

# THE VALUE OF “ALTAN TOBČI” IN REGARDS OF THE HISTORY OF TURKISH LANGUAGE\*

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After having five lines inscription Mongolian language which is written on the stone with Uygur letters admitted the most elder written document of Mongolian language, the other most important document is monument where Turkish translation done by Ahmet Temir named “The Secret History of the Mongols”.

Begin with the 13 Century Mongolian history and about the Mongolian traditional pedigree until the time of Ogedei which covers the most elder knowledge other than the most well-known monument *Altan Tobčı* which is known world-wide.

According to the different point of view, also *Altan Tobčı* suppose to be written in an old century or in the year of 1604 which is just about similar to “The Secret History of the Mongols”. But the similarity which is observed between *Altan Tobčı* and “The Secret History of the Mongols” are not identically the same. Only those are the similarity which is observed as a being cronologically.

In the western literature, the most perfect article of *Altan Tobčı* is done by Charles R. Bawden. In this article, noted transcription and the English translation of the monument are given.

At the introduction, the wide knowledge are placed in this article until the year of 1955 also the name of the article and the subject of its are emphasized.

Bawden has been written about the subject as follows (pp. 1-13):

## I. Introduction.

The name of the Mongol chronicle *Altan Tobčı*, which signifies ‘Golden Summary’ has been well known for nearly one hundred years, since the

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publication in 1858 of edition the text together with a Russian translation by the Lama *Galsan Gomboev*. There has however never been a translation of the *Altan Tobči* into any other western language, and though the chronicle has frequently been referred to in academic literature, such references have perforce been made to the imperfect text of *Gomboev*, and to his inadequate translation. The *Altan Tobči* has received less than its due amount of consideration in the last hundred years, perhaps because the publication in 1829 of *I. J. Schmidt's* translation of the chronicle of *Sayang Sečen*, a translation which in spite of its many deficiencies has never been replaced and still constitutes the standard edition of *Sayang Sečen*, may have appeared to forestall critical work on the *Altan Tobči*, which covers the same ground as *Sayang Sečen*, but is a much shorter work. Thus, with the exception of the recently discovered 'Secret History of the Mongols' of which a German translation by *Haenisch* and a partial translation by *Pelliot* have been published, the chronicle of *Sayang Sečen* has been the sole representative example of Mongol historical literature hitherto known to the west.

As an historical record the *Altan Tobči* is perhaps not of first rate importance. For the period of the rise to power of the Mongols under Cinggis Qan it is overshadowed, as must be any late record, by the Secret History of the Mongols. This record of the early Mongols and the reign of Čgis, besides being almost contemporary with the events which it describes, was embalmed in a transcription into Chinese characters, and thus has remained unaltered by later hands until the present day. For the later period, that is the history of the Mongols during the Yüan dynasty, which is treated by *Altan Tobči* in the most perfunctory manner, and their history after their return to Mongolia from the beginning of the Ming dynasty until the early years of the seventeenth century, there are detailed and reliable sources in Chinese, which have been turned to account, principally by *Pokotilov Franke* and *Wada Sei*. The sociological and organisational detail which is to be found in *Altan Tobči* has been extracted and minutely dealt with by *Vladimirtsov*. There remains however the task of providing a critical translation, based on the several texts of *Altan Tobči* which have become available in the last thirty years, and it is hoped that the present work may supply this need.

## II. Available Texts.

As far as is known to me, there are no manuscripts of *Altan Tobči* available to the western world. According to *Zamcarano* there are three

manuscripts in the Mss. Section of the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Of there, one, that called Ms. B by *Zamcarano*, is the manuscript from which *Gomboev* prepared his edition. Another manuscript, or manuscripts, was in the possession of the Mongol Book Company *Meng Wen Shu She, Monggyi Bičig-ün Qoriya*, in Peking, and from this was printed the text found in the collection *Činggis Qayan-u Čadig*, but I have no information as to the present whereabouts of this manuscript. There does exist in Paris a manuscript of the *Altan Tobči Nova*, which as will be shown later, contains, in a rather different arrangement, most of the text of *Altan Tobči*. This manuscript, which belonged to *Pelliot*, and was made by *Jamyang-Güng*. President of the Scientific Committee of the People Republic of Mongolia, has been deposited in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Its relation to the printed edition of *Altan Tobči Nova* has been briefly dealt with by *L. Hambis*. In the absence of manuscripts, the critical work in the present study has been based on printed texts, of which there have been five, partial or complete, available to me. I describe here these editions, and give an assessment of their value.

### III. Translations.

Until recent times the only translation of *Altan Tobči* was that of *Gomboev*. Owing to insufficient knowledge of Russian, I have been unable to refer directly to this translation, but both *Vladimirtsov* and *Zamcarano* criticise it adversely, the former remarking: 'On peut affirmer sans hésitation qu'une personne ne connaissant pas à fond la langue mongole et n'ayant pas accès. d'autre part, aux manuscrits adéquats, ne peut se servir ni de l'Histoire de Sanang-sacän traduite par I. J. Schmidt, ni de l'Altan tobci dans la traduction de G. Gomboev; cette dernière, tout particulièrement, dénature complètement le texte de l'Altan Tobci.' *Zamcarano* gives a number of examples of the inaccuracies of *Gomboev's* translation. In the few instances where I quote *Gomboev's* version, reference has been made via the Japanese version of short passages which are translated from time to time in the notes to MN.

Apart from this Russian translation there exist only translations into Japanese. The earliest in an uncompleted version undertaken by *Demura Ryoichi*; this is referred to by *Kobayashi* in the introduction to MO, and also by *Z. Ishihama*. The work, which was begun with the collaboration of *Wada Sei*, was interrupted by the death of *Demura*, and as far as I know, the translation was never published.

Next to appear was a partial translation by *Yamamoto Mamoru*, which was published in *Toyosi Tenleyu*. This translation covers only the text as far

as p. 62 line 7, *sayuba*; that is, approximately half the text. It was made from the unsatisfactory text P2, and contains a number of errors and untranslated phrases which later study has rendered susceptible of elucidation.

In March 1939 appeared the first complete translation into any language since *Gomboev's*. This was *Kobayshi's*. '*Moko Nendaiki*'. Like *Yamamoto's* translation, it too was based on the second edition of the '*Cadig*'. In 1941 there appeared a revised edition of this translation under the title '*Moko Ogonshi*'. This book, which was a popular edition, corrected some errors of translation in the earlier edition, and omitted the text and the great majority of the notes. *Kobayashi's* work is not entirely satisfactory. It starts with the disadvantage of having been made from an inferior text and the translator relies heavily upon the version of *Gomboev*, and on the explanation of the latter in translating difficult passages. A very few of the misunderstandings in *Kobayashi's* translation have been referred to in the notes in the present study, but this does not pretend to be a criticism of other translations, and generally speaking these are not referred to unless to help elucidate on obscure passage.

A partial translation into Japanese by *Fujioka* is found in the *Kharchin* text, published in 1940. This is a careful version, but is a posthumous work, which would no doubt have been revised by the author before publication.

A study of *Altan Tobči*, entitled *Altan Tobči*, I, was published in December 1954 by *Ozowa Shigeo*. I have been unable to see this book so far, but it is said to contain parallel romanised versions of the texts G, P1 and P2 as far as P1, page 21, *iregsen-ü qoyina qan yeke oron saybai*, together with a Japanese interlinear translation, and copious notes. The last 35 pages of the book are devoted to a study of the suffix-*run* in the language of the Secret History.

#### IV. The Composition of *Altan Tobči*.

##### A—Date of Composition

Any discussion of the date of composition of the *Altan Tobci* must be preceded by some consideration of the nature of the text itself. In spite of speculation as to the authorship of this chronicle, this question remains unsolved. The one name which has been put forward, that of *Mergen Gegen* has little to recommend it, since according to *Heissig*, *Mergen Gegen* of the Urad was the author of an *Altan Tobči* which appeared in 1765, and our

*Altan Tobči*, which is a different text, must in any case, as will be shown below, have attained its completed form from a considerable time before this.

The theory of the nature of the composition of *Altan Tobči* which I wish to propose is that the text does not represent a homogenous chronicle which is the original work of one author, as is the case with the chronicle of *Sayang Sečen*, but that it is an accretion of traditional legends, written and oral, interspersed with traditional poems and proverbial sayings, and with one or two passages of a more strictly historical nature. As to the ultimate sources of this disparate material I shall say nothing, but merely aim to show that it is unreal to speak of a date of composition of the text, the most one can do being to propose dates before and after which any particular version of the text cannot have been written down.

The first attempt at dating the composition of *Altan Tobči* was made by *Savel'ev* in his introduction *Gomboev's* edition, where he argued that as it chronicle mentions the accession of Lindan Qayan, which took place in the year of the Dragon, 1604, the chronicle must be dated at about this time, although the material preserves archaisms which point to an earlier origin. The date of 1604 has unfortunately come to be considered as the definite date of composition of the text.

### B—The Literary Position of *Altan Tobči*

*Laufer* characterizes *Altan Tobči* as occupying an intermediate position between *the Secret History of the Mongols* and the chronicle of *Sayang Sečen*. Apart from the Secret History, it is the earliest Mongol chronicle which is now available. The material of which it is composed dates from different epochs. As has been observed above, much of the material which forms the first part of the text has been thought to date from the thirteenth century. The question of the origin and tradition of the legends concerning the life of Činggis, as also of those concerning Qubilai, has been fully dealt with by *Heissig* in BE, chapter IV and I can add nothing to the discussion. In connection with the narration of events of the period of the Ming dynasty, as related by *Bolur Erike*, *Heissig* has also referred extensively to the parallel accounts of these events as given by *Altan Tobči* and *Sayang Sečen*. I propose therefore to refer briefly to the relationship between *Altan Tobči* and the Secret History, but more detailed attention will be paid to the relationship between *Altan Tobči* and the Chinese *Meng Ku Shih Hsi P'u*. This text has been occasionally referred to in academic publications, but has never been examined even in outline.

*Altan Tobči* is the earliest chronicle available, apart from the Secret History, and to the latter it appears to owe little, except perhaps in inspiration. *Poppe* says: "Zahlreiche Exzerpte au dem *Yüan-cho'ao pi-shi* finden sich in allen späteren Geschichtswerken der Mongolen: im *Altan Tobči*, das *Gamboev* herausgegeben hat, in der Geschichte des *Sagang Sečen* a.u." but this opinion is not strictly accurate. *Altan Tobči* contains but one excerpt from the Secret History. This is the section in P1 from p. 19 to p. 21 which corresponds closely to certain paragraphs of the Secret History, and which has already been noticed under II, 3 above; and even this passage does not occur in the text published by *Gamboev*".

We briefly mention about the properties of *Altan Tobči* as above, not only it is important view of the Mongolistics but also it is a good quality source for turkology as well.

In 126 paragraph of the work;

- 1) The name of the persons,
- 2) Tribe, troop, clan, race, the name of the carve,
- 3) The name of the place,
- 4) The name of the matter

not to be kept in sight by the point of view comparatively Turkish Language History.

The whole of *Altan Tobči* is translated by us and published in three parts such as in Turkish History Society, *Belleten*, Vol. 152. (October 1974), Vol 196 (April 1986), Vol. 199 (April 1987).

At the end of the third part, "persons name index", "tribe, troop, clan, race, carve and the name of the place index" is given.

The Mongolian Language words (Mongolian Language~Turkish Language) which is explained in notes also is demonstrated as an index.

Also, one property of Turkish translation of *Altan Tobči*, common words of Turkish or Mongolian ~Turkish language which is used each paragraph of monument is demonstrated in details as a foot-notes.

The aim of this paper is to call attention to the academic staff which is mentioned above.

Having consider whole part of monument, however it does not contain number of many Turkish or Mongolian~Turkish language words, but it is the level which shows the way to the language history for one century. This means that is also a criterion for comperatively altayistics-work.

**TURKISH OR TURKISH~MONGOLIAN PERSONAL NAMES IN  
“ALTAN TOBCI”**

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Agbarçin 71-75, 77, 78, 92, 123 | Ere Bogda 85, 104        |
| Agbolad (Agabolad) 76           | Erke Kongor 6            |
| Aka Temür-yin (Sigüse) 108      | Esen Tükel 108           |
| Alag 103, 108                   | Gök Han 58               |
| Alagçi 114, 117                 | Kara Batai 110           |
| Alag Temür, 72, 88              | Katan Temür 74           |
| Al Altan 26                     | Kutug-tu Kagan 5, 52     |
| Al Bugura 106                   | Möngke 85, 86 ...        |
| Altai Katun 75                  | Ölcei 112                |
| Altan 26, 34, 94, 95            | Ölcei-tü 5, 50, 63-65    |
| Arig 123                        | Temüçin 12-14 ...        |
| Arsalan (Ogoçitu Kagan) 2       | Temür 100, 101, 114, 118 |
| Biligtü Kagan 5                 | Togan (Tayisi) 6         |
| Buka 53-55                      | Törü (Bolod) 105, 119    |
| Büri Böke 24                    | Ului Temür 5, 66         |
| Casag tümen kagan 124, 125      | Ulus 105, 112, 119       |
| Cigan/Çigan 102, 103            |                          |

**TRIBE, RACE AND PLACE NAMES**

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Alagçigud 73, 102, 103, 115      | Katun-i goul (river name) 43                      |
| Al Kosigun (place name) 72       | Kızıl göl 86                                      |
| Altai Kan 49, 76                 | Kangurat 12, 13, 19, 98                           |
| Erig Usun 7                      | Korçin 24, 93, 102 vb.                            |
| Baras (Baras) Kota(n) 56         | Korçin Tümen 120                                  |
| Bayikal 27                       | Köke Kota (Island name) 61                        |
| Borcigin 12, 18, 115             | Kutug-tu Kan (mountain name) 48                   |
| Boro Nokai (river name) 67       | Tatar 12, 13, 95, 108                             |
| Çağan Tümen 66                   | Temür Ulku (Körbelgin Gooa<br>Hatun'un mezarı) 43 |
| Çeçeg-tü göl (place name)        | Tenggis 4   |
| İrtiş/Ergi/ertiş (river name) 31 |   |
| Karaçin 96                       |   |

**MATTER NAMES**

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Altan tamaga 125 | darkan 24, 64, 117 |
| ayimag 84        | dokuz örlög 30     |
| barag 15         | esüg “kımız” 9, 17 |

bing bars cil 21	kagen yeke oron 21
Boro (the horse name of Duwa Sokur) 122	Kan-Tengri 103
boro karçigai "boz doğan" 9	kara bulaka 20
bögöter konggur morin 20	kara-kacin kuşu 39
börte çinoa 15	kara mokai cil

### TURKISH OR TURKISH~MONGOLIAN WORDS

#### *ALTAN TOPÇI*

#### *DÎVÂNU LUGÂTİTTURK*

aba 39	aba, apa
acırga 79	
aka 4	
alag 72	ala
altan 1, 26	altun
amarag 48	amrak
anda 66	and
aral 120	
arsalan 2, 41	arslan
ayagan 36	ayak
ayil 96	
ayimag 84	
baga 78	baka
bagatur 88	
balgasun 43	balık
baras 15, 41; baras 22, 28	bars, pars
batu 31	
bayan 80	bay
belge 50	belgü, belgölüg
biçig-tü 59	bilig
bol-101	bol-
boro 4, 67	boz
bölüg 55	
bugu 38	
bugura 13	bogra
buka 39	boka
burkan 21	burhan, furhan
caka 99	yaka



calbari- 105  
 carlıg 25  
 casag 6, 25  
 cigan 102  
 cak 30  
 ceceg  
 çerig, çireg 66  
 çilagun 22  
 darkan 24  
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 ekin 107  
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 katun 11, 22  
 kaya 26  
 kele-tü 38  
 konin 49  
 kög 48  
 kök(e) 3  
 köteçi 111  
 kudug 39  
 kula 41  
 kutuk (tai) 5  
 küç(ün) 88  
 külüg 43  
 kürke (güregen) 12  
 meçin 50  
 minggan 3  
 möngke 91  
 naçin 27  
 nom 3

yalwar-  
 yarlıg  
 yasag (k)  
 cıgan, çıgay  
  
 çeçek  
 çerig  
 taş  
 tarhan  
 eçe, eke, eze  
 tawar  
  
 ekin  
 emle-  
 erdem-erdini  
 erken  
 han  
 kamug  
 kanglı  
 kara  
 karangu, karangu  
 karlıgaç, kargılaç  
 katun  
 kaya  
 keleşü  
 kon, koy  
 kög  
 kök  
  
 kudug  
 kula  
 kut  
 küç  
 külüg  
  
 biçin  
 ming  
 menggü  
 laçin  
 nom

ordu 47	ordu
orun 49	orun
otog 84	otog
ölke 61	
öngge 43	öng, önglög
saçu-103	saçig (Old Uigur Turkish)
sira 25, 40	sarıg
sonkur 12, 22	songkur
sün 101	süt
sürüg 82	sürüg
tamga, tamaga 37	tamga
tawar 55	tavar
temege(n) 70	tewe
temür 1	temür
tengri 4	tengri, Tengri
töbed 123	Töbet(lemek)
törü 30	törü
tusa	tusu
ulus 25	uluş
urug 99	urug
üker 49	öküz

### Look separately

abalacu 63	dugalaga 66	manglai 22	tani- 103
acirga 79	eme 29	merged 124	tarbaga 18
agta 14	gakai 50	noyan 36	taulai 50
aman 29	kabirga 41	nöker 30	tegüs 105
amur 123	karagul 40	olca 82	toguga 108
araki 120	katagu 88	sagadag 101	tolo 78
aral 120	kereye 22	salkin 72	109
baragun gar 34	keseg 101	samur 106	torga 80
bogda 25, 40	kir 42	sayin 1	tölge 111
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cil 49	kugur 48	sokur 7	üre 41
daruga 53	kurim 78	suburgar 26	yada 56
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