

THE PROCESS OF COPYING AND TRANSMITTING THE WORD FOR TEA IN THE TURKIC LANGUAGES

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Abstract: *This paper briefly addresses some aspects of copying and transmitting the word for tea in the Turkic languages. It starts with a classification of words for tea in the Turkic language to their phonetic shape and semantics, followed by discussions of the etymology of the word for tea, mainly focusing on the origin of the final palatal approximant y found in the words for tea. It extends discussions to the explanation of the process of fusion of two words, word for tea and word for monk's meal. It is assumed that the fusion happened first in Old Uyghur and then was introduced to Pre-Classical Mongolian. The Old Uyghurs together with Mongols brought the word çay to Persia presumably in the Ilkhanate period where it was simply accepted as a word for 'tea'. They also introduced the word to Russian around the same period or later. And then the word is assumed to have been introduced to the majority of Turkic languages in this meaning via the intermediary of Persian or Russian.*

Keywords: *copying, çay, transmission, Turkic languages, Old Uyghur*

Türk Dillerinde Çay Kelimesinin Kopyalanması ve Aktarılması Süreci

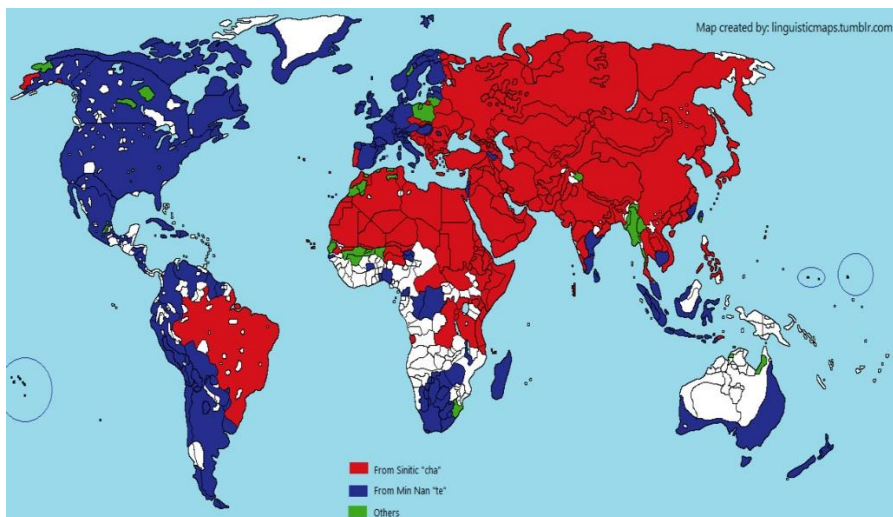
Öz: *Bu makale, Türk dillerinde çay kelimesinin kopyalanması ve aktarılmasının bazı yönlerini kısaca ele almaktadır. Makale, Türk dilinde çay için kullanılan kelimelerin ses ve anlamlarına göre sınıflandırılmasıyla başlar, ardından çay kelimesinin etimolojisi tartışılır, özellikle çay için kullanılan kelimelerde bulunan arka damak sırtıtmeli y sesinin kökenine odaklanılır. Tartışmalar çay kelimesinin ve keşiş yemeği kelimesinin kaynaşma sürecinin açıklanmasına kadar uzanmaktadır. Kaynaşmanın ilk olarak Eski Uygurcada gerçekleştiği ve daha sonra Klasik Öncesi Moğolcaya geçtiği varsayılmaktadır. Eski Uygurlar, Moğollarla birlikte çay kelimesini muhtemelen İlhanlılar döneminde İran'a getirmiş ve burada basitçe 'çay' için kullanılan bir kelime olarak kabul edilmiştir. Aynı dönemde ya da daha sonra bu kelimeyi Rusçaya da sokmuşlardır. Ve daha sonra Türk dillerinin çoğuna bu anlamda Farsça veya Rusça aracılığı ile girdiği varsayılmaktadır.*

Anahtar Sözcükler: *kopyalama, çay, aktarım, Türk dilleri, eski Uygurca*

Introduction

The word for tea is one of the wide-spread lexemes and has wide distribution. *The world atlas of language structures online* presents its distribution in the following map:

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Map 1. *Distribution of the word for tea in the world languages* (from Östen Dahl, *The world atlas of language structures online: tea* (<https://wals.info/chapter/138>))

Basically, the most words for tea come from the following two different pronunciations of the Chinese character 茶 *cha* ‘tea’ which is developed from the character 荼 *tu* ‘bitter plants’:

- (1) Yuan-Chinese tʂa^h, Middle Chinese trfia:, Early Middle Chinese drai / drɛ: (Pulleyblank, 1991, pp. 46), and
- (2) Amoy (Minnan 闽南) variety of Chinese spoken in the Fujian province of China: tê or têt, tiê.

According to the world atlas of language structures online, 110 languages have the word for tea of the type (1), while the words for tea in the other 84 languages comes from (2). However, 36 languages use words of other origin; see Dahl (<https://wals.info/chapter/138>). The most languages in the Turkic family use the word of (1) origin, however, there are also some languages use words of other origin as we will see below.

Concerning the transmission of the words for tea, the journalist Nikhil Sonnad (2022) says, “The words that sound like ‘cha’ spread across land, along the Silk Road. The ‘tea’-like phrasings spread over water, by Dutch traders bringing the novel leaves back to Europe.” Put differently, “tea if by sea, cha if by land.” However, etymology and transmission of the words for tea in the Turkic family of languages are not so simple. In this paper, I briefly address some aspects of copying and transmitting the word for tea in the Turkic languages. This topic is important because some languages in the Turkic family have played crucial role in transmitting the word for tea to the languages in the other families of languages.

1. The word for tea in Turkic: Form, semantics, and etymology

1.1 Form

According to the phonetic shape, the words for tea in the Turkic languages might be classified to the following types:

- (1) *čay*: Altay, Azerbaijan, Dolgan (*čāy*), Kazakh (only in Kazakhstan, but also *šay*), Khakas (also *čey*), Khalaj, Kirghiz, Turkish, Turkmen, Uyghur, Uzbek (*čāy*), Yakut (also *čāy*),
- (2) *šay* (< *čay*): Kazakh as spoken in China (also *čay* in Kazakhstan), Tuvan,
- (3) *čey* or *čāy*: Chuwash, Khakas (also *čay*), Tatar (*čāy*), Yakut (also *čay*),
- (4) *ča*: Salar, the Turfan dialect of Uyghur,
- (5) *tša*: Yellow Uyghur (< the Northwest dialect of Chinese), and
- (6) others, Sakha: *abaha*, Salar: *salux*, Karaim: *qaynar su*.

1.2 Semantics

The meaning of the word for tea is not uniform in the Turkic languages, even though they have the word for tea of same or similar phonetic shape. Below is my tentative classification of the words for tea in the Turkic languages according to their meaning.

- (1) Languages use the word for tea in the meanings (a) tea leaf, and (b) a beverage prepared with tea leaves.
- (2) Languages use the word for tea in the meanings (a) tea plant (*Camellia sinensis*), (b) tea leaf, and (c) a beverage prepared with tea leaves.
- (3) Languages use the word for tea in the meanings (a) tea plant, (b) tea leaf; (c) a beverage prepared with tea leaves, (4) party, banquet, and (5) betrothal presents.

Altay, Chuwash, Dolgan, Kazakh (Kazakstan), Khakas, Khalaj, Kirghiz, Salar, Turkmen, Yakut, and Yellow Uyghur belong to group (1), and the three languages, Azerbaijan, Tatar, and Turkish belong to group (2), whereas the word for tea in the two languages, Uyghur and the Uzbek variety spoken in China, has the meanings of the type (3).

1.3 Etymology

The etymology of *ča*: and *tša*: belonging to (4) and (5) in the phonetic classification is clear, both words go back to Mandarin *cha* or originate from Yuan-Chinese *tša^h*. The meanings listed in (1) and (2) in the semantic classification are easily explainable based on the semantics of the Chinese word 茶 *cha* ‘tea’ which has the meanings, (a) tea tree, (b) tea leaf, (c) a beverage prepared by steeping tea leaves, (d) owner of a teahouse or teashop, or tea seller, (e) some beverage, e.g., millet paste, fruit tea, (f) refreshment, e.g., tea cake, early morning tea, (g) betrothal presents (in Classical Chinese); see *Comprehensive Chinese Word Dictionary* (<http://www.hydc.com/>), entry 茶. The second and third meanings of the Chinese word 茶 *cha* were the basis of the semantics of the word for tea in the languages in group (1) and the first three meanings of the word for tea in the languages in the groups (2) and (3). The meanings (d)-(f) were not transmitted to any Turkic language. The meaning (g) was only transmitted to Uyghur, which is observable in the expressions *kičik čay* ‘small betrothal presents’ (= first betrothal presents) and *čoŋ čay* ‘big betrothal presents’ (main betrothal presents), *čay äkir-* ‘bring betrothal presents’ (< *älip kir-* < *alip kir-*). The remaining questions are two: (a) Where comes the final palatal approximant *y* found in the languages in (1)-(3) in the phonetic classification? And how the word for tea obtained the meanings party and banquet in the languages in group (3) in the semantic classification?

1.3.1 Previous explanations

Concerning the first question there are a lot of discussions and answers which might be outlined by the following three explanations:

A. might come from the Chin. 茶叶 *chaye* ‘tealeaf’. This was first put forward by the famous Turkologist Karl Heinrich Menges; see Menges, 1954, pp. 27. Later it was accepted by other scholars; see Haneda, 1984, pp. 340; Yakup, 2005, pp. 178.

The Japanese historian Akira Haneda writes, “I presume that the transition from *ča* to *čay* (*čai*) occurred around the end of the Ming and the beginning of the Qing, that is at the mid 17th century. A Persian-Persian dictionary, written in 1631/2 at Haydarabād, which contains *chay* as popular form and *cha* or *cha* as classical one, seems to certify my presumption.” (Haneda, 1984, pp. 340) Concerning the transition of the word for tea he writes further the following:

“The other attributes that transition 1) to the remainder of some Chinese dialect, or 2) to the transcription of the Chinese 茶葉 *cha-ye* (tea leaf). As the first has no historical evidence, I wish for the moment to adhere to the second, proposed by Prof. Menges and supported by Murayama. As a fact, the term *cha-ye* is not a neologism. We find it already in the writings of the T’ang. But in this case, it is used in the meaning of “leaf tea”. The “leaf tea” took place of the traditional “brick tea”, even if not completely. We find really the term *cha-yah* < *cha-yeh* in some of the “Addresses” in Persian added to the above mentioned “vocabularies”. I think thus the problem is now solved.” (Haneda, 1984, pp. 340)

B. might come from Persian *čāy* which comprises Northern Chinese 茶 *cha* + the Persian ending *-yi* before it was passed on to Arabic, Central Asian languages, Russian and Turkish, e.g., *čā-ye-khatāi* ‘cha of Cathay’, as documented in *Navigazioni et Viaggi* (1559) by Giovanni Battista Ramusio; see Erling & Mair 2009, pp. 164-180.

Georg van Driem supports this idea. He writes, “The first two syllables of the Persian expression (i.e., *čā-ye* “tea of”) was borrowed as the word for tea, with the Persian genitive ending (*ezāfe* “اضافه of”) being mistaken for part of the name of tea; the indicator of geographic origin (*khatāi* “Cathay”) was dropped from the expression altogether.” (Driem, 2019, pp. 248)

C. [ʃai] arose as a result of Sino-Altai language contact and can be analyzed as [ʃa] plus a fossilized form of the Northern Chinese diminutive suffix 兒; see Li 2019.

Li, Chris (2019) writes, “Beginning with the spread of tea by overland caravan from Northern China to Central Asia by the occupants of the Central Asian steppes, taking into account linguistics admixture between Sinitic and Altaic populations, and illustrating the circumstances under which an additional [i] ending may have been added to Northern Chinese *cha*, and finally, showing why the *chai* variant occupies specifically the land mass stretching from China’s western frontiers to the Caucasus and Eastern Europe.”

According to Li (2019), the attachment of diminutive 兒 to the root noun “tea” 茶 to give the suffixed form 茶兒 (i.e., “tea” with a sense daintiness and endearment, spoken in a casual register) was commonplace back in the thirteenth century, as is evidenced by the following lines from Yuan dynasty opera *Qian Dayi zhikan feiyimeng* 錢大尹智勘緋衣夢 by the famous dramatist, playwright, and poet Guan Huanqing 关汉卿 (1241–1320).

孩兒買風箏兒去了，老漢無甚事，隔壁人家吃疙瘩茶兒去也。

Li (2019) writes, “兒 is a feature associated with the speech of non-Chinese ethnicities, and may have developed out of “influence from Altaic languages, especially Manchu” (Wiedenhof, 2015, pp. 303; Zhao, 1996, pp. 117). According to him, the Japanese linguist Mantaro Hashimoto (1986: 86) believes such influences to be more

pronounced in “the speech of the Chinese people who reside to the north and northwest”, as their language is likely to exhibit “a greater degree of Altaicization”. Li (2019) provides the following list of pronunciations of 兒 from different periods of the Chinese history:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (a) Tang dynasty (628-907): | ɲzi |
| (b) Liao (916-1125) and Jin (1115-1234) dynasties: | ɲi |
| (c) Yuan dynasty (1279-1368): | i |
| (d) Ming dynasty (1368-1644): | ɤ |

According to him only the Mongol-ruled Yuan dynasty variant [i] matches the suffix that would have been attached to *cha*. In other words, historical pronunciation corroborates accounts of the pronunciation *chai* having been spread by the Mongols to the territories that they conquered. As reference to the pronunciation of the word, Li mentions 茶兒 [tʂʰai] (Gao, 1985, pp. 50, 66) from the dialect of Lanzhou of Chinese spoken in the northwestern province of Gansu.

1.3.2. Problem of the previous explanations

1.3.2.1. Problem of the explanation A

The Old Uyghur word for tea, as I will mention below, presumably was **ča*, and it goes back to the Middle Chinese pronunciation of 茶 *cha*. However, there is no evidence of existence of **čay* originated from 茶葉 *chaye* ‘tea leaf’ in Old Uyghur. Even if **čay* was originated from 茶葉 *chaye*, how the final vowel *e* in *ye* has disappeared was not convincingly explained in this explanation.

1.3.2.2. Problem of the explanation B

Obviously, as we will discuss below, appearance of *čay* is earlier than the 16th century, thus the Persian word should be the secondary. On the other hand, Persian is not very likely the language in which *čay* was firstly used. Even if *čay* was transmitted from Persian to other languages, why and how the final vowel *e* or *i* in *ye/yi* (*čā-ye-khatāi* ‘cha of Cathay’) has lost was not illustrated in this explanation.

1.3.2.3. Problem of the explanation C

According to the reconstruction by E. Pulleyblank (1991, pp. 88), the Yuan dynasty pronunciation of 兒 *er* was *rrʹ*. If the word for tea, namely *čay*, comes from the Yuan dynasty pronunciation of 茶兒 *cha er*, it is very likely **čar* instead of **čai* or **čay*. Note that the second character is used to transcribe the ethnonym *uyğur* as part of 畏兀兒 *Wei wu er* exactly in the Yuan dynasty, clearly indicating the pronunciation of the character in question was *rrʹ* or similar one with liquid similar to the Mandarin retroflex liquid but not *i*. The remnants of *rrʹ* were reflected in its Ming pronunciation *ɤ*, and Mandarin *ɤ*. On the other hand, the word for tea in Old Uyghur existed in pre-Mongolian Old Uyghur texts as we will see below. By the way, the Lanzhou pronunciation of 茶兒 [tʂʰai] seemingly was not also the basis of the Old Uyghur copy. The two Turkic languages, Salar and Yellow Uyghur in the region do not use *čay* might be connected to this form but have *ča* and *tʂa:*, respectively.

A very common problem of all three explanations is, moreover, that they do not mention the word for tea in Uyghur which has the meaning party and banquet. Subsequently, they also do not provide any explanation from where this meaning may come. Indeed, the establishment of the pronunciation *čay* and its development of the meaning party and banquet are interrelated.

1.3.3. Our explanation

A. Haneda (1984, pp. 339) states, “In Inner Asia, the Tibetans and the Uyghurs began first to drink the tea, as early as the mid-8th century, in the Tang period.” This claim is supported at least by the following two historical records:

A. The earliest record of tea having been sold to Uyghurs appears in the sixth chapter of the *Fengshi Jianwen Ji* 封氏聞見記 ‘Sights and Sounds from the Travels of Feng’, the memoir of the Tang dynasty writer Feng Yan 封演 of the eighth century, where we find the statement below:

古人亦飲茶耳，但不如今人溺之甚，窮日盡夜，殆成風俗。始自中地，流於塞外。往年回鶻入朝，大驅名馬，市茶而歸。

Translation: Tea drinking was known also in antiquity, but not in the fashion practiced today, where custom dictates the beverage be consumed day and night. The practice began in the interior and quickly spread beyond the western reaches of the Empire, from which the Uyghurs of old would drive their fine horses into the capital and return home with tea they have purchased.

B. The second record is found in the *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 ‘New Book of Tang’ which was completed between 1044 and 1060 by Ou Yangxiu 歐陽修 and others. However, the record found in this book comes from the Tang dynasty writer Lu Yu 陸羽 (733-804) when he published his famous *Chajing* 茶經 ‘The Classic of Tea’. Below I cite the text:

其後尚茶成風，時回紇入朝，始驅馬市茶。 (*Xin Tangshu* 新唐書, vol. 209, *Liezhuan* 列傳 No. 121, Yinyi 隱逸 62).

Translation: Tea drinking was the height of fashion; Uyghurs would march into the capital and trade their horses for tea.

However, hitherto-published Old Turkic texts, including Old Uyghur texts, do not show any independent word denoting tea. What we know is *čačan* ‘teacup’, a copy of the Chinese word 茶盞 *chazhan* ‘teacup’ which goes back to Middle Chinese *tʂʰa tʂʰan*; see Wilkens, 2021, pp. 215. Based on this, we assume that the word for tea was **ča* in Old Uyghur.

The earliest records of the word for tea are found in the two sources in two different forms. First in the form of *ča* in the *Gaochangguan zazi* 高昌館雜字 (see Ligeti, 1966, pp. 148), the Sino-Uyghur vocabulary compiled in the beginning of the 15th century as part of the vocabulary series *Huayi yiyu* 華夷譯語, known as Sino-Barbarian vocabularies, and secondly in the form of *čay* in Chaghatay. Very interestingly, as translation of Chinese 茶 *cha* ‘tea’ we find *saman* ‘straw’ and *yapuryaq saman* which might be translated ‘straw’ and ‘leaf straw’ in the *Weiwuerguan yiyu* 畏吾爾館譯語 which was compiled in the same period as the *Gaochangguan zazi* 高昌館雜字 as part of the same vocabulary series; see Shōgaito, 1983, pp. 141.

I assume *saman* ‘straw’ and *yapuryaq saman* ‘leaf straw’ are alternative terms for tea, if the participant involved in the compilation of the dictionary was a native Uyghur, although we cannot completely exclude the possibility that the translator of the Chinese text might have misunderstand the meaning of the Chinese character 茶, which, I think, is very unlikely.

The production of the vocabulary series *Huayi yiyu* 華夷譯語 was started at the end of the 14th century by the Ming administration to study foreign languages and continued by the Qing dynasty administration. The *Gaochangguan zazi* 高昌館雜字 as part of this

series is assumed to have been compiled in the first half of the 15th century. Obviously, *ča* found in the *Gaochangguan zazi* 高昌館雜字 is the global copy of Chinese 茶 *cha* ‘tea’; for the global copies, see Johanson, 2002. Among the regional varieties of Modern Uyghur, only the Turfan dialect still preserves this form; see Yakup, 2005, p. 44.

The question is, when and how the word for tea had the form *čay* and why it denotes ‘ceremony’, ‘banquet’, ‘party’ etc. in addition to ‘tea’? Without doubt, the meaning ‘banquet’ or ‘party’ of the Modern Uyghur word *čay* can hardly be developed from ‘tea (drink)’. The etymology suggested by the compilers of *Uyğur tiliniñ izahliq luğiti* ‘An explanatory dictionary of the Uyghur language’ (see Yakup, 1990-1998), who believe the meaning ‘banquet’ or ‘party’ to be secondary and having resulted from the broadening of the semantic application of ‘tea’, is hard to support. The explanations attribute tea to banquet extension to tea-drinking culture in modern Uyghur society are not well-founded; see Yakup 2023. Note that in any Central Asian Turkic language in the same cultural sphere that has the word *čay* or *ča* for tea, e.g., Kazakh, Salar, Uzbek spoken and written in Uzbekistan, and Yellow Uyghur as well as in other languages in South Asia, the word *čay* does not have such a semantic development. Put differently, in these languages, *čay* does not have the meaning ‘banquet’ and ‘party’. This is also true of further Eurasian languages, e.g., Mongolian, Persian, and Russian which have the same word.

Indeed, the phonetic and semantic development of Modern Uyghur *čay* is complicated. We believe another word of the same phonetic shape, namely *čay* ‘monk’s meal’, ‘banquet’ which is found in Old Uyghur, the global copy of Chin. 齋 *zhai*, MChin. *tšāi* with the meanings, ‘feast’, ‘a vegetarian feast provided for monks’ etc., have influenced not only on its phonic shape but also on its semantics.

A similar thesis was first put forward by the late Japanese philologist and linguist Masahiro Shōgaito who rightly argued that the Modern Uyghur *čay* is the phonetic and semantic fusion of two Chinese loans, *ča* ‘tea’ copied from 茶 *cha* and *čay*, the global copy of 齋 *zhai* ‘vegetarian diet’; see Shōgaito, 2003, pp. 124-126.

The word for ‘feast’, ‘a vegetarian feast provided for monks’ etc., was *čayši* in Early Old Uyghur. It originates from Chin. 齋時 *zhaiishi* (Middle Chin. <tšāi zioi>). It was *čai ši* in the Inherited Uighur Pronunciation of Chinese (IUPC); see Yakup (forthcoming). Note that here I reject the widespread claim that takes *čayši* as the copy of Chin. << 齋食 *zhaiishi* Late Middle Chinese <tʂa:j ʂhiək> (Wilkens, 2021, pp. 217b). It is impossible to establish a phonetic link between *čayši* and Late Middle Chinese <tʂa:j ʂhiək> because of the final consonant in the second syllable of the Late Middle Chinese form; see Yakup (forthcoming).

Old Uyghur started using *čay* for ‘banquet’, ‘monk’s meal’ in addition to *čayši* around the 10th century. We find it as part of the compound *čay kīl-* ‘to prepare a banquet’ in the 8th chapter of the *Xuanzang Biography*; see Röhrborn, 1996, ll., pp. 1429-1933. Obviously, the change from *čayši* to *čay* is not an inner Turkic development. *čay* in *čay kīl-* goes back to Chin. 齋 *zhai* ‘vegetarian diet’.

In Late Old Uyghur texts, *čay* is the only word for ‘banquet’ and ‘monk’s meal’, whereas *čayši* seems to have become archaic and was used to denote ‘meal’ as seen in the compound *aš čayši*; see the Dunhuang fragment B 128: 18 discovered in the Northern Grottoes of the Mogao caves. In this text, we see *čay* served as basis of the compounds

čay ber- ‘to give a banquet’ or ‘to organize a ceremony’. This demonstrates that it was established in Late Old Uyghur as a word both for ‘banquet’ and ‘monk’s meal’.

Unfortunately, there is a gap in the historical record. The Old Uyghur word *čay* ‘banquet’ originating from MChin. *tšäi*, the MChin. pronunciation of 齋 *zhai*, does not occur in the texts written after the 14th century. As I have mentioned, even the *Gaochangguan zazi* 高昌館雜字 from the 16th century does not have this word. It is not clear whether this is because the dictionary did not have this entry, or the word for banquet was not in use in this period. I think the second one is highly unlikely.

Judging from the fact that Old Uyghur has *čačan* ‘teacup’, I assume that **ča* denoting tea co-existed with *čay* with the meaning ‘banquet’ and ‘party’ already in Old Uyghur, although we do not have yet evidence for an independent usage of **ča* ‘tea’ in the hitherto-known Old Uyghur texts. It may well be that a fusion of **ča* ‘tea’ and *čay* ‘banquet’ has taken place in Old Uyghur proper. Presumably, it started in Late Old Uyghur mainly used in the Mongolian and Yuan period. We find *čai* in the Mongolian translation of the *Lalitavistara* which was edited by the late Altaist Nicholas Poppe:

Basa mön qatayu-ŋiqi čay-tur sildege-nü kümün nandi nandibali ner-e-ten ökid edür-tür naiman jaŋun bira-man-nuŋud-ta čai bariju...

Translation: Also, at the time when he was bearing hardship, the maids Nandā and Nandabalā, village inhabitants, served tea daily to eight hundred brahmas. (Poppe, 1967, pp. 51, l. 143)

M. Shōgaito (2003, p. 24) points out that the word *čai* found in the Mongolian translation of the *Lalitavistara* does not mean ‘tea’ but ‘monk’s meal’. I see this as collateral evidence of the fusion of **ča* ‘tea’ and *čay* ‘banquet’. I assume the fusion happened first in Old Uyghur and then was introduced to Pre-Classical Mongolian. As Nicholas Poppe writes, it is not clear whether Ses-rab Seri-ge, the translator of the Mongolian *Lalitavistara* was a Mongolian, however, “there is sufficient indirect evidence that Ses-rab Seri-ge knew Uyghur very well. He probably had a full command of it and obviously did not always distinguish between Uyghur and Mongolian.” (Poppe, 1967, p. 13)

Obviously, *čay* with the meanings ‘tea’ and ‘banquet’ resulted from the fusion of **ča* ‘tea’ and *čay* ‘banquet’ was inherited by some regional varieties of Modern Uyghur, first and foremost by the Qomul and Turfan varieties spoken in the eastern part of Xinjiang where Old Uyghur was used until the 15th century. Presumably, the eastern regions of Xinjiang kept the word in the meaning ‘tea’, ‘monk’s meal’ and ‘banquet’ side by side until a very late period until the 16th century, or even until the 17th century when Buddhism was completely replaced by Islam in the region. Designation of ‘monk’s meal’ by *čay* is assumed to have disappeared following the replacement of Buddhism by Islam around the 17th century in the region, however, the word *čay* kept the meaning ‘banquet’ in addition to ‘tea’ in the eastern part of Xinjiang. Note that Qomul and Turfan regions are the focal areas where *čay* is also used to designate banquet and ceremony as seen in *kičik čay* ‘small tea’ and *čöŋ čay* ‘big tea’. The first one also refers to the gathering where the presentation of small betrothal gifts takes place in addition to the betrothal gifts to be presented by bridegroom’s family to the family of bride when they visit bride’s family to ask for the girl in marriage, whereas the second one, namely *čöŋ čay* also refers to the ceremony where the main betrothal gifts to be presented in addition to main betrothal gifts just before the wedding. In a text that describes wedding customs recorded by the Russian ethnologist N. Th. Katanov in Turfan in 1891 the word *čay* was used in this

meaning; see Menges, 1976, pp. 23-24. It should be noted that the designation of both betrothal gifts and the gathering where the betrothal gifts to be presented by means of the word for tea is not observed in Chinese.

We do not know exactly when and how this designation of both betrothal gifts and related ceremony by the word *čay* started spreading in other Uyghur-speaking regions. Nevertheless, *čay* began to be used in this meaning in the modern Uyghur literary language around the 1980s, through which this meaning was also introduced to the southwest varieties of Uyghur. As a result, the word *čay* was established in Modern Uyghur with the basic meanings, 'tea', 'banquet' and ceremony. Later it was transmitted to the Uzbek variety used in Xinjiang, perhaps also to Tatar spoken in Xinjiang.

2. Transmission

At the end some more words on the transmission of the word for tea. According to A. Haneda, tea first was introduced to Tibetans and Uyghurs, and then to Mongols. Uyghurs and Mongols brought it to Persia in the Ilkhanid period, and the Russians knew first the term and adopted later the custom of drinking tea from the Mongols, until the mid 17th century (Haneda, 1984, pp. 339-340). I think A. Haneda's explanation is convincing and basically correspond with the thesis put forward first by M. Shōgaito (2003) and was argued in more detail in Yakup (2023) and the present paper.

However, the route of transmission of the word for tea was surely different with regard to the specific varieties of Turkic. The Old Uyghurs together with Mongols brought the word *čay* which was resulted from the fusion of the two different words for 'tea' and 'monk's meal' to Persia presumably in the Ilkhanate period where it was simply accepted as a word for 'tea'. The same word was introduced to Russian also by the Old Uyghurs and Mongols around the same period or later. And then the is assumed to have been introduced to the majority of Turkic languages in this meaning via the intermediary of Persian or Russian. That is why the languages grouped to (1)-(3) in our phonetic classification of the word for tea in the Turkic languages have the same or similar phonetic shape, and it is also why they also have the word of same or similar meanings. Some languages, e.g., Salar and Yellow Uyghur remained outside this transmission route. Presumably, Yellow Uyghur kept the Old Uyghur word for tea. However, this can hardly be the case of Salar. It is also possible that both languages have copied the word again from the Chinese dialects spoken in Northwest China. Thus, they have different forms than in the other Turkic languages. Only the two regional varieties of Uyghur, the Turfan and Qomul varieties, kept the word *čay* both in form and meaning as it was, I suppose, in Late Old Uyghur.

With reference to the claim, "Tea if by sea, cha if by land", I would like to add, "*Čay* if by the Silk Road", i.e., *Čay* was transmitted through the ancient northern Silk Road to the Eurasia, including the other part of the Turkic speaking world. Surely, Persian was not the language in which the word for tea first had the form *čay* but Old Uyghur. Existence of the Turkic languages that do not have the word for tea of this origin implies that either *čay* did not reach the regions where these languages are used or it failed to be established in these languages as part of their lexicon.

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