AN UIGUR DECREE OF TAX EXEMPTION
IN THE NAME OF DUWA-KHAN

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INTRODUCTION

Prof. Dr. Reşid Rahmeti Arat, the great Turkish scholar in the field of Old Turkic philology, dealt with great number of the Old Uigur secular documents in the German-Turfan collection during his study at Berlin from 1928 to 1933. Meanwhile he made many photographic reproductions of the Uigur documents for his further researches, and took the photographs with himself back to Istanbul. Quite a number of the originals of those Uigur documents were destroyed during the World War II, and then the photographs taken by Arat have the great importance to enable us to view the lost manuscripts (Sertkaya, 1996: 279-281).

The Uigur decree presented in this paper also belongs to the lost Berlin collection. It is mentioned by Arat under his personal inventory number “77/01” (Arat, 1964: 16), but he only placed a brief summary. Recently I had a fortune to be offered from Prof. Dr. Osman Fikri Sertkaya (Istanbul University) the photograph taken by Arat with the permission to use it for research, and I have mentioned to its contents in my previous articles (Matsui, 2005: 72; Matsui, 2007a: 67). Again expressing my sincere gratitude to Prof. Sertkaya for his kindness, here I would like to provide fully annotated edition of the document with the photograph, furthermore preliminary analysis from the viewpoint of philology and historical study.

From the photograph, we can observe the site-number “T III Murtuq 253” written on the upper-right of the document, which tells us that it was brought by the Third German Expedition (1906-1907) from Murtuq, the site located at ca. 20 km northward from the ancient capital of Uigur Kingdom,Qara-Qočo. Unfortunately we have no information of size or color of the document, though visible are four of vertical and three horizontal fold lines. A rectangle seal is stamped on 9törüsün and 10yoriqi, but the inscription is too obscure to decipher (see Chapter 6 below). The photograph shows another document fragment aside, on which we find a large Brahmi (or ’Phags-pa?) character. According to Prof. Sertkaya, Arat took the two manuscripts into a single frame and the fragment has no direct connection with our decree.
1. Text

01 ṭuw-a yrlq-în-tîn
02 [t](u)mân sözüm tü[kä](l)-â adan-a ikigü-kä aḍaņgîz-lar
03 qodmîš bitigni yorîdmayîn qalân birim alîm
04 tip tarðar ârmiš siz-lâr bu almîš-a qy-a-
05 -nîng oq [ü]ntürmiš bitiginçä qalân qâyuð
06 birim alîm tilâmâng-lâr anasîn-ya tapînîp
07 yorîsun tip bitig birtim • qalanči
08 alîm-çi mâ bolsar almîš-a-tîn tilâmânglär
09 barz yîl aram ay otuz-qa il törüsîn-
10 -çä aḍasî buyan-a-nîng bitigi yorîqî üçün

2. English Translation

01 By Duwa’s edict. 02 Tûmân, my word (i.e. decree). To the two of Tükäla and Adana.

02-03 “We shall not let the document that your fathers (i.e. ancestors) left [for you] pass (i.e. be valid). [Here are] qalan-labor services and birim-alîm-taxes [on you]!”, thus saying, you have taken [from] (i.e. imposed taxes and labor services on) Altmîša-Qya.

04-05 According to the document that this Altmîša-Qya just presented, never charge qalan-qâyuð-labor services nor birim-alîm-taxes [on Altmîša-Qya]! Just let him pass in serving his mother! Thus saying, I gave [this] document.

06-07 Even if [Altmîša-Qya] should be qalan-labor worker or alîm-tax payer, never charge on Altmîša[-Qya]!

09 On the 30th day, the 1st month, the year of Tiger. For the validity of the document of his (i.e. Altmîa-Qya’s) father Buyana according to the law of the country.

3. Notes

01, ṭuw-a yrlq-în-tîn: This phrase clearly shows that the document was issued under the authority of the Chaghataid khan Ṭuw-a = Duwa (~ Duu-a ~ Du’a > Pers. Dū’ā, r. 1282-1307). Duwa, the descendant of the second son of Chingghisqan Chaghatai, had allied with the Ögödeid prince Qaidu (1236-1301) in the military activities against the Yuan dynasty. But after Qaidu’s death Duwa swept the Ögödeids in Central Asia to finally re-establish the hegemony of Chaghataid khanate (Biran, 1997: 69-77). His name is written in the same form TWW-’ as here in the inscription in memory of the Uigur Ïduq-quts (Geng/

The phrase as XX yrlq-in-tïn “by the edict of XX”, composed of yrlq ~ yarlıq “edict” with +ïn (instructive) + tïn (locative-ablative), is attested in the Persian decrees issued by the Ilkhanate (Herrmann, 2004: 14), and it should be the corresponding to Mong. XX jarlıγ-iyar “by the edict of XX”, the typical opening phrase in the administrative documents (Matsukawa, 1995b: 40). In the Mongol times, jarlıγ “edict” is used only for the edict of the Yuan emperors, while üge “word” is used for decree or commands of the other princes, princesses, nobles, ministers, etc. (Sugiyama, 1990: 1; Matsukawa, 1995b: 26). Neither Chaghatayid khans nor the Ilkhan used the word jarlıγ but üge for their own decrees, though their subordinate officials or local inhabitants did not hesitate use the word jarlıγ for the decrees from their rulers regarding them as standing at parity with the Yuan emperors (Matsui, 2008: 161).

02a, tümän: Uig. tümän (= Mong. tümen) means “ten thousand”, then “the leader of the (military or administrative) unit of ten-thousand”, and we have some attestation of tümän bägi or tümän noyïn “the leader of ten-thousand-unit” in the Uigur texts (Matsui, 2003: 58-59). Here this Tümen is the name of the issuer, yet it might reflect that he was the tümän-bägi (or tümän-noyïn) in the Turfan region.

02b, tükäl-a adan-a: They are whom the issuer, Tümän, informed about the contents of the document.

02c, adaŋiz-lar: Arat took this “your fathers” as those of Tükälä and Adana (Arat, 1964: 16), though from the context we should regard as Altmışa-Qya’s fathers (i.e. ancestors) and understand the text atangiz-lar qodmiï bitigni yorïtmayïn as the claim by Tükälä and Adana in their imposing tax on Altmışa-Qya.

03, qalan birim alïm: Here qalan and birim alïm are used as generic terms for all kind of taxes and labor services (Matsui, 2005: 72). In a narrow sense, qalan is a labor service corresponding to Mong. alban or Chin. chai-yi, and levied on the laymen according to the land in their possession, while it was used also as a generic term for several kind of labor services (Matsui, 2004: 20-21; Matsui, 2005: 72-73). Uig. birim alïm is also a common idiom for basic land tax paid in produce, which covers several subcategories (Matsui, 2005: 72, 74).

04, altmış-a qy-a: The demunitive qy-a is omitted in line 08.

05, qalan qayud birim alïm: qayud ~ qayut (> qayud ~ qayut ~ qavït) “a kind of food made of millet” has been attested in an idiom qalan qavït in three Uigur documents (Zieme, 1980: 219-220; Özyetgin, 2004: 145-147). I have assumed
that qayut ~ qavut ~ qavît is a kind of labor service to be included in qalan as a
generic term (Matsui, 2005: 73). Our document also lends support to me, since
it refers to both of qalan and qayut here, while in lines 03, omitting qayut, only
qalan is mentioned. See also Note 03 above.

09-10: Here is recorded the date of issuing, and then a “postscript” declares
the reason of issuing.

P’RZ = barz instead of P’RS = bars “tiger” may be a reflection of the
Mongolian orthography (cf. Yamada, 1993: Sa10, Mi02). Even though there are
only two candidates for bars yïl “the Year of the Tiger” during Duwa’s reign, i.e.
AD 1290 and 1302 AD, unfortunately we have no definite clue for final decision.

The postscript might be an influence by the Mongolian chancellery practice.
We have some Mongolian decrees that carry the postscript of the reason of
issuing, e.g. XX tula “For XX”.

10, yorîqî: Reading as YWRWX = yoruqî is also possible. Uig. yorîq is
a deverbal noun from v. yorî- “to go, pass” and usually translated as “course,
behavior, character; way of progressing, life” (Clauson, 1972: 963; Erdal, 1991:
257). However, here we should follow Arat’s translation as “validity (yûrûrlük)”
(Arat, 1964: 16). Cf. yorîq böz “passable (i.e. valid in commerce) cotton cloth”
in Yamada, 1993: Sa07.

4. Formula of the Document
Most of the Uigur secular documents — contracts, decrees and administrative
orders — give their date at the beginning (Mori, 1961: 115-117; Yamada, 1967:
87-89; Zieme, 1981: Text A; Matsui, 1998: 1). From this viewpoint, the Uigur
decree presented here is rather rare one that gives its date at the end. I have already
noted that it should be influenced by the contemporary Mongolian chancellery
practice (Matsui, 2007: 67).

Furthermore, we can easily find that the formula of our decree parallels with
that of the edicts or decrees by the Chinggisid Mongolian emperors or princes.
According to the terms of the Mongolian decrees from Turfan and China
(Cerensodnom/Taube, 1993: 165-167; Matsukawa, 1995b: 36-44), we may
summarize the contents of our decree as follows:

(1) Autorisierung (01): Duwa, the Chaghataid ruler.

(2) Intitulatio (02): Tümän, seemingly the high-ranked governor in the Turfan
region.

(3) Publicatio (03): Tükälä and Adana, apparently the local officers (bâgs) in
the Turfan region under Tümän.
(4) Narratio (02-04): Unlawful levy of *qalan*-labor and *birim-alīm*-taxes on Altmīša-Qya by Tükālā and Adana.

(5) Inscriptio: Altmīša-Qya

(6) Dispositio (04-08): Re-authorization of exemption from taxes and labor services, which had been, bestowed Altmīša-Qya and his family.

(7) Schlußprotkoll: The date and the reason of issuing.

As the Turkic administrative decrees in Uigur script that follow such a formula under the influence of the Mongolian chancellery practice, we can pick up Toqtamīš’s decree of 1393 (Özyetgin, 1996: A1), Temür-Qutluɣ’s of 1397 (Özyetgin, 1996: AII), Šāh-Ruḥ’s of 1422 (Deny, 1957; Ono, 2006) and Sultan Umar-Šāyḥ’s of 1469 (Melioranskij, 1904). However, all of the four are from the post-Mongol times, while our document clearly belongs to Duwa’s reign (1282-1307) or the Mongol times. Consequently, our document is the oldest Uigur-Turkic decree of the Mongolian chancellery formula so far as ever known.

On the other hand, we can observe the difference in the ending formula. Most of the Chinggisid Mongolian edicts and decrees declare the issuing place after the date at the end (Cerensodnom/Taube, 1993: 166; Matsukawa, 1995b: 44), while our document does not mention. In other words, the officers and the inhabitants to read this decree knew the issuing place so well that they did not mention it: Most probably, it was Qara-Qočo, the main capital of the Turfan region.

5. Chaghataid Domination of Turfan

The Qočo Uigur Kingdom in the Turfan region brought itself under the domination of the Mongol empire at the beginning of the 13th century. Since the latter half of the century the Turfan region became of the border between the Mongol-Yuan dynasty in China and the Anti-Yuan Ögödeid and Chaghataid princes headed by Qaidu. According to the Persian chronologist Rašīd al-Dīn (d. 1318), the Uigurs of Qara-Qočo or Turfan region were “on good terms with them both and render service to both sides” in the end of the reign of the Yuan emperor Qubilai, r. 1260-1294 (Boyle, 1971: 286).

After this period of neutrality, the Turfan region finally fell into the actual domination by the Chaghataids, who had established the independence in Central Asia after Qaidu’s death (Allsen, 1983: 258-261; Biran, 1997: 43-44). The official map of AD 1330 compiled by the Yuan court recognizes that 畏兀兒地 *Wei-wu-er-di* “the land of the Uigurs” including Qara-Qočo, Lükčüng, Biš-Balïq belongs to the Chaghataid khan Döre-Temūr (Liu, 2006: 576-590). Still earlier, in 1326, the Chaghataid khan Kebeg issued a decree to a governor in Turfan, which is the oldest one issued by the Chaghataid khanate as hitherto dated (Franke, 1962: 406; Cerensodnom/Taube 1993: Nr. 76). Moreover, an Uigur petition to the
Chaghataid khan Tuγluγ-Temür (1346-63) refers to levy of *qalan*-labor service in Turfan during Esen-Buqa’s reign, 1310-1318 (Arat, 1937). These documents suggest that the Chaghataid domination in Turfan had begun by the late 1320’s.

Our decree throws a new light on the beginning of the Chaghataid domination in the Turfan region. It confirms that during Duwa’s reign, 1282-1307, his authority was certainly effective among the Uigurs in Turfan. It may give a support to dating of the Chaghataid occupation of Turfan to the first years of the 14th century (e.g. Allsen, 1983: 259).

However, a close observation on the format of the decree does not allow such simplified understanding on the historical situation in that period.

First, the Chaghataid khans and their subject officials adopted a mark shaped like double-leaves, which is so-called “Chaghatai-Zeichen”, in their seals (Franke, 1962). Such seals with “Chaghatai-Zeichen” became popular also among the local Uigur officers of the Turfan region in the mid-14th century (Matsui, 1998: 3-5, 8-9; Matsui, 2002: Texts A, B). Contrarily the seal on our decree apparently does not have the “Chaghatai-Zeichen”

Second, the Chaghataid subordinate officials often used the “Chaghataid honorific style”, a typical style in writing administrative documents. As a mark of respect for the authority of the document (i.e. the Chaghataid ruler) at the first line, they lift down the top of the following 2-4/5. Also, when “holy” words — e.g., *qan* “king”, *oγlan* “prince”, *tngri* “heaven, god”, the names of the high government officials, or others concerning them — appear in the text, the top of the following two or three lines are to be laid down for the same reason (Cerensodnom / Taube, 1993: 167; Matsukawa, 1995a: 112-115). Otherwise the top of the lines are at same level with the top of the first line with the name of the Chaghataid ruler (Cerensodnom / Taube, 1993: Nrn. 68, 70, 71, 72, 74, 76; Dunhuang North B163:42 = Matsui, 2008: 161). Uigur local officers in Turfan also adopted this method (Matsui, 1998: 8-11, 18-19, 27-28). From this point of view, our decree lifts up the name of the ruler (01Duwa) to the highest and the name of the governor (02Tümān) to the next, and keeps the top of following lines beneath, seemingly following another style of chancellery practice than the Chaghataids’.

Summing up, we may conclude that during Duwa’s reign the Chaghataid domination in Turfan was not thoroughgoing enough to influence the local chancellery system. It tallies that the six Uigur administrative orders so-called “Yalīn-texts”, which are dated to during 1319-1322, have no sign of the Chaghataid domination (Matsui, 2003: 53-55).

Yet, it should be noted that the issuer of our decree, Tümān, seemingly the contemporary governor of the Turfan region, disregards the Yuan-emperor but
regards the Chaghataid ruler Duwa at the beginning. Our decree must be a new source to witness that the Yuan domination in Turfan was on a decline during Duwa’s reign.

REFERENCES


T III Murtuq 253
(By courtesy of Prof. Dr. Osman Fikri Sertkaya)