār". The first one presents biographies of famous personalities from all over the Muslim world, the second (namely, the second volume) introduces biographies of prominent personalities of the Volga-Ural region. "Wafiyyat al-Aslāf" covers the period from the 7th to the 19th cc. (11–1304/633–1887, from the year of Prophet Muhammad's death and ending with the time when Marjani lived). The volumes of the work include 6057 biographies of scientists, writers, philosophers and socio-political figures of the East of the 7th–19th cc. "Wafiyyat al-Aslāf" is a collection of biographical studies in which, unlike

⁵ *Lexicon bibliographicum et encyclopaedicum a Mustafa ben Abdallach Katib Jelebi...*, 1835–1858.

Arabic dictionaries, there is no division into *tabaqats* and biographies are arranged by date of death. Modern researchers describe it as structurally similar to “*Kitāb al-‘Ibar wa Dīwān al-Mubtada’ wa-l-Khabar fī Ta’rīkh al-‘Arab wa-l-Barbar wa Man ‘Āsarahum min Dhawī al-Sha’n al-Akbār*” (“The Book of Lessons and Record of Beginnings and News and the History of the Arabs and the Berbers and The Most Significant of Their Contemporaries”) by Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406), a famous Arab thinker. However, this is merely an external similarity, as these works differ in both their composition (Ibn Khaldun organized the volumes by dynasty) and the content of the material. Marjani was the first scholar in Russia to compile an encyclopedic dictionary of famous figures from the East. He was aware of the importance of this type of research for the future development of Tatar history and Russian Oriental studies, as well as for deepening the understanding of different cultures. He considered this work to be a life’s mission, and one of the most significant goals of his scientific endeavors.⁶ For volumes I, II, and III (11–755/633–1355), Marjani used the already mentioned the already mentioned “Deaths of Eminent Men and History of the Sons of the Epoch” (“*Wafayāt al-‘a’yān wa-‘anbā’ ‘abnā’ al-zamān*”) by Ibn Khallikan (1211–1282) as one of his main sources. For Volume III (474–755/1081–1355), it seems that the main sources, in addition to Ibn Khallikan, were “*Kitāb al-Wāfi bi-l-Wafayāt*” (“Comprehensive on Obituaries”) by Salah al-Din al-Safadi (1296/97–1363), “*Mu‘jam al-buldan*” (“Dictionary of Countries”) by Yaqut al-Hamawi, “*Kitāb Tahdhīb al-asmā’ wa-al-lughāt*” (“The Book of Correcting Names”) by Imam al-Nawawi (d. 1278), “*Al-Jawāhir al-muḍīyah fī ṭabaqāt al-ḥanafīyah*” (“Former Values of the Past in the Ranks of the Hanafis”) by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Qurashi (1297–1379) and “*Tabaqat al-huffaz*” (“The Ranks of The Transmitters of Hadith”) by Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (1445–1505). For Volume IV (756–1004/1355–1595), in addition to the works of al-Safadi, al-Qurashi and al-Suyuti, “*Kitāb al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣahābah*” (“Hitting the Mark in the Discernment of the Companions”) and “*Al-Durar al-kāminah fī a’yān al-mi’ah al-thāminah*” (“Hidden Pearls about Noble People of 800/1398”) by Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani; for Volume V (1004–1100/1596–1689) of “*Tarjama al-‘ayoun min abna al-zaman*” (“Biographies of Famous Sons of All Time”) by al-Burini (963–1024/1555–1615), “*Kitāb Sulāfat ‘al-‘aṣr fī maḥāsin ‘al-shu‘arā’ bi-kull Miṣr*” (“The Glory of the Epoch in the Virtues

⁶ YUZEEV 2021: 90.

of the Poets of all Egypt”) by ‘Ali b. Ahmad b. Ma‘sum (d. 1120/1708–09), and “*Tarikh khulaṣat al-athar fi a‘yan al-qarn al-ḥādī ‘ashar*” (“Collection of Brief Information on Famous People of the 11th Century”) by Muhammad al-Muhibbi (1651–1759); for Volume VI (1072–1304/1661–1887), besides al-Muhibbi, he added archaeological material of the Tatars of the Volga region and the Urals. Marjani used various sources, mostly without citing them, and processed the material by putting it together from multiple sources.⁷

In addition, Marjani actively resorted to the biographical genre in his other work “*Mustafād al-Akḥbār*”: in part II, biographies are an integral part of a small essay about something, for example, the largest number of biographies is found in the history section of various mosques.

Rizaeddin Fakhreddin (1858–1936), who created his biographical collection called “*Asar*” (“Footprints”, or “Monuments”),⁸ became the successor of Marjani’s work. This work, like Marjani’s “*Wafiyyat al-Aslāf*”, covers the period from the time of early Islam to contemporary personalities, but it contains almost no general Muslim material: it contains all the information known to Fakhreddin that has at least some relation to the Volga region and its contacts with the Islamic world. “*Wafiyyat al-Aslāf*” and “*Asar*” are complementary: Marjani was more interested in information about Kazan, Chistopol, Kargali, Orenburg as well as the famous villages around to them, and Fakhreddin, on the other hand, focuses more on Ufa, Menzelinsky, Belebeevsky, Birsky, and Sterlitamak districts.⁹

In Dagestan, Nadir al-Durgheli (1891–1935) played an important role in systematizing the biographies of local scholars. In his work “*A Journey of the Minds through the Biographies of the Islamic Scholars of Daghestan*” (“*Nuzkhat al-azkhān fi tarādzhim ‘ulamā’ Dāgistān*”), he collected information on about 230 scholars from various ethnic groups, including Arabs, Azerbaijanis, Avars, Dargins, Kumyks, Lakhs, Lezgins and Chechens. The book includes biographical information and writings by these scholars, many of which are now lost forever. The dictionary covers a wide range of disciplines from Islamic law and theology, Sufi ethics to astronomy, medicine, Islamic poetry, logic, etc. This work is of great encyclopedic importance in terms of its scale and completeness of the information provided

⁷ YUZEEV 2021: 94–95.

⁸ See: BAYBULATOVA 2004.

⁹ MARJANI 2022: 27.

with a rich source base. Nadir al-Durgheli used in his work a number of information about Dagestani scholars from the works of the Central Asian historian of the 12th c., Abu Sa'd as-Sam'ani, an Arab encyclopedist of the 13th c., mentioned above, Yaqut al-Hamawi, a traveler of the 14th c., Ibn Battuta, and many others.¹⁰

In Crimea, the genre of biographical summaries of scholars has not been widely developed. In the works of Crimean Tatar historians from the 17th and 18th cc., there is scattered biographical material. However, a separate essay on this topic was written in the 20th c. by the Ottoman scholar Mehmed Tahir Bursalı (1861–1925). He collected information about 42 Crimean-born authors who lived during the Ottoman era and served in various cities in the Ottoman Empire¹¹.

The project of the “Thesaurus of Islamic Literacy and Scribes of Russia: electronic version”

Recently, the process of cataloguing the rich manuscript heritage kept in state (museum, archive and library) and private collections in our country has accelerated significantly (due to the global trend in science to create large-scale consolidated databases combining materials from different collections¹²). These collections currently hold a vast number (several tens of thousands) of manuscripts copied in Arabic, Persian, and Turkic languages by Russian Muslims on the territory of the former Russian Empire in the Middle Ages and modern time. These written monuments are found in numerous collections in Dagestan, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kazan, Ufa, Ivanovo, Novosibirsk, Orenburg, Yalta, Bakhchisarai, and other cities. As a result of the acceleration of the digitization and cataloging process, we have gained a fairly clear understanding of the quantity and quality of written products of Russian Muslims up to the middle of the 20th c. Natu-

¹⁰ SHIKHSAIDOV & KEMPER & BUSTANOV 2012.

¹¹ BURSALI 1335/1919.

¹² See the paper by Tatiana A. Anikeeva and Ilya V. Zaitsev “Online Resources on Arabic Manuscripts (databases and libraries): a Brief Overview”. The article is a brief outline and an attempt to systematize some online (mostly foreign) resources that provide access to digital copies of manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Turkic languages from various world repositories and libraries. These are the most famous European and American library databases (“Gallica”, a project of the French National Library; Virtual Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, USA), and the Istanbul University Library project (digitization was completed in May 2021), and some Russian resources (ANIKEEVA & ZAITSEV 2021).

rally, cataloging a large amount of handwritten material leads to a fairly large amount of information about scribes, correspondence centers, customers, editors, and so on. This information needs to be understood and conceptualized.

Despite the fact that this cataloging and the accompanying digitization process are still far from complete, we can already see a unified space of Muslim culture in our country's history. Of course, the written culture of Russian Muslims had and still has its own intra-regional specifics, however, those lands of our country whose historical destiny is firmly linked to Islam were not confined within their own territorial borders: there was an active exchange of knowledge and texts both within the empire and with neighboring Islamic regions and countries. Thus, the texts of Dagestani authors were read and copied in the Volga region, Muslims of the Volga-Ural region went to study in Central Asia, returning from there with manuscripts and printed books, Crimean Muslims experienced powerful cultural influences from the Ottoman Empire, but they were all connected not only by a common political affiliation, but also by awareness of cultural and religious unity. This is why Ismail Gasprinsky (1851–1914) declared “Russian Islam” as a cultural, religious and political phenomenon.¹³

Such unity, manifested in a shared and close written culture, has not been fully appreciated. This is due to the fragmentation of materials. Often, texts copied by one person can be found in repositories in several cities in the Russian Federation and other countries. The same applies to many other prominent authors. Therefore, a significant number of manuscripts originating from Dagestan are kept outside of Dagestan, in collections in Moscow and St. Petersburg.¹⁴ The same is true for the Crimea.

The upcoming encyclopedic dictionary of Islamic literature and scribes of Russia (“Thesaurus of Islamic Literacy and Scribes of Russia: electronic version” — work on the project is currently underway), to be created in the form of an electronic database, will compile data on numerous monuments, scribes, authors of original works and translations, as well as on major centers of manuscript production in the North Caucasus, Dagestan, Crimea, the Volga-Ural region, and Siberia, where many manuscript collections are still undiscovered, anonymous original and translated monuments, cycles

¹³ GASPRINSKY 1881.

¹⁴ See, for example: ALIKBEROV & CHMILEVSKAYA 2023: 24–54.

of works, the most common collections of a stable composition, bibliophiles, collectors of libraries and so on.

The articles of the Thesaurus are planned to be in Russian. An article about a person (author, scholar, scribe, etc.) includes the full name (including any possible *lakabs* or *nisbas*, as well as any nicknames), as well as the dates of their life (according to the Hijri and Christian calendars, with accuracy to the day whenever possible). The article should also provide information about the type of activity they were engaged in, such as being a scribe, a Tatar/Crimean/Dagestani ‘*alim*, a calligrapher, and a bibliophile or the owner of the collection. Additionally, the article should mention their works on *fiqh* and other relevant information. The article should include information about the person’s education, including teachers, as well as his biography, such as places of residence, family, and students. The article may also include essays written by the author, either in manuscript form or published editions, along with references to any unpublished works. Finally, the sources for the article should be provided at the end, along with any relevant literature.

The Thesaurus will also include articles about *madrasas* (name, location and date of foundation, *waqfs*, the most famous graduates, manuscripts copied at the educational institution, indicating the place of storage), manuscript collections, the most famous and frequently copied works, etc.

Here we provide a sample article in English:

al-Bulgari, Abu Sharaf Husayn b. Muhammad b. ‘Umar b. al-Kirmanias-Sa’ati (d. 1858)

Abu Sharaf Muhammad Husayn ibn Abu Umar al-Bulgari (?–1858) was a Bukharan scholar and bibliophile of Tatar origin. He was born in Kargala village and his ancestors came from Kasimov. The fund of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan has over a dozen manuscripts copied by him, as well as containing his works. In the afterwords and glosses to these manuscripts, Abu Sharaf Muhammad Husayn noted that he arrived in Bukhara in 1815 and lived in Khulabafan *guzar* for three decades. During this time, he was a member of Emir Nasrallah (1826–1860) court in Bukhara and engaged in literary and scholarly activities in the society of Hussein, the son of Emir Haidar (1800–1826). He collected a large collection of books and his interests were extremely wide. Among his manuscripts in the collection of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan are works on Sufism, poetry, medi-

cine, astrology, biographies and reference books in Arabic, Persian and Turkic languages. Shihab al-Din Marjani, who knew al-Bulgari well personally, reported many interesting and important details about him.¹⁵ Abu Sharaf Muhammad Husayn died on Friday, the 3rd of Shaban, 1274 H/March 19, 1858.

It was possible to identify more than two dozen manuscripts from his rich manuscript collection, which can be divided into three parts: his own autographed works; works by other authors that he personally copied, and, finally, manuscripts that were created earlier and, most likely, bought by him on the Bukhara book market. The basis for identifying the manuscripts of the al-Bulgari library are the colophons of the lists, as well as the seals.

Works. Marjani considered al-Bulgari to be the author of a number of books, including “Marsad at-tasanif ila ‘uluf sunuf at-tawalif”, which is similar to “Kashf al-zunun...”, “Kitab ma’aqid al-marjan mukhtasar masanid al-nu‘man”.

The first work of al-Bulgari, mentioned by Marjani under the title of the author’s 1266/1850 and 1270/1853 autographs, has been preserved and has come down to us. This multi-volume work belongs to the historical and literary genre and is a collection of extracts from the sofas of various poets with their biographies, sometimes quite extensive. Judging by the dates of correspondence of its parts, it was compiled in the 1850s. The first part contains verses excerpts from the divans of 19 poets (including al-Bulgari’s contemporaries); the second one contains excerpts from 18 divans and “Collection of Kokand poets” (مجمع شعراء خوقندی).

“Kitab ma’aqid al-marjan Mukhtasar masanid al-nu‘man” has not yet been found in the catalogues (judging by the name, it is probably a collection of biographies of Hanafi figures). However, we have also received an autograph of another work by al-Bulgari called the “Commentary on the Wise Sayings of Atayi”. The author of the main text is Abdulkarim b. Ataullah al-Iskandari (d. 709/1309). al-Bulgari began commenting on this Sufi work in 1260/1844 based on comments on the same treatise by Sheikh Ahmed al-Burnusi (d. 899/1493) and Sheikh Ali al-Hindi. However, al-Bulgari’s work remained unfinished.

The al-Bulgari library has preserved manuscripts copied by other calligraphers (such are extract from the tractate of al-Kushayri of 14th c.,

¹⁵ See the corresponding article about al-Bulgari in: MARJANI 2022.

“Al-Shaqa’iq al-Nu‘maniyya fi ‘Ulama’ al-Dawla al-‘Uthmaniyya” by Ahmet Taşköprülüzade (copy of no later than 16th c.) and so on.

Thus, more than two dozen manuscripts (17 in the collection of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan and one each in the collections of the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan in Dushanbe, State Historical Public library of Russia in Moscow, the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg and Kazan Federal University in Kazan) belonged to Abu-Sharaf Muhammad Husayn al-Bulgari, a book lover and literature connoisseur, a native of Tatar Kargala. He was a member of the Bukhara intelligentsia, moving among scholars and writers. His interests were vast, ranging from Islamic sciences such as medicine, mineralogy, astrology, and Hurufism to Sufism and history, as well as Hadith studies, *fiqh*, logic, and belles lettres. It is likely that this is just a small fraction of his extensive collection of books, which were scattered across Eurasia due to various circumstances.

Lit.: *Vildanova A.B.* Manuscripts from the IVAN Fund of the Republic of Uzbekistan created by natives of Bulgaria // Languages, Spiritual Culture and History of the Turks: Traditions and modernity. Proceedings of the International Conference in 3 volumes. June, 9–13, 1992, Kazan, vol. 2. Moscow: Insan, 1997; *Zaitsev I.V.* Abu-Sharaf Husayn b. Muhammad b. ‘Umar b. al-Kirmanī as-Sa’atī al-Bulgari (died in 1858): Tatar Scholar, Calligrapher and a Book Lover in Bukhara (Material for the Future Dictionary of Islamic Literature and Scribes of Russia) // The Road of Science: A Collection of Articles in Honor of the 80th Anniversary of Academician M.B. Piotrovsky / Comp. and Ed. by A.S. Matveev. St. Petersburg: Russian Academy of Fine Arts, 2024. P.100–113; *Marjani Sh.* Loyalty to the Predecessors and Greetings to the Descendants (Wafiyat al-Aslāf wa-Nahiyat al-Akhlāf). Translation from Arabic of Selected Biographies, Research, Comments, Facsimiles of Sections about the Volga-Ural Region]. Kazan: Magarif–Vakyt, 2022.

The Thesaurus will reflect the dynamic exchange of knowledge and texts between the Russian Empire, neighboring Islamic regions, and countries, emphasizing the cultural and religious unity of Russia’s Muslim communities through the interconnection between the written cultures. The source and main material for the articles of the Thesaurus are manuscript collections of our country, but it is also possible to attract materials from

foreign repositories that contain manuscripts of Russian Muslims (e.g., collections of Turkey and Uzbekistan).

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