



Uluslararası  
Uygur Araştırmaları Dergisi  
2017/9

## ARCHAIC CORPUS CONCEPTS ON THE HISTORY AND CULTURE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF MATERIAL FROM “DIWAN LUGHAT AL-TURK” BY MAHMUD KASHGARI)

Tarih ve Kültür Üzerine Arkaik Yapı Kavramları (Kaşgarlı Mahmut Tarafından Yazılan “Divânü Lügâti’t-Türk” Adlı Eserden Örnekler Üzerine)

Gulbakhrem MOLOTOVA\*

### Abstract

Mahmud Qashqari’s work “Diwan lugat at-turk” is a valuable source for the study of archaisms fund. Some terms and lexemes have gone out of use, forming an extremely rich fund of archaisms. For the present-day researchers, they serve as a basis for identification of analogs of words subsequently replaced with Arabic and Persian loanwords.

Within the stated theme, it is supposed to reconsider the information recorded in the “Diwan lugat at-turk” by Mahmud Qashqari, which presents certain definitions to the ritual culture and historical realities. The obsolete words are naturally obscure by nowadays. Based on the explanations that accompany each word, one can restore some aspects of the ritual culture. Mahmud Qashqari also fixed terms for a certain day-part, as well as these relating to the wedding ceremony, sacrificial offering, family relations, animal world, etc. In part, the lexemes recorded by Mahmud Qashqari could be found in the runic written monuments. Such a material serves as an excellent basis to comprehend the process of language development during the antiquity and the early Middle Ages. The change of religion influenced the change of language terminological structure. Concepts recorded within the “Diwan lugat at-turk” suggest the existence of some terms related to the wedding ceremony of bygone period, which are not known at present. Owing to such terms, it is possible to reconstruct the picture of realities of the earlier periods in the history of Turkic speaking peoples. It should be noted that “Diwan lugat at-turk” also fixed terms referred to the genres of folklore and literature. A comparative analysis shows that some of them have fallen into disuse, while some have undergone changes.

We pay special attention to the information on the Qarakhanid dynasty recorded by Mahmud Qashqari. The author of “Diwan lugat at-turk” gives data about the battle between Buka-Budraj and Arslan Khan. This information sheds light on some aspects of the overall struggle between Uighur Muslims and Uighur Buddhists. Among the names comments, there are explained the meanings of the names of some representatives of the Qarakhanid dynasty: Bughra Khan’ laqab, Yusuf Kadyr Khan’s and Burhan ad-Din Qylych’s names. It also provides information on the territory of the Qarakhanid state. The notes to some words indicate that one of the representatives of the Qarakhanid dynasty had been poisoned in certain place – the case non-described in the “Tadhkira”. The information given by Mahmud Qashqari fills the gaps that exist in the historical treatises of the later periods.

**Keywords:** Term, source, archaisms, historical treatises, rituals.

---

\* Assoc. Prof., Gulbakhrem Molotova, Head of Section of Literature studies and linguistics, Center of Uyghur Studies Institute of Oriental Studies named after R.B. Suleymenov Ph.D. in Philology, Almaty-KAZAKHSTAN, E-mail: gmolotova@mail.ru

### Özet

*Kaşgarlı Mahmut'un Divân-ü Lügâti't-Türk adlı eseri, arkaizmler konusundaki kaynak çalışması için değerli bir eserdir. Bazı terim ve sözcük birimler ise arkaizmlerin oldukça zengin bir kaynağını biçimlendiren kullanımın dışındadır. Günümüz araştırmacıları için bunlar, Arapça ve Farsçadan ödünç olarak alınan kelimelerle sürekli bir şekilde yer değiştiren kelimelerin benzerlerini belirlemede bir temel olarak hizmet ederler.*

*Bahsedilen bu tema içinde, Kaşgarlı Mahmut tarafından yazılan; törensel kültür ve tarihsel gerçeklere ilişkin belirli tanımlar sunan Divân-ü Lügâti't-Türk içinde yer alan bilgileri tekrar düşünmek gerektiği varsayılmıştır. Günümüzde kullanımdan düşmüş kelimeler, tabiatı gereği belirsizliğini sürdürmektedirler. Her kelimeyle birlikte verilen açıklamalara dayanarak, bir kişi törensel kültürün bazı yönlerini restore edebilir. Kaşgarlı Mahmut hayvan dünyası, aile ilişkileri, kurban sunumu, evlenme töreni ile ilgili ve bunların yanı sıra belirli gün bölümleri için terimler belirlemiştir. Kısmen, Kaşgarlı Mahmut tarafından kadedilen sözcükler runik yazılı anıtlarda bulunabilir. Böyle bir malzeme antik dönem ve erken Orta Çağ döneminde dil gelişim sürecini anlamada mükemmel bir temel oluşturmaktadır. Din değişimi, dilin terminolojik yapısının değişimini etkilemiştir. Divân-ü Lügâti't-Türk içinde yer alan kavramlar, şu an bilinmeyen, geçmiş dönemin düşün töreni ile ilgili bazı terimlerin varlığına işaret etmektedir. Bu terimler sayesinde, Türkceneden konuşan halkların tarihindeki daha erken dönemlerin gerçeklerinin resmini yeniden inşa etmek mümkündür. Divân-ü Lügâti't-Türk'ün folklor ve edebiyat türlerine atıfta bulunulan terimler de ayrıca belirlediğine dikkat edilmelidir. Karşılaştırmalı bir analiz, bazılarının değişikliğe uğradığı bazılarının kullanımdan kaldırıldığını gösteriyor.*

*Kaşgarlı Mahmut'un kaydetmiş olduğu Karahanlı hanedanı hakkındaki bilgilere özellikle dikkat ediyoruz. Divân-ü Lügâti't-Türk'ün yazarı, Buka-Budraj ve Arslan Han arasındaki savaş hakkında bilgi verir. Bu bilgi, Uygur Müslümanları ile Uygur Budistleri arasında görülen genel mücadelenin bazı yönlerine ışık tutmaktadır. İsimlerin arasında yapılan yorumlarda, Karahanlı hanedanının bazı temsilcilerinin adlarının manaları açıklanmaktadır: Buğra Han lakabı, Yusuf Kadir Han'ın ve Burhan ad-Din Qylych'in adları. Bu eser ayrıca Karahanlı devletinin toprakları hakkında bilgi de sağlamaktadır. Bazı kelimelere eklenen notlar Karahanlı hanedanının temsilcilerinden birinin belli bir yerde zehirlendiğini - Tadhkira'da tanımlanmayan bir olay, belirtmektedir. Kaşgarlı Mahmut'un verdiği bilgiler, sonraki dönemlerin tarihî tezlerinde bulunan boşlukları doldurmaktadır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Terim, kaynak, arkaizm, tarihsel çalışma, tören.

The main source for our study is the work by Mahmud Kashgari, which's material indicates the level of development of culture and science during the reign of Qarakhanid dynasty. Change of religion and wars of conquest played certain role in transformation of some aspects of culture. Concepts previously used in the ancient Turkic period gradually began to be replaced by borrowings, while original Turkic terminology replenished the fund of archaisms. In order to detect such the changes of the Middle Ages in the history and culture of Turkic peoples, specialists turn to various sources. Among these there are ancient Turkic written monuments, such as "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" by Mahmud Kashgari and "Kutadgu Bilig" by Yusuf Khass Hajib. A comparative study of information found in these sources makes possible to explain the meaning of certain concepts or names of heroes of epics and dastans of later periods. Among the vast information contained in the sources mentioned above, one can also find aspects of ritual culture which have not been

preserved up to the present. These are the very samples of folk art where there appears a corpus of archaisms which are incomprehensible for the reader or even specialist of the present epoch. "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" by Mahmud Kashgari contains not only information about events that took place in his time, but also terms related to the ritual culture. The mentioned written artifact serves as a valuable source for modern researchers of the corpus of archaisms, which acts as a basis for identifying analogs of words replaced by Arabic-Persian borrowings.

### Concepts related to ritual culture

The information recorded in "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" by Mahmud Kashgari provides knowledge of certain aspects of ritual culture. Words obsolete in modern times are certainly understandable. Being guided by explanations given to each word, we restore some of the customs and rituals that accompanied the life of Turkic peoples in the epoch of Mahmud Kashgari. These can be divided into three groups: 1) concepts associated with the wedding ceremony; 2) concepts associated with funeral rites; 3) customs and rituals related to the birth of baby and his/her childhood.

For example, matchmakers were called "arquqi" (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:191). Girl's dowry in the time of Mahmud Kashgari was called "səp" (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:418). The fact is interesting that the term "yinqkəqiz" which stands for a "girl of majority age" has remained only in the work by Mahmud Kashgari (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981: 427), and was used in relation to slave maids as well. In the language of modern Turkic peoples the Arab-Persian borrowing "residə" is applicable, and "yinqkəqiz" has gone out of use. It should be noted that in the parables of the modern epoch we find a manifestation of this concept: "qyzdınzholy zhyñishke" – "girl's path is narrow" (Kyrgyz proverb). Here, first of all, we see the girls are admonished to observe the moral purity. In Uigur language there has preserved one of the aspects of this expression, i.e., "inchikə" – "one-inch", which is used to accentuate the subtlety of any situation, state or problem, etc.

In "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" we find a term "əgət" meaning "maidservant" – a woman who was sent to the house of the groom on the wedding day (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:72), and now the term "yəngə" is used. There is also seen a change in her functions. If "əgət" acts as a maidservant, then "yəngə" in the modern wedding ceremony is not a servant at all, but she is appointed from among the female relatives of the groom and her duty is to inform about the moral purity of the bride. The same volume of "Diwan" contains the term "əgətlik" (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:204), which is explained as a "maidservant" who sets off along with a bride. One can assume that for a girl given away in marriage it was customary to hire such a maidservant.

A term "dədək" suggests on the bride's isolation by a curtain from the eyes of outsiders (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:531), through which the realities of the early Middle Ages are manifested. Among the apparels and decorations in "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" there were indicated "didim" – diadem (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:516), "bakan" – necklace (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:519) and "boqmaq" (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:610) which was made of gold or/and silver inlaid with pearls and precious stones. These ornaments were worn by the bride in a very wedding night. Especially for the bride's relocation to the groom's house there was used a palanquin covered with silk cloth. Mahmud Kashgari mentions the name of such palanquin as "mündərü" (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:685).

In the wedding ceremonies of today there is a ritual "chashqa". After performing the nuptials, candies, coins or flowers (in some cases – rice) are poured upon the newly married couple. Thanks to information recorded in work by Mahmud Kashgari, it was detected that this custom of the early Middle Ages has been preserved in somewhat

modified form. In the XI century, in relation to this rite a term “munduri” was used and fine jewelry strewed (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:641).

One more aspect of the wedding rites is gifts presented to the newly married ones and their kinsfolk. Mahmud Kashgari recorded a term “kəzīt” with modern equivalent “kiyim, kiyim-kechək” (“clothes”) (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:463). In twentieth century, this term was no more in use, but in a slightly modified form there is maintained the custom to present the girl’s relatives with gifts called “seliq”, the amount of which is determined by the elders of society – “jut choqliri” or “aqsaqallar”.

Feast on the occasion of naming the baby was called “küdən” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:525). Mahmud Kashgari does not provide detailed explanations on how the very event occurred. However, a term recorded in “Diwan Lughat al-Turk” indicates retention of custom existed in the early Middle Ages. The modern analogue of this custom is “atqoyush” or “naming the name”. Other information somewhat complements the previous knowledge. Thus, the invited guests were handing out the pieces of silk, and this process which points to the existed custom was called “pīqih” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:475). It is noteworthy that the tradition to present a length of cloth maintained also in the wedding ceremony of Uighurs in the twentieth century. For this purpose, 30 meters of crepe-de-chine or silk were bought; 2 meter lengths of fabric were distributed among the invited relatives of the bride and were called “zhitish”. Besides, in this source under our concern there are mentioned children’s games: “ötüx” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:82), təpük (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:501). To the childhood is also related clearing session from the evil eye – “isriq” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:134), which indicates the aspect of traditional medicine.

Hospitality is one of the important aspects of spiritual culture of the people. In the source under study one can find a concept of “boxuq” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:482), which meant “to get permission”. Primarily, it referred to the diplomatic missions. Ambassadors needed to get the permission of the ruler to return homeland. This term also stood for a gift presented to the ambassadors. Gradually, it came to be used in relation to a guest who was about to return home. The event held on the occasion of departure of the guest (relative) was called “boxuq axi”. In the twentieth century’s Uighur culture there was maintained a custom to invite guests on arrival of relatives. In turn, neighbors and relatives also got-together in honor of the guest. And a gift brought by the guest to the host’s relatives was called “bälək” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:500). These two terms did not survive till nowadays.

As one can see from the discussed information from “Diwan Lughat al-Turk”, some of the terms related to the ritual culture have changed, some customs have lost their functions. A similar situation can be observed in respect of customs associated with funerals. Thus, for “əxük” a silk was used to cover a stretcher for carrying out of dead bodies (of khans, beks). After the funeral, this fabric was torn to pieces and distributed between the poor (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:98). Another term mentioned by Mahmud Kashgari is “qabırqaq” – a chest (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:652) which was also associated with a funeral rite. According to the explanatory, this chest was used for burial among non-Muslims. As can be seen from the explanations, the mentioned practices were the indicators of the realities of the author’s times, and eventually lost their functions. In modern Uighur language there is expression “ushmaqqa uchmaq” (“to fly high”), and the meaning of this idiomatic expression is not sufficiently clear to modern man. Condemning a person for any misconduct, it is said: “Ushmaqqa uchqansən” – “I think you have reached the heights”, i.e., it is of a deprecative shade. However, the true meaning of the word “ushmaq” is not understandable to the modern native speaker. It is perceived as something like “top, height”. The answer to this question can be found in the comments by

Mahmud Kashgari. Thus, “uqmaq” means “paradise” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:160). In Modern Uigur language, the concept of “paradise” is communicated by the Arab-Persian borrowing “zhənnət”. In the worldview of the ancient Turks, the soul of a righteous man flew to the upper world. Therefore, the passing away from worldly life was expressed by the word “uchti” (“has flown”). In this regard, runic inscriptions are interesting for the researchers by the fact that they contain the concept of hero of the narrative leaving his life. The Big inscription of the monument in honor of Bilge Kagan says that “Kul-Tegin has gone”. In written monuments of literature of later times the expression “has flown” is used. For example, in “Kutadgu Bilig” the news of the imminent death of vizier Aytoldi is conveyed through a dream. In this case, the expression “has flown” is used. The poem gives peculiar explanation of separation of the astral body from physical one (and this process in the literature and folklore of later periods is denoted close to these texts) – “the soul leaves the body like a bird its cage”.

According to the customs of many Turkic peoples, the passing away of any person is accompanied by distribution of the deceased’s belongings between his relatives as a memory of him. The origins of this custom trace back to the early Middle Ages, and it was denoted by the term “humaru”. According to this Turkic custom, Khan was presented by something valuable from the material property of the deceased. This term also referred to a thing which was left to his kinsfolk by a person who went on a long journey (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:581).

### **Unintelligible terms and concepts mentioned in folk dastans**

In the course of study of texts of folk epics, one often faces with some elements not understandable for the modern person. Thanks to the commentaries provided for these concepts or components of heroes’ proper names, we can find relevant solutions. Thus, in “Diwan Lughat al-Turk” there is recorded a term “tūlfir”, which is explained by Mahmud Kashgari as follows: “a curtain that separates the part of the premises where the women are. It is made of silk” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:596). Uighur version of “Gorogli” contains episode, when Ibrahim ibn Adham Gorogli converses with the wife of the governor of Kunduz through such a curtain. This is a “correction” introduced by religion into the spiritual culture of Turkic peoples. The epoch of Mahmud Kashgari is a period of the Qarakhanid dynasty governing in Eastern Turkestan. As is known, Sultan Satuq Bugra Khan and his descendants had spread Islam there, and this religion has both adapted local beliefs and also introduced certain changes into them.

In some cases, components of proper names of folk epics’ heroes remain unclear. Thus, in “Diwan Lughat al-Turk” we meet the meaning of “kərpə”: “The boy, who was born in the summer, was called “kərpə oqul”. Yearlings and lambs born late were also called with the addition of the word “kərpə” (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:542). Over time, most likely, “kərpə” became to be used to express “late child”. Having this information, we can put forward the assumption that the name of hero of the narration Kozy-Korpesh in Kazakh version and Boz-Korpash in Uighur version on the one hand indicates the season of hero’s birth – the summer, but on the other – it can suggest information that the hero is a late child of his parents.

For modern researchers, the name of Gorogly’s horse – Gyrat – gives no information. However, attracting the data from the composition by Mahmud Kashgari it can be established that “qir at” indicates a horse suit (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:425). Thus, the name of Gorogly’s racer originates from the equine coat color.

A term “īzuq” mentioned by Mahmud Kashgari was used in respect of cattle sacrificed in honour of gods. According to the commentary, an animal prepared for “īzuq” is “not to be loaded with burden, not to be milked and its wool is not to be shorn. The owner

devoted such a cattle for a particular purpose" (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:89). Based upon this information, it can be assumed that this is referred to a bloodless sacrifice. Such custom is found in the Turpan copy (XIII c.) of the epic "Oghuz-name". It mentions the Kurultai held by Oguz Kagan after successful conquests. There were erected two pillars 40 sajene high associated with a world tree. At the footing of pillars there were banded white and black sheep, and on the top – white and black hens. This was, most probably, a bloodless sacrifice to the gods for their support during war campaigns. The text does not mention the term "izuq", but judging by the explanation to the term given by Mahmud Kashgari, the ritual described in the epic text means bloodless sacrifice existed in the culture of many Turkic peoples of that period.

One of the characters of folklore is "alvasti, albasti". In the early Middle Ages, to describe this creature the term "abaqi" somewhat different from the modern analogs was used (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:184). As for the verbal texts' protagonists – the powerful man, the term "alpaqut" was used, giving a meaning of "invincible hero, the hero with a fearless heart", i.e., brave (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:195).

### Historical information

Of particular attention is the information recorded by Mahmud Kashgari about the Qarakhanid dynasty. The author of "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" gives details of the battle between Buqa-Budraj and Arslan Khan. This information sheds light on some aspects of the struggle of Muslim Uighurs against Uighurs-Buddhists. In the text of "Diwan Lughat al-Turk", there is used motif of Arslan Khan's army supported by God. The motif of support of the ruler by the supreme deity exists in the ancient Turkic written monuments. Thus, Turkic people win thank to the support of Kok, Umai and holy Yer-Suv. Line 38 of the monument in honor of Tonyukuk narrates that *"The Heaven, (Goddess) Umai, sacred Motherland (Earth-Mother) – they, chances are, granted us the victory"* (Malov, 1951:68). According to the lines 10-11 of this monument, Kok and holy Yer-Suv contributed to the revival of the Turkic Khanate: *"The Heaven of Turks and the sacred Earth and Water of Turks have said, 'Let not perish, saying such, the Turkic nation, let it be the Nation' – so said the Heaven, guiding from their (celestial) heights my father Ilterish-Khagan and my mother Ilbilga-Katun, raising them (over the people)"* (Malov, 1951:37).

On the overthrow by representatives of the Qarakhanid dynasty of the Samanid domination over the Turks, the brief information contained in the commentary to the word "həmir" is given, which communicates that "ancestors who have returned Turkic countries in their hands were called 'həmir təgin'" (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:151). This short notion represents the historical reality – when the Samanid domination was overthrown during Sultan Satuq Bugra Khan's descendants. Meanings of names of individual representatives of Qarakhanids are explained by Mahmud Kashgari as follows: "buqra" – male camel (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:548), "qadir" – brave, fearless (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:472), "qiliq" – quick and acute as a sword (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:465). In the commentary to one toponym, there is given information which is not found in "Tadhkira". In particular, the author of the "Dictionary" writes that in the area of "siqun samur" Bugra Khan is poisoned (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:533). However, Mahmud Kashgari does not indicate which of Qarakhanids exactly had been poisoned.

For researchers interesting is the proverb contained in "Diwan Lughat al-Turk", which reads: "qiz birlə kürəxmə qisraq birlə yarixma" – "do not fight with a girl, do not compete with a non-foaled mare". This proverb is given in the commentary to the word "qisraq" (Mahmud Kashgari, 1981:619). Here a brief history of appearance of this proverb is given: in the wedding night, one of the girls from the Haqqani-ya family kick-knocked Sultan Mas'ud, after that this popular wisdom appeared. In order to secure the

agreement of support between the Ghaznavids and the Qarakhanids, it was decided to intermarry. According to E.M. Molotova, researcher of Karakhanids' history, in 1025 there were negotiations on mutual support between two empires, which was mentioned above (Molotova, 2016: 157). Information about this agreement is given in the work by Abu Fazl Beyhaki, according to which: "the ambassador Khwaja Abu-l-Qasim Huseyri, neydim and kazy Bu Tahir Tabbani departed from Balkh to Turkestan with a purpose to enter into agreement with Qadir Khan about the matchmaking of one of his daughters for Sultan Masud and one of the daughters of Bogra-tegin for prince Emir Mawdudi". After the death of Qadir Khan, his son Bogra-tegin, named Arslan Khan, ascended the throne and fulfilled this betrothal. However, the girl betrothed for Emir Mawdudi died on the road, while Shah-Khatun – a daughter of Qadir Khan was married to Sultan Masud (Abu-Fazl Beyhaki, 1962:378). The mentioned proverb reflects these very realities. Similar examples from "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" allow to highlight the problem of historicism in the genre of proverbs.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Mahmud Kashgari also recorded the terms for a certain time of a day, the terms relating to the wedding ceremony, sacrifice, family relations, the animal world. This material is an excellent basis for comprehension of the process of development of the language during the ancient times and the early Middle Ages. The change of religion exerted an influence upon the transformation of terminology composition of the language. Concepts fixed in "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" suggest the existence of certain terms related to the wedding ceremony of that period, which are not known at present. Thanks to such terms, it is possible to restore the picture of realities of the earlier periods in the history of Turkic-speaking peoples. It should be noted that "Diwan Lughat al-Turk" also contains terms referred to the genres of folklore and literature; their comparative analysis shows that some of them have fallen into disuse, some have transformed.

### **Bibliography**

- BEYHAKI Abu-Fazl (1962), *Istoriya Mas'uda (1030-1041)*. Tashkent. s. 748.
- MALOV S. E. (1951), *Pamyatniki drevnetyurkskoy pismennosti. Teksti i issledovaniya*. Moskva-Leningrad. s. 452.
- KASHGARI Mahmud (1981), *Diwan Lughat al-Turk*. V. 1, Urumchi. b. 689.
- MOLOTOVA Elvira (2016), «Tazkirayi Bugra-khan»: *Istoriya I Kul'tura Karakhanidskogo Gosudarstva*. Almaty. s. 208.