Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher, Neue Folge, Bd. 27 (2019)

Inhalt

AUFSÄTZE

MARIANN BERNHARDT: Definiteness marking on proper nouns in Mordvin 1

GERSON KLUMPP: The numerals of Abakanic 71

FLORIAN SIEGL: Nebensächlichkeiten zur Kopula *leä-* im Umesaami unter Berücksichtigung der Verhältnisse in den anderen westsaamischen Sprachen 93

HANS-HERMANN BARTENS: Tschudensagen in der Turkuer Talvadas-Sammlung (Teil 1) 128

KLAUS RÖHRBORN: Soteriologische Aktivität von Buddhas und Bodhisattvas im uigurischen Buddhismus 142

GÜLSCHEN SAKHATOVA: *Notwendigkeit* in oghusischen Sprachen am Beispiel des Zyperntürkischen und des Aserbaidschanischen 153

ORÇUN ÜNAL: The Issyk and Ai Khanum Inscriptions Revisited 172

JÖRG BÄCKER: Epic Traditions of China's Orochens and Russia's Ewenki-Orochons: Cultural Contacts, Shamanism and the Origins of Epics 211

ELISABETTA CHIODO: Geser in a Mongolian Oral Tale from Baγarin, Inner Mongolia 238

HARTMUT WALRAVENS: Unkrigiana 255

BERICHTE

AYSIMA MIRSULTAN / MICHAEL KNÜPPEL: Mirsultan Osmanov (31.7.1929-1.12.2017) – ein Nachruf 272

IGOR DE RACHEWILTZ †: The Future of Mongolian Studies 281

BESPRECHUNGEN

SHIMUNEK, ANDREW: *Languages of Ancient Southern Mongolia and North China: A Historical-Comparative Study of the Serbi-Mongolic Language Family, with an Analysis of Northeastern Frontier Chinese and Old Tibetan Phonology*. Besprochen von PAVEL RYKIN 287

Inhalt

MEINERT, CARMEN: *Buddha in der Jurte. Buddhistische Kunst aus der Mongolei. Gėrt zalarsan burchad. Mongolyn burchny šašny urlay*. 2 Bände. Besprochen von DOMINIQUE DUMAS 300

Samiskt liv i äldre tid. Edvin Brännströms uppteckningar från Arvidsjaur och Arjeplog: redigerade av Ivan Eriksson med språkliga kommentarer av Olavi Korhonen. Besprochen von HANS-HERMANN BARTENS 308

BESPRECHUNGEN

SHIMUNEK, ANDREW: *Languages of Ancient Southern Mongolia and North China: A Historical-Comparative Study of the Serbi-Mongolic Language Family, with an Analysis of Northeastern Frontier Chinese and Old Tibetan Phonology*. (Tunguso-Sibirica 40.) Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag 2017. xlix, l, 519, [1] pp. ISBN 978-3-447-10855-3.

The present volume is a large-scale and ambitious attempt to revise the ethnolinguistic history of the early speakers of the Serbi-Mongolic languages on the basis of the entire corpus of linguistic and philological data available today. It concentrates on the reconstruction of three main Serbi-Mongolic languages, Taghbach, Tuyuhun, and Kitan, but also contains a description of the most important features of what the author calls the "early northern frontier varieties of Chinese" as well as analytical notes on Old Tibetan phonology, and provides a detailed review of previous theories about the origin of the Mongolic languages in the introductory chapter (pp. 1–35).

The unquestionable merit of the author is a collection and systemic presentation of most of the philologically attested data on two early Serbi-Mongolic varieties, Taghbach and Tuyuhun, which have never been presented before in such a large amount. This makes the present volume a useful tool for all subsequent research in these languages and related problems. I think that the most valuable and interesting section of the book is the chapter on the Kitan language (pp. 197–281), which continues the topic of the author's MA thesis (SHIMUNEK 2007) and significantly enlarges the existing knowledge of Kitan, as provided e.g. in KANE (2009) and WU and JANHUNEN (2010). SHIMUNEK has offered a new and, in my opinion, adequate periodization of the Khitan language history into three stages, namely Old Kitan (ca. 386–907), Middle Kitan (ca. 10th c.–ca. 11th c.), and Late Kitan (ca. 11th c.–ca. 13th c.) (pp. 197–198). He has collected and carefully analyzed Middle Chinese transcriptions of Old Kitan (pp. 198–209), but the longest part of his Kitan chapter deals with Middle Kitan, the best documented Serbi language that is highly important for understanding Serbi-Mongolic language development (pp. 209–278). The author provides a gen-

eral sketch of Middle Kitan phonology, morphology and syntax which appears to be the most extensive survey of Kitan grammar ever published in a Western language.

Also of great value is the chapter on a reconstruction of Common Serbi-Mongolic (pp. 283–382), the first attempt at a detailed comparative analysis of the grammatical and sound features of Mongolic and the attested Serbi languages. At the same time, this chapter is based on some methodologically outdated proposals, as e.g. the claim that "morphology is comparatively stable diachronically. Shared morphology is thus strong evidence of common origins" (p. 283, n. 1). It is a common view expressed in modern works on linguistic typology that morphological elements can be easily borrowed from one language to another, sometimes even on a large scale, but derivational morphology seems to be more susceptible to borrowing than inflectional one (see e.g. GARDANI, ARKADIEV AND AMIRIDZE 2015: 9–10). It should be borne in mind that "language contact can affect languages to such an extent that genealogical traceability becomes impossible" (*ibid.*: 14). This is a serious challenge to what is termed by SHIMUNEK "the traditional view of comparative-historical linguistics" (p. 283), and the possibility of contact-induced morphological change should be taken necessarily into consideration in any approaches to linguistic reconstruction. Nevertheless, the concrete language data, i.e. regular sound correspondences and common morphological and syntactic patterns between the Serbi and Mongolic languages, as presented in this chapter, are highly informative and provide strong evidence in favour of a common genetic origin of these two language groups.

The final chapter of the book (pp. 383–414) aims to determine the approximate location of the Proto-Serbi-Mongolic homeland. On the basis of the *Hou Han Shu* 後漢書 account of the Serbi and historical-comparative evidence, the author comes to the conclusion that "the speakers of Proto-Serbi-Mongolic lived approximately in what is now eastern and southern Inner Mongolia, possibly extending into Amdo, northeastern Inner Mongolia, and the territory of present-day northeastern China" (p. 414). This localization of the Proto-Serbi-Mongolic homeland is too broad and needs to be additionally verified, as according to the current knowledge, the Proto-Mongolic lineage was secondarily formed in northwestern Manchuria (see JANHUNEN 2015: 579), but the ultimate homeland of the speakers of Pre-Proto-Mongolic (or Proto-Serbi-Mongolic, in SHIMUNEK's terminology) was located in the western part of Southern Manchuria (JANCHUNEN 1996: 232; 2008: 127, 135). Furthermore, some of the etymologies proposed by the author in support of his view seem forced and unconvincing, e.g. WMMo. (MA) *aruq* 'basket', WMo. *aruɣ* 'a loosely woven basket or dosser for collecting arɣal' < PSM *arug ← 簍 MSC *lǒu*, EMC *ləw* (Pul. 199)

'basket, cage' ~ 籠 MSC *lóng*, OC *rôŋ/*rôŋʔ (Sch. 167) or *k.r^{ʕ}oŋ (BS 350), LHC *loŋ (Sch. 167), EMC *luŋ* (Sch. 167), *luwnɡ* (BS 350) or *ləwŋ* (Pul. 198) 'id.' (pp. 386–388) or PSM *anǰa ~ *anda 'plough' ← ? PJK > PJpn *anti 'good plough' > OJpn *adi-suki 'id.' (pp. 394–395).

The volume is provided with four appendices, of which the most useful are Appendix A (pp. 419–444) that presents SHIMUNEK's reading of Kitan Small Script graphemes appearing in the book, organized into table format, and Appendix D (pp. 449–459) that lists the main Pre-Proto-Mongolic morphological innovations distinguishing the Mongolic branch from the Serbi one, as identified by the author, notably the pre-Proto-Mongolic suffixes *-ɣA, *-sU, *-ɣU, and *-bA. These appendices add substantially to current understanding of the Kitan language and script as well as of the relationships between the Serbi and Mongolic languages in general.

Probably the weakest point in the whole book is the methodology of linguistic reconstruction of the Serbi languages on the basis of the philologically attested data in Chinese transcriptions, as used by the author. The analysis of the historical varieties of Chinese, which forms a separate chapter of the book (pp. 79–108), does not take into account two most recent and authoritative systemic descriptions of Old Chinese to Middle Chinese phonology, namely SCHUESSLER (2009) and BAXTER AND SAGART (2014). Instead, SHIMUNEK heavily relies upon CHRISTOPHER BECKWITH's Chinese reconstructions (see e.g. pp. xlv, 79, 81, 84–88, etc.), highly idiosyncratic and strongly diverging from the mainstream Chinese reconstruction. The weaknesses and inconsistencies of BECKWITH's methodology have been repeatedly pointed out in previous literature. The most obvious of them, unfortunately present in SHIMUNEK's book as well, are as follows:

(a) BECKWITH's reconstruction has been presented so far not in a systematic way but only in bits and pieces, most often as *ad hoc* reconstructions scattered through his numerous articles and monographs, as opposed to the systematically presented versions of the tradition-based Chinese reconstruction (see VOVIN ET AL. 2016: 126a-b; VOVIN 2017: 226a).

(b) BECKWITH's Chinese reconstructions are often teleological or even circular (cf. PELLARD 2005: 168–169; VOVIN AND SAGART 2016: 117a): they are based largely on external comparisons, i.e. the readings of Chinese characters given in the foreign languages, but in return his analysis of the latter (e.g. his presentation of the data on Old Tibetan and "Old Koguryŏ" phonology) is highly dependent on his Chinese reconstruction.

(c) BECKWITH and SHIMUNEK (see e.g. SHIMU-NEK ET AL. 2015: 144b, n. 16) provide a highly idiosyncratic and confusing periodization

of the Chinese language history, greatly differing from that widely accepted in the mainstream varieties of Chinese reconstruction. They include what is traditionally referred to as Later Han Chinese into their "Late Old Chinese" (cf. p. 79), rename traditional Early Middle Chinese as "Late Middle Chinese" (cf. p. 94) and use the term "Early Middle Chinese" to denote the language of the period of Northern and Southern division (ca. 4th c.–ca. 6th c. A.D.). Their view has been sharply criticized by most specialists in Chinese historical linguistics (see e.g. VOVIN ET AL. 2016: 126a, n. 2, 130b).

(d) BECKWITH (2014: 112, n. 4; 2017: 218b–220b) and, following him, SHIMUNEK (pp. 80, 141, 387) reconstruct a "Late Old Chinese" coda **-ʁ in syllables with the Middle Chinese rising tone, corresponding to a final glottal stop (*-ʔ) in traditional Chinese reconstructions. However, this reconstruction has no support from Chinese-internal evidence as well as from early foreign transcriptional data and therefore should be abandoned (see VOVIN AND SAGART 2016: 117b–118a).

(e) BECKWITH (2004: 93, 101–102) and, following him, SHIMUNEK (pp. 85–87, 128–129) reconstruct a (Northeastern) Early Middle Chinese coda **-r < Late Old Chinese *-r. However, as rightfully noted by VOVIN ET AL. (2016: 127a), "two different phenomena are confused by BECKWITH: the shift of OC *-r > EMC *-n* in one of subclasses of the 元 *yuán* rhyme… and completely unrelated and later shift EMC *-t* > LMC *-r*". Thus, the reconstruction of the EMC coda **-r is implausible and should normally not be taken into consideration.

Below are a few examples of incorrect or problematic reconstructions proposed by SHIMUNEK in accordance with BECKWITH's questionable methodology. I will confine myself to the analysis of some Early Middle Chinese transcriptions of the Taghbach language, as attested in the mid-sixth century *Wei Shu* 魏書, compiled by WEI SHOU 魏收 (506–572 A.D.), and, to a lesser extent, in the early sixth century *Nan Qi Shu* 南齊書, compiled by XIAO ZIXIAN 蕭子顯 (489–537 A.D.), which are discussed in Chapter 5 (pp. 121–168).

(1) Taghbach **čʰɪrnɔ 'wolf' (pp. 128–129; cf. also pp. 123, 333–134), transcribed as 叱奴 MSC *chì-nú*, EMC *tśʰiet-nuo* (Sch. 302, 57) or *tɕʰit-nɔ* (Pul. 57, 227). SHIMUNEK's reading: Ch'ih-nu, NWei $^{☆}$tśʰirnʊ ~ $^{☆}$ tśʰirnɔ. Cognate to EMMo. (SHM, HY) *čino* 'wolf', WMo. *čino-a* 'id.' < PM *čino (see NUGTEREN 2011: 303). To justify his reconstruction, the author was forced to invent a special sound law, stating that "the Taghbach sequence $^{☆}$-rn- is a retention of Common Serbi-Mongolic *-rn-, which lenited to *-n- in Proto-Mongolic" (p. 165, cf. pp. 333–334).

But this sound change may well be dispensed with, if one discards the untenable reconstruction of the EMC coda **-r proposed by BECKWITH (see under (e) above). COBLIN (1991: 67) points out that in late sixth century Chinese transcriptions of Sanskrit "QYS (=EMC. – *P. R.*) -t in effect disappears or seems to have no value of its own in compounds where it is followed by a dental initial of any manner group. Put another way, it could be said to take on the articulatory manner of the said initial… And it can be observed that the same phenomenon occurred when the following initial was a retroflex stop or nasal". The shift of EMC *-t* > -$C^{1}_{\textit{dental or retroflex}}$ / __ $C^{1}_{\textit{dental or retroflex}}$- is regularly attested in Chinese transcriptions of Sanskrit, suggesting that such sandhi phenomena seem to have been a feature of EMC in general (cf. COBLIN 1991: 68). This explanation helps us to solve the puzzle, noted by VOVIN (2007: 198), why Chinese scribes used here a syllable with coda *-t*. Accordingly, SHIMUNEK's reconstruction of this Taghbach word should be revised. My reconstruction: *čino *[ʧʰinɔ] ~ *čïno *[ʧʰɪnɔ]. Cf. BAZIN (1950: 288): *čïnua; LIGETI (1970: 305): *činno ~ *čino; VOVIN (2007: 199): *čino.

(2) Taghbach **gir 'sandal cord' (pp. 125–126; cf. also p. 341), transcribed as 其連 MSC *qí-lián*, EMC *gɨ-liän* (Sch. 92, 258) or *gɨ/gi-lian* (Pul. 245, 190). SHIMUNEK's reading: Ch'i-lien, NWei *gilɛ̃r. Cognate to WMMo. (MA) *jirim* 'girth strap', WMo. *jirim* 'either one of the two leather straps on the left side of the saddle which are put through the buckles of the olung', etc. (see NUGTEREN 2011: 389). SHIMUNEK's reconstruction is based on the assumption that "the character 連 MSC *lián*, read *lɛ̃r in Northern Wei Chinese, was used to transcribe Taghbach coda *r and *l" (p. 87), in its turn influenced by BECKWITH's implausible claim about the usage of "Korean Peninsular Early Middle Chinese" *lir (尸 MSC *shī*) to transcribe "Old Koguryŏ" coda *r (see BECKWITH 2004: 99–101). However, in later Sino-Mongol transcriptions of the 13th and 14th centuries, the character 連 MSC *lián* is normally used to transcribe full Middle Mongol syllables *len* and *ren*, the latter in combination with the diacritic 舌 (MSC *shé*); cf. e.g. 額兀連 = *e'ülen* 'cloud' (YCBS X 12a4), 勺斡連 = *jö'ölen* 'weak, soft' (YCBS VII 10b3), 也^{舌}連 = *yeren* '90' (HY I 22a7). Early Middle Chinese transcriptions of Taghbach are also clearly based on the principle of using Chinese characters to transcribe full Taghbach syllables, not only codas. In EMC, there is a syllable *ljəm* (Sch. 364–365) or *lim* (Pul. 194–195) that could have been used for rendering Taghbach *rim, as well as a syllable *ljen* (Sch. 321) or *lin* (Pul. 194–195) that could have been used for rendering Taghbach *rin, and a syllable *liem*/*ljäm* (Sch. 348) or *liam*

(Pul. 191) that could have been used to transcribe Taghbach *rem. The only remaining option is to admit that the EMC syllable *ljän* or *lian* is used here for the Taghbach syllable *ren. My reconstruction: *giren *[kiren]. In view of the Mongolic cognates, it can be assumed that eventually the mid or close-mid vowel *e became assimilated to *i of the initial syllable, and the coda *-n irregularly changed to *-m (for this change in Mongolic, see VLADIMIRCOV 1929: 357–358; POPPE 1955: 101–102; NUGTEREN 2011: 241). Therefore, the following development may be postulated: *giren > *girin > *girim > *jirim*.

(3) Taghbach **k^{h}ɪrʁaycɪn 'assasins' (pp. 149–150; cf. also p. 351), transcribed as 契害眞 MSC *qì-hài-zhēn*, EMC *k^{h}iet-ɣâi-tśjen* (Sch. 226, 231, 319) or *k^{h}ɨt-vai^{h}-ʈɕin* (Pul. 248, 118, 401). SHIMUNEK's reading: Ch'i-hai-chen, NEMC *k^{h}ɨrɣaytśĩr. Cognate to EMMo. (SHM) *kidu'ači* 'murderer, assassin' (see DE RACHEWILTZ 2006/2: 652). For the Proto-Mongolic verb stem *kidu- 'to kill, massacre' and its modern cognates, see NUGTEREN (2011: 412). According to SHIMUNEK, "this correspondence is further evidence of Common Serbi-Mongolic */t/ rhotacizing to *[r] intervocalically in Taghbach" (p. 149, cf. also pp. 143, 164 and 165). However, the conclusion that there was the so-called "intervocalic rhotacization of */d/ and */t/" (p. 164) in Taghbach is clearly based on circular reasoning: it is drawn from BECKWITH's reconstruction of the "Late Middle Chinese" (Early Middle Chinese in traditional terninology) coda **-r, corresponding to *-t* in traditional reconstructions (see under (e) above), which in itself is largely derived from foreign transcriptional data, in particular the Northern Wei transcriptions of Taghbach themselves (cf. p. 86). Once one disallows the coda **-r misreconstructed for EMC, it is expectedly possible to safely dismiss the hypothesis about "intervocalic rhotacization" in Taghbach and at the same time to rehabilitate traditional variant reconstructions based upon the EMC coda *-t*. My reconstruction: *kitɣayǰin *[k^{h}it^{h}kaytʃin] ~ *kïtɣayǰïn *[k^{h}it^{h}kaytʃin] < *kït-ɣay-ǰï-n 'kill-RES-OCCUP-PL'. Cf. LIGETI (1970: 303): *qitγaičin; VOVIN (2007: 197): *kitγečin. It should be noted that the marker *-ɣay, considered by VOVIN (2007: 97) to be a causative suffix and interpreted by SHIMUNEK (pp. 149–150) as a verbal noun suffix, closely corresponds to the Middle Mongol *-(U)'A(y)* < *(U)GA(y) marker with a resultative meaning, traditionally but inaccurately labeled as *nomen imperfecti*, or imperfective participle (see BROSIG 2014: 97–99; cf. also GODZIŃSKI 1985: 137, § 232; RYBATZKI 2003: 76, 77). To be honest, this marker cannot be followed by noun-deriving suffixes in Middle Mongol, but the rules of combinability of morphemes within a word in Taghbach and

other Serbi varieties may have been different from those in Proto-Mongolic and its daughter languages.

(4) Taghbach **ɦiʁləgbɔr or **ɦirləgbɔr ‘abalone’ (p. 133), transcribed as 俟力伐 MSC *sì/qí-lì-fá*, EMC *dʐɨ-ljək-bjwɒt* (Sch. 99, 110, 238) or *zɨ/zi(ɡɨ/ɡi)-lik-buat* (Pul. 293, 245, 189, 89). SHIMUNEK’s reading: I-li-fa, NWei ☆ɦiʁləgbɔr. SHIMUNEK suggests that ☆ɦiʁləgbɔr or ☆ɦirləgbɔr “resembles several Mongol words, i.e. ☆ɦir resembles Written Mongol *ir* ‘blade’, the ☆-ləg element resembles the Written Mongol possessive attributive suffix *-lig* ‘having N’… and the ☆bɔr element closely resembles Middle Mongol *boro* ~ *bora* ‘grey’… The Taghbach word probably literally means ‘the bladed gray one’, a description of the iridescent surface inside the abalone’s shell and the dull color of the outer shell” (p. 133). Two critical remarks need to be made in this regard. First, the MSC reading of the character 俟, used in the *Wei Shu* transcription of this word (WS 113: 3008), is not “I” but *sì* or *qí*; the author may have confused 俟 with the graphically similar character 矣 MSC *yǐ*, but the latter has the EMC pronunciation *jɨ* (Sch. 99), *hiX* (BS 371), or *ɨ/i* (Pul. 367), not “☆ɦiʁ”. Second, the character 伐 MSC *fá* in Early Middle Chinese ends in *-t*, not in misreconstructed **-r, but it could indeed have been used as an approximation of a foreign syllable with a final *-r, although syllables with the EMC coda *-n* are more widely used for this purpose (see VOVIN 2007: 194–195). I agree with SHIMUNEK’s reconstruction of the last part of the word as *bor *[pɔr] ‘grey’, corresponding to PM *bora ‘id.’ (for this etymon, see NUGTEREN 2011: 285), but the first part should be completely revised. Since a connection with WMo. *ir+lig* ‘the bladed one’ is phonologically unacceptable and semantically unconvincing, I reconstruct it as *gilig *[kilik], proceeding from the second reading of the character 俟. It may be considered to be cognate of WMo. *gilügen* ‘shimmering, bright’ or *gilüger* ‘smooth, shiny, bright; gorgeous’, going back to the Proto-Mongolic root *gïl- ~ *gil- (> *ǰïl- ~ *ǰil-) ‘smooth; glossy, shiny’ (see NUGTEREN 2011: 342–343). My reconstruction of the whole word: *gilig bor *[kilik pɔr], lit. ‘the shimmering grey one’. It would have been an appropriate circumlocution for the abalone, but this connection is nevertheless not completely certain.

Some of the reconstructions proposed by SHIMUNEK are clearly teleological and based on forced or doubtful correspondences to attested Mongolic stems. Cf. the following examples:

(5) Taghbach **čʰur/**čʰʊr ‘hand net’ (pp. 129–130; cf. also p. 334), transcribed as 出連 MSC *chū-lián*, EMC *tśʰiwet-liän* (Sch. 313, 258) or *tɕʰyt-lian* (Pul. 59, 190). SHIMUNEK’s reading: Ch’u-lien, NWei ☆tśʰurlɛr̃. Regarded by the author as cognate to WMMo. (IM) *tor* ‘net’, WMo. *toor*

'net; grate' < PM *tor (see NUGTEREN 2011: 522–523). SHIMUNEK's reconstruction once again rests on the implausible assumption that the character 連 MSC *lián* is used to transcribe Taghbach coda *r (see under (2) above), as well as on the *ad hoc* invented sound law that "Taghbach affricated Common Serbi-Mongolic *t^{h}- to *č^{h}- before *u ~ *ʊ" (p. 130). My reconstruction: *čüren *[ʧ^{h}uren] or *čülen *[ʧ^{h}ulen]. No known cognates. A connection with PM *tor is highly unlikely. The same phenomenon of dental/retroflex coda assimilation to the following dental/retroflex initial, as noted in (1) above, seems to be observed here.

(6) Taghbach **p^{h}ɔr 'surrounding' (pp. 135–136; cf. also p. 363), transcribed as 普 MSC *pǔ*, OC *p^{h}âʔ (Sch. 60), LHC *p^{h}a (Sch. 60), EMC *p^{h}uo* (Sch. 60) or *p^{h}ɔ* (Pul. 243). SHIMUNEK's reading: P'u, NWei *p^{h}ʊʁ ~ *p^{h}ɔʁ. Regarded by the author as cognate to EMMo. (SHM) *horči-* 'to surround, encircle; to turn (intr.)', WMo. *orči-* 'to turn around, revolve, rotate; to go through the cycle of transmigrations, transmigrate' < PM *horči- and unattested MMo. **horiya-* 'to wrap', WMo. *oriya- ~ oruγa-* 'to tie around, entwine, coil; to wrap, bandage; to wind, reel, roll (around); to tangle, confuse' < PM *horiha- (cf. NUGTEREN 2011: 359, 360). SHIMUNEK follows BECKWITH's reconstruction of "Late Old Chinese" coda **-ʁ, corresponding to traditionally reconstructed Old Chinese *-ʔ (see under (d) above). However, it is commonly accepted in the mainstream Chinese reconstructions that the Old Chinese postcoda *-ʔ has already disappeared by the Later Han period, creating the rising tone in Middle Chinese (see e.g. BAXTER AND SAGART 2014: 195–196). Even if one accepts BECKWITH and SHIMUNEK's idiosyncratic reconstruction of this Old Chinese postcoda as **-ʁ, it is absolutely unclear how it does concern Chinese transcriptions of Taghbach which are given in Early Middle Chinese. Still less probable is the author's proposal that this **-ʁ is "used to transcribe a foreign coda *r", the reason for which, to be honest, is regarded by him as "not entirely clear" (p. 136). Taghbach coda *-r is normally transcribed with EMC syllables with codas *-n* or *-t* (see VOVIN 2007: 194–195; cf. also (4) above), but none of them are present in the *Wei Shu* transcription of this word. My reconstruction: *po *[p^{h}ɔ]. No obvious connection with PM *horči- and *horiha-. This Taghbach word is glossed 周 MSC *zhōu*, which means not only 'tourner autour de; autour de' but also 'période; cycle', 'année', 'semaine' (DGR II 28a). In view of this, a possible connection with Kitan *po *[p^{h}ɔ] 𘲭 <po> 'time, season' < CSM *po 'id.' (for this word see p. 361; cf. also SHIMUNEK 2007: 89; KANE 2009: 68, 122–123) may be proposed, but this is also not fully conclusive.

A number of SHIMUNEK's reconstructions can be accepted only with substantial corrections. For example:

(7) Taghbach **pary-al 'bridge' (p. 135), transcribed as 拔列 MSC *bá-liè*, EMC *bwât/bǎt-liät* (Sch. 237, 235) or *bəɨt/bɛːt-liat* (Pul. 27, 193). SHIMUNEK's reading: Pa-lieh, NWei ☆parliar. Following the tradition-based Chinese reconstructions, the codas **-r in the EMC pronunciations of both syllables should be revised to *-t*. The first *-t* seems to have no value of its own before the initial *l-* of the following syllable (cf. COBLIN 1991: 67–68), which could be used to render foreign *l- as well as *r-. The second *-t* may be regarded as an approximation of a foreign *-l due to the absence of coda *-*l* in Early Middle Chinese, although VOVIN (2007: 194) finds this unusual. The Taghbach word should definitely be reconstructed with front (or [+ATR]) vocalism, as Taghbach *bal/*bar may well have been transcribed by more appropriate EMC syllables, e.g. *pwât* (Sch. 237) or *bat* (Pul. 27). In addition, the character 拔 MSC *bá* has the Sui-Tang Chang'an pronunciation *bär (COBLIN 1994: 318, No. 0662). The origin of a spurious *-y- in SHIMUNEK's reconstruction is unclear. I agree with SHIMUNEK that this Taghbach word is cognate to MMo., WMo. *bari-* 'to grasp, hold, grab, etc.' < PM *bari- 'id.' (for this etymon, see NUGTEREN 2011: 278), but the meaning of the Chinese gloss 梁 MSC *liáng*, attached to it in the *Wei Shu* (WS 113: 3007), is not only 'bridge' but also 'a handle to a kettle, etc.' (GILES 1912: 883b). The latter meaning seems to be more appropriate here in view of the Mongolic comparative data. My reconstruction: *bäräl *[pɛrɛl] 'handle' < *bär- 'to grasp, hold' + *-l the deverbal noun suffix, normally used in Written Mongol to form nouns designating abstract ideas (POPPE 1974: 47, § 159) but possibly having no such semantic constraints in Taghbach. The vocalism of this Taghbach lexical item may be accounted for as a result of vowel palatalization, as observed in Eastern Mongolian dialects and Oirad, in which originally back (or [-ATR]) vowels changed to front (or [+ATR]) ones before an *i in the following syllable (see e.g. SVANTESSON ET AL. 2005: 210–212). It should be noted that vowel palatalization is not mentioned by SHIMUNEK among the phonological features of Taghbach (pp. 163–165) and Common Serbi-Mongolic (pp. 288–292).

(8) Taghbach **uwl or **ʊwl 'cloud' (pp. 140–142), transcribed as 宥連 MSC *yòu-lián*, EMC *iəu-liän* (Sch. 96, 258) or *wuw-lian* (Pul. 379, 190). SHIMUNEK's reading: Yu-lien, NWei ☆uwlɛ̃ ~ ☆ʊwlɛ̃. Regarded by the author as cognate to Kitan *əwl ᠰᡆ <eu.wl> 'cloud', EMMo. (SHM, HY) *e'ülen* 'id.', WMo. *egüle/n* 'id.' < PM *ehülen (cf. NUGTEREN 2011: 334). For an incorrect treatment of the transcriptional

value of the character 連 MSC *lián* in BECKWITH and SHIMUNEK's EMC reconstruction, see under (2) and (5) above. There are no syllables **ɛw* or **əw* in EMC, so the character 有 EMC *jəu* (Sch. 96), LMC *iw* (Pul. 379), may have been chosen to transcribe the Taghbach syllable *ew. My reconstruction: *ewlen. Cf. BAZIN (1950: 296): *yäülän; LIGETI (1970: 304–305): *üglen; VOVIN (2007: 198): *gülen or *γülen. The phonetic shape of this Taghbach word seems to be intermediate between those of its Middle Mongol and Kitan cognates.

In conclusion, the book under review represents an important achievement as the most extensive and systematic contribution to the study of the early history of the Serbi-Mongolic language family. It gives a fresh perspective to the debate on the origins of the Mongolic and Serbi languages and offers a new approach to the ethnolinguistic history of the Mongolic peoples. SHIMUNEK's book should be highly appreciated as a rich collection of philologically attested data on three best documented Serbi varieties, Taghbach, Tuyuhun, and Kitan, although his reconstructions of Serbi language materials in Chinese transcriptions have too many methodological shortcomings and need to be carefully reconsidered.

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Abbreviations

Glosses

OCCUP	Occupation
PL	Plural
RES	Resultative

Symbols

<	Developed from
>	Changed to
←	Borrowed from
~	Variation between two or more forms
*	Reconstruction
☆	Reconstruction from traditional Chinese *fanqie* spellings or rhymes (in BECKWITH and SHIMUNEK's notation)
**	Misreconstruction or misreading

Languages

EMC	Early Middle Chinese
EMMo.	Eastern Middle Mongol
LHC	Later Han Chinese
LMC	Late Middle Chinese
MMo.	Middle Mongol
MSC	Modern Standard Chinese
NEMC	"Northeastern Early Middle Chinese" (in SHIMUNEK's terminology)
NWei	"Northern Wei Chinese" (in SHIMUNEK's terminology)
OC	Old Chinese
OJpn	Old Japanese
PJK	Proto-Japanese-Koguryoic
PJpn	Proto-Japanese
PM	Proto-Mongolic
PSM	Proto-Serbi-Mongolic
WMMo.	Western Middle Mongol
WMo.	Written Mongol (according to LESSING (ed.) 1960)

Primary sources

HY	the Sino-Mongolian glossary *Huayi yiyu* 華夷譯語 (1389) (MOSTAERT 1977; MOSTAERT AND DE RACHEWILTZ 1995; KURIBAYASHI 2003)
IM	the Arabic-Mongol glossary *Kitāb Ḥilyat al-Insān wa Ḥalbat al-Lisān* by ǦAMĀL AL-DĪN IBN AL-MUHANNĀ (early 14th cent.) (MELIORANSKIJ 1904; POPPE 1938: 432–451; WEIERS 1972)
MA	the Arabic-Persian-Turkic-Mongol dictionary *Muqaddimat al-Adab* (14th cent.) (POPPE 1938; SAITÔ (ed.) 2008)
SHM	the *Secret History of the Mongols* (mid-13th cent.) (KURIBAYASHI AND CHOIJINJAB 2001; KURIBAYASHI 2009)
WS	WEI SHOU 魏收. *Wei Shu* 魏書 [The Book of Wei]. Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1974.
YCBS	the Shanghai (Commercial Press) edition of the SHM: *Yuanchao bishi* 元朝秘史 [The Secret History of the Yuan Dynasty] 1936. [Sibu congkan sanbian shibu 四部叢刊三編史部] Shanghai 上海: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館有限公司.

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DGR	*Grand dictionnnaire Ricci de la langue chinoise.* 6 vols., 1 vol. d'annexes. Paris: Association Ricci – Desclée de Brouwer, 2001.
Pul.	PULLEYBLANK 1991
Sch.	SCHUESSLER 2009

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