

انهم كانوا اذا قبل لهم
 مایند اینان اولار برنده اردویار
 کهنه شوره جیسا خان ایلیا اولاقنا
 لست برون
 مع برستف ک حلاوی
 حکری بون سوزانیا ک برحری
 بوسا تروق قیلور اردویار
 وبقولوا اينا النار لو
 امخوند م اندکان
 م ایولار میز قوزوش لاز میز

KOMAN (XXXVII. 34-35). ARABIC TEXT WITH PERSIAN AND OLD TURK TRANSLATIONS (XIVth-XVIIth CENT.)

AN IMPORTANT OLD TURKİ MANUSCRIPT IN THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY.

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IN the Eastern parts of the country from which the actual Turks came, the inhabitants spoke the Uighur language of the *Ḳudatḳu Bilik*, or the so-called old Turḳi. This language has but slight affinity with the Osmanli Turkish used by the Turks in their official acts from the fifteenth century onwards. The modern Turkish has a nearer ancestor in the language known as Chaghataï, constituted in a literary form principally by the poet Mir 'Ali Shîr (906 A.H.). Even this last language a Turk of our days would hardly understand. The most common words are generally very different in their morphological form and in their lexicographic formation. For instance, the word used to express "God" is in modern Turkish either the Persian خدا or the Arabic الله, but I doubt whether many Turks of Constantinople or the neighbouring districts are able to understand the word تىكرى of the Chaghataï.

At the time when the Turkish hordes settled in Asia Minor and pushed forward their success until the Byzantine hegemony was definitively overthrown in Stambûl and in the lands situated in the South-western parts of the surrounding seas, a thick mist of ignorance enveloped their most enlightened circles. The constant intercourse with civilized nations occasioned, however, among them a progressive and salutary feeling towards scientific questions which gave their neighbours an unapproachable superiority. The first step in this direction was taken on the ground of their ancestral literature, and the poems of Mir 'Ali Shîr and of Bâber became the subject of the studies of many a Turkish patriot.

This language roused even greater interest among classic Persians, and few indeed are the books written in it which are not represented in the language of Sa'di. Many useful lucubrations have been written by Persians to explain the philological difficulties of a language

to which they were so curiously inclined. The catalogue of the British Museum and of other public libraries of Europe contain many Persian-Chaghatāi dictionaries and grammars; see Ch. Rieu's "Mus. Brit. Catalog." Add. 6646; 16, 759; 2892; 1021; 1712; 1912; 404, etc.

The Turks themselves, attracted by their learned co-religionists, began, possibly towards the end of the fifteenth century, to devote themselves to the study of their mother-tongue, and some libraries fortunately show us the outcome of their researches. The MS. (Mus. Brit. Add. 7886) is a small Turki dictionary compiled chiefly from the works of Mir 'Ali Shīr and explained in classic Turkish by an anonymous Turkish writer. The book is generally known under the title of "Abushka," which forms the first word explained in it. Its full title is اللغات النوائية والاستشهاديات الجغتائية. A copy of it is found in Munich (No. 221), dated 960 A.H., and another one in Petrograd (No. 594) with the date of 967 A.H.

This language is on its broad lines fairly well understood by Orientalists. The Persians have smoothed the path of our access to it, and for this we are grateful to them. On this subject, the lexicographical works of the eminent Orientalists Vambéry, Zenker, and Pavet de Courteille, which explain hundreds of difficult words, are viewed with great esteem by their successors.

Of the old Uighur language of the semi-Mongols who inhabited the South-western parts of Manchuria, little is known, owing to the scarcity of inscriptions and of historical and literary compositions referring with certainty to Eastern Mongolia. It is, in a strict sense, this last country which gave birth to the famous Gengis Khan, who destroyed the Arab Empire of the East and stifled for a long time the attempts at domination of upstart descendants of some Kurdish and Turkish eponyms. As the origin of the peoples called Mongols, Tatars, Uighurians are very obscure, some useful purpose might be served by an attempt to throw a ray of light on the point which constitutes the aim of this article.

So far as our historical knowledge goes, we may assert that the Uighurians did not found an Empire,¹ but having quickly followed the Mongols in their attempt to conquer the old world stretching from

¹ Cf. N. Elias' "The Tarikh-I-Rashidi," 1895, pp. 72 sqq.

the North-eastern parts of India as far as the valley of the Euphrates, they are justly incorporated in history with their Eastern conquerors, and counted as one of them. A Western branch of these Uighurians led by Ṭuġhrul and 'Othmān occupied step by step the whole of Asia Minor, with all the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, and their successors were dreaming to add to their conquests the Southern parts of Italy and the whole of Austria, when a complete defeat checked their audacious advance under the walls of Vienna (1683 A.D.). More than two hundred and fifty years earlier, some altercations about the right division of the occupied provinces had begun to have prejudicial results between the two clans, the old and the new, the Mongols and the Turks, and a fratricidal war (1402 A.D.) brought them to a premature exhaustion, the conclusion of which was the consolidation of the actual Empire of Persia. It would not be out of place here to remark that we believe the actual Ottomans never would have been able to settle so firmly round the littoral of the Black Sea, if the Eastern Uighurians, or more accurately, the Tatars, had not inflicted a crushing defeat on the remnants of the ephemeral Empire of the Seljūks (1300). The acceptance of the rich inheritance that the Tatars had left was the only merit of the Osmanli Turks at their beginnings.

The inhabitants of Eastern Uighuria and of Mongolia were some few years before Gengis Khān hardly more civilized than the antediluvian men : " They were dressed in the skins of dogs and wolves ; they ate the flesh of mice and of other unclean animals, and they drank the milk of mares ".¹ These primitive habits compared with the interesting legislation promulgated by the famous Gengis, the creator of the Tatarian Empire, will enhance the natural virtues of these " Asiatic Huns ".²

" When you have to send a letter or a messenger to some rebels, do not threaten them with the greatness of your numbers or with your fighting force, but only say : ' If you submit, you will find goodness and peace ; and if you rise, we will not be responsible for what will happen ; the Eternal God only knows what will befall you '. In this way your confidence in the Lord will be made manifest, and you will win.

¹ Barhebræus, " Chron. Syr." edit. Bedjan, pp. 406-7.

² *Ibid.* pp. 410-1.

“ You will honour and revere men who are pure, upright, learned and wise in all the nations, and you will despise the wicked and bad people amongst them.

“ Do not use towards your kings and princes many titles of honour as other peoples do. The man sitting on the throne should be given only one name: *Khān*, and his brothers and relatives should be called by the name of their birth.

“ When you are at peace with your enemies, give yourselves up to hunting, and teach also your children how to hunt beasts. In this way, you will be drilled in warfare, you will acquire endurance, and you will attack your enemies, without fear and pity, as wild beasts.

“ If a man dies amongst you without a legitimate heir, all his possessions, and even his wife, should be given to the man who was attending to him. The king should not be given anything.”

People brought up under such legislation could not fail to subjugate some decadent nations, worn out by intestine divisions and mutual strife. From the beginning of 617 A.H. to 619 many important places, such as Bukhāra, Samarkand, Khawarazm were successively taken by storm, and some years later, the fall of Baghdād (1258 A.D.) put an end to the Arabo-Persian domination in the South and threatened the Turkish possessions in the North.

These Mongols had no special literature, but they adopted the Uighur language to transmit their orders to the peoples that they had so easily subjugated.¹ By this method the Uighur acquired a wider field of extension than it could otherwise possess. Of the language itself, of the conquerors, not many literary compositions are known to-day, and it is by the language of the conquered nations that their own history is to be sketched in its most striking lines.

Between the old and imperfectly known language of the *Ḳudatḳu Bilik* poem, and the Chaghatāi, ancestral-tongue of the Osmanli-Turkish, there is an intermediary language which so far has not been very accurately studied in its general morphological features and in its distinct relations with the two dialects between which it keeps a *juste milieu*. It is well represented by the works of the famous writer Rabghūzi—of which a fourteenth century good MS. is found in the British Museum (Add. 7851) and it has been carefully

¹ Barhebræus, “ Chron. Syr.” *ibid.* p. 410.

described by the skilled hand of Dr. Rieu. The edition (1859) of Ilminsky from another MS. belonging to the Imperial Library of Petrograd is not found in the public libraries of this country, and as Dr. Rieu says "is extremely rare, and no copy is accessible for purposes of comparison". About the value of Rabghūzi's work, Dr. Rieu writes (*ibid.* p. 271) :—

"The early date of Rabghūzi's work gives it a great linguistic value. It forms an intermediate link between the old Turki, or so-called Uighur, and the Chaghatai of Mir 'Ali Shīr and Bāber. Although written two centuries and a half after the former work, it preserves, with slight phonetic changes, much of its archaic vocabulary. It may be considered in that respect its lineal descendant, and a careful study of its language would throw light on many obscure points, which, in spite of the brilliant decipherment and interpretation of Prof. Vambéry, still remain in the earliest document of the Turkish language."

Happily Rabghūzi is not the only man who can guide us safely in our investigations of the language of nations which played so important a rôle in the history of the world.

A manuscript in the John Rylands Library of Manchester contains the text of the *Qurân* with a literal translation into this Rabghūzi dialect, distant only a few steps from the Uighuric tongue. This MS. numbered cod. 760-773 consists of fourteen volumes of 355 × 300 mm.

Nearly all the volumes are unfortunately truncated at the beginning and at the end, and all of them have many leaves missing in the middle, whilst the margins of many of the remaining leaves which were injured by worms have in consequence disappeared for ever. But what is most to be regretted is the clumsiness of the last binder who arranged the volumes in the present order. Many leaves which properly belong to the beginning are placed at the end; and several leaves which contain verses of a *Sūrah* and should have been bound for instance in volume 766, are bound through an incomprehensible blunder in volume 770, etc. The following partial description of volume 772 will give a fair idea of the whole collection :—

XXVIth juz' of the *Qurân*, from *Sūrah XLVI*, 1, to *Sūrah LI*, 30; with illuminated headings. Folio 1a, which is half-torn

away contains in the middle [ب]كتا [ج] تنزيل، at the top الاحقاف and at the bottom وخمس اية . . . Folio 26b, title of Sūrah XLVIII. Folios 51b and 52a, a very large illuminated Sūrah title. Folios 52b and 53a, beginning of Sūrah XLIX called in the MS. لا تقدموا ; the two pages are completely illuminated. Folios 67b and 68a end with Sūrahs XLIX and L respectively, and in both cases with some curved Sūrah titles. In folios 50b and 51a, a blank. Folio 74b, Sūrah L, 60, omitted by the copyist but supplied by him on the margin.

Lacunæ. Folio 1a has only the second half of the title ; one leaf, therefore, which contained the introductory words and سورة at the top, and ثلثون at the bottom is lost. Folio 1b ends واجلي (XLVI, 1) ; then follows a gap of about sixteen leaves, extending from verses 2-20 (عذاب). The next six leaves containing XLVI, 20-22 and 22-29 are wrongly bound as folios 84 and 79-83 respectively, of the volume 766. Folio 3b, the last two verses of the Sūrah are altogether missing, with the heading of Sūrah XLVII. At the top of the next page there is the following remark : " In the Kūfi, thirty-eight verses ".

As the MS. stands to-day, it would have occupied thirty volumes instead of fourteen if there were no lacunæ in it.

The MS. seems to come from a country in which the Arabic was not the language of the people. The last owner of the MS. has preserved his name in his seal found on Folio 19a of volume 765 : " 'Abdul-Bâki son of 'Ali, the Arab ". We suppose that according to the Oriental custom he would not have called himself " the Arab " if he were living in an Arab country.

One of the curious features of this MS. is that the old Turki and the Persian translations do not correspond always with the Arabic text, in spite of the fact that one word is above the other, beginning with the Arabic and ending with the old Turki. If we mistake not, the Persian and the old Turki translations were made several years before the transcription of the Arabic sacred text, and the task of the scribe was in this case simply to transcribe from another MS. a translation already in existence. Two reasons make this view highly probable :—

1. There are Arabic sentences which do not give the same meaning as that of the translation. This fact would be very surpris-

ing, did we suppose that the divergence extends only to some very easy words, such as pronouns, and preformative letters of the Aorist. We know that in early times, and before the invention of the diacritical points in the Arabic language, there were in the Muḥammadan world different schools which read, for instance, the word مقتل as *Naktulu*, "we kill," or *Yaktulu*, "he kills," or *Taktulu*, "thou killest". When the context did not condemn one of these readings to death, they were generally admitted by the most rigid commentators; and the *Kutubul-Kira'āt* have preserved scores of such words read in a different way. In the MS. with which we are dealing it happens sometimes that when the Arabic text gives "he kills" the translation exhibits "we kill". Let us take an example which is even more amazing than a usual variant of a diacritical point. In volume 760, last line of fol. 1, the Arabic words of Sūrah III, 116 وان تصبهم are rendered in Persian واكر برمد شمارا and in old Turḳi واكر تكسا سيزكا. The Arabic text means "and if it befall them," and the Persian and the old Turḳi signify "and if it befall you". The old Turḳi and the Persian translations are therefore made from a copy of the *Qurān* which exhibited the reading of Flügel's edition, "and if it befall you".

2. In volume 771, folio 68a, the word "God" is omitted in the Arabic text in verse 18 of Sūrah XLV, but it is rendered, in spite of the Arabic omission, into Persian and old Turḳi. This omission means also that the copyist was transcribing from two different MSS. He has omitted the word in question in one of his transcriptions, but he has inserted it in the two other transcriptions. Here we find a curious coincidence to which we wish to draw attention.

In the book entitled "Leaves from the ancient Qurāns" which was printed some few months ago at the University Press of Cambridge, the word *Allah* which occurs in the above quoted verse of the *Qurān* has been read اللكم or اللك "a blow". I was not quite satisfied with this reading, but the palimpsest which belongs to Dr. Agnes S. Lewis did not permit me to read the word otherwise. The letter ل is distinct and does not seem to suffer the existence of another word, or, at all events, I was not able to find a more suitable word. Everything considered, it appears that the scribe of our present MS. found himself face to face with the same difficulty; having been unable to substitute another good vocable for the one that

he could not decipher, he omitted it entirely. The hypothesis will become more plausible, if we consider the extreme care the copyist has taken, throughout all the volumes, of the word *Allah* on which he has indeed profusely lavished all his skill ; he writes it always in gilt letters, and sometimes he forms its letters in a curiously waving form, resembling a coarse zigzag. In any case such an omission in the text of the *Ḳurân* while both translations, the Old Turḳi and the Persian, are exact, is worthy of the attention of critics.

The note of the scribe referred to above informs us that the Arabic text has been transcribed from an old Kūfic MS., but the most elementary criterion is deficient as to the provenance of the old Turḳi version.

On the probable hypothesis that the translation was undertaken several years before the transcription of the Arabic text, the old Turḳi dialect becomes of an exceptional importance. The Arabic MS. itself goes back to the time of Rabghūzi, or at latest, a few years after him, while the translation is very probably many decades earlier. Our MS. is, therefore, from a linguistic point of view, more valuable than Rabghūzi's apocryphal stories.

A second reason which seems to establish a superiority of our MS. over Rabghūzi's work, is the facility with which it may be used for critical studies or scientific researches. Being simply a literal and interlinear translation of the *Ḳurân*, while the Old Turḳi word is placed immediately under the Persian and the Arabic words explained, it affords a most valuable field of investigation for the student who is by this method enabled to examine more thoroughly the old Chaghatāi dialect for purposes of comparison with the Uighur language.

Dr. Rieu (*ibid.* pp. 271-2) has gathered from Rabghūzi's book some stray words that he has compared with those of the Uighur of the *Ḳudatḳu Bilik* poem ; we also will endeavour to compare some of these words with those used in our MS. The character of the Rabghūzian and even pre-Rabghūzian of the language of our MS. and the importance that it deserves will then perhaps appear more striking. As is easily noticed from the following list, the dialect used in our MS. corresponds, with a slight and explicable change of the letter ے into ى, with the oldest form of the Uighur language. The Chaghatāi dialect, ancestor of the actual Turkish, has lost the majority of the under-mentioned words, and in the case of the few which it

has preserved, it has softened to a simple vowel the strong consonants which characterise them. Let us take as our examples three words from the list: the word which means "after" has a *z* in the dialect of our MS. and a *z* in Uighur, but both consonants have been simply eliminated in Chaghatāi. Likewise the word meaning "foot" is in Chaghatāi *اياق*, and the word meaning "good" *ايو*, as in modern Turkish.

A.	B.
Rabghūzi dialect and that used in our MS.	Uighur of the Kudatku Bilik.
اذاق foot (vol. 763, fol. 60a).	اتاق
بودون people (vol. 763, fol. 17b).	بوئون
توريتىمك to create (vol. 763, fol. 58a).	توريتىمك
ايدىمق to send (vol. 771, fol. 47a).	ايتىمق
تېكىم everything (vol. 763, fol. 23b).	تېكىم
كېيىن after (vol. 763, fol. 12b).	كېيتىن
اذكو good (vol. 771, fol. 105a).	اتكو
پلاوج prophet (vol. 763, fol. 33b).	چلاوج

There are even philological features which seem to establish a morphological ascendancy of the dialect of our MS. over that used by Rabghūzi, ex. gr. the particle of dative-accusative is in our MS. always the letter *ق* followed by a paragogic *Alif*, for instance *قا موسى* to *Moses*, *قا ابراهيم* to *Abraham* (vol. 771, fol. 8a); in Rabghūzi this archaic letter is softened sometimes into a *غ* as in Chaghatāi, v. gr. *تنگريغا* to *God*.

As a mere curiosity for students not accustomed to peruse an Old Turki MS. we may mention the fact that the word "Arab" or "Arabic" is translated by the word *Târi*, ex. gr. volume 771, folios 3b and 37a, the words *قرانا عربيا* *an Arabic Kurân* are translated into Persian *نبي تارى زبان* and in Old Turki *قران تارىجا*.

We cannot conclude this study without comparing some grammatical topics of the text of our MS. with the rules given by R. B. Shaw in his work entitled, "A Sketch of the Turki Language" (Lahore, 1875).

1. Against the rules of p. 52 dealing with the case of the "defective auxiliary" verb, cf. the following example (Sūrah, IX, 56):

اندقارلر تنكرى توتا اولار سيزهز ارمان اولار سيزهز انجاي بارادارلر بوزون
تورقارلر لاركيم (Vol. 764, fol. 40b).

2. Against the rules found on p. 8 about the pronouns in general, cf. how the Arabic word *اليه* to *it* (IX. 57) is translated انكار (*ibid.* fol. 41a).

3. Against what is said (pp. 72-75) about post-positions and conjunctions, cf. how the Arabic particle meaning *or* is translated twice by ازو (*ibid.*).

4. The possessive affix (p. 13) obsolete in the Old Turki, studied by Shaw, is generally maintained in our MS.

On the other hand, there are many lexicographical and grammatical similarities between the dialect exhibited in Shaw's Grammar and that used in our MS. ; but these similarities, so far as our short study of the text permits us to judge, do not seem to exceed in preponderating proportion those which unite all the Tatar dialects, the Chaghatâi and the Osmanli, for instance ; and the main interest is precisely to ascertain the number of these similarities and dissimilarities and to know the epoch in which they have been gradually introduced by the general public whose linguistic knowledge was not so brilliant in ancient times as to fix all the disunited elements of words into a more common and stereotyped form of speech.

We could lay more stress on some grammatical peculiarities of this dialect, but we think that this short notice is sufficient to give an adequate idea of the MS. and to stimulate the ardour of Ural-Altaic scholars, who by a careful study of its contents will perhaps be in a position to make substantial additions to the information published from time to time regarding the Turco-Tatar languages.

It should also be pointed out that in certain catalogues mention is made of a *Kurân cum Versione Turcicâ*;¹ but since it is not clearly stated what value we must attribute to this misleading term, we infer that it means simply Osmanli Turkish. At the time when such catalogues were prepared, few scholars were familiar with the Old Turki. These MSS., consisting of a single volume, cannot be compared with the thirty volumes of which our MS. was composed. We cherish the hope that in the near future we shall learn more of the exact nature of these manuscripts.

¹ Cf. Cod. MDCXIII of *Lugd. Batav.* 1866, IV, p. 2 ; Cod. XLIII of *Mus. Brit.* 1846, p. 38 ; Cod. 370, Vol. I, p. 140 of *Berlin.*