

## THE STUDIES OF THE TURKIC LANGUAGES IN JAPAN AFTER WORLD WAR II

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0. Inasmuch as Japanese scholars specialized in the subjects of Asia usually write only in Japanese, the written form of which is extremely difficult for foreigners to learn, the Oriental studies in Japan are almost unknown to the Western world. However, the study of Chinese Classics in Japan began very early already in the eighth century. Since that time, erudition in Chinese Classics never ceased to be the symbol of scholarship. On the basis of studies of Chinese books and documents, historical studies not only of China, but also of the peripheral nations, i. e. the studies in the "Eastern History" began to develop towards the end of the last century. In this paper only the studies after the World War II will be surveyed.

The number of linguists specialized in the Turkic languages is limited, and it is impossible to say that studies of these languages are much developed in our country. However, it is a remarkable fact that historians studying the Central Asia are mostly versed in the Turkic languages. Some of them are conducting excellent philological studies and some can speak and write Turkish.

It is a continuation of the situation since the Meiji era, when historians became the initiators of the study of the Altaic languages. For example, there are four translations of the *Secret History of the Mongols* in Japanese, all of which were done by historians.

Among the names of the authors in the appended list of bibliography, Goh, Hattori, Murayama, Nomura, Osada, Ozawa, Satō, Sibata, and Takeuchi are linguists, and Haneda, Kobayashi, Mitsuhashi, Mori, Nagata, Oda, Saguuchi, and Yamada are historians.

### 1. Comparative studies of Turkic with the other Altaic languages.

In 1959 Nomura and Hattori independently came to a similar conclusion that Proto-Mongolian had long vowels in addition to short vowels. Hattori

conducted the comparative study of the Mongolian languages, always paying attention to the opposition between short and long vowels and concluded that some of the Monguor long vowels should have come from the Proto-Mongolian long ones. On the contrary, Nomura compared the Monguor long vowels with the Turkic and Tungusic long ones, and found a number of examples of coincidence, indicating that these words possibly had long vowels in Proto-Mongolian. It is well-known that N. Poppe was independently developing a similar theory almost at the same time. Since then Nomura has been, any is, expanding his research. (Cf. Bibliography)

In the author's opinion, it has not yet been fully proved beyond any doubt that the three language groups, i. e. Turkic, Mongolian, and Tungusic, really make up one language family, because it is still impossible to convincingly discriminate the correspondences and similarities due to *parenté* and borrowing. This is one of the reasons why he did not compare Mongolian with the other Altaic languages in his study mentioned above. Although there are a number of exceptions to the correspondence rule of vowel length, not only between each two of the three Altaic language groups, but also between languages of the same group, the finding was certainly a large step forward in the comparative study of the Altaic languages. When a systematic explanation of the relation between coincidences and exceptions and the reconstruction of the Altaic proto-system of length will succeed, it will become one of the proofs of the relationship of these three language groups.

Murayama (1958) also made some contribution to the correspondence rules of the Altaic languages.

In the case of the Indo-European languages, Franz Bopp established in 1816 the *parenté* of Sanscrit, Greek, Latin, Persian, and Germanic. However, it took about sixty years to prove beyond doubt the relationship of the Indo-European languages in terms of sound laws. The establishment of the relationship by Bopp was possible because the system of conjugation of these languages are inflectional, i. e. very irregular and complicated. On the other hand, in the case of the Altaic languages which are agglutinative, the similarities of conjugational and declensional endings cannot even establish the *parenté* of these languages (although they indicate the probability of *parenté*), because particles and agglutinative endings may be borrowed, and because endings are often weakened to make exceptions to the sound laws. Therefore it is necessary to compare the vocabularies and to establish sound laws which are found in cognate words, discriminating them from those found in loan words.

From this point of view, it is to be noted that since 1967 Goh has been publishing his result of an extensive comparative study of the Manchu, Mongolian, and Turkic vocabularies in the *Wu-t'i Ch'ing-wen-chien* (around 1790), a five language polyglot. He (1967) writes that out of 18673 items of the dictionary he found about 2000 items which resemble in shape and meaning with each other in two or three of the Altaic languages. In his 1969 paper he enumerates about 520 similar items between Manchu and Mongolian, and in his 1970 paper about 330 items between Manchu and Turkic, about 270 more items between Manchu and Mongolian, and 126 items between Manchu and Turkic. These lists apparently include not only cognate words but also loan words and others. In order to prove the *parenté* of these languages, it is necessary to classify them and to establish true cognates. At any rate, Goh's work is a useful step toward our goal.

Hattori (1948, 1959), Sibata (1955), Murayama (1958, 1962), and Osada (1966, 1972) refer to Turkic in comparison with Korean and Japanese, as well as Mongolian and Tungusic.

## 2. Comparative studies of the Turkic languages.

Accepting the theory of Proto-Turkic opposition of short and long vowels, Takeuchi (1954) concludes that \**ä* and \**ā* were [a] and [e:] respectively. However, his ground is not sufficiently convincing.

Comparing the vowel systems of the Turkic languages, Hattori (1972) has set up the following hypothesis: "Tatar (Kazan), a Z-language, was formed on the substratum of Volga-Bulgar, which was an R-language. Chuvash, an R-language, was already somewhat different from Bulgar in the seventh century, when the Bulgars immigrated from the south to their neighborhood, i.e. the Volga-Kama district. Since the middle of the 13th century these Volga-Bulgars began to get under the influence of the "Türk-Tatars" (a Kypchak nation close to, if not the same as, the Cumans) and finally accepted the language of the latter with their own vowel system. This language has changed into Tatar (and Bashkir)." Incidentally, Hattori reconstructs a voiceless [l̥] (phonemically /lh/) for the correspondence: Z-language -š || R-language -l.

## 3. Studies of the individual Turkic languages.

- They can be divided into two: 1) linguistic studies, and  
2) philological studies and translations of texts.

### 3.1. Linguistic studies.

In 1946 Sibata made some description of Salar in the Ch'ing-hai Province of China.

Takeuchi published a grammar of Turkish (1970).

#### 3.1.1. Phonetics and phonology.

Sibata (1950 July; 1953) came to the conclusion that the Runic letters which are usually transliterated with *nd* and *ld* (or *nt* and *lt*) represent sound groups, the final sound of which was a plosive [d̥] (tending to be devocalized), whereas the Runic letter, usually transliterated with *d*, represents a fricative [ð]. The letter, usually transliterated with *nč*, represents [ndʒ], whereas the letter, usually transliterated with *č*, represents [tʃ].

Sibata (1952; 1953) made some observation on the vowel harmonies of the Turkic languages.

Hattori (1951; 1961) sporadically describes the sounds of Tatar. In the forthcoming paper he concludes that the high vowels of Tatar (at least those of Mishar) can be analyzed as diphthongs ending in [j] or [w] from the phonological point of view, i.e. [i]/ej/, [ɨ]/ew/, [u]/ew/, and [ij]/əj/.

#### 3.1.2. Grammar.

Sibata (1948) made some observation on the Turkish syntagma, i. e. a word or a word suffixed with enclitics.

Hattori (1950) has proposed three universal criteria to discriminate synonymous words (i. e. proclitic or enclitic words) from prefixes, suffixes, or endings, which are not words but bound forms. If we apply the first and second criteria to Turkish, *geldi*, *geldin*, *gelse*, *gelsen*, etc. will be words suffixed with endings, whereas *mi*, *le*; *-dir*, *-sin* in *ev mi*, *ev de*; *evdir*, *talebesin* will be enclitic words.

Takeuchi (1964) made a description of the declension of Modern Uighur.

Sibata (1972) tries to structurally describe the meanings of the conjugational endings in Turkish.

The Altaic languages are usually supposed to have no relative pronouns. Hattori (1958) has pointed out that in Tatar and Mongolian the use of interrogatives is sometimes close to that of relative pronouns. For example:

*kemmenj arbasəna utararsəŋ, šunəŋ jərəŋ jərlarsəŋ*  
 «whose» «to the carriage» «you will «sit» the persons» «his song» «you  
 will  
 sing»

= «You will sing the song of the person, whose carriage you will sit on.»

*Qaja telejsəŋ, šunda quj.*

«Where» «you want» «there» «put» = «Put it where you like.»

### 3.1.3. Vocabulary.

Sibata (1968) has made a structural observation on the kinship terms in Turkish.

### 3.2. Studies and translations of inscriptions, documents, and other texts.

As mentioned above, our historians specialized in the Central Asia are versed in Turkic languages and read inscriptions, documents, and other texts. Their articles on the appended bibliography are mostly the results of researches of documents and books, not only in Chinese but also in Turkic and other languages.

Sibata made some linguistic observation on the Orkhon inscription, and Mori studied extensively the Türküt inscriptions from the historical viewpoint.

The Uighur documents have been studied by Haneda, Mori, and Yamada. Mori and Yamada have been publishing the translations and the results of their studies of Uighur documents. (Cf. Bibliography.)

Kobayashi and Satō (1957) made some observations on the *Çingiz Name*.

Murayama (1963, 1964) studied the Nestorian inscriptions on tomb stones.

Satō (1954) translated several Turkic fairy tales, and Sibata (1961) several Turkish tales. Hattori (1961) translated three tales by Abdullah Tuqaj, a famous Tatar poet.

## 4. The teaching of the Turkic languages.

Since 1961 Mori has been energetically teaching at the University of Tokyo modern Turkish, Ottoman Turkish, Uighur, and Türküt.

Since 1970 Oda has been teaching at Kyoto University modern Turkish, Ottoman Turkish, and *Quatadyu-bilig*.

Yamada taught Uighur in 1968 and 1969 at the University of Osaka.

Takeuchi taught Turkish at the Diet Library (1956) at the Tokyo University of Foreign Languages (1961, 63, 64), and at the Tōyō Bunko Library (1971).

Sibata gave at the University of Tokyo seminars in the field work of Turkish in 1966 and 67, and taught Turkish in 1968, 69, and 70.

Since 1968 Murayama had been teaching Turkish at the University of Kyushu, and then since 1972 at the Industrial University of Kyoto.

Ozawa taught Turkish at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1963, 68, 69, and 70.

#### 5. The Altaistic Kurultai at Lake Nojiri.

In 1964 younger Altaists (again mainly younger energetic historians) started a "kurultai" at a summer resort, Lake Nojiri, which has been continuously held every summer. At this conference of 4 – 6 days, they give confessions, reports, and lectures. These rather informal gatherings contribute to the interchange of scientific information, and are giving and will certainly give, an impetus to the development of the Altaic studies in our country.

6. As the Turkic languages are located rather remote from our country, we cannot expect that the studies of these languages will develop very rapidly. However, they have been the focus of attention of earnest historians and linguists, and it is expected that the number of scholars will increase steadily, owing to the development of the interchange of scientific information in the world.

Last but not least it is to be mentioned that the script and language reform in Turkey is well-known in our country, and those who were or are interested in the Romanization of Japanese have been paying much attention to the Turkish reform.

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