SOME REMARKS ON OLD TURKISH WORDS FOR "WIFE" *

PETER ZIEME

The collection and the explanation of the Old Turkish personal names is of great importance for the study of the juridical and economic documents of Turfan. To recall only one example, one may mention that this work helps to establish the interrelationships of the persons involved in the transactions which the documents were issued for. While preparing an Old Turkish onomastikon it is necessary to check not only the names of the persons, but also to collect names from the colophons attached to religious books. By editing so far unpublished colophons and similar texts containing personal names it is intended to make accessible new sources.

In order to give correct explanations of the personal names one has to pay attention to the terms of relationship preceding in many cases, unfortunately not always, the names. Before discussing some terms meaning "wife" used in the religious colophons I want to mention that the orderers usually name in the first position of the section of the transfer of merit their elder brothers (içi). This fact well corresponds to the result A. v. Gabain pointed out when she studied the specific role of the older brothers in the social life of the family. ¹

The group of words for "wife" and "woman" has been studied several times. The articles of W. Bang, ² S. Çağatay, ³ L. Rásønyi, ⁴ and L. A. Pokrovskaja, ⁵ to name the most important ones only, are indeed valuable contributions on this subject. Neither I want to repeat the results of those

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works nor I intend to discuss the known usual words. My main purpose is
to draw the attention to some rather unknown terms found in recently edi-
ted texts and to give some new data on words already known.

1. kisi

Since the publication of G. Clauson’s Etymological Dictionary \(^6\) and
the new American edition of Kāšyarī’s Dīvān \(^7\) it has become clear that
we have to distinguish, at least for the older periods, between kāsi “human
being” and kisi “wife”. \(^8\) While W. Bang thought that the word kisi “der
(andere) Mensch” \(^9\) was used in a specified manner for “wife”, G. Clauson
introduced the reading kisi depending on Kāšyarī’s statement, into the in-
terpretation of some Old Uigur documents. \(^10\) Additionally it should be
mentioned that the only family register so far known also has kisim “my
wife”. \(^11\) Coming now to the religious texts, one should first of all refer to
the colophon written by the lay-brother Alp Bars and the lay-sister Kökāč
as an appendix to an Old Turkish version of an Avalokiteśvarastava the text
of which is not preserved. \(^12\) In the colophon itself there is no statement
on the relationship of the named lay-brother and lay-sister. One may sup-
pose that they were in the status of husband and wife, as can be deduced by
analogy, without excluding the possibility of other relationships, e.g. that of
brother and sister. It is remarkable that the section of the transfer of merit
contains the following statement: kisim Alqatmišqa “for my wife” Alqat-
mīš”. \(^13\) Of particular interest is the unedited colophon TM 36 of the Berlin
Turfan Collection, it belongs to a block-printed edition of six sūtras of the
Buddhist canon. \(^14\) There we find the enumeration of terms of relationship
in the following order: elder brothers (ičläirim) younger brothers (inīlärīm),
elder sisters (ākhālārim), younger sisters (singīlārim), kisilārim, sons (oylan-
larām), daughters (qižlarīm), grandchildren (uruylarām), (other) family


\(^7\) R. Dankoff, J. Kelly, *Compendium of the Turkic Dialects* (Dīwān Lāyāt at - Turk), Harvard 1982–1985, Parts I–III.

\(^8\) See *ED* (fn. 6), 749a; *CTD* (fn. 7), part III, p. 107: kis “wife”.

\(^9\) Bang (fn. 2), p. 245.

\(^10\) *ED* (fn. 6), 749a.


\(^13\) Hazai (fn. 12), p. 274 line 20.

\(^14\) See my provisional remarks in: Religion und Gesellschaft im Uigurischen Königreich
von Qočo. Kolophone und Stifter des alttürkischen buddhistischen Schriftums aus Zentral-
asien, in: *Problema von Schrifttum und Gesellschaft in altasiatischen Kulturen*, Berlin (in
print).
members (qadaşlarım).

In the case of other texts A. v. Gabain proposed to translate the plural of kişi/kisi as "relatives", not as "wives", but the above cited text does not speak in favour of such an interpretation. I believe that kisiülərim has to be translated in the narrow sense of "my wives" being a generalized statement of several persons. One of the two colophons edited by L. Ju. Tuguşeva contains five times the expression anam "my mother" followed by different personal names. Obviously these mothers are those of several persons (orderers). In the light of such examples it has to be considered that these texts often were written by the order of not one, but rather several persons.

2. bəğ

The usual word for "husband" is bəğ. This is already stated by Kâşyarî. It can be found in the documents as well as in some colophons. A good example is the confession text of the lay-sister Qutluğ who names her late husband (ürtimiş bəğim).

In a text printed in 1330 the wife calls her husband Yol Tämür on behalf of his healthy return öz bəğim "my own bəğ". Likewise in a colophon text from Murtuq there appears Öz B(ä)g as a personal name: inim Öz Bğ-ğä "for my younger brother Öz B(ä)ğ". In the same colophon bəğim has the meaning "my wife". Here are the examples: bəğim Qutadmiş Bört "my wife Qutadmış Bört", bəğim Ödüş-kä "for my wife Üdüş", L. Rásonyi and S. Çağatay respectively have given references to this meaning of bəğim on the basis of other sources.

3. qatd (= qa’t)

The following items of qatdim (= qa’tim) "my wife" are taken from a colophon attached to an unknown book:

\[ qatdim Qitay [Tn]gri[m]-kä "for my wife Qitay [Tn]gri[m]", \]
\[ qatdim Üritmiş "my wife Üritmiş", \]

15 TM 36 (U 4791) [in the possession of the Turfan Collection of the AdW der DDR], lines 15-17.
18 ED (fn. 6), 323a.
22 MzuO III (fn. 21), p. 268, line 12.
25 Çağatay (fn. 3 [b]), p. 15 sqq.

From the context it becomes clear that the form qatdim is not the Past of a verb, but rather a noun to which the Possessive Suffix of the first person is added.

S. Çağatay mentions the word qat and its variants as they are found in some Siberian Turkish languages 27. Further data are given in the recent publications by N. A. Baskakov 28. I cannot follow S. Çağatay’s assumption that qat etc. are abbreviated forms of xatun > qadin 29. The main reason is the fact that in some colophons or other texts the word xatun “wife” 30 is well known even as a part of personal names 31.

The most striking feature of qatd is its rendering of the final consonant so far not known from other words. I suppose that this rendering must reflects a peculiarity of its pronunciation. In this connection I want to cite the Tuvinian words qa’taš “wife” 32 contrasting with qatim “my father-in-law” 33. The first word has the phenomenon of pharyngalisation 34. I think that the rendering –td– was used to express this peculiar pronunciation. All in all, I want to propose that the basis of the word qa’t “wife” is more or less identical with qa’t “layer” 35.

4. aļiņču

There is only one example in a colophon to an unknown Buddhist work: aļiņču xatun-larim “my taken wives” 36. Obviously, aļiņču being an Attribute to xatun, is derived from al– “to take”, in a specific sense “to take a woman, to marry” 37. S. Çağatay refers to other deverbal nouns such as aļyar 38. In the Mongolian language there is a similar expression: abali “wife” derived from ab– “to take” 39.

26 MzuO III (fn. 21), text B lines verso 7-8.
27 Çağatay (fn. 3 [b]), pp. 13–14.
28 N. A. Baskakov, Dialetk lebedinskikh tatar - čalkancev (kuu-kiži), Moskva 1985, p. 159.
29 Çağatay (fn. 3 [b]), p. 13.
30 ED (fn. 6), p. 602b.
31 See fn. 43.
33TRS (fn. 32), 231b.
35 ED (fn. 6), p. 593b.
36 BT XIII, 42.23.
38 Çağatay (fn. 3 [b]), p. 19.
39 See note on BT XIII 42.23.
5. adaš

According to the examples recorded in K. Röhrlborn’s Uigurisches Wörterbuch the word adaš has the general meaning “comrade, friend”, but one has to consider that the colophon edited by L. Ju. Tuguševa contains the following data:

"adas-im Bolmīš-qa “for my adaš Bolmīš”,
ada[s]-im Qurluγ-qa “for my adaš Qurluγ”, followed by two names without a preceding term of relationship: Qarna Šāli-kā “for Qarna Šāli” and Ana Xatun Tngrim-kā “for Ana Xatun Tngrim”,
adašim Ilīg-kā “for my adaš Ilīg”, again followed by two names: Yīγmīš Tngrim-kā “for Yīγmīš Tngrim” and Kā[s]ik Tngrim-kā “for Kā[s]ik Tngrim”.

As this colophon does not contain any other term for “wife”, one might suggest that the word adaš is used here in this sense. But the name Qarna Šāli is a pure masculine name, and the meaning “sevgili” given by S. Çağatay seems to be a secondary one.

40 UWB (fn. 37), p. 48ab.
41 Tuguševa (fn. 17), p. 255 line 14.
42 Tuguševa (fn. 17), p. 255 line 23.
43 Ibidem.
44 Ibidem.
47 Çağatay (fn. 3 [b]), p. 32.