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Preliminary Notes on the Uigur and Tibetan Versions of the
Sitātapatrādhāraṇī

As is familiar to scholars in the field, the Uigur of Eastern Turkestan created a vast Buddhist literature, and the majority of this literature comprises translations and adaptations of various Buddhist texts from different languages. These translations and adaptations can be divided into two main groups: 1. texts belonging to the pre-Mongolian period (ninth to twelfth centuries AD); 2. texts belonging to the Mongolian period (thirteenth to fourteenth centuries AD) (Zieme 1992:16). A chronological order can be established according to the original languages from which these translations were made: the Tocharian, the Chinese, the Tibetan, and finally the Sanskrit which, presumably, began only in the latter period (Zieme 1992:16).

The first wave of translation from Tibetan dates back to the Yuan period (1280-1367). Works belonging to this period include the *Mañjuśrī-Sādhana* or the *Guruyoga* by Saskya Paṇḍita etc.¹ Other works such as the *Uṣṇīṣavijayadhāraṇī* (Müller 1910:27-50) or the *Sitātapatrādhāraṇī* (Müller 1910:50-70, 100), exhibit signs of having been translated from Tibetan. I have chosen the latter text as the subject of my current investigations.

The *Sitātapatrā* text must have been very popular from the fifth or sixth century onwards, and remains so among Tibetans even today. A number of manuscripts in different languages have been discovered in different places – from Central Asia to Nepal² – and the text is also a part of the Chinese, the Tibetan and the Mongolian Buddhist Canons.

¹ A list of the Uigur works translated from Tibetan originals is found in Kara-Zieme 1976:14-15 and Zieme 1992:40-42.

² Mrs. Sudha Sengupta provides a very useful survey of the locations and publications of the available manuscripts in her article *A Note on the Uṣṇīṣa-Sitātapatrā Pratyamṅira Dhāraṇī* (1974:70-77). She might be correct in assuming that “The earliest Mss of this text seem to be those found from Eastern Turkestan which are written in ‘upright’ and ‘cursive’ Gupta scripts...” (71) but her suggestion that these manuscripts may date from the seventh century AD (71-2) is yet to be determined.

The great variety of versions of this text and the fact that none of the extant manuscripts, especially those which remained complete, has been published and edited critically as a whole render the task of establishing a correlation among the variations rather a challenge, as we shall see later.

The purpose of this *dhāraṇī*: The 'Invincible White Umbrella One' goddess is described as she who wards off all evil and is endowed with full power to be of benefit to her devotees. She is invoked to protect the devotees and all sentient beings from all such dangers as thieves, poison, enemies, untimely death, natural disasters, various kinds of sicknesses, all sorts of demons and malicious spirits etc.

The manuscripts of the Uigur text³ were discovered by the first Turfan expedition (1902-3) from Qočo and by the third (1905-7) from Murtuq and then were transported to Berlin.

A portion of the fragments uncovered by the third Turfan expedition was first published by F. W. K. Müller (1910) and supplementary fragments were later added by S. E. Malov (1930). Most of the former are also available in facsimile (Hazai-Zieme 1982 and Le Coq 1919:Tafel 5). A part of the colophon of our text was published by R. R. Arat (1965:233-235) and it was later edited and translated in its entirety by P. Zieme (1985:170-172).⁴ However the colophon makes no mention of any date whatsoever nor the language of an original which might have served as a basis for the Turkic translation. F. W. K. Müller consulted the Chinese version, but the Chinese text shows considerable divergence from the Uigur translation. Since research on this text has begun the assumption has formed that it was translated from or, at least, influenced by a Tibetan version. F. W. K. Müller wrote the following about the possible origin of the Uigur version:

"Vielleicht sind beide Übersetzungen, die uigurische wie die chinesische, der Sitāpatrādhāraṇī schon mit Benutzung der tibetischen Version hergestellt." (1910:51 n.1)

³ At least two different xylographs have come down to us, but there are perhaps more, as Prof. Zieme has kindly informed me.

⁴ There are still a number of fragments kept in Turfan-Collection in Berlin as yet unpublished. Prof. Zieme was so kind as to send me a list of these fragments.

It has also been pointed out by L. Ligeti that the Tibetan version of the *Sitātapatrā* could provide the correct interpretation of the obscure parts of the Uigur text (1973:155-9).

If we are to examine the Uigur text as a translation from a Tibetan original, the question becomes: which of the Tibetan variations may have served as a basis for the Turkic? But first of all: whether the Tibetan text which was the basis for the Turkic is identical to any of those included in the Tibetan Canon?⁵ In this paper I will focus on the latter question.

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Mkhas-grub-rje (1385-1438), the chief disciple of Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419), refers to the Tibetan texts in his work “Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras”⁶ as follows:

“There are four *Sitātapatrā* texts. There is the *Sarvatathāgatoṣṇīṣa-sitātapatrā-nāma-aparājitapratyaṅgirāmahā(vidyārājñī)* and the second text, which adds ‘*paramasiddha*’ to the title, is a different translation. In those early translations, it is mentioned that the Bhagavat was in the meeting place of the gods ‘*Sudharma’ in the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods. There are extracts from those two, with introduction and without introduction, which, in the given order, are not insignificant in the world of gods and of inferior renown in the world of men. Among those (four), the one with complete subject matter is the ‘*paramasiddha*’ ”⁷ (Lessing-Wayman 1978:117).

⁵ Another but not less important task is to take into consideration the Tibetan versions from the various Kanjur editions, but this would lead us far beyond the framework of this paper. This study is mainly based on the texts in the Derge Kanjur.

⁶ The full Tibetan title is *Rgyud sde spyi'i rnam par gzhag pa rgyas par brjod* (Toh. 5489).

⁷ In Tibetan: *gdugs dkar la bzhi yod de | de bzhin gshegs pa'i gtsug tor nas hyung ha'i gdugs dkar po can gzhan gyis mi thub pa phyir zlog pa chen mo zhes bya dang | de'i steng du mchog tu grub pa zer ba btags pa zhig dang gnyis yod pa 'gyur khyad zhing 'gyur phyi ma dag la | bcom ldan 'das kyis yul sum cu rtsa gsum po'i lha gnas chos bzang lha'i 'dun sar gsungs so | de gnyis las phyung ba gleng gzhi yod med gnyis yod pa rim pa ltar lha yul ma chun ba dang mi mar grags te | de dag gi nang nas brjod bya yongs su rdzogs pa ni mchog grub ma'o |* (Lessing-Wayman 1978:116) As far as the expression 'gyur phyi ma dag is concerned it can hardly be translated as 'early translations'. Though the meaning of the attribute *phyi ma* is quite obscure here, it would probably translate better as either 'those late translations' or as 'those latter translations'.

Based on a comparison of the four versions, the two “extracts” (*phyung ba*) (Toh. 592, 593)⁸ hold no importance for us here, since several parts are omitted, which are included in both longer Tibetan variations (Toh. 590 = **T1** and Toh. 591 = **T2**) as well as in the Uigur text (**U**).

Only one (**T2**) of these two Tibetan texts contains a colophon: *pañ di ta ba ra hi ta bha dra dang lo tsisha ba gzu dga' rdor gyis kha che'i bdud rtsi 'hyung gnas kyi gtsug lag khang gi dpe rnying la gtuḡs nas gtan la pheḡ pa l*

“This has been finalized (*gtan la pheḡ pa* ‘set in order’) on the basis of comparing it with an old exemplar (*dpe rnying*) of ‘Nectar – source’ Monastery of Kashmir by Pañḡita Parahitabhadrā and Lotsava Gzu-dga'-rdor.”⁹

As far as **T1** and **T2** are concerned, it is not clear from the passage quoted above what Mkhas-grub-rje meant by different translations ('gyur khyad), whether they were of the same origin¹⁰ or translations of different originals. Nevertheless, he points out the contextual difference as well, as he states that the ‘paramasiddha’ is that of “complete subject matter” (*brjod bya yongs su rdzogs pa*).¹¹ **T1** and **T2** have different titles, as Mkhas-grub-rje also noticed; however, the ‘added paramasiddha’ (*mchog tu grub pa*) in the title of **T2** is not the only difference, and this fact becomes significant because of the Uigur:

⁸ From *A Catalogue of the Tōhoku University Collection of Tibetan Works on Buddhism*.

⁹ We know that the Kashmiri Pañḡita Parahitabhadrā and the Tibetan translator Gzu-dga'-rdor worked in the second half of the eleventh century (Roerich 1949:87, 325, 344, 348). The colophon clearly informs us that they did not actually translate the text, but in fact retranslated and upgraded matching it (*gtuḡs*) with an ‘old exemplar’ as a basis for this work. If this is so, this ‘old exemplar’ must have been not an older Tibetan translation, but a Sanskrit text. This assumption might be supported by the fact that the ‘old exemplar’ was preserved in Kashmir. In turn, if *dpe rnying* referred to an old Tibetan translation composed according to the “old orthography” (*hrda rnying*) (i.e. prior to the Great Revision) and in this way distinguished the text from the “new language” (*skad gsar*), using the ‘old exemplar’ as an aid to revising the same Tibetan text would not have made much sense.

¹⁰ At another place he remarks that two variations (Toh. 594 and 595) of a scripture “are different translations of an identical original” (Lessing-Waymen 1993:115). But it should be noted that those texts (Toh. 594 and 595) bear an identical title.

¹¹ A part of this version (i.e. **T2**) was interpreted by Waddel, using a text from his own collection (1914:49-54).

1.

T1 *'phags pa de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gtsug tor nas byung ba gdugs dkar po can zhes bya ba gzhan gyis mi thub ma phyr zlog pa'i rig sngags kyi rgyal chen mo'o |*

“The great queen of magic spells (*vidyā-rājñī*), the invincible averter [of evil] called The Noble White Umbrella One, who issued from the Uṣṇīṣa of all the noble Tathāgatas.”

T2 *'phags pa de bzhin gshegs pa'i gtsug tor nas byung ba'i gdugs dkar po can gzhan gyis mi thub pa phyr zlog pa chen mo mchog tu grub pa zhes bya ba'i gzungs |*

“The Dhāraṇī called The Noble White Umbrella One, invincible averter [of evil] and perfectly accomplished who issued from the Uṣṇīṣa of the noble Tathāgatas.”

U¹² *tüziün alqu ančulayu kälmiš-lär-ning ušnir lakšan-lar-inta ün[miš adī kötrül]miš sitatapatiri atl(i)ğ utsuqmaqsız uluğ yanturdači atl(i)ğ arvišlar eligi¹³*

The title of the Uigur corresponds closely to that of **T1**, whereas **T2** lacks *thams cad* (~*alqu*) and reads *gzungs* in the place of **T1**'s *rig sngags kyi rgyal chen mo*¹⁴ (~*uluğ... arvišlar eligi*).

But interestingly at the very beginning of the texts we find that Uigur coincides with **T2**, whereas the following passage is omitted from **T1**:

2.1.

T2¹⁵ *'phags pa nyan thos dang | rang sangs rgyas thams cad la phyag 'tshal lo | bcom ldan 'das gzhan gyis mi thub pa gtsug tor rgyal mo la phyag 'tshal lo |*

¹² U 402-403 (Hazai-Zieme 1983:Tafel 62); old sigla: T III M 225 (43), T III 225 (62) (Müller 1910:75).

¹³ Müller provides a reconstructed title on the basis of a Chinese version, which is: (*)*Alqu ančolayu kälmiš-lär-ning ušnir-lakšan-lar-intin önmiš adī kötrülmiš sitatapadra atlg utsukmaksız darni* (1910:50). This corresponds to the Tibetan Toh. 593.

¹⁴ The title given to **T1** also occurs in the body of **T2**'s text which implies that they might go back to a common archetype.

¹⁵ Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 213a1-2.

“I salute all the Noble Hearers (*śrāvaka*) and Pratyekabuddhas. I salute the Bhagavat, the invincible queen of the Uṣṇīṣa.”

U¹⁶ *yükünürm(ä)n alqu pratika-bud-lar tüz-ün sṛavak-lar qut-lar-inga
yükünürm(ä)n alqu ada-lariğ yanturdači adin-lar-qa utsuqmaq-siz adi
kötrülmiş sita-tapadri qutınga*

“I salute all the Pratyekabuddhas and Noble Śrāvakas. I salute the Bhagavat Sitātapatrā, the invincible, the averter of all danger.”

And throughout the texts, we come across examples where the parallel of the Uigur text can only be found in **T2**, or appears to be closer to **T2** in its wording, thus e.g.,

2.2.

T²¹⁷ *rgyal po'i chad pa'i 'jigs pa dang | las[sic] kyi¹⁸ 'jigs pa dang klu'i
'jigs pa dang |*

U¹⁹ *el-ing qan-ing qin qizgut qorqinč-intin | tängri qorqinč-intin luu
qorqinč-intin |*

“(Protect us) from fear of royal punishment, from fear of gods, from fear of *nāgas*.”

2.3.

T²²⁰ *zas su lhag ma za ba mams |*

U²¹ *qalınču aš-lig-lar*

“Eaters of residues”

2.4.

T¹²² *rgyu skar nyi shu rtsa bryad rab tu sgrub par byed pa |*

¹⁶ U 376 3-7 (Hazai-Zieme 1983:Tafel 36); old sigla: T III 225 (Müller 1910:51).

¹⁷ Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 215a4.

¹⁸ The word *las* should clearly read *lha*, e.g. The Peking Edition (Rgyud 'bum Pha 253a6) reads *lha'i jigs pa*. This clause is absent from **T1**.

¹⁹ Malov 1930:89 (4) 2-5.

²⁰ Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 217a2. **T1** omits this clause.

²¹ T III 182 45 (the original is now lost) – U 393 I (Hazai-Zieme 1983:Tafel 50); old sigla: T III M 225 (42) (Müller 1910:67).

²² Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 206b4.

“who renders the 28 lunar mansions (*nākṣatra*) well-executed.”

T2²³ *rgyu skar nyi shu rtsa brgyad dga' bar byed pa* |

U²⁴ *säkiz otuz yultuz-lar qubraq-in ögirün-türdeçi*

(**T2** = **U**) “who makes the 28 (groups of stars) lunar mansions rejoice”

Yet, based on a comparison of the two Tibetan versions with the Uigur, it should be noted that **T1** is a longer version of the work than **T2** and it consists of a number of parts with parallels in the Uigur text but none in **T2**, thus e.g.,

3.1.

T1²⁵ *bcom ldan 'das de bzhin gshegs pa dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas rdo rje 'dzin pa rgya mtsho 'joms pa la phyag 'tshal lo* |

U²⁶ *yükünürm(ä)n adi kötrülmiš ančulayu kälmiš ayağ-qa tägimlig köni tüz-üni tuymiš včir tutdači taluy ögüz-üg üvätäči*²⁷ *burxan qutinga*

“I salute the Bhagavat Tathāgata Arhat, the fully enlightened Buddha Vajradhara, the conqueror of the ocean [of cyclic existence?].”²⁸

3.2.

T1²⁹ *bsgyur ba'i las thams cad kyis mi tshugs* |

U³⁰ *näng alqu ayig qililmiš iš küč-lär tägmäkäy-lär*

“They will not be harmed by the retroactive effect of bad deeds.”³¹

3.3.

T1³² *bcom ldan 'das las kyi gdung la phyag 'tshal lo* |

²³ Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 214a3.

²⁴ T III M 225 (8) 4-5 (Müller 1910:58).

²⁵ Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 205b6-7.

²⁶ U 382 6-9 (Hazai-Zieme 1983:Tafel 40); old sigla T III 225 (7b) (Müller 1910:55).

²⁷ For the latest interpretation of the Turkic word *üvä-* see Laut 1995:117-8.

²⁸ Among all the available versions of this text, this clause can only be found in **T1** and the Uigur text.

²⁹ Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 211b3.

³⁰ U 398 1-2. (Hazai-Zieme 1983:Tafel 56); old sigla: T III 225 (33) (Müller 1910:71).

³¹ Mvy. 4359:skr. *karma* ~ tib. *bsgyur ha'i las* ~ mong. *urhayulqu* / *urhayuluqui üile*.

³² Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 205b4.

U³³ *yükünürm(ä)n adi kötrülmiš is³⁴ uğuš-luğ- qa*
 “I salute the Bhagavat [of] the Action Family (*karma-kula*)”

This peculiarity of the Uigur text presented above might rightly give rise to the suspicion that our Uigur fragments are not parts of the same text, but of two or more different versions in much the same way as the Tibetan texts are. This question can be resolved once all the remaining Uigur fragments – as yet unpublished – have been examined (see no. 4.). Of course, the possibility that different Uigur versions might have existed cannot be ruled out. On the basis of fragments already published, however, it seems that these fragments belong to a single Uigur version of the text, since: (1) the Uigur text is identical to T1 at certain points while it agrees with T2 at other points, often within the same fragment; (2) it also contains parts which can be found in neither of the Tibetan texts; thus we have e.g.,

4.1.

U³⁵ *qarın-ıtaqı känd-ig qundači-lar*
 “who steal unborn children”³⁶

4.2.

U³⁷ *atarvana-ning qıl-miš arviš-ın käsär m(ä)n qasguq toqıyur m(ä)n*
 “I cut off the magic performed by *ātharvaṇas*³⁸ and I nail it down.”

Despite the fact that sufficient research has not been done on the various extant Sanskrit (and corrupted Sanskrit) texts, it may be of some interest not to neglect them completely even in this short paper. Rudolf Hoernle noticed that the Eastern Turkestani texts were practically identical, while the Hodgson manuscripts (S1) showed significant differences and expansions

³³ U 381 9-10. (Hazai-Zieme 1983:Tafel 39); old sigla: T III M 225 (17) (Müller 1910:54).

³⁴ F. W. K. Müller's reading, *is* ('Freund'), is obviously a mistake (1910:54).

³⁵ T III 182 (the original fragment is now lost) (Müller 1910:64-65).

³⁶ Clauson 1972:632b.

³⁷ Malov 1930:91 (10) 1-3.

³⁸ *ātharvaṇa* 'a priest or Brahman whose ritual is comprised in the Atharva-veda; a conjurer' (MW. 136b). Malov read: *ātarpaṇa* ('satisfying; whitening the wall or floor or seat on festive occasions, pigment used for this purpose.' MW. 135a), which simply does not make sense here.

(1916:56). As a curiosity it may be noted that the name of Kashmir is mentioned only in **S1** and **T1**: *adhimuktika kāśmīra-mahāśmaśāna-vāsine*³⁹ ~ *kha che'i zhing dur khrod chen po na gnas par mos pa*⁴⁰ “who are inclined to dwell in the big cemetery-fields of Kashmir.”

There are instances that can only be found in the following three manuscripts:

5.1.

S1⁴¹ *namo rāja-kūlasya*

T1⁴² *bcom ldan 'das rgyal po'i gdung la phyag 'tshal lo l*

U⁴³ *yükünürm(ä)n adi kötrülmış el qan uğuş-luğ-qa*

“I salute (the Bhagavat [of]) the King Family”

5.2.

S1⁴⁴ *vinītā sānta-cittā ca | ātma guṇa sasī prabhā |*

T1⁴⁵ *mam dul zhi ba'i sems dang ni | zla 'od bdag gi yon tan shes |*

U⁴⁶ *ämrlmiş yavalmış köngül-lüg ymä | ät'öz ädgü-sin biltäci ay tängri yaruq-luğ |*

“with calm and peaceful mind, shining like the moon (Uig. shining god of the moon), [it is she who] knows the virtue of the soul (or ‘self’ *ātman* ~ *bdag* ~ *ät'öz*)”

But one should not jump to the conclusion that **T1** is a possible translation of **S1**. Though **S1** appears (on the basis of already published parts) to be the closest to **T1** among the Sanskrit versions, there are sections omitted from **T1** which are included in **T2**, as the following quotation illustrates:

39 Hoernle 1911:463 n. 6.

40 Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 205b2-3.

41 Hoernle 1911:463.

42 Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 205b4.

43 U 381 8. (Hazai-Zieme 1983:Tafel 39); old sigla: T III M 225 (17) (Müller 1910:54).

44 Hoernle 1916:57.

45 Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 207a2.

46 Malov 1930:92, (13) 2-4.

5.3.

S1⁴⁷ *namo nāga-kulasya |*
T2⁴⁸ *klu'i gdung la phyag 'tshal lo |*
 "I salute the Nāga Family."

The Dunhuang Manuscripts bear witness to the fact that the *Sitātapatrā* was translated very early into Tibetan.⁴⁹ Without going into detail concerning these Old Tibetan versions suffice it to make a single general remark: they suggest a closer relationship to **T2** than to **T1**. On this basis, and taking the different Sanskrit texts into consideration as well, the parts of the early Tibetan translations that differ from **T2** are of special interest, e.g.:

5.4.

U⁵⁰ *ölüm-süz včir sinčir-liğ ymä |*
D⁵¹ *myi 'chi rdo rje lu gu rgyud |*
T1⁵² *'chi med rdo rje lu gu rgyud |*
T2⁵³ *rdo rje lu gu rgyud gzhan dang |*⁵⁴
S1⁵⁵ *amalā vajra-śṛṅkharāś caiva |*
S2⁵⁶ *aparā vajrra-śamkalā caiva |*
S3⁵⁷ *aparajānta vajrra-śakalā caiva |*

For Tibetan '*chi med* (old tib. *myi 'chi*), the Sanskrit terms either *acyuta* ('not fallen'; 'firm, solid'; 'imperishable, permanent' MW. 9b) or *amṛta* ('not

47 Hoernle 1911:463.

48 Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 213b3.

49 In Vienna in the spring of 1996 I had the opportunity to read the microfilm copy of the Dunhuang Manuscripts of this text kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Pelliot tibetain). (I have to express my special thanks to Prof. Ernst Steinkellner who ordered the microfilms for the *Institut für Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde* in order to help me in my work.)

50 U 389 7. (Hazai-Zieme 1983:Tafel 46); old sigla: T III M 225 (22) (Müller 1910:60; Malov 1930:93 162).

51 Dunhuang Ms. Pelliot tibetain 377.

52 Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 206b7.

53 Sde dge: Rgyud 'bum Pha 214a6-7.

54 Waddell (1914:51) translates this as 'the thunderbolt enchaining others'.

55 Hoernle 1916:57.

56 Ms. no. 150vii 5 (Hoernle 1916:56).

57 No. 0041 (Hoernle 1916:56).

dead'; 'immortal'; 'imperishable' MW. 82b) or *amara* ('undying, immortal, imperishable' MW. 80b-c) would have been expected (cf. also Das 444a). The readings of the Sanskrit versions confirm that the term '*chi med*' goes back to the latter one, i.e. **amara*. It seems most probable that *amala* ('spotless, stainless, clean, pure, shining' MW. 81a) in **S1** is a corruption of *amara*. The **T2** *gzhan* corresponds to the Sanskrit *apara*. Which is the original? At the present stage of my investigations this question cannot be fully answered.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, what is of significance here is that the equivalent of the term *amara* has been preserved by **T1** and the Old Tibetan versions, and it coincides with the Uigur (*ölümsüz*).⁵⁹

The following conclusion can be drawn from this analysis and my investigations to date:

1. The Uigur version was not directly derived from any of the Tibetan texts included in the Kanjur. Considering the broad popular appeal of the *Sitātapatrādhāraṇī*, this is not surprising.

2. We may not be wrong in maintaining that the Uigur version is closer to **T1** than to any other versions or translations of this work.

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⁵⁸ At the current stage of research two possibilities can be suggested: 1. *aparājita* is the original, and it became abbreviated to *apara* for metrical reasons (since this part of the texts was composed in verse), and then it was misread as *amara* (*aparājita* → *apara* → *amara*). 2. *amara* was misread as *apara*, and this was completed to *aparājita* in order to provide it with a clear and more appropriate meaning (*amara* → *apara* → *aparājita*).

⁵⁹ The Chinese also coincides with the Uigur (cf. Müller 1910:60.).

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