

Title	Epistolary Formulae of the Old Uighur Letters from the Eastern Silk Road (Part2)
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Citation	大阪大学大学院文学研究科紀要. 2012, 52, p. 1-98
Version Type	VoR
URL	<a href="https://doi.org/10.18910/23262">https://doi.org/10.18910/23262</a>
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# Epistolary Formulae of the Old Uighur Letters from the Eastern Silk Road (Part 2)

Takao MORIYASU

\* 本稿の前編は『大阪大学大学院文学研究科紀要』第51巻（2011年3月）に和英対訳で掲載された。すでに後編の和文版は森安孝夫（編）『ソグドからウイグルへ』（汲古書院，2011年12月）に掲載されたので，ここには後編の英文版のみを掲載する。ただし付録があるのはこちらだけである。

## 7. Basic Conventional Greetings

[II-1] Basic conventional greetings (see p. 61 of Part 1 of this article = Moriyasu 2011) in Uighur letters are composed of a number of stock phrases. I shall begin by explaining each of their constituent elements.

A letter is usually sent from a far-off place, and it begins first with **(1a)** *iraq yir-dän/tin* “from a far place” or its abbreviated form *iraqtan* “from afar,” which is sometimes followed in the manner of an antithesis by **(1b)** *yayyuq* (or *yaqin*) *köng(ü)lin* “with/by a near heart.” The antithesis construction **(1a)+(1b)** “from a far place with a near heart” is also found in Sogdian, Khotanese and Mongolian.<sup>1)</sup> It has not yet been possible to establish its origins, but it has been pointed out by Sims-Williams (1996a, p. 83) that at least (1a) can be traced all the way back to Ugaritic and Middle Babylonian in Mesopotamia.<sup>2)</sup> Next comes a

1) Cf. DTSTH, p. 69; Sims-Williams 1996a, p. 83; Yoshida 2000c = TuMW, pp. 267-268, 271; Emmerick 1975, pp. 225-226; Kumamoto 1982, pp. 138-140. There can be no doubt that the Mongolian expression *yajar-un qola-ača oyir-a-yin sedkil-iyer* “with a close heart from a distant place” found in the Mongolian letter fragment G 117 from Kara-khoto has been influenced by Uighur (cf. Kara 2003, p. 36).

2) Sims-Williams 1996a, p. 83. This article by Sims-Williams discusses how the stock phrases of letters that originated in Mesopotamia in the second millennium B.C. exerted an influence on Sogdian and other languages of Central Eurasia, probably through the medium of Achaemenian Aramaic or the Middle Persian of the Sassanids. Although a short study, it is very thought-provoking, and when one considers the advancedness of Mesopotamia in the history of human

conventional phrase such as **(1c)** *isinü amranu* “having warm and friendly feelings > with warm and friendly feelings,” **(1d)** *äsängüläyü* “giving one’s greetings,” or **(1e)** *yinčürü yükünü* “bowing down and worshipping.” This is followed by the closing formula **(1f)** *üküş köngül ayitu idur biz/män* “we/I send (a letter) asking many times about (your) heart (= mental health)” (used in letters to superiors, peers and inferiors) or by a variant (1f’) or abbreviated form of this. As a more polite form of (1f), there is also the expression **(1g)** *üküş köngül ötünü täginür biz/män* “we/I venture to ask many times about (your) heart (= mental health)” (used only in letters to superiors)<sup>3</sup>.

It may be noted in passing that while, like previous scholars (cf. UBr, Text D; Zieme 1975 = BTT V, no. 31 & no. 33; MOTH), I regard *id-* in (1f) *üküş köngül ayitu idur biz/män* as the main verb, meaning “to send,” it is also possible to take it as an auxiliary verb used in an intensive sense and joined to the converbal form of the preceding verb *ayit-* “to ask.” If one attaches special importance to the fact that the corresponding verb in (1g) *üküş köngül ötünü täginür biz/män*, the polite form of (1f), is the auxiliary verb *tägin-*, then it may be more reasonable to interpret (1f) as “we/I ask many times about (your) heart (= mental health)” in contrast to (1g) “we/I venture to ask many times about (your) heart (= mental health).” But as can be seen in the example from the *Da Ci’ensi sanzang fashi zhuan* quoted in footnote 3, the Chinese equivalent of Uighur *üküş köngül ayitu idur* is *zhishu... jingwen* 致書…敬問 or *zhiwen* 致問, and since *zhi* 致 here clearly means “to send,” I shall for the present follow the generally accepted interpretation.

The word *köngül* appearing in (1f) and (1g) always refers not to one’s own (i.e., the sender’s) “heart, feelings,” but to the other party’s (i.e., addressee’s) “heart, mental state > health,” and *köngül ayit-* or *köngül ötün-* ought to be translated as “to inquire after someone’s health.”<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the word *üküş* in *üküş köngül ayitu* (or *ötünü*) must be interpreted not as an adjective meaning “many” and qualifying *köngül*, but as an adverb meaning “many times, repeatedly” and modifying *ayitu* (or *ötünü*). This can also be

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culture, one can agree with its general thrust. But questions arise regarding some details. For example, would not the use of “slave, servant” as a first-person term of self-deprecation develop of its own accord even without any direct influence from outside?

3) Also instructive, although not attested in an actual letter, is the fact that phrases such as *zhishu... jingwen* 致書…敬問 and *zhiwen* 致問 in the original Chinese of the *Da Ci’ensi sanzang fashi zhuan* (Biography of Xuanzang) are translated in Uighur by expressions that include the words *üküş köngül ayitu idur* (BHtB, ll. 1825-1826, 1839-1840).

4) Cf. UBr, p. 454; MOTH, p. 99, n. 17.3 & p. 52, n. 5.65.

confirmed from the parallel expression in Sogdian, thought to derive from Uighur (cf. Yoshida, TuMW, pp. 86-87, 125).<sup>5)</sup> The verb *ayit-* means “to ask,” while *ötün-* has many meanings, but is here used as a polite form of *ayit-*, and in some cases the biverb *ayit- ötün-* corresponds to the Chinese *qingwen* 請問<sup>6)</sup>. Some might regard this *ötün-* as an auxiliary verb expressing humility, but the common auxiliary verb of humility in Uighur is *tägin-* “to venture to do something, to do humbly, to do respectfully.”<sup>7)</sup> In Buddhist texts, *köngül ayitu tägin-* may correspond to Chinese *wenji* 問疾 (cf. Zieme 2000, BTT XX, p. 167).

Next, I shall list some concrete examples of basic greetings that come at the start of the salutation as a whole, and the numbers (1 a) ~ (1 g) have been added to show how these conventional phrases are combined.

- (1 a) *iraq yir-dän/tin; iraqtan*
- (1 b) *yayyuq (or yaqin) köng(ü)lin*
- (1 c) *isinü amranu*
- (1 d) *äsängüläyü*
- (1 e) *yinčürü yükünü*
- (1 f) *üküş köngül ayitu idur biz/män*
- (1 g) *üküş köngül ötünü täginür biz/män*

(1 a)+(1 b)+(1 c)+(1 d)+(1 f)

*iraq yirdän/yirdin yayyuq köng(ü)lin isinü amranu äsängüläyü üküš (üküş) köngül ayitu idur biz* [MOTH 20, ll. 3-5, semi-square, Type E 1; MOTH 22, ll. 1-2, semi-square, Type E 2; MOTH 29, ll. 2-3, semi-square, Type D 1]

“From a far place but near at heart, with warm and friendly feelings, giving (our) greetings, we send (a letter) asking many times about (your) heart (= mental health).”

(1 a)+(1 c)+(1 d)+(1 f)

*iraq yirdän isinü amranu äsängüläyü üküš üküš köngül ayitu idur biz* [MOTH 22, ll.

5) But in the following expression appearing in the draft of a letter in semi-square script [Ot.Ry. 1914 side a, ll. 2-3] *üküş* is probably an adjective: *iraqtin üküš sav idayin* “Let me send many words from afar.”

6) Cf. ShōAbd II, p. 313 = ShōUAb, p. 610.

7) Cf. GOT, pp. 130, 369; ED, p. 484b; Wilkens 2007, BTT XXV, p. 412.

5-6, semi-square, Type E2]

“From a far place, with warm and friendly feelings, giving (our) greetings, we send (a letter) asking many times about (your) heart (= mental health).”

*iraqtan isinü amranu äsängüläyü üküš üküš köngül ayıtu idur biz* [MOTH 23, ll. 3-4, semi-square, Type D2]

“From afar, with warm and friendly feelings, giving (our) greetings, we send (a letter) asking many times about (your) heart (= mental health).”

(1a)+(1d)+(1f)

*iraqtan äsängüläyü üküš köngül ayıtu idur+män* [Ot.Ry. 5328 + 5356, l. 2, semi-square, Type ?]

(1a)+(1b)+(1c)+(1f')

*iraq yirdän yayuq köngilün isinü amranu idur biz* [MOTH 17, ll. 13-14, semi-square, Type C]

“From a far place but near at heart, with warm and friendly feelings, we send (a letter).”

(1a)+(1b)+(1f')

*iraq yir-tin yaqın köngül-in inç-lik äsän-lik ayıtu idur biz* [UBr, Text C = K 7715, ll. 4-5, cursive, Type E3, Buddhist]

“From a far place but near at heart, we send (a letter) asking about (your) good state of health.”

(1a)+(1c)+(1f')

*iraqtan isinü amranu köngül ayıtu idur biz* [MOTH 17, ll. 2-3, semi-square, Type C]

“From afar, with warm and friendly feelings, we send (a letter) asking about (your) heart (= mental health).”

(1a)+(1d)+(1g)

*iraqtan äsängüläyü üküš köngül ötünü täginür+biz* [BTT V, no. 32 = Ch/U 6854 v, ll. 3-4, semi-square, draft of Type A, Manichaean]

“From afar, giving (our) greetings, we venture to ask many times about (your) heart (=

mental health).”

(1 a)+(1 e)+(1 g)

*iraqtan yinčürü yükünü üküš köngül ötünü [täginür+biz] [TuKa, pl. 84 on p. 90 = K 7713 recto, l. 3, semi-square, Type A, Buddhist]*

“From afar, bowing down and worshipping, [we venture to] ask many times about (your) heart (= mental health).”

(1 a)+(1 f)

*yiraq yirdän üküš köngül ayiti idur biz [MOTH 28, ll. 5-6, semi-square, Type D 2]*

*iraqtan üküš üküš köngül ayitu idur biz [MOTH 5, 4<sup>th</sup> text, ll. 65-66, semi-square, draft of Type A, Manichaean]*

*iraqtan üküš köngül ayitu idur+män [UBr, Text D = U 5890, ll. 3-4, semi-square, Type E 2]*

*iraq yir-tin üküš köngül ayitu idur+män [B 59: 68 held by Dunhuang Academy, ll. 1-2, cursive, Type E 2]*

(1 a)+(1 f’)

*iraqtin üküš köngül ayitu<sup>8)</sup> idur+biz [MOTH 26, l. 1, semi-square, probably Type D 1]*

*iraqtin köngül ötünmäk idur+män [U 5294, ll. 14-15, semi-cursive, Type ?]*

“From afar, I make inquiries about (your) heart (= mental health).”

(1 a)+(1 g)

*iraqdan üküš köngül ötünü [tä]ginür män [Ch/U 6570 + 6959, ll. 2-3, semi-square, Type B]*

(1 a)+(1 g’)

*iraqtin üküš köngül ayitu ötünü täginür biz [UBr, Text A = K 7718, ll. 3-4, semi-square, Type A]*

“From afar, we venture to ask (hend.) many times about (your) heart (= mental health).”

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8) I assume that *ayitu* has been mistakenly omitted.

The above examples at least begin with a conventional phrase such as (1 a) “from a far place; from afar” and end with the formulaic (1 f) or (1 g) or a variant thereof (1 f’) (1 g’), and this is the overriding principle. However, in letters other than those addressed to a superior it is possible in exceptional cases for the dative suffix indicating the addressee to be immediately followed by the closing formula [cf. MOTH 24, ll. 1-2, semi-square, Type D 1]. In addition, one sometimes finds examples of (1 f) in which *köngül* has been omitted, and these tend to occur in these exceptional cases.<sup>9)</sup>

A point to note regarding basic conventional greetings is that they do not include seasonal greetings at all. This is quite striking when one considers that the *Shuyi* 書儀, a guide to letter writing in Chinese, the primary cultural language in the Eastern Silk Road, had circulated widely and the greater part of its specimen examples of greetings was devoted to seasonal greetings. In fact, seasonal greetings have not been found in other Central Eurasian languages either, for example, among Gāndhārī letters (Niya Kharoṣṭhī documents), Bactrian letters, and Sogdian letters. Moreover, according to Takeuchi Tsuguhito, seasonal greetings appear in Tibetan letters due to the influence of Chinese letters from around the tenth century, but they are not found in original Tibetan letters written at the time of the Tibetan empire.<sup>10)</sup> This may possibly be because, unlike the *Shuyi*, which evolved in northern China, a Sinophone cultural sphere sharing the same seasons, letters in the world of Central Eurasia were premised on the fact that they would be delivered over long distances and it was only natural that the climate should differ; alternatively, because it took several weeks or more than a month for letters to reach their destination, there was from the outset no assumption of a shared experience of the same season. When considered in this light, it would seem quite understandable that the phrase (1 a) “from afar” goes back to Mesopotamia and is found also in Sogdian, Khotanese and Mongolian.

## 8. Expressions about the Health of Both Parties

In letters of any language, it would be general practice for the sender to express first of all solicitude for the addressee at the start or near the start of a letter. Uighur letters differ little in this regard, and basic conventional greetings [II-1] are followed by statements about the

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9) TuMW, Letter E, l. 30; MOTH 29 = P. ou. 3, l. 9; Ot.Ry. 2718, l. 3; U 5941, l. 16; Ot.Ry. 1592, ll. 4-5.

10) Takeuchi 1986, p. 588; Takeuchi 1990, pp. 185, 189.

addressee's health [II-3] and/or the sender's health [II-5], but what is slightly unusual is the not infrequent insertion of religious greetings [II-2] between the two. However, since there are many points that deserve special examination regarding the distinctive greetings used by Manichaeans and Buddhists in particular, these will be dealt with separately in Chapters 9 and 10, and in this chapter I shall discuss conventional phrases concerning the addressee's health [II-3], the sender's sense of relief [II-4], and the sender's health [II-5].

### (1) Inquiries about the Addressee's Health [II-3]

At the end of basic conventional greetings [II-1] there is already included an inquiry after the addressee's health, but there are in addition a number of conventional phrases whereby the sender inquires in greater detail after the addressee's health in the form of questions. In premodern times, providing that the letter was not a business letter, the highest priority was given to formal greetings or the ascertainment of the other party's well-being, and it was probably for this reason that the following phrases were added, with often more than one such phrase being used.

(3a) *ädgü+mü äsän+mü* “Are you in good health (hend.)?”; (3b) *köng(ü)li ädgü+mü* “Is your (lit. his) mind good?”; (3c) *yini yinik+mü* “Is your (lit. his) body light (unburdened)?” Phrases (3b) and (3c) are often used together in an antithesis construction. As is also evident from the examples cited when discussing “YOU” in the section on alternative expressions for the first and second persons in Chapter 6, it is common for the third person, indicative of respect, to be used instead of the second person. But there are also instances in which the second person is definitely used. So these are referred to here as (3b') *köngülüng(üz-lär) ädgü+mü* “Is your mind good?” and (3c') *yining(üz-lär) yinik+mü* “Is your body light?” (3d) *nätäg sän/sizlär, nätäg ärür (siz)* “How are you?”; (3e) *nätäg yarliqar ärki/siz* “How is Your Lordship?”; (3f) *nätäg inč+mü sän/siz(lär), nätäg inč+mü ärki, nätäg inč ärki sizlär* “How are you keeping?”; (3g) *nätäg inč+mü yarliqar ärki/mu* “How is Your Lordship keeping?” (3e) is the polite form of (3d), and (3g) is the polite form of (3f). However, I would like to draw attention to the fact that (3f) is used in a letter included in the *Biography of Xuanzang*, where one would expect considerable use to be made of honorific language.<sup>11)</sup> This is presumably related to the fact that this letter is of neither Type A nor Type B, but of Type D1. Meanwhile, in the dictionary by Kāṣṣārī of the

11) Cf. Gabain 1938, pp. 375, 378 = BHtB, ll. 1828-1829, 1884 = AtXzB, VII, ll. 1855-1856, 1911.



Karakhanid period one finds the expression *köngül enč+mü* “Is your heart content?” (CTD, II, p. 374).

The greetings in the form of questions given above as (3 a) ~ (3 g) do not anticipate an immediate response and are stock phrases used to express the wish that the other party is in good health. Therefore, instead of using interrogative sentences that include the indeclinable *mu*, which clearly expresses a question, or the interrogative *nätäg* as in (3 a) ~ (3 g), there are also expressions using the particle *ärki*, which expresses a far weaker sense of doubt or implies the hope that something will be so: (3h) *inč ärki sän/sizlär* “You are well, aren’t you?” or its polite form (3i) *inč yarlıqar ärki* “I presume that Your Lordship is well.” In the later period, there also appears the expression (3j) *inč äsän bar/ärür ärki sizlär* “You are fine and healthy, aren’t you?”

The above expressions inquiring after the well-being of the other party in the form of a question generally follow basic conventional greetings [II-1] and/or religious greetings [II-2], but in letters that are not of such a polite nature there are instances in which they are used without any preamble. Some concrete examples are given below, and the numbers (3 a) ~ (3 j) have been added to show how these conventional phrases are combined (although they are sometimes used singly).

(3 a) *ädgü+mü äsän+mü*

(3 b) *köng(ü)li ädgü+mü*

(3 b’) *köngülüng(üz-lär) ädgü+mü*

(3 c) *yini yinik+mü*

(3 c’) *yining(iz-lär) yinik+mü*

(3 d) *nätäg sän/sizlär; nätäg ärür sän/siz/sizlär*

(3 e) *nätäg yarlıqar ärki/siz*

(3 f) *nätäg inč+mü sän/siz(lär); nätäg inč+mü ärki; nätäg inč ärki sizlär*

(3 g) *nätäg inč+mü yarlıqar ärki/mu*

(3 h) *inč ärki sän/sizlär*

(3 i) *inč yarlıqar ärki*

(3 j) *inč äsän bar/ärür ärki sizlär*

(3 b)+(3 c)+(3 e)

*köngli ädgü+mü yini yinik+mü nätäg yarlıqar ärki* [BTT V, no. 30 = U 5281, ll. 7-8, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

“Is your (lit. his) mind good? Is your (lit. his) body light (unburdened)? How is Your

Lordship?”

*kö[nqli] ädgü+mü yini yinik+mü nätäg yarliqayur ärki* [TuKa, pl. 84 on p. 90 = K 7713  
recto, ll. 4-5, semi-square, Type A, Buddhist]

(3 b’)+(3 c’)+(3 d)

*könglüng ädgü+mü yining yinik+mü nätäg ärür sän* [MOTH 22, ll. 2-3, semi-square,  
Type E 2]

“Is your mind good? Is your body light (unburdened)? How are you?”

*köngülüngüz-lär ädgü+mü yiningiz-lär yinik+mü nätäg ärür sizlär* [MOTH 23, ll. 4-5,  
semi-square, Type D 2]

“Are your minds good? Are your bodies light (unburdened)? How are you?”

(3 b)+(3 c)+(3 f) or (3 g)

*köngüli ädgü+mü [yini yin]ik+mü nätäg inč+mü ärki* [Ot.Ry. 1647, ll. 3-4, semi-  
square, extraordinarily Type B]

“Is your (lit. his) mind good? Is your (lit. his) body light (unburdened)? How are you  
keeping?”

*köngüli ädgü+mü yini yinik+mü [nätäg yarliq]ar ärki* [TuMW, Letter E, ll. 3-4, semi-  
square, Type A, Manichaeian]

*[köngli]i ädgü+mü yini yinik+mü nätäg [ ]* [MOTH 32, ll. 2-3, semi-square, Type ?]

*[köngli] ädgü mü yini yinik mü nätäg inč+mü //* [U 5929, l. 5, semi-square, Type ?,  
Manichaeian]

(3 a)+(3 d)

*ädgü+mü äsän+mü nätäg sän* [MOTH 26, l. 2, semi-square, probably Type D 1]

“Are you in good health (hend.)? How are you?”

(3 d)+(3 a)

*nätäg silär ädgü mü äsän+mü* [MOTH 21, l. 4, semi-square, Type E 2]

“How are you? Are you in good health (hend.)?”

(3 a)+(3 e)

*ädgü+mü äsän+mü nätäg yarliqar siz* [UBr, Text A, l. 4, semi-square, Type A]

“Are you in good health (hend.)? How is Your Lordship?”

(3b)+(3d)

*köngli ädgü+mü nätäg ärür siz* [MOTH 22, l. 6, semi-square, Type E2]

“Is your (lit. his) mind good? How are you?”

(3b)+(3e)

*köngli ädgü+mü nätäg yarliq[ar är]ki* [Ot.Ry. 2720 + 2795, ll. 7-8, semi-square, Type A]

“Is your (lit. his) mind good? How is Your Lordship?”

(3d)

*nätäg ärür siz* [MOTH 29, ll. 3-4, semi-square, Type D1]

(3f)

*nätäg inč+mü sän/siz(lär)* [U 6194, l. 3, semi-square, probably Type C; U 5759, recto, l. 2 & verso, l. 2, semi-cursive, Type D1; TuMW, Letter D, l. 5, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean; U 5754 r, l. 2, semi-square, Type E2; Ot.Ry. 1879, l. 1, semi-cursive, Type ?]

*nä[täg] inč+mü ärki* [TuMW, Letter F, l. 8, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

*nätäg inč ärki sizlär* [UBr, Text D, ll. 4-5, semi-square, Type E2; Ot.Ry. 1914, side a, ll. 3-4, semi-square, draft of Type D1']

(3g)

*nätäg inč+mü yarliqar ärki* [Ch/U 6570 + 6959, ll. 3-4, semi-square, Type B]

*nätäg inč+mü yarliqar m[u]* [U 5795, l. 5, semi-square, Type ?, Christian]

*nätäg inč+mü yarliqayur [ ]* [Ot.Ry. 2822, l. 2, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

(3h)

*inč ärki sizlär* [Ot.Ry. 1097b, l. 3, semi-square, Type E2; U 5693, l. 2, semi-square, Type ?; U 5941, l. 16 (l. 3'), cursive, probably Type B, Buddhist]

*inč ärki sän* [SI 4b Kr 223, l. 2, semi-square, Type ?; Ot.Ry. 7094 + ST 116, l. 6, semi-cursive, Type ?]

(3i)

*inč yarliqar ärki* [U 5941, l. 3, cursive, probably Type B, Buddhist]

(3j)

*inč äsän bar ärki sizlär* [B59: 68 held by Dunhuang Academy, l. 2, cursive, Type E2;

UBr, Text C, ll. 5-6, cursive, Type E3, Buddhist; P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, verso,

l. 5, cursive, Type E1, Buddhist]

*inč äsän ärür ärki sizlär* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, recto, ll. 2-3, cursive, Type E2,

Buddhist]

## (2) Sender's Sense of Relief [II-4]

After the conclusion of the above greetings inquiring after the other party's health, there are instances in which the sender(s) express(es) delight at hearing that the other party is well. The news that the other party is well would have been conveyed by people travelling with a caravan from some faraway place or by a letter brought by a caravan, and usually this news would be about a situation at the very least several days or weeks earlier or as long ago as several months earlier. But even so, expressly mentioning one's sense of relief on hearing this news had great significance in premodern letters. Such expressions are, of course, not found in letters to an inferior. They appear mostly in letters to a superior, and even in the case of letters to a peer it seems that they are used with a strong nuance of being addressed to a superior.

*äsänin ädgün yarliqamışiy äšidü täginip ärtingü ögirä sävinü [täginür+biz]* [TuKa, pl.

84 on p. 90 = K 7713 recto, ll. 5-6, semi-square, Type A, Buddhist]

“[We humbly and] extremely rejoice (hend.) at being informed that you were (lit. he was) in good health (hend.)”

*äsänin [ädgün] ärdükin äšidip qatıy sävinür biz* [UBr, Text A, l. 5, semi-square, Type A]

“We are very glad to have heard that you were (lit. he was) in good health (hend.)”

*äsänin ädgün yarliqamışiy [äšidü täginip] ärtingü ögirä sävinü täginür+biz* [TuMW,

Letter E, ll. 4-5, semi-square, Type A, Manichaeon]

“We humbly and extremely rejoice (hend.) [at being informed] that you were (lit. he was) in good health (hend.)”

*sizing bitigingiz-lär kälti yügürgän-tä bultumuz äsäningiz-[lä]r-ni išidip üküš sävintimiz ärdi* [MOTH 20, ll. 10-12, semi-square, Type E 1]

“Your letters have arrived. We received them from the courier. On hearing that you are well, we greatly rejoiced.”

*ädgü äsän ärmišingiz-lärni išidip artuq sävinür+biz* [MOTH 23, ll. 5-6, semi-square, Type D 2]

“On hearing that you have been in good health, we are very happy.”

*äsänin ädgün] yarliqami[šir] äšidü täginip ögirä säv[inü tägin]ür+biz* [Ot.Ry. 2720 + 2795, ll. 6-7, semi-square, Type A]

*äsänin ädgün yarliq yarliqamišir qulut išidü [täginip J* [BTT V, no. 30 = U 5281, ll. 8-9, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

*silär-ning äsäningizlärni išidip ögirär sävinür b[iz]* [MOTH 21, ll. 4-5, semi-square, Type E 2]

*inč [äsän] yarliqamišir qulut išidü täginip s[ä]v[inü t]äginür män* [Ch/U 6570 + 6959, ll. 4-5, semi-square, Type B, Manichaean]

### (3) Sender's Health [II-5]

The adjectives used to convey the fact that the sender is in good health are *ädgü*, *äsän*, *inč*, *su*, and *tükäl*, and although they are sometimes used singly, it is more common for two of them to be used together, as in *ädgü äsän* “being in good health (hend.),” *inč äsän* “fine and healthy (sometimes at peace and safe),” *su inč* “vigorously fine,” *su äsän* “vigorous and healthy,” and *äsän түкäl* “healthy and perfect.” Examples of the use of *ädgü äsän*, *inč äsän*, and *äsän түкäl* can be found in (5 a) ~ (5 c) below, and so here I shall cite only some examples of *su inč*.

*män/biz su inč män/biz* [U 7252 v, l. 4, semi-square, draft of Type D 1, Christian; UBr, Text D, l. 5, semi-square, Type E 2; Ot.Ry. 1097b, l. 3, semi-square, Type E 2; Or. 8212-136, l. 3, semi-cursive; Ot.Ry. 1914, side a, l. 6, semi-square, draft of Type D 1'; Ot.Ry. 7094 + ST 116, l. 6, semi-cursive]

“I/We am/are vigorously fine.”

*män su inč turur män* [\*U 9003, cursive, draft of Type E 3, Buddhist]

“I am vigorously fine.”

The most important item in premodern letters was inquiring after the health of the other party, but informing the other party whether or not the sender was in good health also had meaning. In an age when news was exchanged via people accompanying caravans between localities separated by long distances or by letters delivered by caravans, even if the sender wrote that he or she was well, it would take at least several days, and usually several weeks or several months, before this information reached the addressee. Consequently there evolved the custom of specifying the date until which the sender had been well. Idiomatic phrases for this purpose included the following: **(5a)** *bu bitig bitiginčä* “until the time when (I am) writing this letter”; **(5b)** *biz ymä munta* and/or *munča-qatägi* “we too (*or* as for us) here *and/or* until now”; **(5c)** *körmiš-täki-čä* “as when (we) met (previously)”; **(5d)** ... *ay* ... ...-*qatägi/-kätägi* “until the ~ day of the ~ month.” But (5d) did not achieve such widespread use as to fulfill the role of the date in Uighur epistolary formulae. One reason for this would have been that conveying news of the sender’s health was not a requisite element of letters.

According to Yoshida Yutaka, the expression “I have been well until the ~ day of the ~ month when I am writing this letter” is not only found in Sogdian, but goes back to Middle Persian collections of epistolary formulae (TuMW, pp. 126, 279; Zaehner 1939, p. 99).

As regards the phrase *biz ymä*, found frequently in expressions conveying news of the sender’s health, Hamilton has argued in MOTH that it should be interpreted not as “We too (are well),” but as “As for us, (we are well).” He maintains, in other words, that this *ymä* means not “and, also, too” but “as for ...” But according to a private communication from Yoshida Yutaka, in Letter C in TuMW the Sogdian equivalent of *biz ymä* is *’zw ms* “I too,” and he suggests that one need not necessarily follow Hamilton’s view. I have chosen to translate this phrase in different ways depending on the context.

I shall next cite some typical examples.

(5a)

*biz ymä bu bitig bitiginčä inč äsän ärür biz* [TuMW, Letter D, ll. 5-6, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

“As for us too, we have been fine and healthy up until the time of writing this letter.”

*biz ymä bu bitig bitiginčä ädgü äsänin ärür biz* [MOTH 20, l. 5, semi-square, Type E1]

“As for us too, we have been in good health (hend.) up until the time of writing this letter.”

*biz ymä bu bitig bitiginčä barča ädgü äsän biz* [MOTH 21, ll. 10-11, semi-square, Type E2]

“As for us, we have all been in good health (hend.) up until the time of writing this letter.”

(5b)

*biz ymä munta munča-qatägi ädgü äs[än] ärür biz* [MOTH 23, ll. 6-7, semi-square, Type D2]

“Here we too have been in good health (hend.) until now.”

*biz ymä munta ädgü äsän ärür+biz* [MOTH 26, ll. 2-3, semi-square, probably Type D1]

“Here we too have been in good health (hend.)”

*biz ymä munta ädgü äsän ärür* [MOTH 29, l. 4, semi-square, Type D1]

“Here we too are in good health (hend.)”

*biz ymä munča-qatägi inč biz* [Ot.Ry. 1946, l. 1, semi-square, Type ?, Buddhist]

“As for us too, we have been fine until now.”

(5c)

*biz so körmiš-täki-čä äsän tükäl bar*<sup>12)</sup> *turur biz* [UBr, Text C, l. 6, cursive, Type E3, Buddhist]

“We have been as healthy as (we used to be) at the time when we met (you) before.”

(5c)+(5d) or (5d)+(5c)

*män siän körmiš-täki-čä t[örtünč] (or t[oquzunč]) ay [ü]č otuz-qatägi inč äsän bar turur m[än]* [P. ou. 16 Bis, ll. 2-3, cursive, Type ?, Buddhist]

“Until the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> (or 9<sup>th</sup>) month, I have been as fine and healthy as (I used to be) at the time when I met (you) before.”

*yitinč ay [ -kä]tägi körmiš-täki-čä äsän tükäl bar turu[r män]* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, verso, ll. 6-7, cursive, Type E1, Buddhist]

12) In UBr, Text C, this word *bar* is read as *bay* “rich, wealthy,” and Erdal follows it [Erdal, GOT, p. 350]. In my opinion, however, it should be read as *bar*. We can find the same expressions as follows: *äsän tükäl bar turu[r män]* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, verso, l. 7], *inč äsän bar turur m[än]* [P. ou. 16 Bis, l. 3], and *[äsä]n tükäl bar turur* [U 5634, l. 3].

“Until the ///<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, [I] have been as healthy as (I used to be) at the time when I met (you before).”

(5 d)

*so yiti ygrmikä-tägi inč täginü[r ärtimiz?]* [U 5632, l. 3, semi-cursive, Type ?]

“Until the preceding 17<sup>th</sup> day, [we had?] been fine.”

A brief comment needs to be added regarding the final example. This concerns the verb *tägin-*, which is usually used as a main verb meaning “to reach, arrive.” I initially wondered whether the letters having the same expression were all sent during the course of a journey, and that *tägin-* might have been used in the sense of informing the recipient that the sender had arrived safely at his or her destination, but it would appear that this is not the case. The verb *tägin-* appearing in the context of conveying news about the sender’s health would seem to be an example of its use as an auxiliary verb, usually added to the converbal form of the main verb to express humility, but here used on its own, probably instead of the copula.<sup>13)</sup> I have therefore provisionally translated it with forms of the verb “to be,” and I wish to cite some examples of this usage.

*qulut ymä inč äsän täg[inür män]* [Ch/U 6570 + 6959, ll. 5-6, semi-square, Type B]

“As for me too, I am fine and healthy.”

*biz qulut-lar [ ] inč äsän täginür+biz* [Ot.Ry. 2692 + 2693, ll. 8-9, semi-square, Type ?]

“We ..... are fine and healthy.”

*qulutī ymä inč äsän täginür ///* [U 5929, l. 6, semi-square, Type ?, Manichaean]

“As for me, I am fine and healthy.”

*qulut ymä inč täginür män* [U 5835 + 5836, l. 3, semi-square, Type ?, Christian]

“As for me, I am fine.”

*qulut [ ]° bašinta inč äsän kyä täginü[r+biz]* [U 5941, ll. 3-4, cursive, probably Type B, Buddhist]

“[As for us] starting with ....., we are a little fine and healthy.”

<sup>13)</sup> This is not my own original interpretation, and in her translation of U 5941 Raschmann (1991, p. 147) has “Der Diener [...] am Anfang ist ergebenst w[ohl] und gesund.”



*äsänin ädgün täginür+biz* [SI Kr IV 737, l. 2, semi-square, Type ?]

“We are in good health (hend.).”

## 9. Greeting Phrases Used Especially by Manichaeans

As was noted at the start of Chapter 8, it is not unusual for religious greetings [II-2] to be inserted between basic conventional greetings [II-1] and statements about the addressee’s health [II-3] and/or the sender’s health [II-5]. In some cases, these religious greetings are used on their own. In this chapter, I shall examine the distinctive greetings often used in letters written by Manichaeans. The letters containing these expressions all belong of course to the early period.

There were a number of stock phrases used by Manichaeans in everyday life, starting with the weekly repentance of sins, which was one of their religious duties, and these phrases were not confined to letters.

*mnastar xirza* (Pth. *Man āstār hirzā!*) “Forgive my sins!”

*mnastar xirz qıl-* = “to express (lit. make) a Manichaean confession prayer *Man āstār hirzā!*”

*yztan astar xirza* (Pth. *Yazdān āstār hirzā!*) “O Gods! Forgive (our) sins!”

*yazuqda boşunu ötünür biz/män* “We/I pray to be freed from sins (hend.)” [This appears frequently at the end of each section of the *X<sup>u</sup> āstvānīft.*]

*yazuq bolmazun* “May there be no sin!” (a formula of confession) [cf. Moriyasu 1991, p. 19 & n. 43 = GUMS, p. 18 & n. 43]

*krmšuxun*<sup>14)</sup> *birü yarlıqazun* = “May he deign to give forgiveness for (our) sins!” [Pothi-Book, l. 241 on p. 174]

*krmšuxun qolu ötünü tägin-* = “to plead (hend.) for forgiveness for (our) sins” [Pothi-Book, ll. 352-353 on p. 177]

*krmšuxun qolu mnastar xirz qıl-* [Pothi-Book, ll. 368, 373-374 on p. 177]

Next, let us consider some concrete examples of how these stock phrases were used in

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14) The actual connotations of *krmšuxun* “forgiveness for sins” are discussed in this chapter, but for a preliminary discussion see TuMW, pp. 266, 269 & pp. 53-54.

actual letters.

*iraqtan yinčürü yükünü suy yazuq qılmışıy suy-da yazuqda boşunu ötünü täginür+biz mnastar xirza* [BTT V, no. 30 = U 5281, ll. 4-6, semi-square, Type A]

“From afar, bowing down and worshipping, I (lit. we) venture to pray to be freed from the sins that I have committed. Forgive my sins! (Pth. *Man āstār hirzā!*)”

*iraqtan äsängüläyü üküš köngül ötünü täginür+biz mnastar xirza* [BTT V, no. 32, ll. 3-5, semi-square, draft of Type A]

“From afar, giving (our) greetings, we venture to ask many times about (your) heart (= mental health). Forgive my sins! (Pth. *Man āstār hirzā!*)”

*[üküş köngül] ötünü täginür+biz mnastar [xirza]* [TuMW, Letter E, ll. 2-3, semi-square, Type A]

*isinü amranu üküš köngül ötünü [täginür+biz] yazuqda boşunu krmšuxun qolu täginür [biz ] mnastar xirza* [TuMW, Letter F, ll. 4-6, semi-square, Type A]

“Having warm and friendly feelings, [we venture to] ask many times about (your) heart (= mental health). [We] plead for forgiveness for (our) sins (*krmšuxun*) to be freed from the sins. .... Forgive my sins! (Pth. *Man āstār hirzā!*)”

*iraqtan üküš köngül ////////// krmšuxun idur biz yztan astar xirza* [U 6198 + 6199, ll. 3-4, semi-square, Type C]

“From afar, we send forgiveness for sins (*krmšuxun*) [asking] many times about (your) heart (= mental health). O Gods! Forgive (our) sins! (Pth. *Yazdān āstār hirzā!*)”

*iraqtan üküš köngül [ ] mnastar xirza* [BTT V, no. 31, ll. a3-a4, semi-square, draft of Type A]

*üküş köngül ayıtu [ötünü täginür+biz yzt]an astar xirz* [TuMW, Letter H, ll. 2-3, semi-square, Type D 1]

*iraqtan üküš köngül [ ] boşunu ariy krmšuxun [ ] astar] xirz* [Ot.Ry. 2692 + 2693, ll. 2-4, semi-square, Type ?]

The primary concern of Manichaeans was to obtain “forgiveness for sins” through the religious act of repentance. These “sins” encompassed both “original sin,” with which all people are born, and sins committed by individuals in everyday life. For Uighur Manichaeans, the term signifying this “forgiveness for sins” was *krmšuxun* / *krmšuhn*, a word of Parthian origin that was borrowed from Sogdian, and the stock phrases used for

asking for forgiveness were *mnastar xirza* and *yztan astar xirza*, which were also of Parthian origin.

It is common knowledge that the original form of *mnastar xirza* is Parthian *Man āstār hirzā!* and that it means “Forgive my sins!”<sup>15)</sup> This phrase is used as a standard formula in the *X<sup>u</sup>āstvānīft* (Sogd. *Xw’stw’nyβt*, Uig. *Xwastwanivt*), the main confessional formulary for auditors (or lay worshippers).

The less frequently used phrase *yztan astar xirza* (Pth. *Yazdān āstār hirzā!*) has generally been interpreted to mean “Forgive the sins of the Gods (= Electi!)”<sup>16)</sup> This interpretation is based on the context of only two examples, namely, a fragment pertaining to the Manichaean New Year’s festival [U 121 = T II D 16] and a fragment of a letter to a Manichaean monk [U 6198]. At this stage, it was supposed that U 6198 was a letter to an eminent Manichaean monk. But in actual fact, U 6198 and U 6199 are conjoining parts of the same letter, and in terms of the classification of epistolary formulae presented above in Chapter 5, this is not a letter to a superior, but a letter to an inferior of Type C (see Appendix on pp. 86-92). Further, with respect to the phrase *yztan astar xirza* found in 81 TB 65:8 = TuMW, Letter H, one of eight letters newly discovered at Bezeklik, Yoshida discarded the prevailing interpretation and put forward the view that it ought to be interpreted as “O Gods! Forgive (my) sins!” (Yoshida / Moriyasu 2000b, p. 177, n. 21). He took the view, in other words, that, notwithstanding certain irregularities that cannot be explained grammatically, if one compares the various contexts in which it is used, *yztan astar xirza* ought to be more or less synonymous with the well-known phrase *mnastar xirza* “Forgive my sins!” I am in general agreement with Yoshida’s view, but I would change the parenthetical “(my)” to “(our)” and translate the phrase as “O Gods! Forgive (our) sins!” My grounds for following Yoshida’s view, along with the reason for my minor modification, are explained below. At any rate, these two stock phrases were in such common use that they were naturally incorporated in the greetings used in letters exchanged among Uighur Manichaeans.

Now, when the religious act of repentance was performed, who was being addressed in the appeal for forgiveness of sins, or, to put it another way, who was it that granted

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15) Cf. Widengren 1965, p. 83; Zieme 1972, pp. 175-176; BTT V, n. 47 on p. 24 & n. 150-151 on p. 30; Asmussen 1975, pp. 70 ff.; Boyce 1977, pp. 57, 50; *Pothi-Book*, n. 353 on p. 206; Klimkeit 1993, p. 299; DMMPP, pp. 229, 55, 197.

16) Cf. BTT V, pp. 28-30, 66, 90; *Pothi-Book*, n. 353 on p. 206.

forgiveness? This can be ascertained in the aforementioned *X<sup>u</sup>āstvānīft*. First, in § 15<sup>17)</sup> of the Uighur version we find the following statement:

*yaruq tngriḷärkä nom qutīnga arīy dintarlarqa suyda yazuqda bošunu ötüinür+biz  
mnastar hirz*

“We pray to the Gods of Light, to Nom Qutī (lit. the charisma of Doctrine)<sup>18)</sup>, and to the pure Electi (the Clergy) so that we may be delivered from sins and faults. Forgive my sins!”

Further, in § 13<sup>19)</sup> there is the following phrase:

*ay tngri künin sayu tngrikä nomqa arīy dintarlarqa suyumuznī yazuqumuznī bošuyu  
qolmaq kärgäk ärti*

“Every Monday it is (lit. was) necessary (for us) to plead with the God, the Doctrine, and the pure Electi to liberate our sins and our faults.”

Only fragments of the Sogdian version of the *X<sup>u</sup>āstvānīft* survive, but in the passages identified by Henning as corresponding to these Uighur passages there appears the word *krmšwhn*.<sup>20)</sup> It is thus clear that the target of Manichaean appeals for forgiveness, that is, the grantor of forgiveness, was the Gods of Light, Manichaean doctrine, and Electi, corresponding to the Three Jewels (Skt. *Triratna* or *Ratna-traya*) of Buddhism (Buddha, Dharma, and Saṃgha).<sup>21)</sup> I would, therefore, translate *krmšuxun* as “forgiveness for sins (by the Gods of Light, Manichaean doctrine, and Electi).”

The word *krmšwhn* is generally interpreted as “absolution, pardon; forgiveness for

17) Asmussen 1965, pp. 179, 199; Asmussen 1975, p. 77; Klimkeit 1993, p. 305.

18) In many cases *Nom qutī* appearing in Manichaean documents written in Uighur refers to the Manichaean god Vahman (= Great *Nous*) (cf. Moriyasu 1991, pp. 201-202 = GUMS, p. 244). But it is, I believe, clear also from the use of only *nom* in *X<sup>u</sup>āstvānīft* § 13 quoted immediately below that this is not the case in this passage and it should be taken in the sense of “doctrine.” This differs from the interpretations of Asmussen and Klimkeit, but Asmussen (1975, p. 77) has “Nom qutī (i.e., Vahman, the personified church),” which is close to my interpretation.

19) Asmussen 1965, pp. 177, 198, 227; Asmussen 1975, p. 75; Klimkeit 1993, p. 304.

20) Cf. *Sogdica*, pp. 63-67, frag. 1, ll. 4, 26.

21) Cf. Asmussen 1965, p. 227, n. 262-263; Klimkeit 1993, p. 309, n. 30.

sins,” but for some reason Henning translated it as “forgiveness for **my** sins.”<sup>22)</sup> We should, however, take note of the fact that Manichaeans were able to “request” (*qol-*), “give, grant” (*bir-*) and “send” (*id-*) this *krmšuxun*.<sup>23)</sup> It can be inferred from this fact that the “sins” of which an awareness was embodied in expressions that include the word *krmšuxun* pertained not only to the speaker or the sender of the letter, but also to the listener or the addressee of the letter. In other words, this *krmšuxun* related to all of humanity. I believe, therefore, that this term should be interpreted not as “forgiveness for **my** sins,” but rather as “forgiveness for **our** sins” or “forgiveness for **humanity’s** sins.” The term *krmšuxun* would initially have been used to profess faith in Manichaeism, and then it would have come to be used in greetings exchanged in everyday life and eventually also in greetings used in letters.

Until now, there have been discovered only three Uighur letters with expressions containing the word *krmšuxun* [81 TB 65:6 = TuMW, Letter F; U 6198 + 6199; Ot.Ry. 2692 + 2693], and in each case it is accompanied by the stock phrase *mnastar xirza* or *yztan astar xirza*. If one considers the context of one of these in particular [U 6198 + 6199; see Appendix], taking note of the fact that it is a letter to an inferior containing the phrase *yztan astar xirza*, considerable difficulties arise if both *yztan astar xirza* and *krmšuxun* are taken to refer to “my sins,” that is, the sins of the sender. The context requires the forgiveness of also the sins of the Manichaean monk, an inferior, to whom the letter is addressed.

For the above reasons, just as I modified Henning’s translation of *krmšuxun*, I would also slightly modify Yoshida’s interpretation of *yztan astar xirza* and translate it as “O Gods! Forgive (our) sins!”

To sum up, it is to be surmised that stock phrases originally used when performing repentance, one of the duties of Manichaeans, and also expressions containing the term *krmšuxun*, which appears to have been used in professions of faith, gradually came to be used as everyday greetings and were then incorporated in letters as well. It is not possible at present to determine whether this occurred in Sogdiana, or during the time of the East Uighur empire (A.D. 744-840), when Sogdians were in close contact with Uighurs, or only after the establishment of the West Uighur kingdom in the mid-ninth century. Although there

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22) Cf. TTT III, n. 176 on p. 211; BBB, n. 532 on p. 66; DTS, p. 321; Asmussen 1965, p. 242; BTT V, n. 8 on p. 21, p. 81; *Pothi-Book*, n. 241 on p. 203; Yoshida 2000a, TuMW, pp. 53-54.

23) Ex. TM 276a = U 72, l. 36 cited in TTT II, p. 216; *Pothi-Book*, ll. 352, 355, 368, 373 on p. 177; BTT V, no. 6, l. 89; 81 TB 65:6 = TuMW, Letter F, l. 5; *Pothi-Book*, l. 241 on p. 174 = TTT III, p. 200; U 6198 + 6199, l. 3.

is no positive historical proof, it is generally recognized that Sogdian Manichaeism acted as the cradle of Uighur Manichaeism. Expressions containing *krmšuxun* appear frequently also in Sogdian letters of the late tenth to early eleventh century [TuMW, Letters A, B and C], but this alone is not conclusive evidence for dating these expressions.

### 10. Greeting Phrases Used Especially by Buddhists

Whereas greeting phrases used especially by Manichaeans were the stock phrases of repentance *mnastar xirza* and *yztan astar xirza*, deriving from Parthian, and expressions containing the word *krmšuxun*, which entered Uighur from Parthian via Sogdian, what was the situation in the case of Buddhists? In fact, it was pointed out already by Bang and Gabain (TTT III, n. 176 on p. 211) that a term used by Buddhists which corresponds to *krmšuxun* was *kšanti*. This word derives from Sanskrit *kṣānti* “patience, endurance,” which is one of the six perfections (*pāramitā*) in Buddhism, but in Uighur Buddhism it was rarely used in the meaning of “patience” (for which Uighur *sārinmāk* was used instead), and it came to be widely used primarily in the sense of “forgiveness (of sins)” and “confession of sins, penitance, repentance” (cf. BHtB, pp. 407-408). According to Asmussen (1965, pp. 146, 153), the reason that Sanskrit *kṣānti* came to be used in the sense of “forgiveness (of sins)” on entering Uighur is that it had changed to this meaning in Tocharian, and this has been generally accepted by scholars.<sup>24)</sup> The process whereby the meaning of “forgiveness” evolved from the original meaning of “patience, endurance” can be readily surmised, and a similar shift in meaning can be seen, for example, in the use of the word *kannin* 堪忍 in

<sup>24)</sup> I agree with this view, but I would go one step further and suggest that *kšanti* is a word that was not found in Manichaean texts written in Uighur. This means, in other words, that all texts in which this word appears were composed by Buddhists. From Le Coq down to Zieme, the two documents T II Y 59 = Mainz 39 & T II Y 54 = Mainz 373, in which the phrases *kšanti bol-* or *kšanti qil-* appear, have tended to be classified as Manichaean (Le Coq 1911, pp. 27-28, 37; Asmussen 1965, pp. 218-219, 232-234; BTT V, no. 2 = T II Y 59 and no. 3 = T II Y 54), but I have already raised objections to this (Moriyasu 1991, p. 34, n. 108 = GUMS, p. 38, n. 108). The distinctive punctuation mark consisting of a black dot surrounded by a red oval, with two sometimes being placed side by side in a manner resembling the shape of a bow tie, is not restricted to Manichaean texts and is also found in early Buddhist texts in Uighur (Moriyasu 1989, pp. 5-6 = Moriyasu 1990a, pp. 150-151). Among words of Indic origin that were borrowed into Uighur, the majority of those that entered Uighur via Sogdian are related to Manichaeism. In other words, there are almost no words of Indic origin frequently used by Uighur Manichaeans that entered Uighur via Tocharian. The fact that *kšanti*, with which we are here concerned, entered Uighur via Tocharian and not via Sogdian would support my conjecture.

Japanese. But Asmussen's explanation of the process whereby the meanings of "patience, lenience" and "forgiveness (of sins)" further changed to the meaning of "repentance" is not necessarily convincing (Asmussen 1965, pp. 154-155). Nonetheless, the fact that the "Book for the Redemption of Sins" (Ch. *Cibei daochang chanfa* 慈悲道場懺法 = Uig. *Kṣanti qilyuluq nom bitig*); cf. UBL, no. 51) or several confession texts entitled *Kṣanti qilmaq [atliq] nom bitig* "Scripture [named] Performing Confession" (cf. UBL, no. 79; Uigurica, II, nos. 7 & 8; TTT IV; Wilkens 2003; Wilkens 2007 = BTT XXV) were extremely popular among Uighur Buddhists is demonstrated by the many fragments of these works that have been unearthed in Turfan. The Sanskrit equivalent of "repentance" is generally *kṣama*, but it is a different form from the same stem as *kṣānti*.

Be that as it may, there has not yet been discovered a single example of an Uighur letter using the word *kṣanti* in a greeting phrase. In contrast, a term found in distinctive expressions that were actually used in letters by Uighur Buddhists is *buyan*. This Uighur term derives from Sanskrit *puṇya* and has various meanings such as "blessed virtues, religious merits," "all good deeds, meritorious deeds" and "blessing arising from good deeds."<sup>25)</sup> I shall now cite some concrete examples of greetings containing this word.

*buyanlarıy üküš ayit*[ [Or. 8212-1803 v, l. 4, semi-square, Type ?]

*män buyan qulı nišüng qisil-tin tälim tälim buyan ayıtdim* [Ch/U 6245, ll. 2-3, cursive, draft of Type E 2]

*qisil-taqı buyan ävirü üküš kön[gül] ayıtu idur+m[än]* [Ot.Ry. 5336, ll. 2-3, semi-cursive, Type ?]

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*šarir-liq orun-tin üküš tälim buyan ortuq ayıtu idur+män* [Ch/U 7426, ll. 1-2 & ll. 9-10, cursive, draft of Type E 1]

*qisil-taqı buyan ortuq ayıtu idur+män* [Dx 3654 v, ll. 4-5, cursive, draft of Type E 2]

*aryatan-taqı buyan [ortuq ayıtu] idur+män* [U 5977, ll. 3-4, semi-cursive, Type D 1]

*buyan ortuq-layı idur+män* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, recto, l. 2, cursive, Type E 2]

*buyan ortuq bolzun* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, verso, ll. 4-5, cursive, Type E 1]

*tälim tälim buyan ortuq män čo qiz kä yi alip qaldim ärti* [SI Kr I 151, ll. 3-6, cursive, Type E 1]

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25) Cf. Soothill, p. 426 a; ED, p. 386.

[*buyan*] *ortuq ötünü idur+biz* [SI Kr IV 739, l. 3, cursive, Type ?]

The first requisite for a Buddhist is to take refuge in the Three Jewels, i.e., the Buddha, Dharma and Saṃgha. In actual practice, taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Saṃgha takes various forms, such as repeating the name of a Buddha, worship of the Buddha's relics (Skt. *śarīra*), reading and/or copying the scriptures, giving alms, and observance of the precepts. Another basic concept in Buddhism is “transference of merit” (Skt. *puṇya-pariṇāmanā*), or the turning or directing (*pariṇāmanā*) of merit (*puṇya*) from one person to another.<sup>26)</sup> This means to direct the merit gained through “good deeds” such as repeating the name of a Buddha, worshipping the Buddha's relics, reading and/or copying the scriptures, giving alms, and observing the precepts not just to oneself but also to others, to make a vow that all living beings will attain right awakening (Skt. *bodhi*), be free of defilements (Skt. *kleśa*) and reach the state of *nirvāṇa*, and to strive towards this end. This was expressed in Uighur Buddhism as *buyan ävir-*, and its infinitive form *buyan ävirmäk* even became a generic title of a group of Buddhist texts. As was noted above, *buyan* is a loanword deriving from Sanskrit *puṇya*, but *ävirmäk* is a genuine Uighur transitive verb meaning “to turn or rotate (something).” In order to explain *buyan* in simple terms, those who were aiming to spread Buddhism through the medium of the Uighur language coined the synonym *ädgü qilinč* “good deed,” and consequently not only was *buyan* used on its own to express the notion of “merit,” but the hendiadys *buyan ädgü qilinč*, and occasionally *ädgü qilinč buyan*, also came to be frequently used. A point to note, however, is that *ädgü qilinč* means only “good deed,” and whereas *buyan* has the meaning of not only “merit” but also “good deed,” it is difficult for *ädgü qilinč* to express the meaning of “merit” on its own. This can also be inferred from the fact that while expressions such as *buyan ävir-*, *buyan ädgü qilinč ävir-* “to transfer the religious merits acquired by oneself to others” and *buyan küčintä*, *buyan ädgü qilinč küčintä* “by the power of the religious merits acquired by oneself” appear with great frequency in Buddhist texts, the expressions *ädgü qilinč ävir-* and *ädgü qilinč küčintä* are very rare. Therefore, I would like to rethink the interpretation “meritorious good

26) Soothill (p. 205 a) gives the following explanation for “Skt. *pariṇāmanā*, Ch. 廻向”: “transference (of merits); it means the bestowing on another, or others, of merits acquired by oneself, especially the merits acquired by a bodhisattva or Buddha for the salvation of all, e.g. the bestowing of his merits by Amitābha on all the living. There are other kinds, such as the turning of acquired merit to attain further progress in *bodhi*, or *nirvāṇa*.”



deeds” which many past researchers, including myself, have given for *buyan ädgü qilinč*, and instead I propose to translate it henceforth as “religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) good deeds.”<sup>27)</sup> The validity of this interpretation ought to be evident from the six texts quoted below.

The reason for the use of *buyan* in greetings appearing in Uighur letters written by Buddhists ought now to be clear. But in actual practice, rather than *buyan* appearing on its own, it appears more commonly in the combination *buyan ortuq*. How should this phrase be interpreted? The original meaning of *ortuq* is “partner,” and on no account does it mean “portion, share.” Because my earlier interpretation and explanation in this regard (Moriyasu 1985 a, pp. 76, 80-81, 84) were inadequate, they failed to meet with the approval of Erdal and Zieme (OTWF, p. 409; Zieme 1995, pp. 2-4). Accordingly, in order to determine anew its meaning in a logical manner, I would like to draw attention to the following texts.

Text 1 is part of a prayer inscribed in semi-square Uighur script on the verso of a Chinese Buddhist text discovered at Dunhuang, and it therefore dates from the second half of the tenth century to the early eleventh century. Text 2 is the prayer section at the end of the Third Stake Inscription presented at the city of Qočo in Turfan in 1019. Texts 3–6 belong to prefaces or colophons of Uighur Buddhist texts of the early period unearthed at Turfan (Texts 3–5) and Dunhuang (Text 6), and they may therefore be considered to date from the tenth to eleventh centuries.

1 A) *alu tägintim qangim tngri tngri burxan yarliqamiš üč türlüg umuḡ inay boltačı buyan ädgü qilinčimlarıḡ bo buyan ädgü qilinčim kücintä alqu tinly oylanı inč mängilig bolzunlar* (Niu / Zieme 1996, pp. 45-46, ll. 13-17.)

“I have ventured to receive the religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) my good deeds, which should be the threefold devotion (= devotion to the Three Jewels) preached by

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27) Özertural (2008, pp. 115-117), pointing to an unusual example in which “transferring merit,” a notion that appears frequently in Uighur Buddhist texts, is used in an Uighur Manichaean text, states that this usage was a phenomenon that occurred after Uighur Manichaeans had come under the strong influence of Uighur Buddhists. This is indeed so, but I had already demonstrated that the Manichaean *pothi*-book containing the phrase *buyan ädgü qilinč* had itself been composed in the final stage of Uighur Manichaeism under the strong influence of Uighur Buddhism (Moriyasu 1989, pp. 19, 25-26, n. 77; Moriyasu 1991, pp. 153-154 = GUMS, pp. 182-184). Wilkens (2008, pp. 210-211) has expressed agreement with my dating of this *pothi*-book and bolstered my arguments.

my father, the Buddha, i.e., the god of gods. By the power of these religious merits and good deeds of mine, may all living beings be peaceful and happy!” (Translation revised by me on the basis of Niu / Zieme 1996, p. 48.)

1 B) *amtī alu tāginür+mn qangim tngri burxan yarliqamiš üč türlüg umuḡ inay boltači buyan ädgü qilinč öng ülüg adinqa ötünü tāginür+mn* (Niu / Zieme 1996, p. 46, ll. 38-41.)

“Now I venture to receive the religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) good deeds, which should be the threefold devotion (= devotion to the Three Jewels) preached by my father, the Buddha, i.e., the heavenly god. I venture to present some portion (of the religious merits) to the others.” (New translation by me.)

2) *MW<sup>ooo</sup>’N T<sup>ooo</sup>// buyan ädgü qilinč-niḡ <sup>oooo</sup>in yaqasın ävirär biz · kim bizingä bu yaruḡ yirtinčü yir suvuḡ körküti birmiš atma? buma? · qangimz quvüz apa tay ögä bäg ögümz tngrikän qutluḡ tuymış tngrim · ulatı qa+qadaš ygän tayay · qamy tört tuḡum biš yol içintäki tirig tinly ödüš özlüg tinly oylanınga tüzü öng ülüg bolmaqı bolzun alqu tinly oylanı barča üstün tngri yirintäki ulatı nirvanlıḡ inčgülgü māngi-kä tägmäkläri bolzun · biz burxan bolalim* (Stake III, ll. 24-27 in Moriyasu 2001, pp. 185, 188; Hamilton 2004, p. 124.)

“////////// we (the above mentioned persons) transfer the ////////// portion (*yaqa*) of the religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) good deeds to our ////////// (deceased parents), i.e., our father Quvüz Apa Tay Ögä Bäg and our mother Tngrikän Qutluḡ Tuymış Tngrim who had shown us this bright earthly world, as well as to the (deceased) relatives, nephews and uncles, and all living beings (hend.) in the Four Births and the Five Ways of Existence. Let some portion (of the merits) reach all of them without exception. May all human beings, starting with those who are above in Paradise, get into the eternal peace (lit. peaceful joy) of *nirvāna*! Let’s become Buddha!” (New translation by me; I omit my old translation in Moriyasu 2001, p. 190.)

3) *munta turmiş buyan ädgü qilinč öng ülüg ävirär mn ’ängilki tngri burxan-niḡ isig özin sataḡ yuluḡ birip sataḡın almiş nomluḡ ärdniḡ közätädäci äzrua xormuzta višnu*

*mxašvri tört mxaraç-lar-da ulatı qamay şazın közätdäci qutlar waxşik-lar nyvaziki tngri-lärkä qamay-qa tüzü öng ülüg bolzun* <short omission> *taqı ymä bu buyan ädgü qilinč közünür ödtä amraq içimz qutbulmıš oğul inanč* //// *tngri birmiš oğul inanč* //// *äkämz ypar qamay-qa öng ülüg bolmaqı bolzun* (Tekin 1980, BTT IX, *Maitrisimit*, pp. 26-27 = 1 v 13-22 & 27-32.)

“I transfer some portion of the religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) good deeds, which have arisen from it, firstly to the Four Great Kings, i.e., Brahmā, Indra, Viṣṇu, and Maheśvara, who should protect the *dharma*-jewel that the godlike Buddha got by trading with his life, and then to all the spirits and guardian deities who should watch the discipline (= Buddhism). Let some portion (of the merits) reach all of them without exception. <short omission> Moreover, may some portion of these religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) good deeds, reach the dear elder brothers of ours in this world, Qutbulmıš Oğul İnanč and //// Tngri Birmiš Oğul İnanč as well as the //// elder sister of ours Ypar!”

4) *anin bu alqu ayıy qilinč-lariy aritdaçi kšanti nom ärdinig bitidü tägindim : bu buyan ädgü qilinčiy öng ülüg ävirä ötü[nü] täginär(sic!)+mn* (Uigurica, II, p. 80, ll. 63-64.)

“Therefore, I respectfully ordered to have written this confessional book which cleanses all bad deeds. I venture to transfer and submit some portion of (lit. part by part) these religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) good deeds < to the spirits, guardian deities, and the deceased persons >.”

5) *bu buyan ädgü qilinč qamay üç yüz altmıš tngri-lärkä öng ülüg bolzun* (Uigurica, II, p. 89, ll. 84-85.)

“May some portion of these religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) good deeds, reach all of the three hundred sixty gods!”

6) *taqı bu buyan ädgü qilinč öng ülüg bolzun qamay yitinč uyuşqatägi barçaqa öng ülüg bolzun* [MOTH, no. 1, ll. 21'-24']

“Moreover, may some portion of these religious merits, i.e., (the fruits of) good deeds, reach all relatives up to the seventh generation! May some portion (of the merits) reach each of them!”

As can be seen in the above examples, *buyan ädgü qilinč* usually appears together with *öng ülüg*. The word *öng* is synonymous with *ülüg* / *ülüš*, and there can no longer be any doubt that the hendiadys *öng ülüg* means “part, share, portion.”<sup>28)</sup> Needless to say, it signifies “a portion of merit.” It should be noted that in Texts 2 and 3, *öng ülüg* by itself means not simply “portion” but “portion of merit.” I shall refrain from providing any more quotations, but several more similar examples can be found in Uighur Buddhist texts.

In view of this background, I wish to argue once again that the distinctive expression *buyan ortuq* used in Uighur letters may be interpreted as “partner in merit, sharer of merit” or, to state it more fully, “someone sharing in the transference of a portion of merit.”<sup>29)</sup> I would also like to draw attention to the fact that *ortuq* is always preceded by *buyan* and never by *ädgü qilinč*. The phrase *buyan ortuq* is a compound and cannot be separated into *buyan* and *ortuq*, and therefore *buyan ortuqlayu* must also be interpreted as a compound.<sup>30)</sup> Furthermore, in light of the fact that the compound phrase *buyan ortuq* has not been found once in letters written in the early semi-square script, I surmise this to have been a new locution that spread during the time of the Mongol empire.

If we take into account the above discussion, the greeting phrases containing the word *buyan* that were created by Uighur Buddhists may be interpreted in accordance with their context as follows.

### ● Buddhist Formulae

*buyanlarıy üküš ayıt* [Or. 8212 - 1803 v, l. 4, semi-square, Type ?]

“We(?) ... in asking many times religious merits (for you).”

*män buyan qulı nišüng qısıl-tin tälim tälim buyan ayütdim* [Ch/U 6245, ll. 2-3, cursive, draft of Type E2]

“I, Buyan Qulı, have asked many many times about (your sharing) religious merits from Nišüng Qısıl (= famous cave temples in the gorge of Bezeklik).”<sup>31)</sup>

28) Zieme 1992, p. 65, n. 338; Moriyasu 2001, pp. 198-199.

29) Cf. Moriyasu 1985 a, pp. 80, 84, 85; Matsui 2005 b, pp. 150-151.

30) In light of this, I am unable to concur with the view that would regard *+layu* as a suffix expressing the meaning “as if” (cf. OTWF, p. 409; Zieme 1995, p. 4).

31) Until now the meaning of *nišüng* / *nižüng*, which appears frequently in Uighur documents, had been unclear, but it has been shown in his most recent article by Matsui Dai (2011) that it is a phonetic transcription of the Chinese Ningrong 寧戎 and that *Nišüng* / *Nižüng qısıl* “the gorge of Nišüng / Nižüng” refers specifically to the gorge of Bezeklik where the cave temples of Ningrong are located and also to the cave temples of Bezeklik themselves.

*q̄isil-taq̄i buyan ävirü üküš kön[gül] ayitu idur+m[än]* [Ot.Ry. 5336, ll. 2-3, semi-cursive, Type ?]

“I send (a letter) transferring religious merits (accumulated) at Q̄isil (= a gorge where there are cave temples) (to you) and asking many times about (your) heart (= mental health).”

### ● New Buddhist Formulae

*šarir-liq orun-tin üküš tälīm buyan ortuq ayitu idur+män* [Ch/U 7426, ll. 1-2 & ll. 9-10, cursive, draft of Type E 1]

“I send (a letter) from Šarir-liq (= place for worshipping the *śarīra*) asking many times about (your) being a sharer of religious merits.”

*q̄isil-taq̄i buyan ortuq ayitu idur+män* [Dx 3654 v, ll. 4-5, cursive, draft of Type E 2]

“I send (a letter) asking about (your) being a sharer of religious merits (accumulated) at Q̄isil (= a gorge where are cave temples).”

*aryatan-taq̄i buyan [ortuq ayitu] idur+män* [U 5977, ll. 3-4, semi-cursive, Type D 1]

“I send (a letter) [asking about (your) being a sharer] of religious merits (accumulated) at the Aryatan (= a small Buddhist temple).”

*barča nomd[aš]-lar qut-larīnga qulut taypudu [ ] buyan ortuq-layu idur+män* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, recto, ll. 1-2, cursive, Type E 2]

“I (lit. slave), Taypudu, send (a letter) to Their Excellencies, all (my) brethren-in-religion, praying [many times?] for (your) being sharers of religious merits [accumulated somewhere?].”

*buyan ortuq bolzun* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, verso, ll. 4-5, cursive, Type E 1]

“May he be a sharer of religious merits!”

## 11. Idiomatic Phrases and Popular Terms in the Body of the Letter (including Introductory Formulae and Closing Formulae)

The function of bringing to a conclusion the various greetings discussed in detail in Chapters 7–10, as well as indicating that the main subject of the letter (apart from greetings) is about to begin, is fulfilled by [III-1] introductory formulae. Typical of these formulae is *amtī bitigdä nä üküš sav idalīm/idayin* “Now, in (this) letter, I/we will send as many words (= matters, news) as possible.” It is not unusual for the initial *amtī* “at present, now” to be

omitted or the word *ayu* “saying” to be inserted between *sav* and *idalim/idayin*.

The core part of this introductory formula is *nä üküš sav*, and it has been pointed out by others that parallel expressions also exist in Sogdian and Khotanese.<sup>32)</sup> Clauson (1973 a, p. 217) makes the following comment on *nä üküš*: “*Ne üküš* cannot mean ‘how many?’ which would be *kaç*. This seems to be an example of the use of *ne* as an exclamation, which is noted in Kaş. ; ‘what a lot of ...!’.” That this interpretation in terms of Turkic is correct can also be confirmed from the parallel expressions in Sogdian and Khotanese. While *nä üküš* can be translated literally as “what a lot of,” Hamilton interprets it as “le plus possible de, aussi nombreux que ce soit,” and I would like to follow this interpretation.<sup>33)</sup>

The above expression is used in letters to either a superior, an inferior or a peer. The word *söz* is never substituted for *sav* in *nä üküš sav*, and this is because although *sav* and *söz* both have roughly the same meaning of “word,” only *sav* has the meaning of “matter, business,” and here it is being further used in the sense of “news.”<sup>34)</sup> On the other hand, there are patently polite expressions used only in letters to superiors, as well as expressions used only in letters to inferiors. In the former, *sav* changes to *ötüg*, and in the latter *sav* is replaced by *yarlıy*. The former type of expression appears frequently in Type A and sometimes in Type B, and a typical example is: *amtī ötüğ bitigdä nä üküš ötüğ ötünü täginälim* “Now, in (this) polite letter, we will submit as many statements as possible.” Here too the word *amtī* can be omitted. Only one example of the latter type of expression is known: *bitigdä nä üküš yarlıy yarlıqayu idalim* “In (this) letter, we will issue and send as many orders as possible” [SI 2 Kr 17 = Clauson 1973 a, pp. 215, 220].

### (1) Introductory Formulae [III-1]

Letters containing the formulae cited in this section are all written in semi-square script, and there has not yet been discovered a single letter in cursive script with any such expression. Since the absolute number of letters in cursive script is small, this may be a coincidence. On the other hand, during the later period, when the cursive script was used, there are instances in which the postscript formula *yana sözüüm* is used for introducing the main subject of

32) Cf. MOTĦ, pp. 111-112, n. 20.6; DTSTĦ, pp. 54-55; TuMW, p. 275.

33) Erdal, in his review of MOTĦ, does not accept Hamilton’s interpretation and instead proposes the literal translation “What use is it to write a lot of words?” interpreting it as “Let’s get down to business!” (Erdal 1988, p. 256), but I am unable to concur with this interpretation.

34) See footnote 29 on p. 58 of Part 1 of this article.

the letter. Prior to this, there is one example of *yana bir savim* [Ot.Ry. 6375, l. 3] in semi-cursive script, but its position has yet to be determined.

*amtī bitigdā nā ūküš sav ayu idayin* [MOTH 29, ll. 4-5, semi-square, Type D 1; MOTH 22, ll. 6-7, semi-square, Type E 2]

*bitigdā nā ūküš sav ayu idayin* [MOTH 28, ll. 6-7, semi-square, Type D 2]

*amtī bitigdā nā ūküš sav ayu idalim* [Ot.Ry. 1592, ll. 2-3, semi-square, Type ?]

*amtī äsängü bitig-dā nā ūküš sav ayu idalam* [MOTH 20, l. 6, semi-square, Type E 1]

*amtī bitigdā nā ūküš sav idalim* [MOTH 23, ll. 7-8, semi-square, Type D 2; Ot.Ry. 8131, ll. 2-3, semi-square Type ?; TuMW, Letter D, ll. 6-7, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

*bitigdā nā ūküš sav idalim* [U 5320, l. 3, semi-square, Type C; SI Kr IV 597, l. 3, semi-square; U 5531 + 6066, Text a, l. 2, semi-square, Type B, Manichaean]

*amtī nā ūküš sav idalim* [MOTH 26, l. 3, semi-square, probably Type D 1]

*ötüg bitigdā nā ūküš ötüg [ötünü] täginälim* [Ch/U 6570 + 6959, ll. 6-7, semi-square, Type B]

*amtī bitigdā nā ūküš ötünü täginälim* [Ot.Ry. 2720 + 2795, ll. 7-8, semi-square, Type A]

*amtī ötüg bitigdā nā ūküš ötüg ötünü tä[ginälim]* [TuKa, pl. 84 on p. 90 = K 7713 recto, l. 7, semi-square, Type A, Buddhist]

*bitigdā nā ūküš ötüg täginälim* [U 5531 + 6066, Text b (upside down), ll. 2' -3', semi-square, Type B, Manichaean]

As has already been mentioned, the introductory formulae listed above usually come after all the greeting phrases have been concluded, but I have also found an irregular exception to this: [*nā*] *üküš sav ayitu idalim nātäg °[ ] män su inč män* [U 7252 v, ll. 2-4, semi-square, Type D 1, Christian]. In Part 1 of this article (p. 59) I classified the script of U 7252 v as semi-cursive, but now I would like to regard it as semi-square because of the existence of this introductory formula.

## (2) Terms and Idiomatic Phrases Frequently Used in the Body of the Letter [III-2]

After the introductory formula, the body of the letter, that is, its main content, finally begins, but there are not a few cases in which the letter consists almost entirely of greetings and

there is no other subject matter.<sup>35)</sup> These are instances, similar to Christmas cards and New Year's cards today, in which the greetings are themselves the main purpose of the letter. Whereas there are many fixed formulae for greetings, it would be no exaggeration to say that there are no fixed formulae for the body of the letter. In the following, I therefore wish to examine some terms frequently found in the body of the letter and some idiomatic phrases that are used with comparative frequency.

First, some of the terms appearing with the greatest frequency are also found in greeting formulae: *bitig* "letter," *sav* "speech, words; message; matter, business; news," and *söz* "word, short utterance, message." Frequently appearing verbs are *id-* "to send" and *al-* "to receive." The next most frequently encountered words are *arqış* "caravan" and *bäläk/biläk* "bundle, package; gift." The word *bitig* refers to anything written, while *sav* and *söz* signify spoken words, but when these are conveyed by an *arqış*, they become a "letter."<sup>36)</sup> The main articles carried by an *arqış* were in fact *bäläk/biläk*. The original meaning of *bäläk/biläk* is "something wrapped up," but in letters it refers to a "package" or "parcel" sent with a caravan, and it also came to mean "gift" in a broad sense (cf. TMEN, no. 833). In other words, *bäläk/biläk* may refer to an official or private "gift, present," or it may refer to "a package of merchandise or trade goods" for commercial purposes, and the two meanings can be distinguished only by context.

For reasons of safety, the letter and the gift or merchandise were often sent with separate caravans or were consigned to different members of the same caravan. In order to identify the person to whom the letter or gift had been entrusted, the word *älgintä* "in/from/through the hands (of so-and-so)" was also sometimes used in letters.

In Chapter 4, I cited the word *qutınga* along with a list of terms signifying "letter" as keywords for identifying letters, and in addition to these the words *arqış*, *bäläk/biläk* and *älgintä* are also extremely helpful in this regard. I am convinced that if two or three of these keywords are found in a small fragment, it is fairly safe to identify it as a letter. Because caravans and gifts concern the very foundations of Silk Road trade, I shall discuss them in the next chapter, and in the following I wish to consider some other idiomatic phrases that

35) Cf. Takeuchi 1986, p. 583; Takeuchi 1990, p. 185.

36) The fact that letters were carried by caravans is also clear from the phrases from Uighur letters cited in Chap. 12, Sect. 2. It is also clearly stated in Sogdian Letter A and Letter C from Bezeklik that the letter would be sent by caravan (TuMW, Letter A, ll. 57-59 & Letter C, l. 13; Yoshida / Moriyasu 2000b, pp. 151, 162).



appear in the body of the letter.

● *älgintä* “in/from/through the hands (of so-and-so)”

This expression has been found only in letters in semi-square script, and it is used when entrusting a letter or gift to someone or when both have been entrusted to separate people. The word *älgintä* is formed from *älig* “hand” with the addition of third-person possessive suffix plus locative-ablative case suffix, and it is always immediately preceded by the name of the person to whom the letter or gift has been entrusted. When the letter or gift is being sent by entrusting it to that person, the case suffix *-tä* indicates the locative, and when the addressee is being instructed to receive the letter or gift from that person, it indicates the ablative. A corresponding expression is the Chinese (*zai*) ... *shou shang* (在)... 手上, to be seen for example in Chinese letters from Dunhuang (S. 4362, S. 4667, S. 4677, S. 4685, SP 76 = Ch. 00144),<sup>37)</sup> but far earlier examples of a similar expression can often be seen in the Kharoṣṭhī documents in Gāndhārī.<sup>38)</sup> It is also found in Khotanese and Sogdian.<sup>39)</sup>

*qawdī älgintä yüz yiti ygrmi salqīm yinčü körü al bir bitig maxa süü baši älgintä bir bitig yaqšiči ortuq älgintä* <one round *tamya*-seal> [MOTH 26, ll. 7-9, semi-square, probably Type D 1]

“From the hands of Qawdī, take delivery, on having checked them, of 117 strings of pearls. (I have sent) one letter in the hands of troop commander Maxa and one letter in the hands of Yaqšiči Ortuq. <one round *tamya*-seal>”

*ädgü ygän älgintä al* [MOTH 25, l. 12, semi-square, Type D 1]

“Take delivery (of them) from the hands of Ädgü Ygän.”

*qutadmış ygän ilgintä ymä bitig idmiş siz* [MOTH 29, ll. 14-15, semi-square, Type D 1]

“I have heard that you sent a letter in the hands of Qutadmış Ygän, too.”

*arqış tavraq barur üçün bitig quruγ bol[ma ]° qanuda qan-ča ärüp anča CW[ ]X’N älgintä aling taqi nä tü[rlüg sav bar] ärsär bay arslan qošt[r]*

37) Cf. *Zhenji shilu*, vol. 5, pp. 29-30, 40, 48, 49.

38) Cf. nos. 59, 83, 106, 159, 161, 164, 165, 177, 211, 247, 288, 385, 399, 646, 702, 714 in Burrow 1940. As for no. 288, see especially Thomas 1934, p. 66.

39) Cf. Sims-Williams 2006, p. 712; DTSTH, Text E (ll. 11-12) on pp. 42, 47, Text G (ll. 20-21) on p. 65; Kumamoto 1982, p. 46; TuMW, Letter C (l. 13); Yoshida / Moriyasu 2000b, p. 162. The Chinese translation in TuMW, p. 122, does not correctly reflect the sense of “by the hand of.”



“[Whatever] timely statement (= request, matter, news) from us there may be, [we have sent someone?] with each caravan.”

[*n*]ä uyurluy savīngīz-lar ārsār [TuMW, Letter E, l. 7, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

“Whatever timely message (= matter, news) from you there is, ....”

● *adīrtlīy bitig, bālgūlūg bitig* “a letter with explicit (instructions)”

*bizingā bir adīrtlīy bitig īding* [MOTH 23, ll. 11-12, semi-square, Type D2]

“Send us a letter with explicit (instructions).”

*ač tävä kārḡāk bolsar adīrtlīy bitig īdyīl* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, recto, ll. 7-8, cursive, Type E2, Buddhist]

“If a free camel is necessary, send a letter with explicit (instructions).”

*manga adīrtlīy bitig īdyīl* [SI Kr I 151, ll. 8-9, cursive, Type E1]

“Send me a letter with explicit (instructions).”

*bālgūlūg bitig sav īding* [MOTH 27, ll. 9-10, semi-square, Type D2, Buddhist]

*bālgūlūg bitig qīlīp ī[dyīl]* [Ot.Ry. 1107, l. v4, semi-square, Type ?]

“Make (= Write) and send a letter with explicit (instructions).”

● *osal bolmazun* “Don’t be negligent!”

*altī tapīy tūpsi?-lār · nātāg ārsār manga tilāp īdyīl : sanga manga buyan kārḡisiz mu buyan alyu üçün manga tilāp īdyīl osal bolmazun* [Ch/U 7426, ll. 6-8, cursive, draft of Type E1, Buddhist]

“Send me (these) six ritual implements(?) however (poor) their condition may be. Are not religious merits necessary for you and me? In order to achieve religious merits, you should seek out (the objects mentioned above) and send me (them). Don’t be negligent!”

*yan-a sōzūm manga üç yangīqa bir ulay-nī yarašturup īdinglar osal bolmazun* [Ch/U 6245, ll. 3-4, cursive, draft of Type E2, Buddhist]

“And again my message: Make a horse (or an ox or a donkey) ready for a long-distance relay (*ulay*) and send it to me on the third day (of the next month?). Don’t be negligent!”

*bu ud-lar-qa ulay-čï quduy buq-a bardï anga išänmäyin sän asirap alip kälgin säning ämgäking tuta birgäy biz osal bolmazun* [U 5318, ll. 7-12, cursive, Type D1]

“For these oxen, a relay-post officer (named) Quduγ Buqa has gone. (But) I will not trust him. You should feed (them) and bring (them back). (Then) we will take your labour service (upon ourselves). Don’t be negligent!”

*yana söziüm alp qay-a nomdaš-qa sän šaču-täki yonar-niing bütmiš-in bütmäyük-in andaqi iš-ning küč-nüing yarayï nätäg ärsär anï manga b[iti]p idyil osal bolmazun* [P. ou. 16 Bis, ll. 8-11, cursive, Type ?, Buddhist]

“And again my message to (our) brother-in-religion, Alp Qaya: Whether or not you have completed the carving work (of printing blocks?) in Šaču (= Dunhuang), whatever the circumstances of the work (labour service?) there may be, write to me about them and send (a letter). Don’t be negligent!”

- ... *üčün busanmanglar* “Don’t worry about ...”

*män ymä qidïy-qa-tägi äsän tägdim mini üčün busanmanglar* [MOTH 19, ll. 3-4, semi-square, Type ?]

“As for me, I have safely arrived at the frontier. Don’t worry about me.”

*tayay čor üčün busanmanglar* [MOTH 21, l. 5, semi-square, Type E2]

“Don’t worry about Tayay Čor.”

- *kör- al-* “to examine and receive, to take delivery after checking” This expression will be discussed in Section 3 of the next chapter.
- *yamu* “All right?” This word is added immediately after a voluntative-imperative for emphasis.

*bir ilätü yinčgä böz sükin? körü al* [MOTH 25, ll. 11-12, semi-square, Type D1]

“Take delivery of a handkerchief-sized piece of fine cotton cloth after //// having checked (it).”

*körü aling* [U 6198 + 6199, l. 6, semi-square, Type C]

“Check and receive (them). = Take delivery (of them) after having checked (them).”

*munča nom-lar-nï idt[im] körüp alyil yamu* [P. ou. 16 Bis, ll. 19-20 (from P. 4521), cursive, Type ?, Buddhist]

“[I] have sent the above scriptures. Take delivery (of them) after having checked (them). All right?”

### ● Date

It is quite common practice to add the date to a letter, and in the Iranian languages, including Sogdian (which may be assumed to have close connections with Uighur letters), and in Chinese the date often comes at the end of a letter.<sup>40)</sup> But in the case of Uighur letters we find an unusual phenomenon regarding the date.

In Uighur contracts the date invariably comes at the start, but it is rare for the date to be included in Uighur letters. Consequently, in cases when it is included, not even its position is fixed. But at least during the early period of the semi-square script the date never comes at the start of a letter. For example, in UBr, Text B r? = U 181 r?, l. 6, the Date “on the 12<sup>th</sup> (or 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>) day [of the // month?]” is at the end, while in MOTH 26, ll. 5-7, the sentence “This letter is a letter written on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the 8<sup>th</sup> month” comes in about the middle of the main body of the letter. In SI 2 Kr 17 & SI Kr IV 256, on the other hand, the date “on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month” comes towards the end of the body of the letter, although not at the very end. Meanwhile, in letters from the period when the cursive script was used, there is one example of the date “on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the // month” coming at the start [UBr, Text C], and this is probably due to the influence of the format used in contracts. At any rate, no reference to the year has been found in these dates, and there is, I believe, probably little possibility that they would have included the year. My reasons for drawing this inference are touched on in Chapter 12 (2), “Caravan Traffic and Letters.”

### **(3) Postscript Formulae (Change of Addressee, Change of Subject, Postscript)**

Although I have called these simply postscript formulae, in actual practice they tend to be often used in the body of the letter when the person who is being addressed changes, and when this is not the case, they are used when changing the subject. Typical examples of this kind of expression are *taqī bir savīm* “A further message from me,” used in the early period (10<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> cent.), and *yana sözüim* “And again my message,” used in the late period

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40) Sogdian = cf. Sims-Williams 1991, pp. 177, 185; TuMW, p. 251; Tafazzolī 1993, p. 289b. Middle Persian = cf. Tafazzolī 1993, p. 288b; Weber 2009, p. 540. Bactrian = cf. Sims-Williams 2007, pp. 98, 100, 104, 108, 114. Khotanese = cf. Tafazzolī 1993, p. 290a. Chinese = *Zhenji shilu*, vol. 4, pp. 9-50.

(13<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> cent.). Of course, there are variant forms in which *yana/yinä* “again, once more” is substituted for the adverb *taqī* “furthermore, in addition” or *basa* “thereafter, then, next” or in which *taqī* / *yana* are omitted. There are also two examples of *ynä bir ötügüm* [U 3890 r, l. 8, semi-square, Type A, Christian] and *yana ötügüm* [U 5941, l. 8, cursive, probably Type B, Buddhist], the polite form of *taqī bir savim* or *yana sözüm*.

In Uighur letters, there are often several addressees even if there is only one sender, and it is not unusual for there even to be several senders. (This is the case not only in Uighur letters but also in almost all letters in any language used along the Silk Road.) Accordingly, in these postscript formulae the sender is often indicated by the nominative and the addressee by the dative, and this has resulted in the emergence of a variety of variant forms from the above basic forms. In the case of *yana sözüm*, a postscript formula that appeared in the later period, it is sometimes also used to introduce the main subject of the letter after the conclusion of the greetings. In the following, I shall omit examples of the frequently used basic forms and list only examples of variant forms.

sender + *taqī bir savim* :

*qutluḡ tözün taqī bir savim* [MOTH 29, l. 5, semi-square, Type D 1]

“A further message from me, Qutluḡ Tözün (= one of several senders): .....”

sender + addressee *-qa/-kä taqī bir savim* :

*qutluḡ tözün sangunqa taqī bir savim* [MOTH 29, l. 14, semi-square, Type D 1]

“(From) Qutluḡ Tözün (= one of several senders), my further message to (Tüz Ygän) Sangun (= one of several addressees): .....”

addressee *-qa/-kä* + sender + *taqī bir savim* :

*äkämkä tonga šäli taqī bir savim* [U 5924, l. 3, semi-square, Type ?]

“A further message from Tonga Šäli (the sender) to my elder sister (the addressee): .....”

addressee *-qa/-kä taqī bir savim* :

*qutluḡ siligkä taqī bir savim* [MOTH 21, l. 10, semi-square, Type E2]

“A further message from me (the sender) to Qutluḡ Silig (= one of several addressees): .....”

$T^{\circ}M^{\circ}$  *tonga-qa taqı bir savım* [Or. 8212-1803 v, l. 8, semi-square, Type ?]

“A further message from me (the sender) to  $T^{\circ}M^{\circ}$  Tonga (the addressee): .....”

sender + *sözüm* + addressee *-qa/-kä* :

*taqıčuq tarqan sözüm · toyınçoy kişi-singä* [U 5331, l. 4, cursive, Type D1]

“My, Taqıčuq Tarqan’s, words (= instructions) to Toyınçoy’s wife.”

*yana sözüm* + addressee *-qa/-kä* :

*yana sözüm alp qaya nomdaş-qa* [P. ou. 16 Bis, l. 8, cursive, Type ?, Buddhist]

“And again my message to (our) brethren-in-religion Alp Qaya: .....”

*basa* sender + *sözüm* + addressee *-qa/-kä* :

*basa toyın sözüm äsän tämür-kä* [UBr, Text C, l. 7, cursive, Type E3, Buddhist]

“Next, (from) Toyın (= one of several senders), my message to Äsän Tämür (= one of several addressees): .....”

#### (4) Closing Formulae [III-3]

The following two examples are known from the Uighur translation of the *Biography of Xuanzang*:

*yinçürü töpün yükünü täginür män* [BHtB, ll. 2030-2031 = AtXzB, VII, ll. 2055-2056]

“I venture to bow and worship (you), inclining my head to the ground.”

*qalmışın tükäl sözläyü umaz toyın kuintso bitigim* [BHtB, ll. 2146-2147 = AtXzB, VII, ll. 2170-2171]

“I am unable to state fully the rest. (This is) a letter of mine, the monk Xuanzang.”

The latter example corresponds to the original Chinese sentence as follows: *yu bu neng weishu, bichu Xuanzang jin Cheng* 餘不能委述，苾芻玄奘謹呈 “I am unable to state in greater detail. I, the Buddhist monk Xuanzang, respectfully send (this letter).” But polite closing formulae such as these are not found in our corpus of Uighur letters. Various expressions or endings are used at the end of ordinary letters, and it is difficult to categorize them, but one of the following patterns is used with comparative frequency: (1) expressions ending with the first-person past tense: “I/we have written,” “I/we have sent,”

“I/we have humbly said/done”; (2) expressions ending with the second- or third-person voluntative-imperative or future to make a request of or give instructions to the addressee; or (3) expressions ending in the first-person voluntative-imperative or future to indicate the sender’s intentions or plans.

A typical example of (1) is *anin bitig idtimiz* “For that reason we have sent a letter.” This is discussed immediately below. Typical examples of (2) include *osal bolmazun* “Don’t be negligent!” and *adirtliḡ bitig idyil* “Send a letter with explicit (instructions)!” which were cited in Section 2 of this chapter. In the later period, *yamu* “All right?” is sometimes added after the voluntative-imperative for emphasis.<sup>41)</sup>

● *anin bitig idtim(iz)* “For that reason we/I have sent a letter”

This expression has a number of variants — polite form: *anin bir asangü bitig idtim(iz)* “For that reason we/I have sent a greeting letter”; form for addressing a superior: *anin ötünü tägintimiz* “For that reason we have ventured to submit a statement”; form for addressing an inferior: *anin yarliḡ yarliḡayu idtimiz* “For that reason we have issued a commanding letter.”

These are all types of closing expressions, and they often come at the end of a letter, although this is not necessarily the case.<sup>42)</sup> At any rate, since they bring the foregoing content of the letter to a conclusion, *anin* “for that reason, accordingly,” which is the instrumental form of the pronoun *ol* “that,” may be assumed to mean “on account of those matters mentioned above.” It may be noted that not only when the term used in the opening formula is of the simple *bitig* form, but even in cases of the *ötüg* form and standard *asangü* form, only the word *bitig* is often used here. There follow four typical examples.

*tört šing boduy tsir ayaq birgäy män tip ymä birmäding amtī kiwin toyin-qa torqu birsär  
birdim tip bitig idyil anin bitig idtimiz* [MOTH 24, ll. 8-10, semi-square, Type  
D1]

“While saying, ‘I will deliver four pints of dye and lacquered cups,’ again you did not give (them). Now, if you give the silk to Kiwin Toyin, send (me) a letter saying, ‘I

41) [Ch/U 7462, ll. 7-8, cursive; U 5634, l. v3, cursive; Ch/U 6245, ll. 4-5, cursive, draft of Type E2]

42) [MOTH 24, ll. 9-10; U 6198 + 6199, l. 7; TuMW, Letter D, ll. 21-22; U 5531 + 6066, Text a, l. 8; U 5320, l. 8; SI D 11 recto?, l. 5; Ot.Ry. 1978, l. 13; U 6155, l. 5; SI 2 Kr 17 & SI Kr IV 256; U 5783, l. 10; U 5545, l. 5; SI Kr IV 595, l. 5; MOTH 26, l. 11; TuMW, Letter E, l. 28; Ch/U 6570 + 6959, ll. 16-17; Ot.Ry. 1960, l. 3; TuMW, Letter F, l. 32]



have given (it to him).’ On account of those matters (mentioned above) I (lit. we) have sent a letter.”

*körü aling köz? ädgüti ying biz-ni ida[la]mang saqınmang anin bitig idtimiz* [U 6198 + 6199, ll. 6-7, semi-square, Type C, Manichaeon]

“Take delivery (of them) after having checked (them). Eat (them) carefully(?) and properly. Don’t renounce us. Don’t worry about us. On account of those matters (mentioned above) we have sent a letter.”

*taqi nä tü[rlüg sav bar] ärsär bay arslan qoştr iltgäy [ J° körtgürüing anin bitig idtimiz äsänin tägzün* [TuMW, Letter D, ll. 19-v3, semi-square, Type A, Manichaeon]

“If there are any further [kinds of words (*or*) matters] at all], the Superior (*qoştar*) Bay Arslan will take them. Please show ///. On account of those matters (mentioned above) we have sent a letter. May it reach (you) safely!”

*yuti-qa üküş köngül ayitu idur+biz anin bitig idtimiz* [MOTH 26, l. 11, semi-square, probably Type D1]

“To Yuti we send (a letter) asking many times about (your) heart (= mental health). On account of those matters (mentioned above) we have sent a letter.”

In the numerous examples starting with these examples, the word “that” of *anin* “for that reason” refers to the overall content of the body of the letter, and not to the sentence immediately preceding *anin*. But in the case of *anin* as used in the four examples cited in Section 2 of the next chapter — as, for example, in *arqiş barir ücün anin bitig idtimiz* “Because a caravan is leaving, therefore we have sent a letter.” — it is not suitable to determine from the context that it also means “on account of those matters (mentioned above).” However, though one of the four examples [MOTH 5, 4<sup>th</sup> text, ll. 79-81] clearly comes at the end of the letter, the other three examples [MOTH 19, ll. 2-3; MOTH 25, ll. 9-10; MOTH 29, ll. 11-12] do not come at the end of the letter, and so in these cases I shall for the time being follow Hamilton’s interpretation “par conséquent” and translate *anin* as “therefore.” But there also remains the possibility that, in line with its original meaning as the instrumental of *ol* “that,” *anin* meant simply “with that (caravan).”

### (5) Delivery Notes [IV]

The Naming Formulae [I] may be regarded as a form of address, but I have clearly

differentiated between this and the superscription, or the address given on the verso. This latter is the addressee (name or title) inscribed on that part of the verso of a letter which appears on the outside when the letter is folded up into a small rectangle with the text of the letter on the inside. Even if the text of the letter continues onto the verso, if the letter is carefully folded so that only the part with the delivery notes appears on the outside, the text of the letter will remain hidden. The majority of letters with delivery notes in our corpus are written in semi-square script, but there is also one example [U 5941] that is clearly in cursive script, and delivery notes would have been used in all periods. The formulae for delivery notes are illustrated below.

addressee + *qutınga* + sender + *ötüg* form [UBr, Text A = K 7718, semi-square, Type A]

addressee -*qa/-kä birzün*, sender + *bitigimiz* [MOTH 28, semi-square, Type D 2]

addressee -*qa/-kä birzün* / *tägzün* / *ötünzün* [MOTH 29, semi-square, Type D 1; U 5831, semi-cursive, Type D 1, Christian; U 5941, cursive, probably Type B, Buddhist; probably U 5644, semi-cursive, Type ?, Buddhist; probably U 5795, semi-square, Type ?, Christian]

sender + (*äsängü*) *bitigim(iz)*, addressee -*qa/-kä birzün* [MOTH 21, semi-square, Type E 2; MOTH 25, semi-square, Type D 1; MOTH 30, semi-square, Type E 2; MOTH 24 without *birzün*, semi-square, Type D 1]

As can be seen in the above examples, the addressee is essential in delivery notes, but it is not necessary to give the sender. The verb that frequently appears in delivery notes is the third-person voluntative-imperative *birzün* “Let (someone) give!” This represents an instruction to the letter-carrier or postman, and a parallel expression is found in Sogdian too.<sup>43)</sup> In the example from MOTH 28, even though *qutınga* and *äsängümüz* are used in the naming formula and the letter is addressed to a superior, the delivery note takes a discourteous form, using simply -*qa* and *bitigimiz*. Since the delivery notes provide instructions for the letter-carrier or postman, they did not necessarily need to accord in style with the naming formula.

It is not uncommon for the place of delivery to be indicated by the locative suffix in front of the addressee’s name, but there have not been discovered any examples in which

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43) Cf. DTSTH, p. 61, F 24. 2; TuMW, p. 276.

the place of writing is given in front of the sender's name. The places of delivery that have so far come to light are Shazhou 沙州 (Dunhuang) [MOTH 21, l. v2; MOTH 29, l. 21; MOTH 30, l. 13], Hami [MOTH 28, l. 24], Turfan [U 5831, semi-cursive, Type D 1, Christian], Yar (Jiaohe 交河)<sup>44</sup> [UBr, Text A, l. 1 & l. 6], and Bulayüq [U 5795, l. v 1, semi-square, Type ?, Christian]. Although Qočo is frequently mentioned in the body of letters, no definite example of its use in delivery notes has yet been found.

### (6) Envelopes

Gabain (1964, p. 238) writes that when a letter was folded rectangularly, the address was written on the back of the letter, which was on the outside, and therefore no envelope was needed, but this is not so. I have to date managed to ascertain only a small number of examples of envelopes used with Uighur letters, but they do definitely exist. A typical example is MIK III 5003, held by the Asian Art Museum (formerly Museum of Indian Art) in Berlin. It goes without saying that all the artefacts from Turfan held by the Asian Art Museum are of the same provenance as the Turfan documents held by BBAW, and the envelope in question was discovered at Ruin  $\alpha$  in the ancient city of Qočo by the first German expedition to Turfan. It is made not of paper but of cloth, probably cotton, and measures approximately  $19 \times 13$  cm. It would have been only just large enough for a letter folded rectangularly, and the address, in Uighur script, seems to have been written in two lines each on its recto and verso after the letter had been placed inside. It is thus clear that it was used as an envelope, and there are also signs that a silk ribbon about 4.5–5 cm wide had been sewn onto the back with silk thread, although this seems to have occurred at a later date when the cloth was reused. The text inscribed on the envelope reads as follows:

01) *tinmiš tarqan* 02) *oqli qut* -- blank space -- 03) *bulmiš-qa* 04) *birzün*  
 “Let (this letter) be given to Qut Bulmiš, the son of Tinmiš Tarqan.”

The phrase *-qa/-kä birzün* “Let (this letter) be given to (someone)” is naturally an instruction to the letter-carrier. I have been unable to find any other envelopes in Berlin, but I have managed to identify as envelopes the following three items among the Ōtani Collections held by Ōmiya Library at Ryūkoku University in Kyoto.

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44) This has until now been read as *Yin+dä*, but I have emended the reading to *Yar+da*.

Ot.Ry. 1961 + 1962 (paper envelope, semi-square)

Ot.Ry. 1961 (24.4 × 5.5 cm)

01) *J buqa čaq*

Ot.Ry. 1962 (22.8 × 5.9 cm)

01) *J<sup>o</sup>-qa birzün ·*

02) *Jmiš qutluy taybač<sup>o</sup>[*

Ot.Ry. 1963 (paper envelope, 24.5 × 9.0 cm, semi-square)

01) *J<sup>o</sup>[*

02) *J<sup>oooo</sup> WN*

03) *J-kä? [*

Ot.Ry. 11162 (Tachibana no. 162) (cloth [probably cotton] envelope, 10.5 × 10.8 cm, semi-square)

01) *känč tngirim-kä*

In addition to the above items, Ot.Ry. 11163 (Tachibana no. 163) may also be an envelope of cotton cloth. The above examples are by no means numerous, but it should be permitted to infer from them that the wording on the envelope was more or less the same as that of the superscription on the verso of a letter as described in the previous section. This would seem reasonable from a commonsense point of view, and it does not seem to be at any great variance with examples of envelopes in other languages cited below.

As for the material used for envelopes, it is clear that Uighur envelopes were made of both paper and cloth. On the other hand, almost all of the envelopes used for Chinese documents of the same period from the Library Cave at Dunhuang are of paper, and while there are several examples of the paper having been folded in such a way as to produce a fairly large envelope, very occasionally the paper envelope was wrapped around a letter that had been rolled up cylindrically (Akagi 2005, pp. 4-11). In the case of Sogdian, there is one item among the Ōtani Collections dating from about the tenth century [Ot.Ry. 1979] that is thought to have possibly been an envelope (Kudara / Sundermann / Yoshida 1997, p. 69 & pl. 13). Furthermore, in the case of Letter II among the Sogdian *Ancient Letters* discovered in the vicinity of Dunhuang and going back to the early fourth century the inner envelope

is of brown silk while the outer envelope is of coarse cloth, on which the address has been written (*Serindia*, II, p. 776; Sims-Williams 2001 a, pp. 267-269; Sims-Williams 2001 b, p. 47). Here I wish to cite the English translation by Sims-Williams (2001 a, p. 269): (*Envelope*) ... should send and bring [this] letter to Samarkand. And [the noble lord Varzakk ... should receive (?)] it all(?) [complete(?)]. Sent [by his] servant Nanai-vandak. (*Verso*) To the noble lord Varzakk (son of) Nanai-thvār (of the family) Kānakk. Sent [by] his servant Nanai-vandak.

## 12. The Caravan Trade and Communications

### (1) The Importance of Caravans

It is hardly necessary to point out the importance of caravans in the premodern history of Central Eurasia.<sup>45)</sup> The Old Turkic word for “caravan” is *arqış*,<sup>46)</sup> and in Chinese it is *banci* 般次. That *banci* means “caravan” was already pointed out by Fujieda Akira, and later James Hamilton noted that *arqış* corresponded to *banci*, while Zhang Guangda has collected examples of the use of the word *banci* in Dunhuang documents from around the tenth century.<sup>47)</sup> Fujieda considered *banci* to refer to government-sponsored caravans, but in actual fact it also encompasses caravans engaged in private trade. Meanwhile, the word *arqış* appears already in Old Turkic inscriptions dating from the first half of the eighth century, where it is found in a declaration that the second Türk (T‘u-chüeh / Tujue 突厥) empire would be secure if it established its base in the area around Mount Ötükän in central Mongolia and engaged in caravan trade with other countries, and it is also found in reference to the Basmil nomads, who lived in the northern foothills of the eastern Tianshan Mountains

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45) Studies of and references to the caravan trade are far too numerous to list here, but I would like to recommend just one work, by my former teacher Enoki Kazuo (1979; Repr. 1993). Reference should be made in particular to the essays “Shiruku rōdo no kokusai bōeki—kyaravan bōeki—” シルクロードの国際貿易——キャラヴァン貿易—— [International Trade along the Silk Road: The Caravan Trade] and “Tonkō to Yārukando—kyaravan bōekishi no hitokoma—” 敦煌とヤールカンド——キャラヴァン貿易史の一齣—— [Dunhuang and Yarkand: A Page in the History of the Caravan Trade] included in this work.

46) ED, pp. 216-217; UW, 3, pp. 198-199; MOH, p. 52, n. 5. 73.

47) Fujieda 1943, pp. 78-79, n. 191; Zhang Guangda, “Tangmo Wudai Songchu xibei diqu de banci he shici” 唐末五代宋初西北地区的般次和使次 [Banci and shici in Northwest China during the Late Tang, Five Dynasties, and Early Song], in Zhang Guangda 1995, pp. 335-346. In Chavannes and Pelliot 1913, pp. 278-279, the term *banci* 般次 has been completely misunderstood, and it was pointed out in Hamilton 1955 (= OECD, p. 78) that it actually means “caravan.”

and, it is said, were subjugated because they did not send (regular or constant) caravans to the Türk court.<sup>48)</sup> These examples tend to be viewed as the activities of caravans that were operated by the government authorities, but if one takes into account the historical background at the time, it is most unlikely that there would not have been any caravan trade privately conducted by Sogdians in particular.<sup>49)</sup> Since they carried costly goods, caravans were liable to be targeted by brigands and naturally needed to be provided with armed protection, and from the outset they tended to be jointly operated by the government authorities and private interests. Our corpus of Uighur letters includes more than ten letters in which the word *arqış* appears, and among these letters private letters and letters concerning Manichaeans are especially noticeable.<sup>50)</sup> Furthermore, perhaps by coincidence, these are all letters in semi-square script and can be dated to around the tenth and eleventh centuries. Nonetheless, there is not the slightest need to doubt that the word *arqış* survived beyond the Mongol period down to modern times.

Also of great interest in connection with *arqış* are the two major literary monuments of the Muslim Karakhanids, who established themselves to the immediate west of the West Uighur kingdom. First let me quote a passage from the section on “Associating with merchants” in the *Qutadqu bilig* (Wisdom Conducive to Happiness). Since there exists an outstanding English translation by R. Dankoff, I shall not give the original text.

“Then come the merchants (*satiyčĭ*). They never rest from trading and seeking a profit. They roam the world for a living, while they keep mind and heart devoted to God. Associate with them as they come and go, do business with them, and give them what they require. For they have acquired all the choice and beautiful and desirable things of the world. They travel round from east to west, bringing you whatever you may wish. They provide all sorts of silken stuffs, and all the world’s rare and wondrous things. O discriminating and generous one! If there were no merchants roaming the

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48) Cf. Onogawa 1943, p. 35 (I S 8), p. 54 (II E 25), p. 59 (II E 41), p. 125; GOT, pp. 231-232, 262 (KT S 8), pp. 243, 275 (BK E 25), pp. 245, 278 (BK E 41); Mori 1976, pp. 8-9 = Mori 1992, pp. 105-106. The original meaning of *arqış* has still not been conclusively established, but I believe that Hamilton is very much to the point when he posits a root *\*arq-* meaning “traverser, aller transversalement, faire la navette” and regards *arqış* as a derivative of this root (cf. ED, p. 216; UW, 3, p. 198; MOTH, p. 52, n. 5. 73).

49) Cf. Moriyasu 2007a, pp. 269-271.

50) See the examples cited in Section 2 of this chapter.

world, when could you ever wear a black sable lining? If the China caravan (*Xitay arqīši*) ceased to raise dust on the roads, how could these countless kinds of silks arrive? If the merchants did not travel the world around, who could ever see a string of pearls? ” (Dankoff 1983, p. 184)

The word *arqīš* appears repeatedly in other parts of the *Qutadyu bilig* too, and in one such passage we find: *xitay arqīši yađtī tavyač ädi* “the Cathay caravan spread out its Chinese wares” (Dankoff 1983, p. 41). A point to notice here is the manner in which the words *xitay/qitay* and *tavyač* are differentiated. *Tavyač* originally referred to the Northern Wei 北魏, founded by the Tuoba 拓跋 clan of the Xianbei 鮮卑 tribe, and later to the Northern Dynasties and the Sui 隋 and Tang 唐 empires, but at the time in question it undoubtedly referred to the Song 宋. The “Chinese (*tavyač*) wares” brought by the Cathay (i.e., Liao 遼) caravan were no doubt silk fabrics and other quality goods from Song China. Meanwhile, Kāšyarī’s dictionary, the other literary legacy of the Karakhanids, not only includes the illustrative sentence *yirāq yēr sāwin arqīš kaldürür* “The caravan (= traveller) brings news of a distant land” (CTD, I, p. 129), but *lutai* 鹿胎 / *lütai* 綠胎, a high-grade silk fabric that was a speciality of Sichuan 四川 during the Song, is recorded as *loxtāy* “A red Šīnī brocade with yellow spangles” (CTD, II, p. 274). Furthermore, *žünkim* (*rongjin* 絨錦 / 戎錦), another high-grade silk fabric of this period, is recorded in Kāšyarī’s dictionary as *zūngüm* “A type of Šīnī brocade” (CTD, I, p. 360), and it is evident that these silk fabrics were available under the Karakhanids. I have already discussed elsewhere how this *žünkim* was available among the West Uighurs around the tenth century and was used as a gift from Cathay (Liao) to the sultan of the Ghaznavids in the eleventh century (Moriyasu 1991, pp. 90-91 = GUMS, pp. 112-113), but since then I have noticed that *rongjin* 戎錦 appears in a tenth-century Chinese document from Dunhuang (Pelliot Chinois 3644) together with “Tatars” (Dadan 達担) and “Uighur mission” (Huihu *shi* 迴鶻使). A single example of *žünkim* is also attested in my corpus of Uighur letters, and it appears, moreover, together with *tavyač* [Ot.Ry. 1657 r, semi-square].

The fact that special terms signifying high-grade Chinese silk fabrics had spread as far as the Karakhanids cannot but lead to the supposition that there existed a flourishing caravan trade from the Song (= *Tavyač* = Šīnī) to the Liao (Cathay) and then on through the West Uighur kingdom in the Tianshan region or through the Ganzhou 甘州 Uighur kingdom, the Dunhuang kingdom (or independent government of the imperial military commissioner of

the Return-to-Allegiance Army of Hexi), the Xixia (Tangut) kingdom, and so on, which controlled the Hexi Corridor. This supposition can, of course, also be confirmed on the basis of Chinese and Tangut sources<sup>51)</sup> and can be further corroborated through excavated glassware that was produced in Muslim regions and imported by the Liao.<sup>52)</sup>

In an article discussing Sogdian and Uighur merchants along the Silk Road, I illustrated by means of diagrams “the Uighur network around the tenth century” and “the Uighur network in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries (Mongol period)” (Moriyasu 1997, pp. 106-108, 114-115). If one now adds to MOTH, DTSTH, SUK and Chinese sources on which I relied on that occasion the new information noted above and also gives comprehensive consideration to the place-names and ethnonyms found in our corpus of Uighur letters, it becomes possible to present anew the extent of “the Uighur network in the tenth and eleventh centuries” in the form of the sketch map given below. It goes without saying that the eastern Tianshan region where the West Uighur kingdom was based included not only the towns of the Turfan Basin and Bišbaliq (Beiting 北庭) in the northern foothills of the Tianshan Mountains, but also the area from Hami (Yiwu 伊吾) in the east to Solmī (Yanqi 焉耆 = Karashār) in the west, while the Hexi Corridor encompassed the towns of Shazhou (Dunhuang), Ganzhou (Zhangye 張掖), and Suzhou 肅州 (Jiuquan 酒泉), or the states of the independent government of the Return-to-Allegiance Army of Shazhou, the Ganzhou Uighur kingdom, and Xixia, and there lived also the Tatars in Mongolia.<sup>53)</sup> Even though goods and letters may have been carried great distances, it would not necessarily have been the case that the caravans and merchants who carried them likewise travelled long

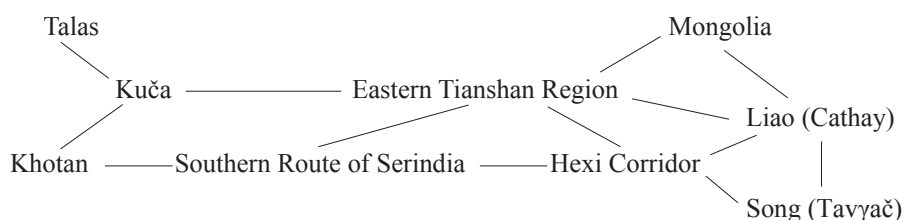
51) Cf. Shirota 1976; Shirota 1992; Hino 1965, p. 39 = Hino 1982, pp. 247-248; K. Sato 1978, pp. 97-98 = K. Sato 1981, pp. 334-335; Nagasawa 1979, pp. 245-378; Otagi 1989, pp. 29, 31-32; Dohi 1988, pp. 415-418, 427-429; Moriyasu 1997, pp. 109-111; Moriyasu 2004a, pp. 19-27; Moriyasu 2004b, pp. 231, 234; Fujieda 1950, pp. 832-839; T. Sato 2003, pp. 221-223, 232; T. Sato 2006, pp. 120-121.

52) Cf. Taniichi Takashi 谷一尚, *Garasu no hikaku bunkashi ガラスの比較文化史 [Glass in Comparative Perspective]*, Tokyo: Sugiyama shoten 杉山書店, 1993, pp. 195-214; Egami Namio 江上波夫 / Li Yiyou 李逸友 (eds.), *Hoppō kiba minzoku no ōgon masuku ten 北方騎馬民族の黄金マスク展 [Exhibition of Golden Masks of Northern Horse-riding Peoples]*, Tokyo: Asahi tsūshinsha 旭通信社, 1996, pls. 72-75; Ma Wenkuan 馬文寬, “Liaomu Liaota chutu de Yisilan boli—jiantan Liao yu Yisilan shijie de guanxi” 遼墓遼塔出土的伊斯蘭玻璃——兼談遼与伊斯蘭世界的關係 [Islamic Glass Unearthed from Liao Tombs and Liao Pagodas, with a discussion of relations between the Liao and the Islamic world], *Kaogu 考古* 1994-8, pp. 736-743, +3 pls.

53) It has in fact been demonstrated by the latest research (Bai Yudong 2011) that at the time the Tatars of Mongolia had established a state called the “kingdom of the Nine Tatars.”



distances, and short-distance or medium-distance movement between several junctions in the network would in reality have been more common if one takes into account acquaintance with local conditions and so on.



### “Uighur network in the tenth and eleventh centuries”

It is only when one takes into account the spread of this Uighur commercial network that the implications of the following passage in Üträt’s famous confession can be understood: “If I, Üträt, from past lives until the present life, at monasteries, monastic quarters and pure localities, ..... have taken and managed monastic property and not given compensation for it, or if when buying and selling I have by means of ruses falsified scales, yardsticks and measures, giving only a little and taking much, ....., or if I have wandered as a spy from town to town, from region to region, and from country to country, ..... I now repent and reflect on everything” (Uigurica, II, pp. 77-78). This is part of a colophon appended to a Buddhist text, with the colophon as a whole being classified among the early Uighur Buddhist texts, which retain evidence of strong Manichaean influence, and according to my investigations presented in past publications,<sup>54)</sup> it can be dated to the period from the second half of the tenth century to the first half of the eleventh century.

## (2) Caravan Traffic and Letters

In the letters contained in our *Corpus of the Old Uighur Letters* we often find statements to the effect that the letter was written with a view to sending it with a caravan that was about to leave, and it has been shown by Hamilton and Sims-Williams that there exists a corresponding expression in Sogdian too (DTSTH, Text G, ll. 7-8, p. 69; Yoshida 2011 c, pp. 24, 25, 28). Since there are similar expressions in Chinese as well (cf. Zhang 1995,

54) Cf. Moriyasu 1985b; Moriyasu 1989; Moriyasu 1990a; Moriyasu 1991 = Moriyasu 2004c = GUMS; Moriyasu 2000c; Moriyasu 2000d; Moriyasu 2003; Moriyasu 2007b = Moriyasu 2008b.

p. 335), it can be readily surmised that cultural exchange occurred between these different peoples, but it is still unclear where this form of expression originated. The Uighur examples read as follows.

*arqış barir üçün anin äsängü bitig idtim* [MOTH 19, ll. 2-3, semi-square, Type ?]

“Because a caravan is leaving, therefore I have sent a greeting letter.”

*arqış barir üçün anin bitig idtimiz* [MOTH 25, ll. 9-10, semi-square, Type D 1]

“Because a caravan is leaving, therefore I (lit. we) have sent a letter.”

*arqış tavraq barir üçün anin bitig idtimiz* [MOTH 29, ll. 11-12, semi-square, Type D 1]

“Because a caravan is leaving in a hurry, therefore we have sent a letter.”

*arqış yügürü täginür üçün anin bir äsängü bitig idtimiz yazuq bolmazun* [MOTH 5, 4<sup>th</sup> text, ll. 79-82, semi-square, draft of Type A, Manichaean]

“Because a caravan ventures to rush away, therefore we have sent a greeting letter. May there be no sin!”

*arqış tavraq barur üçün bitig quruq bol[ma ]* [TuMW, Letter D, ll. 17-18, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

“Because a caravan is leaving in a hurry, [may] a letter [not] be empty ....”

*arqış barir üçün bu bir äsängü ötüg bitig idur biz* [UBr, Text B r? = U 181 r?, ll. 3-4, semi-square, Type A or B]

“Because a caravan is leaving, we are sending this one letter praying for (your) good health.”

As far as can be judged from pre-tenth-century Chinese contracts, transit permits (*guosuo* 過所 or *gongyan* 公驗), and so on that have been discovered in Turfan and Dunhuang, the groups of merchants who travelled across the Silk Roads at the time were quite small, consisting in some cases of only a few people with a few head of livestock, but there is no need to assume that these small groups travelled alone. (This point has been misunderstood in some previous general accounts.) When one considers safety en route, it is likely that in actual practice several such small- and medium-sized groups would have joined forces to form a caravan. According to a well-known passage in the “Account of the Tuyuhun” (“Tuyuhun zhuan” 吐谷渾傳) in the *Zhoushu* 周書 50, in 553 an army of the prefect of Liangzhou 涼州 of the Western Wei attacked a Tuyuhun caravan and seized “240 Sogdian

merchants, 600 camels and mules” and “more than 10,000 rolls of various kinds of silk fabrics.” (cf. Moriyasu 2007a, p. 119.) Even if one assumes that one roll of silk was worth only 100,000 yen in today’s terms, this would still come to one thousand million yen, which gives us an indication of just how large the caravan must have been. The figure “240” mentioned here clearly refers to the number of people in a single caravan. It is evident from the circumstances of an incident in 722 described by Yoshida Yutaka that the Sogdian merchants who had just returned to Sogdiana from China and escaped being massacred by Muslim troops on account of their merchandise numbered 400 (Yoshida 2011 a, pp. 29, 65). This figure may represent the complement of two or three caravans that happened to be on the move at about the same time, but the possibility that a single caravan was made up of 400 people can also not be discounted.

To the best of my knowledge, there has not yet been discovered any material that clearly shows how frequently caravans were travelling back and forth along the Eastern Silk Road in premodern times. It is to be surmised that short-distance smaller caravans travelled quite often, while medium- to large-sized caravans for medium and long distances were less frequent, and the examples of the letters cited above would suggest that caravans were not leaving every day or every few days for a particular destination. But it is also evident from the following examples that they were not leaving only once or twice a year either.

*mini ücün qurıqa arqış barsa bir bitig id* [MOTH 21, ll. 11 - 12, semi-square, Type E2]

“If a caravan leaves for the west, send a letter for me.”

*ängür-ki arqışta kântü bögü uyan yarlıy boltı ärki* [MOTH 5, 4<sup>th</sup> text, ll. 73 - 74, semi-square, draft of Type A, Manichaean]

“(Your) own wise and almighty command was apparently issued with the long-awaited caravan.”

*bu tävä öngräki arqış-ta baryuq ol* [MOTH 23, ll. 15 - 16, semi-square, Type D2]

“This camel has just left with the previous caravan.”

*nä uluy bäläk ärsä känki arqış-ta idyay män* [MOTH 30, l. 11, semi-square, Type E2]

“If there is some large gift, I will send (it) with a later caravan.”

*[ar]qiş kälsär idi bitig sav täginmáz* [BTT V, no. 34 = U 6069, l. 7, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

“Whenever caravans come, no written word (= letter) reaches (us) at all.”

*büküntä inaru bir atlıy arqış bulsar nätäg savangız ärsär antatay kälzün* [TuMW, Letter

D, ll. 15 - 16, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

“From today on, if you find a reputable caravan, have come as they are any of your words (or business?) whatsoever.”

[*nä uyu*]rluy ötügümüz ärsär arqış sayu [ ] tögir ärki z-yn'y alyalī idtimiz  
[TuMW, Letter F, ll. 11 - 12, semi-square, Type A, Manichaean]

“[Whatever] timely statement (= request, matter, news) from us there may be, [we have sent someone?] with each caravan. They have arrived, haven't they? We have sent (some people) in order to receive (our) deposit (= merchandise or money).”

[ ] arqış käl[sär] idi bitig[-ingiz-lär] savingiz-lar yoq biz so arqış sayu bitig  
idur+biz tögir ärki [U 5924, ll. 1 - 2, semi-square, Type ?]

“[Even though] / / / / / caravans have come, there is no word (= letter) from you. We have previously been sending a letter with every caravan. They have arrived, haven't they?”

äpädgü arqış kälsär [ ] p idyil anin äsängü [ ] [U 6155, ll. 4 - 5, semi-square, Type D 1]

“If an excellent caravan comes, / / / / / and send! On account of those matters (mentioned above) [we have sent] a greeting [letter].”

ängür arqışta [ ] bultumuz [MOTH 32, ll. 4 - 5, semi-square, Type ?]

“With the long-awaited caravan, [your letter has arrived.] We received (it) [from the courier<sup>55</sup>].”

I would particularly like to draw attention to the fact that a great variety of modifiers are used to describe caravans: *öngräki arqış* “the previous caravan”<sup>56</sup>) [MOTH 23], *känki arqış* “a later caravan” [MOTH 30], *äpädgü arqış* “an excellent caravan” [U 6155], *atliḡ arqış* “a reputable caravan” [TuMW, Letter D], and *ängür(ki) arqış* “the long-awaited<sup>57</sup>) caravan” [MOTH 5, 4<sup>th</sup> text; MOTH 32]. In Chinese there are examples of caravans bearing a

55) The expression “at the courier's” could be reconstructed comparing the following example: *sizing bitigingiz-lär kälti yügürgän-tä bultumuz* [MOTH 20, ll. 10 - 12, semi-square, Type E 1] “Your letters have arrived. We received them from the courier.”

56) Sogdian Letter C from Bezeklik includes the statement “I sent letters to each of you with a previous caravan by the hand of Il Mängü İnal” (TuMW, l. 13; Yoshida / Moriyasu 2000b, p. 162).

57) As for the interpretation of *ängür(ki)*, see MOTH, glossary, p. 213. I follow Hamilton, although Röhrborn does not do so (UW, 6, p. 389).

person's name,<sup>58)</sup> and the same probably occurred in Uighur too. In addition, though not a letter that was actually sent, in the Uighur translation of the *Biography of Xuanzang* we find the sentence *kältäči arqış-din idyu qiling* "Please send (it) with the caravan that is expected to come" (BHtB, ll. 2144-2145 = AtXzB, VII, ll. 2168-2169), which suggests that the sender regarded it as entirely natural that a caravan would be coming in the near future. Meanwhile, the following Uighur contract unearthed at Čiqtim in the Turfan Basin tells us just how closely connected caravans were to everyday life.

SUK, Lo06 (U 5231 = TII Čiqtim 2)

Ox year, 2<sup>nd</sup> month, on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the first (ten days).

Felt became necessary to me, Būdüs Tutung, in Napčik (Nazhi 納職<sup>59)</sup> in the west suburb of Hami), and I borrowed from Arslan Sīngqur Oγul one felt in exchange for six pieces of cotton cloth. When the caravan with which I went returns, I will send six pieces of cotton cloth in payment. If I do not send it with the caravan, I will repay it correctly with interest of one piece of cotton cloth each month. However many months I borrow it, I will repay it correctly with this kind of interest.

If I should flee before paying the cotton cloth, may the family members pay correctly!

Witness Yigän Taš Oγul. This *tamya*-seal is mine, Būdüs Tutung's.

What should be recalled at this juncture is the examples of dates cited or mentioned in Chapter 8, (3) "Sender's Health" and in the section on the "Date" at the end of Chapter 11 (2). I wish to list some of the more important examples once again.

*bu bitig säkizinč ay iki yangıqa bitimiš bitig ol* [MOTH 26, ll. 5-7, semi-square,

58) See Zhang Guangda 1995, pp. 335, 338. I would like to draw attention in particular to P. 3579 from Dunhuang, dated Yongxi 雍熙 5 (988), which has "caravan of Intendant An" (安都知般次) and clearly refers to a caravan led by a Sogdian. In addition, a horse-selling contract from Dunhuang held by Kyōu shooku in Osaka (羽 27: 史喜酥壳馬契) and dating from the cyclic year *guiwei* 癸未 (probably 983) refers to a "caravan of Commandant Mi" (米都頭般次), and this too was a caravan under the leadership of a Sogdian (cf. Takeda kagaku shinkō zaidan Kyōu shooku 武田科学振興財団杏雨書屋 (ed.), *Tonkō hikyū: eihen satsu ichi* 敦煌秘笈影片冊一 [A Secret Satchel from Dunhuang: Facsimile Volume], vol. 1, Osaka: Takeda kagaku shinkō zaidan 武田科学振興財団, 2009, pp. 200-203. As is well-known, An and Mi are both typical family names of Sogdians who lived in China.

59) Moriyasu 1990b, pp. 72-80 = Moriyasu 1996, pp. 82-88.

probably Type D 1 ]

“This letter is a letter written on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the 8<sup>th</sup> month.”

*so yiti ygrmikä-tägi inč täginü[r ärtimiz?]* [U 5632, l. 3, semi-cursive, Type ?]

“Until the preceding 17<sup>th</sup> day, [we had ?] been fine.”

*män siän körmiš-täki-čä t[örtünč] (or t[oquzunč]) ay [ü]č otuz-qatägi inč äsän bar turur m[än]* [P. ou. 16 Bis, ll. 2-3, cursive, Type ?, Buddhist]

“Until the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> (or 9<sup>th</sup>) month, I have been as fine and healthy as (I used to be) at the time when I met (you) before.”

*yitinč ay [ -kä]tägi körmiš-täki-čä äsän tükäl bar turu[r män]* [P. 181 ou., no. 203 group, verso, ll. 6-7, cursive, Type E 1, Buddhist]

“Until the ///<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, [I] have been as healthy (hend.) as (I used to be) at the time when I met (you before).”

In his most recent article, Yoshida Yutaka has presented an annotated translation together with a photograph of a hitherto unpublished Sogdian letter [\*So 21009] that was among a collection of photographs formerly belonging to R. R. Arat in Istanbul (the original being a Turfan document that would have been in Berlin until World War II). Not only does this letter end with the statement “A caravan goes, and for that reason a letter of (asking after your) health has been written. In the 9<sup>th</sup> month, on the 5<sup>th</sup> day, Saturday,” but here too, as in the Dunhuang documents included in MOTH, the Uighur word *arqiš* is used for “caravan” (Yoshida 2011 c, pp. 24-28). In view of the fact that in these Uighur and Sogdian letters only the month and day, and not the year, are specified when giving the date of an inquiry after someone’s health or the date when a letter was sent, it is evident that the month and day alone sufficed for the people concerned, which indicates that it was assumed as a matter of course that caravans would travel several times a year to and from a particular destination.

In light of the above observations, there is not the least need to doubt that in the world of the Eastern Silk Road at the time in question the exchange of letters by caravans had become firmly established in social life. By my estimate, at busy times caravans would probably have departed for various destinations every month or every second month, and even at less busy times they would have departed once every few months. This means that in the case of an oasis serving as a transfer point on an east-west or north-south route there would have been twice this number of caravans passing through, while in the case of an

oasis at a crossroads even simple arithmetic suggests that there would have been four times as many caravans.<sup>60)</sup> These could not have failed to stimulate the local economy in each region. Even if luxury goods from all quarters did not circulate in the markets of every town along the Silk Road, the economy in each locality would have benefited considerably from just the passage of caravans.

### (3) Gifts Accompanying Letters and Acknowledgement of Their Receipt

Setting aside letters that were sent urgently by post-horse messenger in order to convey as quickly as possible information relating to important matters of state, when sending a letter by caravan, which, although slow, could carry large quantities of goods, it was a matter of courtesy, and also accepted practice, to send not just a letter, but also some sort of gift along with the letter. In fact, the origins of the spread of letters in regions where the Silk Road trade, dealing in luxury goods, flourished is to be sought in the invoices accompanying the packages in which the goods were wrapped, and this is also consistent with the fact, noted at the end of Chapter 7, that whereas seasonal greetings constitute the main part of Chinese letters, thought to have evolved from letters conveying the compliments of the season, letters from the Silk Road region are characterized by an absence of seasonal greetings. It is to be surmised that as invoices developed, they gradually came to convey personal news as well, which led in turn to the idea of sending only letters even if there were no goods to send, and the caravans of horses and camels that travelled along the Silk Road took on the role of a postal service. In other words, a letter and a gift originally formed a set.<sup>61)</sup> It was

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60) There have survived records of the amount of tax levied on quality goods sold by weight at the public market in the capital city of the Qocho kingdom in Turfan in the course of one year at the start of the seventh century, and in view of the fact that the number of transactions recorded is forty-five, Yoshida Yutaka has speculated that the number of large-scale caravans that passed through Qocho during this one year would have been close to this figure (Yoshida 2011 a, pp. 64-65). This is not all that different from my own sense of the frequency of caravans.

61) There has been discovered a gift that would appear to have accompanied a letter sent from Dunhuang to Khotan around the tenth century. It is a fragment of white twill damask that covered the face of the corpse of a member of the Khotanese royal family which was unearthed from the cemetery at Buzak on the southern outskirts of Khotan, and it has been reproduced in colour (cf. *Xinjiang wenwu guji daguan* 新疆文物古迹大观, Urumchi: Xinjiang meishu sheying chubanshe 新疆美術攝影出版社, 1999, p. 99, no. 230; Zhao / Wang 2009, pp. 228-229). In the former publication the size of the damask piece is given as 56 × 44 cm, but in Zhao / Wang 2009 (p. 172) it has been emended to 56 × 75 cm. At any rate, the white damask has a full width of 56 cm, including the two selvages. On one side of the edge where it was cut there is written in Chinese 夫人信附 男宰相李枉兒, while on the other side there is written in Khotanese “belonging to





Letters were accompanied by gifts also in the case of Gāndhārī, Middle Persian, Sogdian, Khotanese, Chinese, Mongolian and Tibetan letters, and there is a strong possibility that it was the same with letters in other languages.<sup>62)</sup> A fragment of a Mongolian letter unearthed at Karakhoto (G 117) contains the phrase *bičig beleg* (Kara 2003, p. 36), and there is no reason to doubt that this is a calque of the corresponding Uighur. In the case of Chinese, many examples have been found among the Dunhuang documents. There is no space to list them all here, but reference can be made to some typical examples cited in Moriyasu 1987. The same can also be said with regard to the three letters in vol. 7 of the *Biography of Xuanzang*, and since one of these is a Chinese translation of a Sanskrit letter from an Indian monk addressed to Xuanzang, it is evident that there was a similar custom in India too. I shall quote the relevant passage from the original Chinese and the Uighur translation.

今共寄白氎一雙，示不空心。路遠莫怪其少，願領。〔『慈恩伝』卷7，中華書局版，p. 162〕“We are now together sending you two rolls<sup>63)</sup> of cotton cloth to indicate that our hearts are not empty.<sup>64)</sup> As the way is long, we hope you will not deem it a small gift but will accept it.”

*amtī qamaḡliḡ bäläk ötügüm bir šong yürüng böz quruḡ bolmazun tip ötüñü täğindim yol ıraḡinga az tip tangırqayu yarlıqamazun küsüşüm ol* [BHtB, p. 376, ll. 1842-1847 = AtXzB, VII, p. 160, ll. 1869-1875]

“I now humbly present as a jointly offered gift two rolls of cotton cloth, saying, ‘May

62) It has been pointed out by F. W. Thomas that the Niya Kharoṣṭhī documents in Gāndhārī, the oldest documents to have been discovered in Central Eurasia and dating from about the third to fourth centuries, include sets of letters and gifts (Thomas 1934, pp. 64-66; see also nos. 109, 140, 152, 159, 161, 165, 177, 184, 188, 288, 320, 373, 624, 667, 690 in Burrow 1940). On Sogdian, cf. DTSTH, Texts E & G, pp. 42, 47, 65, 75; on Khotanese, cf. Kumamoto 1982, p. 46; and on Mongolian, cf. Kara 2003, p. 36. In the case of Tibetan, a later collection of writing models includes the heading “List of gifts attached to letters” (cf. Ishihama 1998, p. 175). Bactrian letters too contain statements that would suggest that letters were accompanied by gifts (cf. Sims-Williams 2007, Documents bf & cj on pp. 62, 86). Further, while not of Central Eurasian provenance, among letters in Middle Persian written on papyrus and discovered in Egypt there is also an example of a letter and a gift forming a set (cf. Weber 2009, p. 540). On Chinese examples of the ninth to tenth centuries, cf. Wu Liyu 2010.

63) *Shuang* 雙 is a unit for counting “pairs,” or sets consisting of two items. Regarding the fact that the unit for cotton cloth was a “pair,” see Tasaki 2006.

64) See next footnote.

(our words in this letter) not come to nothing.’<sup>65</sup>) As the way is long, please do not be surprised that (the gift) is small. This is my request.”

Most of the packages containing personal gifts or goods intended for sale would have been quite valuable, and so it is only natural that various ways and means were devised to avoid losses through the falsification of quantities or the substitution of inferior goods for high-grade goods in transit. One such method was to consign the letter and the package to different members of the same caravan, and when still greater care was taken, they were sent by separate caravans. In such cases, the name of the person to whom the package had been entrusted was mentioned in the letter. A second method was to state the content and quantity of the gifts or goods. A third method was to use a seal called the *tamya*. By way of precaution against the loss or pilfering en route of costly goods consigned to a caravan, the packages were sealed and affixed with a *tamya*-seal, as was the letter giving the content and quantities of the articles, and by sending both separately it was hoped to prevent any foreseeable mishaps. The following passages hint at such measures.

*qawdī ālgintā yūz yiti ygrmi salqīm yinčü körü al bir bitig maxa süü baši ālgintā bir bitig yaqšiči ortuq ālgintā* <one round *tamya*-seal> [MOTH 26, ll. 7-9, semi-square, probably Type D 1]

“From the hands of Qawdī, take delivery, on having checked them, of 117 strings of pearls. (I have sent) one letter in the hands of troop commander Maxa and one letter in the hands of Yaqšiči Ortuq. <one round *tamya*-seal>”

*bäläk bu tamya üzä körü al* <one rectangular *tamya*-seal> <one round *tamya*-seal> [MOTH 26, l. 12, semi-square, probably Type D 1]

“Take delivery of the gift (sent separately) by checking it against (these) *tamya*-seals. <one rectangular *tamya*-seal> <one round *tamya*-seal>”

*//////min qırqız-din körü alinglar ..... bilikig* <*tamya*-seal> *bu tamya üzä körü [alinglar]* [U 5545, l. 4 & ll. 6-7, semi-square and Syriac, Type ?, Christian]

“Take delivery of / / / / / from Qırqız after having examined it. .... Check the gift

<sup>65</sup>) In DTSTH, p. 75, the Chinese phrase *bu kong xin* 不空心 is translated “(je) n’ ai pas le cœur vide (= insensible, ingrat, indifférent),” while the Uighur phrase *quruq bolmazun* is interpreted as “(ce) ne soit pas vide,” and this Uighur expression is deemed to have entered the Sogdian letter Text G in DTSTH.

against this *tamya*-seal [and take delivery of it].”

The expressions *körü al*, *körü alinglar* and *körüp alııl* “examine and receive, take delivery after checking,” mentioned in Section 2 of the previous chapter, are also found in Sogdian documents from Dunhuang,<sup>66)</sup> and the corresponding Chinese terms *jianling* 檢領, *jianrong* 檢容 and *jianna* 檢納 appear in P. 2992, P. 4638, etc. also from Dunhuang.<sup>67)</sup> The two Uighur letters quoted above are actually affixed with *tamya*-seals, and the Chinese letter S. 4362 also has a *tamya*-seal, which is referred to in the letter as *yinzi* 印子. The *tamya*-seal was originally a brand used for branding livestock owned by nomadic Turkic peoples, and it is possible that their contact with Chinese and Sogdians lay behind its use in written documents.

The custom of using seals existed from early times in both West Asia and China. In recent years, many rings mounted with seals of precious stone have been found in Sogdian tombs discovered in northern China, and these seals bear various intaglio designs.<sup>68)</sup> When stamped on clay, these seals produced a clay sealing of a distinctive design and were used for sealing goods and documents, and when such a seal was used with black or red ink and stamped on paper, it was possible to convey in a letter the same design to the addressee. Recently there have been published a considerable number of examples of clay sealings used on documents written in Middle Persian and Bactrian,<sup>69)</sup> which would have had an enormous influence on written Sogdian, and in the future the comparative study of seals and clay sealings will no doubt play an increasingly important role in research on the history of the Silk Road.

## Concluding Remarks

In premodern times, when travel entailed many difficulties, there were presumably close links between the movements of merchants and monks or missionaries of either universal religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Manichaeism and Islam or ethnic religions such as

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66) DTSTH, p. 76, G20.4.

67) Cf. OECD, pls. I, IV = pp. 121, 125; Moriyasu 1982 p. 6; Moriyasu 1983, pp. 216-217; MOTH, p. 136; Wu Liyu 2010, pp. 800-802, 810.

68) Cf. Iwamoto 2005 a; Iwamoto 2005 b.

69) Cf. Azarpay 2006; Lerner 2006; Sims-Williams 2007, p. 15; Weber 2009, p. 540; Lerner / Sims-Williams 2011.

Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Hinduism and Daoism. Furthermore, even ordinary people, whose movements were often subject to restrictions, could travel with comparative freedom for the purpose of making a pilgrimage, and therefore commercial activity making use of this pretext also flourished. In other words, it was common for monks and pilgrims travelling long distances to combine their religious activities with commercial activities.

It was easy for monks in particular to win social trust even among different religions and peoples and to obtain transit permits for travelling long distances, and consequently they were always in a position of being able to involve themselves in long-distance commerce. Monks who fearlessly entered unknown lands out of proselytizing zeal would often carry with them exotic goods in order first of all to arouse the interest of people in the new land and also to make a living. Then, as monasteries and churches gradually became established in their respective localities, donations of land by their followers would also increase, and they were often accorded preferential treatment by local rulers in the form of exemption from taxation and so on. When this happened, not only would monasteries and churches themselves use their land for agriculture and stock-farming, but they would also amass capital and launch out into innkeeping, warehousing, money-lending or brewing, and it was not unusual for them to take on the functions of a general trading house.

While monks themselves also travelled widely, monasteries and churches, which often served as cheap lodging houses for pilgrims, tended to attract all kinds of people, and all manner of information gathered there. As a consequence, ordinary merchants would often call or stay at monasteries or churches of co-religionists in order to seek out information useful for their business. It may also be assumed that when the need arose they began to exchange letters with other people.

The first prerequisite for exchanging letters is the ability to read and write. Wherever they found themselves, monks had a far higher literacy rate than ordinary people, and the pattern of monks teaching the rudiments of reading and writing to those around them who required these skills would have been universally observed.

When one considers the matter in this light, it can be understood that it is by no means a coincidence that many of the corpuses of premodern documents containing letters and contracts have been unearthed from the sites of monasteries and churches. The letters included in the *Corpus of the Old Uighur Letters* which were written by Manichaeans, Buddhists or Christians are no exception.

It is to be noted that among the letters by Manichaeans and Buddhists included in my

forthcoming *Corpus* there are quite a number regarding which it is difficult to determine whether they concern commercial activities conducted purely for profit or whether they are dealing with the procurement of luxury goods for use by the religious order. This is probably related to the fact that religious orders also required luxury goods, since rituals in which rare foreign incenses were not burnt and monks who did not adorn themselves with unusual items of foreign provenance would have been considered to have less religious value. Therefore, demands for not only secular prestige goods for both official and private use, but also expensive religious necessities for ritual use (monks' vestments, decorations for ceremonial halls, incense, alcoholic beverages, etc.) were also able to act as a major factor in the vitalization of long-distance commerce in the Silk Road region. Even so, this does not go against the basic principle that the Silk Road trade was essentially a trade in luxury goods.

It is the movement of people that promotes cultural exchange and the rise of new culture.<sup>70)</sup> In premodern society the movement of people was facilitated by commerce and religious activities, both of which were often closely connected. As a result, traces of cultural exchange between different peoples came to be imprinted not only on religious scriptures but also on the formulae used in secular letters and contracts. It is here that the significance of the comparative study of formulae of similar types that have survived in different languages lies. I would therefore like to present here a basic bibliography<sup>71)</sup> of relevant writings to serve as an aid to the investigation of broader interconnections between epistolary formulae in Central Eurasia and the elucidation of the history of cultural exchange.<sup>72)</sup>

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70) Cf. Kobayashi Michinori 小林道憲, *Bunmei no kōryū shikan—Nihon bunmei no naka no sekai bunmei—* 文明の交流史観——日本文明のなかの世界文明—— [*A View of the History of Exchange between Civilizations: World Civilization within Japanese Civilization*], Tokyo: Mineruva shobō ミネルヴァ書房, 2006, especially chap. 1 “Bunmei no seitai shikan hihan” 文明の生態史観批判 [A critique of the eco-historical view of civilization] and chap. 8 “Fukuzatsukei to shite no bunmei” 複雑系としての文明 [Civilization as a complex system].

71) This bibliography is intended to provide a guide for future research and is by no means exhaustive. In addition, studies on Early New Persian and Arabic, which came under the influence of Islamic culture, have been omitted since they fall outside my area of expertise and I am unfamiliar with the best research on the subject. However, I wish to point out that the famous Geniza documents include many letters in Arabic that date from the same period as the Uighur letters dealt with in the present study, and they have already been studied and translated; see S. G. Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders. Translated from the Arabic with Introductions and Notes*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.

72) It has already been pointed out that, for example, the epistolary formulae of Bactrian had an

## Brief Bibliography on Epistolary Formulae

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influence on Sogdian and those of Tibetan should have had some connections with Gāndhārī (= Indic language written in Karoṣṭhī). Cf. Sims-Williams 2006; Thomas 1934, p. 64; Thomas 1951, p. 333.

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1991, pp. 59-80.

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P. O. Skjærvø, *Khotanese Manuscripts from Chinese Turkestan in the British Library. A  
Complete Catalogue with Texts and Translations*. London: British Library, 2002, pp.  
270-271, 281.

· **Parthian:**

Sh. Shaked, "Two Parthian Ostraca from Nippur." *BSOAS* 57-1, 1994, pp. 208-212, +3 pls.

· **Middle Persian:**

Zaehner 1939; Weber 1992, pp. 233-236; Tafazzolī 1993, pp. 288 a-289 a; Weber 2009.

D. Weber, "An Interesting Pahlavi Letter from Early Islamic Times (Berk. 245)." *ZDMG* 161-  
1, 2011, pp. 91-98.

· **Judeo-Persian:**

Whitfield et al. (eds.) 2004, no. 147 (pp. 221-222).

Zhang Zhan 張湛 / Shi Guang 時光, "Yijian xin faxian Youtai Bosiyu xinzha de duandai yu  
shidu" 一件新發現猶太波斯語信笥的斷代與釋讀 [The Dating and Interpretation of a  
Newly Discovered Judeo-Persian Letter]. *Dunhuang Tulufan yanjiu* 敦煌吐魯番研究 11  
(2008), 2009, pp. 71-99, +1 pl. in colour.

· **Gāndhārī (Niya Kharoṣṭhī documents):**

Burrow 1940.

T. Burrow, *The Language of the Kharoṣṭhī Documents from Chinese Turkestan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937.

Lin Meicun 林梅村, *Shahai gujuan 沙海古卷 [Sand-See Ancient Scroll]*. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社, 1988, pp. 264-320.

· **Tokharian:**

G. Pinault, “Une lettre de monastère du fonds Pelliot Koutchéen.” *Revue de la Bibliothèque Nationale* 11, 1984, pp. 21-33.

· **Syriac:**

M. Maróth, “Ein Brief aus Turfan.” *AoF* 12-2, 1985, pp. 283-287, +3 pls.

· **Tibetan:**

Takeuchi 1986; Takeuchi 1990; Ishihama 1998.

M. Taube, *Die Tibetica der Berliner Turfansammlung*. (BTT X), Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1980, nos. 1-20.

· **Xixia (Tangut):**

According to a private communication from Matsuzawa Hiroshi 松澤博, the Xixia documents from Khara Khoto include a small number of letters, but none of them have been published because they are written in cursive script and are difficult to decipher. However, one such letter, judging from an unpublished provisional translation that I was shown privately by Matsuzawa, begins with the sender followed by the addressee on a new line. I wish to thank Matsuzawa for his assistance.

· **Mongolian:**

Kara 2003.

H. Franke, “A 14th Century Mongolian Letter Fragment.” *Asia Major* 11, 1965, pp. 120-127, +1 pl.

L. Ligeti, *Monuments préclassiques I, XIII<sup>e</sup> et XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles*. Budapest, 1972.

- D. Cerensodnom / M. Taube, *Die Mongolica der Berliner Turfansammlung*. (BTT XVI), Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992. (This book does not include any actual letters, but it is important because it shows the strong influence of Uighur documents on the format of written orders and administrative documents sent to inferiors. See Matsukawa's review below, p. 113.)
- T. Matsukawa 松川 節, Review of Cerensodnom / Taube, *Die Mongolica der Berliner Turfansammlung*. *Tōyōshi kenkyū* 東洋史研究 54-1, 1995, pp. 105-122.
- H. Serruys, "Two Mongol Letters." *ZAS* 5, 1971, pp. 95-104, incl. 2 pls.
- H. Serruys, "Twelve Mongol Letters from Ordos." *ZAS* 12, 1978, pp. 255-272.

The standardization of epistolary formulae is itself an indication that letters were being frequently exchanged. It is to be surmised, in other words, that there was sufficient overland traffic, and therefore commercial activity (trade), to facilitate the exchange of letters. Collections of more than ten letters have been discovered in Central Eurasia in Gāndhārī (Niya Kharoṣṭhī documents), Bactrian, Sogdian, Uighur, Tibetan, and Chinese, and the fact that terms and phrases relating to commerce can be found in all of these with considerable frequency is eloquent testimony to the fact that this conjecture is not mistaken.

There has already been accumulated a considerable body of research on the formats of Uighur contracts along the Eastern Silk Road, and it has become clear that the direction of the main current of contractual formulae moved from Chinese to Uighur and then to Mongolian. In contrast, the comparative study of epistolary formulae has only just begun, and the present work will provide a basis for future research. However, to summarize what has come to light in the above, Uighur letters show evidence of the overwhelming influence of Sogdian epistolary formulae, and it can also be seen that Uighur letters had some influence on Mongolian letters, and therefore the overall current of epistolary formulae may be considered to have flowed from Sogdian to Uighur and then to Mongolian. This coincides with the spread of writing too, from the Sogdian script to the Uighur script and then to the Mongolian script. Just as in the case of contracts there have been discovered bilingual documents in Chinese and Uighur (Moriyasu / Zieme 1999), in the case of letters (and ledgers, etc.) there are known to exist bilingual documents in Sogdian and Uighur (DTSTH). These all date from the early times of the West Uighur kingdom. It could possibly be said that the process whereby bilingual or polyglot Sogdians active in Inner Asia began to write down in Sogdian script the Uighur that they heard spoken and the process whereby

they began to write letters in Uighur happened simultaneously,<sup>73)</sup> and the Uighur ruling class or intellectual class then followed their example, as a result of which the Uighur script was born from the Sogdian script and cultural traditions were passed on from Sogdians to Uighurs.

But in this connection there is one inexplicable phenomenon, which is, namely, that when referring to “caravan,” a term the importance of which has been dwelt on at length in the above, not only the above-mentioned bilingual letters in Sogdian and Uighur (DTSTH, Texts E & G), but also contemporaneous letters written purely in Sogdian [TuMW, Letters A, C; \*So 21009 in Yoshida 2011 c, pp. 23-28] use not the word *sart*, found in the Sogdian *Ancient Letters* dating back to A.D. 312-314, but rather surprisingly Old Turkic *arqış*. There is no way of knowing whether the borrowing of such a basic term occurred during the time of the second Türk empire or East Uighur empire or after the founding of the West Uighur kingdom, but when one considers the preeminent position of Sogdian merchants along the Silk Road at this time, this phenomenon is difficult to comprehend. In contrast, the term *sartpau*, signifying a caravan leader, entered Uighur from Sogdian and appears in the earliest Uighur Buddhist texts, dating from the tenth to eleventh centuries. This Sogdian word *sartpau* also appears frequently in Chinese sources from the sixth to eighth centuries in the transliterated forms *sabao* 薩寶 / 薩保 or *safu* 薩甫,<sup>74)</sup> and it is thought to derive from Bactrian, the language spoken by Bactrian merchants, who might be presumed as the forerunners of the Sogdian merchants.<sup>75)</sup> It had previously been known to some extent that Sogdian epistolary formulae were influenced by Aramaic, Middle Persian and Bactrian, but recent research has demonstrated strong connections between Bactrian epistolary formulae and Sogdian ones.<sup>76)</sup>

Be that as it may, if we confine ourselves to the origins of Uighur epistolary formulae, it seems likely that Uighur Manichaeans took over the epistolary formulae of Sogdian

73) This question of language contact is discussed in detail in Yoshida Yutaka's latest article (Yoshida 2011 c, pp. 31-39). According to his thinking, it should perhaps be said rather that initially bilingual Sogdians wrote down in Sogdian script the Uighur that they themselves spoke.

74) Yoshida 1989, pp. 168-171; Arakawa 1998.

75) Cf. Sims-Williams 1996 b, p. 51; Yoshida 2009, pp. 327-328.

76) Sims-Williams 2006, pp. 710-712; Sims-Williams 2007. It is also conceivable that a reason for similarities between Bactrian and Sogdian letters and contracts lies in the fact that, in addition to the direct influence of the former on the latter, they both shared a cultural tradition going back via Aramaic to Mesopotamian civilization (cf. Greenfield 1982, pp. 4-7; Sims-Williams 1996 a and footnote 2 above; Yoshida 2011 b, p. 90).

Manichaeans, which had come under the influence of the *Ancient Letters* and the Sogdian letters among the documents from Mt. Mug, and Uighur Buddhists then imitated these epistolary formulae while modifying them along Buddhist lines. But the influence of Chinese epistolary formulae is also ubiquitous, nor can one exclude the possibility of influence from Tocharian, Tibetan and other neighbouring languages, and so one must not rush to simple conclusions. For example, Chinese may have had some influence on the fact that Sogdian, which had originally been written horizontally, came to be written vertically and on the method of indention<sup>77)</sup> and so on. As for letters written by Christians, on the other hand, it is to be anticipated that there were connections with Syriac and Greek, but it has to be said that almost nothing is known in this regard. The elucidation of the historical background to the emergence of major differences in the transmission of contractual and epistolary formulae, including the above points, remains a subject for future research.

### Abbreviations

- AHDok. 1 Raschmann 2007, *Alt türkische Handschriften, Teil 13: Dokumente, Teil 1*.  
 AHDok. 2 Raschmann 2009a, *Alt türkische Handschriften, Teil 14: Dokumente, Teil 2*.  
 AoF *Altorientalische Forschungen*, Berlin.  
 AOH *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, Budapest.  
 APAW *Abhandlungen der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse*, Berlin.  
 AtXzB, VII Röhrborn 1991, *Die alt türkische Xuanzang-Biographie, VII*.  
 BBAW Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.  
 BBB Henning 1937, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch*.  
 BHtB Gabain 1938, "Briefe der uigurischen Hüen-tsang-Biographie."  
 BSOAS *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*.  
 BSOS *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*.  
 BTT Berliner Turfantexte, Berlin.  
 BTT V Zieme 1975, *Manichäisch-türkische Texte*.  
 Ch. Chinese.  
 Ch/U Documents found by German expeditions to Turfan at start of 20th century and now housed in BBAW, of which the recto is written in Chinese and the verso mostly in Uighur.

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77) Yoshida surmises that indention was influenced by Chinese (TuMW, p. 277).

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- DMMPP Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, *Dictionary of Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian*. (Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum, Subsidia, Dictionary of Manichaean Texts, Vol. III: Texts from Central Asia and China, Part 1), Turnhout: Brepols, 2004.
- DTS V. M. Nadeljaev et al. (eds.), *Drevnetjurkskij Slovar'*. Leningrad: Akademija Nauk SSSR, Izdatel'stvo NAUKA, 1969.
- DTSTH Sims-Williams and Hamilton 1990, *Documents turco-sogdiens du IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècle de Touen-houang*.
- ED G. Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- ed., eds. editor(s), edited, edition.
- Erdal, GOT M. Erdal, *A Grammar of Old Turkic*. (Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section 8, Vol. 3), Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2004.
- Ergebnisse Sprachwissenschaftliche Ergebnisse der deutschen Turfan-Forschung, I-III*. 3 vols., Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat der DDR, 1972-1985.
- fig(s). figure(s).
- Gharib B. Gharib, *Sogdian Dictionary*. Tehran: Farhang Publications, 1995.
- GOT T. Tekin, *A Grammar of Orkhon Turkic*. (Uralic and Altaic Series, 69), Bloomington / The Hague, 1968. (See Erdal, GOT)
- GUMS Moriyasu 2004c, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus an der Seidenstraße*.
- hend. hendiadys.
- HSP *W. B. Henning -- Selected Papers*. 2 vols, (Acta Iranica, 14 & 15), Leiden: Brill & Téhéran / Liège: Bibliothèque Pahlavi, 1977.
- incl. including.
- IPNM Sundermann 1994, "Iranische Personennamen der Manichäer."
- JA Journal Asiatique*.
- K Call number of archaeological relics (Kaogu 考古) held by China State Museum in Beijing.
- l., ll. line(s).
- lit. literally.
- MOTH Hamilton 1986, *Manuscripts ouïgours du IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècle de Touen-houang*.
- MP. Middle Persian.
- MRDTB Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko*, Tokyo.
- no., nos. number(s).

- NS. New Series, Neue Serie.
- OECD Hamilton 1955, *Les Ouïghours à l'époque des Cinq Dynasties*.
- Or. Oriental documents or manuscripts housed in British Library, London.
- Ot.Ry. Central Asian manuscript remains brought back by Ōtani Expedition and preserved in Ōmiya Library at Ryūkoku University, Kyoto, under the name “Seiiki bunka shiryō” 西域文化資料, i.e., so-called *Ōtani Collections*.
- OTWF M. Erdal, *Old Turkic Word Formation. A Functional Approach to the Lexicon*. (Turcologica, 7), 2 vols., Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1991.
- P. Pelliot chinois. Chinese documents found by Paul Pelliot in Library Cave, Dunhuang, and housed in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.
- P. ou. Pelliot ouïgour. Uighur documents found by Paul Pelliot in Library Cave, Dunhuang, and housed in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.
- P. 181 ou. Uighur documents from Mongol period found by Paul Pelliot in Cave 181 (Pelliot's numbering), Dunhuang, and housed in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.
- pl., pls. plate(s).
- Pothi-Book* Clark 1982, “The Manichean Turkic *Pothi-Book*.” (Revised version of the text in TTT III.)
- pp., p. page(s).
- Pth. Parthian.
- r recto.
- Repr. Reprint.
- S. (= Or. 8210) Chinese documents found by Aurel Stein in Library Cave, Dunhuang, and housed in British Library, London.
- Serindia* A. Stein, *Serindia. Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia and Westernmost China*. 5 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921.
- ShōAbd II Shōgaito Masahiro 庄垣内正弘, *Kodai Uiguru-bun Abitatsuma kusharon jitsugisho no kenkyū* 古代ウイグル文阿毘達磨俱舍論実義疏の研究 [*Studies in the Uighur Version of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya-tīkā Tattvārthā*], Vol. II. Kyoto: Shōkadō 松香堂, 1993.
- ShōUAb Shōgaito Masahiro 庄垣内正弘, *Uiguru-bun Abidaruma ronsho no bunkengaku-teki kenkyū* ウイグル文アビダルマ論書の文献学的研究 [*Uighur Abhidharma Texts: A Philological Study*]. Kyoto: Shōkadō 松香堂, 2008.
- SI Documents found by Russian expeditions to SerIndia (Chinese Turkestan) in 20th century and now housed in Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.
- SIAL* *Nairiku Ajia gengo no kenkyū* 内陸アジア言語の研究 [*Studies on the Inner Asian Languages*].

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- Skt. Sanskrit.
- Sogd. Sogdian.
- Sogdica* Henning 1940, *Sogdica*.
- Soothill W. E. Soothill / L. Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms with Sanskrit and English Equivalents*. London 1937.
- SPAW* *Sitzungsberichte der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Berlin.
- SUK N. Yamada (auth.), J. Oda, P. Zieme, H. Umemura and T. Moriyasu (eds.), *Sammlung uigurischer Kontrakte (Uiguru-bun keiyaku monjo shūsei ウイグル文契約文書集成)*. 3 vols., Suita 吹田, Osaka University Press, 1993.
- TMEN G. Doerfer (ed.), *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen*. 4 vols., Wiesbaden, 1963-1975.
- Tokh. Tokharian.
- tr. translated, translation.
- TTT Türkische Turfan-Texte, I-X. (Repr. of I-VII in *Ergebnisse II*.)
- TuKa Huang Wenbi 黄文弼, *Tulufan kaogu ji 吐鲁番考古记*. (Zhongguo kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo 中国科学院考古研究所, *Kaoguxue tekan 考古学特刊*, no. 3), Beijing: Zhongguo kexueyuan 北京, 中国科学院, 1954.
- TuMW Xinjiang Tulufan diqu wenwuju 新疆吐鲁番地区文物局 (ed.), *Tulufan xinchu Monijiao wenxian yanjiu 吐鲁番新出摩尼教文献研究 [Studies in the New Manichaean Texts Recovered from Turfan]*. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe 北京, 文物出版社, 2000. (Incl. Yoshida / Moriyasu 2000 a & Yoshida 2000 c).
- U Uighur documents found by German expeditions to Turfan at start of 20th century and now housed in BBAW.
- UAJ* *Ural-Altische Jahrbücher*.
- UBL Elverskog 1997, *Uyghur Buddhist Literature*.
- UBr Tezcan / Zieme 1971, "Uigurische Brieffragmente."
- Uig. Uighur.
- Uigurica, I F. W. K. Müller, "Uigurica." *APAW* 1908-2, 60 pp. +2 pls. (Repr. in *Ergebnisse I*.)
- Uigurica, II F. W. K. Müller, "Uigurica, II." *APAW* 1910-3, 110 pp. +3 pls. (Repr. in *Ergebnisse I*.)
- USp Radloff 1928, *Uigurische Sprachdenkmäler*.



- UW K. Röhrborn, *Uigurisches Wörterbuch. Sprachmaterial der vorislamischen türkischen Texte aus Zentralasien*. Parts 1-6, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1977-1998 (to be continued).
- v verso.
- VOHD Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland.
- vol., vols. volume(s).
- VSUA Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica.
- ZAS *Zentralasiatische Studien*.
- ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*.
- Zhenji shilu 唐耕耦 Tang Gengou / Lu Hongji 陸宏基 (eds.), *Dunhuang shehui jingji wenxian zhenji shilu 敦煌社會經濟文獻真蹟釋錄 [Critical Transcriptions of Original Manuscripts concerning Socio-economic Literature from Dunhuang]*, vol. 4 & vol. 5. Beijing / Hongkong, 1990.

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## Appendix

Here I would like to reproduce just one of the letters included in our *Corpus of the Old Uighur Letters*. The first reason for selecting this particular letter is that in spite of the fact that the two fragments have consecutive holding numbers [U 6198 & U 6199], it was not realized that they were parts of the same document, and only fragment U 6198 had been published, thereby leading to some misunderstanding. It has until now been regarded as a letter sent by an ordinary lay believer to a Manichaean priest, i.e., a letter sent by an inferior to a superior, but by joining it to U 6199 it has become clear that it is not a letter to a superior but is actually a letter to an inferior, i.e., a letter of Type C as classified in Chapter 5 of Part 1 of the present study. That is to say, this document is almost a complete letter that was sent by a Manichaean dignitary of the West Uighur kingdom to an ordinary priest by the name of Yišō Pühr. My second reason for choosing this letter is that it provides hitherto unknown information about meals, which were for Manichaean priests an extremely important ritual.

### U 6198 + 6199

Housed at BBAW; unearthed from Turfan.

Semi-square, Type C (standard *äsängü* form), Manichaean.

Facs.) BTT V, pl. XLIII (only the part of U 6198).

Ed. or Tr.) BTT V, p. 66, n. 702 (only the part of U 6198).

Cit. or Cat.) Wilkens 2000, no. 464; AHDok. 1, no. 49.

Paper) 30 × 18 cm; medium-thick paper of uneven quality (I removed the glass plate and touched it); traces of coarse ribs; chamois  $\alpha$  ~ beige; contains many fibre particles; medium- to inferior medium-quality paper; verso blank (the reason that writing can be seen on the verso of U 6198 is that another document was stuck to it). In its present state there are no traces of folding. When the two fragments are joined together, their total length is exactly 30 cm. U 6199 is 18 cm wide, and not only is the final section blank, but there are signs that this blank section has been pasted.

### Transcription:

- 01) tngri *aryaman* °//°°° *äsängümüz* · nomluγ oγlumuz ·  
 02) <blank> yišo puxr qoštr-qa  
 03) ĩraqtan üküš *köngül* °//°°/// *krmšuxun* ĩdur  
 04) *biz* yztan astar xirza sizing bitigingiz  
 05) *kä*lti bir ädgü körtlä xoan üç taγar  
 06) buz ĩdtümiz körü aling köz/küz? ädgüti ying  
 07) biz-ni ĩdalama'ng saqinmang anin bitig ĩdtümiz  
 <blank>

### Translation:

- 01) The heavenly Aryaman // // // // // // // //, my (lit. our) greeting letter. To our religious son,  
 02) the Superior (*qoštar*) Yišo Puhr.  
 03-04) From afar, we send forgiveness (by the Manichaeen Gods, Doctrine, and Clergy) for (our) sins (*krmšuxun*) [asking] many times about (your) heart (= mental health). “O Gods! Forgive (our) sins! (Pth. *Yazdān āstār hirzā!*)”  
 04-07) Your letter reached (us). (Accordingly) we have sent a good and beautiful table (with sacred food) and three containers of ice. Take delivery (of them) after having checked (them). Eat (them) carefully(?) and properly. Don't renounce us. Don't worry about us. On account of those matters (mentioned above) we have sent a letter.

### Notes:

- 01) aryaman** # According to IPNM, pp. 255-264, the only names to end with the element *-man/-mān* among the elements used in the names of Manichaeen clergymen in Central Asia were Aryāmān, Wahman, and Narīmān, with the first two appearing with the



greatest frequency. Since the letter at the start of this word is alef or N and not W, I have reconstructed it as *aryaman*. “Yišō Aryāmān” means “Jesus the Friend” (Boyce 1977, p. 103). According to Sundermann, in Middle Persian “Aryāmān” was used in the sense of “Christ,” and “Yišō Aryāmān” meant “Jesus Christ” (Sundermann 1992, p. 537).

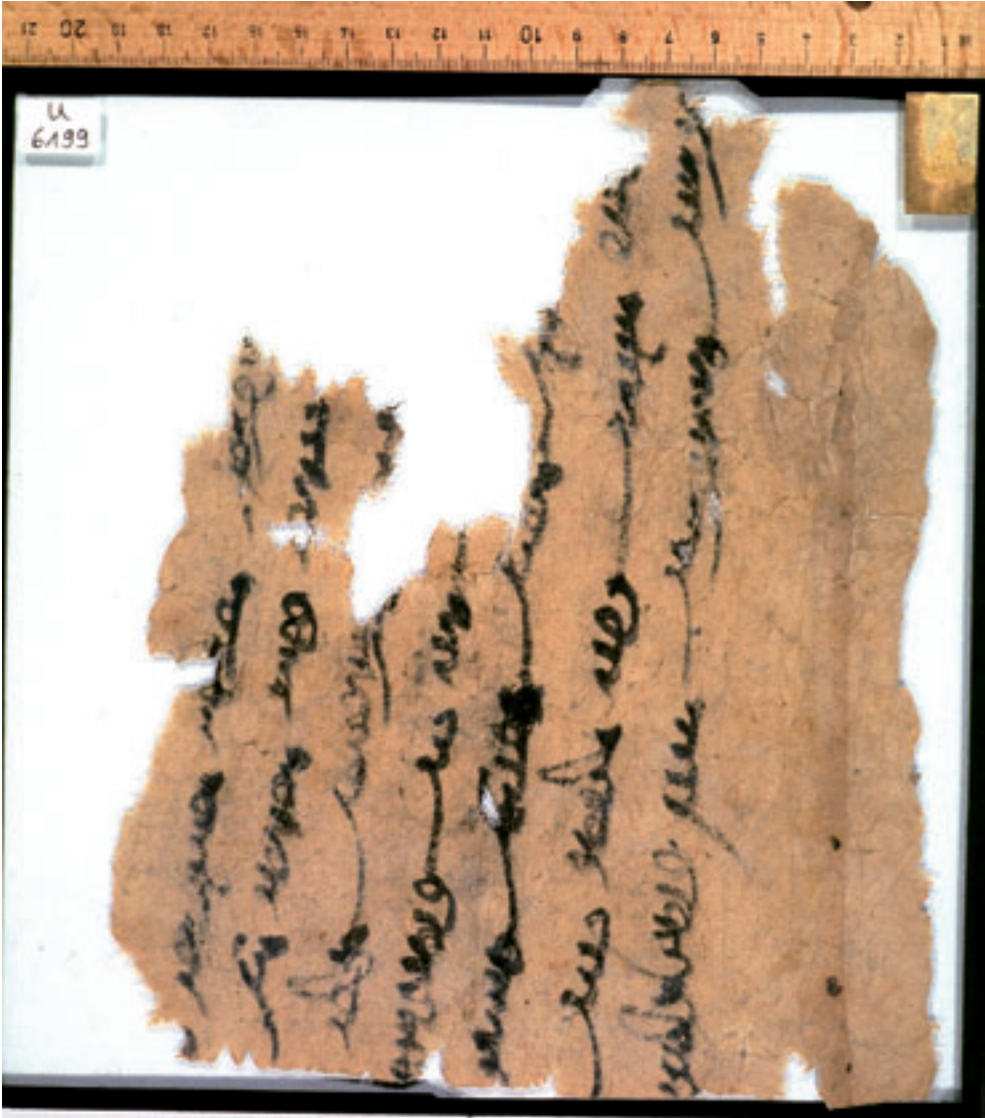
- 01) nomluγ oylumuz #** Since this phrase modifies the addressee, who is an inferior, it should, properly speaking, be written on the indented next line.
- 02) yišo puxr #** Personal name meaning “son of Jesus.” A typical personal name composed by two West-Iranian (i.e., Pth. or MP.) words for Manichaean priests. As for *yišo* = Yišō “Jesus” and *puxr* “son,” see Boyce 1977, pp. 103, 75; DMMPP, pp. 375-376, 286.
- 03) köngül** is usually followed by *ayītu*, but here the text cannot be read in this way.
- 03-04)** It should be noted that *krmšuxun* and *yztan astar xirza* are here used together. This can also be seen in BTT V, p. 29, ll. 164-166. On the meanings of these two expressions, see Chapter 9 “Greeting Phrases Used Especially by Manichaeans” of the present study.
- 05) xoan #** “tablecloth set with food; sacred table; table with sacred food for the Electi, sacred meal” < Sogd. *xw’n* < MP. *xw’n* [cf. BBB, p. 41, n. 750 on p. 87; Boyce 1977, p. 99; Gharib, p. 434; DMMPP, p. 365; Moriyasu 1991, p. 71 = GUMS, pp. 86-87; BeDuhn 1996, pp. 4, 6, 7-8; BeDuhn 2000, pp. 150-160, n. 86 on p. 309; Gulácsi 2001, p. 228 & n. 195; TuMW, pp. 110-111]. The original meaning of *xoan* is “table,” but among Manichaeans it came to signify a table set with sacred food for priests, and it might therefore be translated as “sacred table.” In point of fact, it ought to have been interpreted in this way in ll. 53 & 61 of the Monastery Scroll (Moriyasu 1991, pp. 42, 71 = GUMS, pp. 47, 86). Meanwhile, in his unpublished article “Table Cloth and the Chinese Manichaean Term *Shou shidan ji* 呷食單儂,” Wang Ding 王丁 links *xoan* to the Chinese term *shidan* 食單 and regards it as a “table cloth,” but he also suggests that in a Manichaean context it included the meaning of food. In the present context too it is followed by the invitation to “Eat (them),” and there can thus be no doubt that it refers not just to a table but also to food. It can therefore also be interpreted as “sacred meal.” At any rate, I wish to stress the fact that it has become clear from this letter that *xoan*, which originally signified “table,” actually referred to a set of items that included a meal. BeDuhn 2000, pp. 150 ff., similarly translates it not only as “table,” but also as “meal.” Moreover, since this letter and “food” were delivered together with ice, they may perhaps have been sent to Turfan from somewhere in the Tianshan Mountains or

from Beiting 北庭 (Bišbaliq) on the northern foothills of the Tianshan Mountains where there would have been ice chambers.

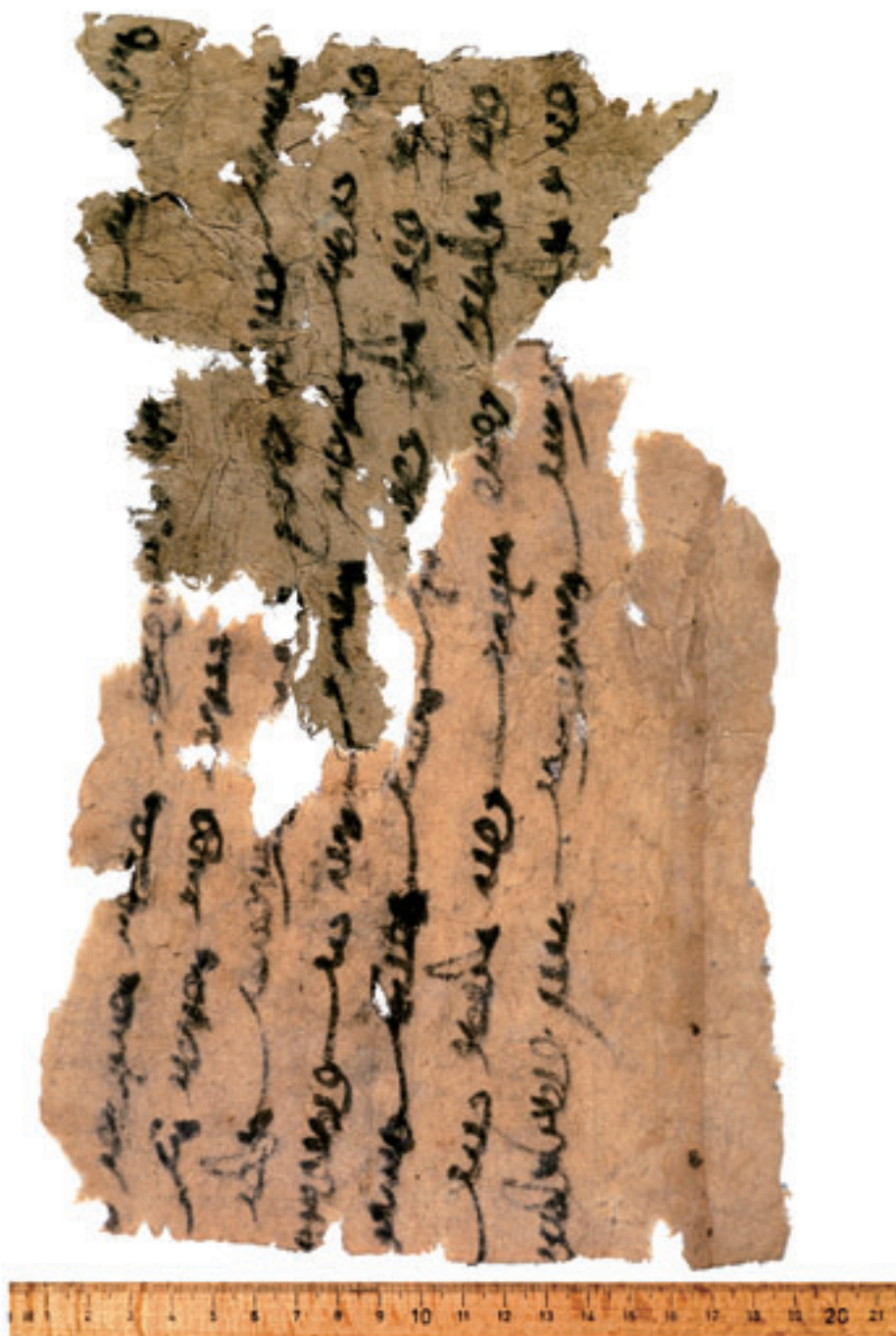
- 06) buz #** I have taken the final letter of this word to be -Z and read it as *buz* “ice.” If the final letter were -R, it would become *bor* “wine.” Word-final -R and -Z are generally quite difficult to differentiate, but because there are several examples in the present document, it is comparatively easy to distinguish them. Zieme too read this word as *bz* = BWZ (BTT V, p. 66). In addition, the decisive factor is the subsequent use of the word *tayar*, indicating a unit of capacity, for if it were a question of “wine,” the unit would be *qap*, *tāmbin* / *tānbin* or *küp*, used for measuring liquids. The word *tayar* is generally a unit for measuring solids such as grain, typified by *buyday* “wheat,” and *saman* “straw” (cf. TMEN, no. 905; SUK I, pp. 166-168, 461-463; SUK II, glossary; Matsui 2004 a, p. 200 = Matsui 2004 b, p. 158), and therefore its use would also be anticipated in the case of ice. The fact that “a sacred meal” and three containers of *buz* “ice” were sent together by a Manichaean dignitary to the Manichaean priest Yišō Pühr living in Turfan is very important for Manichaean studies. When I interpreted the drinking water mentioned in l. 64 of the *Monastery Scroll* as *buz suvī* “iced water,” I left open the possibility that it could be *bor suvī* “wine diluted with water” (cf. Moriyasu 1991, pp. 42, 77 = GUMS, pp. 48, 94-95), but my new reading of this letter confirms that the interpretation “iced water” was correct.
- 06) köz/küz? ädgüti #** Since the meaning of *ädgüti* is “finely, properly, carefully,” I have provisionally taken *köz/küz? ädgüti* to be either an emphatic form of *ädgüti* or an example of hendiadys. If the first word is to be read *köz*, it would mean “eye,” and if it is to be read *küz*, it may be a derivative of *kü-* “to watch, protect.”



U 6198 (Reproduced by the courtesy of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.)



U 6199 (Reproduced by the courtesy of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.)



U 6198 + 6199 (Artificially joined photograph processed by Y. Ishikawa.)

## Epistolary Formulae of the Old Uighur Letters from the Eastern Silk Road (Part 2)

Takao MORIYASU

### Summary

The present study corresponds to the research volume of the *Corpus of the Old Uighur Letters from the Eastern Silk Road*, which I am currently preparing for publication. The overall contents are set out below, and the present instalment represents Part 2 of this study, corresponding to Chapter 7 *infra*. Part 1, corresponding to Chapters 1-6, was published in the previous issue of this journal together with the original Japanese, but only the English version of Part 2 is being published here because the original Japanese appears in Moriyasu Takao (ed.), *Sogudo kara Uiguru he ソグドからウイグルへ [From Sogd(ians) to Uighur(s)]* (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin 汲古書院, 2011 / 12). It is for this reason that there are slight differences between Parts 1 and 2 in the format of the Bibliography, and for this I beg the reader's indulgence. In addition, the Appendix and this somewhat unusual Summary, explaining the significance of this study in historical terms, have been added only to the English version.

### **Contents:**

Preface

1. The Position of Letters in Old Uighur Literature
2. The Periodization of Old Uighur Letters and Religious Distinctions
3. Research History
4. Special Terms and Formulae as Criteria for Identifying Letters
5. The Classification of Epistolary Formulae according to Naming Formulae
6. The Basic Structure of Old Uighur Letters and Honorific Expressions

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7. Basic Conventional Greetings

8. Expressions about the Health of Both Parties

(1) Inquiries about the Addressee's Health

(2) Sender's Sense of Relief

(3) Sender's Health

9. Greeting Phrases Used Especially by Manichaeans

10. Greeting Phrases Used Especially by Buddhists

## 11. Idiomatic Phrases and Popular Terms in the Body of the Letter (including Introductory Formulae and Closing Formulae)

- (1) Introductory Formulae
- (2) Terms and Idiomatic Phrases Frequently Used in the Body of the Letter
- (3) Postscript Formulae (Change of Addressee, Change of Subject, Postscript)
- (4) Closing Formulae
- (5) Delivery Notes
- (6) Envelopes

## 12. The Caravan Trade and Communications

- (1) The Importance of Caravans
- (2) Caravan Traffic and Letters
- (3) Gifts Accompanying Letters and Acknowledgement of Their Receipt

Concluding Remarks

Appendix

Summary

The original motive for writing this study was to develop criteria for seeking out as many letters as possible to include in my *Corpus of the Old Uighur Letters*. This was because, as is the case with documents in other ancient languages, there are very few Uighur documents that have been preserved in their entirety, with the overwhelming majority being fragments, and in order to single out and gather together letters from this vast corpus of fragments it was absolutely essential to formulate some sort of criteria. The development of these criteria initially began with twenty-odd cards and ultimately turned into this lengthy study.

In Chapter 4 of Part 1 I have listed terms that appear with some frequency in Uighur letters, and in Chapters 7-11 of Part 2 I have classified the formulae or conventional expressions that are frequently encountered in letters. For instance, the formulae cited in (1 a) ~ (1 g) in Chapter 7 and (3 a) ~ (3 j) and (5 a) ~ (5 d) in Chapter 8 are the most easy to comprehend among these formulae. But I shall omit further details here since summarizing the content of Chapters 7-11, in which the emphasis is on the identification of other formulae as well, would merely repeat the content of these chapters, which would be meaningless.

Chapter 12, on the other hand, attempts to shed as much light as is possible at the present point in time on the realities of the caravan trade, the relationship between caravans and the delivery of letters, and so on. We are all aware of the enormous importance of the caravan trade in the history

of premodern Central Eurasia, that is, in the history of the Silk Road, but surprisingly little is known about concrete aspects of this caravan trade, especially during the period prior to the fourteenth century. This is where the significance of this chapter lies.

The predecessors of Uighur merchants were Sogdian merchants. Or rather, in my view, the nucleus of the early Uighur merchants was composed of Uighurs of Sogdian descent, i.e., people of the West Uighur kingdom who were descended from Sogdian merchants and maintained their traditions. Therefore, new vistas should be opened up by combining the findings of the present study with the findings of research on the *Ancient Letters* by Sogdian merchants and also comparing them with letters in other languages that have been unearthed in the Silk Road region.

The nomadic peoples that rose in the steppes of Central Eurasia, especially horse-riding nomadic tribes, played an enormous role in premodern Eurasian history, which was in effect world history. Generally speaking, in addition to productive capacity and purchasing power a major driving force of history has been military might. Once horse-riding nomadic tribes emerged on the vast arid steppes of Central Eurasia at the start of the first millennium B.C. and came to command the strongest mounted troops on earth, it was only natural that their movements became a force that changed the world.

For instance, in China in the east the five main nomadic tribes, including the Xiongnu 匈奴 and Xianbei 鲜卑, invaded China and after a period of the so-called Sixteen Kingdoms of the Five Barbarian peoples the Xianbei founded the Northern Wei 北魏 and their descendants established the Sui 隋 and Tang 唐 empires. Meanwhile, European forces to the north of the Alps, lying to the west of Central Eurasia, evolved only after invasions by Indo-European Germanic tribes such as the Goths, Franks, and Lombards and Asiatic nomadic tribes such as the Huns, Avars, and Magyars.

To people of modern times, Central Eurasia has come across as an outlying region outside the sphere of the great agricultural civilizations of East Asia, South Asia, West Asia, and the Mediterranean region. But looking at it from another perspective, it could also be said that these great civilizations were in fact located on the “periphery” of Central Eurasia. It was for this reason that Central Eurasia was able to act as the main artery linking these civilizations, with their plentiful productive capacity and purchasing power, that lay around its “periphery.” It was the Silk Road that corresponded to this main artery. People, goods, money, and information flowed in from the periphery via the Silk Road, and Central Eurasia turned into a vast melting pot of diverse languages, cultures, and religions and, while itself also undergoing transformation, had an enormous cultural influence on the surrounding world.

In other words, not only did Central Asia continue to drive world history with the backing of the most powerful military might in the premodern world, but because it contained within it a transport



and communications network extending north, south, east, and west in the form of the Silk Road, it also continued to exert an enormous influence on the world, both economically and culturally. It is true that the Central Eurasian forces with their mounted troops succumbed to modern European forces bearing firearms. But the importance of the Central Eurasian world for world history during more than two thousand years up until then should not be forgotten.

As I have pointed out on numerous occasions in the past, a major turning point in Eurasian history occurred in the ninth to eleventh centuries (or the long tenth Century). By this time there was arrayed across Eurasia a series of “dynasties of conquest” (or, in my new terminology, “Central Eurasian-type states”) of a similar type, starting in the east with the Khitan Liao 遼 dynasty and including, in geographical order, the dynasties of the Shatuo 沙陀 -Türks (i.e., the Later Tang 後唐, Later Jin 後晉, and Later Han 後漢 among the Five Dynasties), the Tangut Xixia 西夏 kingdom, the Ganzhou 甘州 Uighur kingdom, the West Uighur kingdom, the Karakhanids, the Ghaznavids, the Seljuks, and the Khazar khaganate. In other words, the horse-riding nomadic tribes that had over a long period of time since around the ninth century B.C. had mixed success in their attempts to plunder and conquer wealthy agricultural and settled regions or to cooperate, be reconciled, and assimilate with their inhabitants had by the ninth to tenth centuries finally managed to perfect the organizational know-how for making do with only a small population to rule in a stable fashion regions with large populations of farmers and city-dwellers. Several elements of this know-how had already been developed, and the principal foundations underpinning them were the military might of the horse-riding nomadic tribes and their accumulation of wealth by means of the Silk Road. But any rule founded on these factors alone was short-lived, and they were inadequate for maintaining more stable and powerful dynasties of conquest, or Central Eurasian-type states. What was needed was presumably the construction of a “system” in which various elements were intricately interrelated, and it goes without saying that a culture of writing (i.e., the spread of writing and document-based administration making use of writing) lay at the root of any such system.

It cannot by any stretch of the imagination have been a coincidence that horse-riding nomadic tribes from the sparsely populated “north,” while still retaining a foothold in the steppes, their original home, established all at once several states of Central Eurasian type that ruled over cities and agricultural regions in the “south.” The level of the “northern” forces, with their long history, had reached the stage where they were able to build a system for ruling the “south” both directly and indirectly by means of document-based administration without relying solely on military force. It should be assumed that it was for this reason that a similar phenomenon is to be seen at roughly the same time right across Eurasia, and one should discern in this a certain historical inevitability.

The reason that the history of the Uighurs is important for Eurasian history is that the golden age of the Uighurs occurred in the eighth to eleventh centuries, which overlapped with this major defining period in world history, and they moreover played a leading role in trends in world history at this time. Furthermore, during this period the Uighurs changed their religion, first from shamanism to Manichaeism and then from Manichaeism to Buddhism, and Uighur history is a subject with direct bearings on world history.

Just as the Four Great Civilizations of the Old World which adorned the start of world history cannot be separated from the invention of writing, so too does the importance of a culture of writing also stand out at the dawn of the above period of dominance by the Central Eurasian-type states. It was the Mongol empire that brought the state of Central Eurasian type to completion, became the first world empire in both name and reality, and influenced world history in a major way, but we should not forget that its predecessors in eastern Eurasia were the Liao, the Jurchen Jin 金 dynasty, the Tangut Xixia kingdom, the West Uighur kingdom, the Ganzhou Uighur kingdom, and the Karakhanids. Among these states, the Liao, Jin, and Xixia were comparatively strongly influenced by Sinographic culture, as is evident from the fact that the Khitan large script, Jurchen script, and Xixia script are all quite similar in form to Chinese characters (whereas the Khitan small script was influenced by the Uighur script). However, although the West Uighur kingdom, with its base in the eastern Tianshan region, incorporated large numbers of Han Chinese who had been living in the region since the Tang and also came under the influence of Sinographic culture, as is evident in the format of Uighur contract documents, the degree of this influence was rather small when compared with the Liao, Jin, and Xixia. The gaze of the people of the West Uighur kingdom extended not only to China in the east but also to the Tarim Basin and Tibet in the south and, in the west, to the western Tianshan region, West Turkestan, and as far as India and Iran. This wide-angle vision was, in my opinion, a legacy of the Sogdians.

Past Japanese research on Uighur contract documents, pioneered by Yamada Nobuo and Mori Masao, has made clear the course of the dissemination of a culture of writing from written Chinese to Uighur and then to Mongolian, but this present study of mine has demonstrated anew that in the case of epistolary formulae there existed a current that flowed from Sogdian to Uighur and then to Mongolian. In its culture of writing (including document-based administration and so on) the Mongols came first of all under the strong influence of the Uighurs, and the Uighur script provided the prototype for the Mongolian script. Furthermore, as is symbolized by the fact that the prototype of the Uighur script lay in the Sogdian script, it is to be surmised that Uighur culture was strongly influenced by Sogdian culture. I would even go so far as to posit a major current in the culture of writing that flowed from the Sogdians to the Uighurs and from the Uighurs to the Mongols, or, to put it differently,

a relationship founded on the long-term transfer of an overall cultural and social system, including document-based administration.