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A Female Mongol Headdress in Old Uyghur Secular Documents

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Özet

Eski Uygurca Din Dışı Belgelerde Geçen bir Moğol Kadın Başlığı

Eski Türkçe çalışmaları içinde Eski Uygurca din dışı belgeler üzerine yapılan araştırmalar son zamanlarda öncekine oranla büyük önem kazandı ve konuyla ilgili birçok eser yayımlandı. Bu yazmalar araştırmacılara Uygurların günlük yaşamına ve maddi kültürüne dair ipuçları vermektedir. Bununla birlikte, hâlâ hayatın bazı alanlarında kullanılan terimlerin derinliğine araştırılmasına ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Özellikle dokuma ve giyim alanındaki birçok terimin anlamı henüz açıklığa kavuşturulabilmiş değildir. Bu makalede, daha önce anlamı belirlenemeyen bu terimlerden biri olan *kükü* sözcüğünün Çince *gugu* sözcüğünden geldiği ve evli Moğol kadınlarının kullandıkları işli uzun başlığın adı olduğu savunulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eski Uygurca, Moğolca, Çince, Yuan Devri, din dışı metinler, hotoz, *kükü*, *bogtag*, 罟罟 ~ 姑姑 *gugu*, giyim, kumaş, Xuanzang.

Abstract

Research on the Old Uyghur secular documents has become an ever more important branch of Old Turkic studies, and many relevant publications have seen the light of day. The manuscripts provide a glimpse into the daily life and material culture of the Uyghurs. However, the terminology of some areas of life still needs in-depth investigations. Especially in the semantic field of textiles and clothing several lexical items are still unexplained. The present article identifies one such item, *kükü*, as a

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designation of the high embroidered headdress of married Mongol women, adopted from Chinese *gugu*.
Key Words: Old Uyghur, Mongolian, Chinese, Yuan Period, secular documents, headdress, *kükü*, *bogtag*, 罟罟 ~ 姑姑 *gugu*, clothing, fabric, Xuanzang.

I.

Research on clothes and fabrics is a major topic in Silk Road studies, especially in the investigation of the social history of the Mongol empire in general and of the Yuan Dynasty in particular (1271-1368 CE), where dress was seen as indicative of social status.[1] In Old Uyghur studies, the focus until now has been mainly

[1] For recent archaeological finds of costumes from the Yuan period see Oka 2015. Cf. also Denney 2010 and the master thesis by Halbertsma-Herold (2008). See Cho, Yi & Kim 2015 with special reference to the so-called *terlig*. The Old Uyghur term *tärlik* is attested in the *Maitrisimit* in combination with a word interpreted as *artču* or *äräńčü*, as well as with *bibru* and *üm* (the latter, which survives in several modern Turkic languages, denotes a kind of legwear; *bibru* may as well). See Gabain 1961:83 for the leaf of which today only a small fragment has been preserved (only the extant parts are edited in Tekin 1980, I:230). The translations "Schweißtuch (?)" ("sweat cloth") for *tärlik* in Röhrborn 2015:268 s. v. *artču* and "Pantoffeln" ("slippers") in Tekin 1980, I:230 are not correct. The meaning "slippers" is specific to Ottoman. In view of its Mongolic counterpart, *tärlik* may have meant "coat". The reading *artču* "Satteltasche" was first given by Röhrborn 1981:201a, based on von Gabain's private glossary cards, although she went on to use *äräńčü* in her publications. The reading *artču* was maintained by Erdal 1991:106, but was corrected to *äräńčü* again in Röhrborn 2017:224 and defined as "Bezeichnung für eine Art Hose für Männer" ("a kind of men's trousers"). The second instance of *äräńčü*, from chapter VI of the biography of Xuanzang, is *keŋ äräńčü tonluglar* "those with wide *äräńčü* garments". This Old Uyghur phrase is due to a misunderstanding of the translator, as observed by Röhrborn. 廣袤 *guangmao* "extent" in the Chinese original was interpreted as 廣袤 *guangmou* "wide upper garment" (see 袤 in Giles 1912:996a, no. 8037 "the dress above the waist", but with a different translation in the example 看袤服者 "one who wore a long robe"). We can add that the front vocalism is corroborated by Kyrghyz *erenče ton* (Judaxin 1965:960b), "a light robe", occurring in the Manas epic. The word *erenče* is recorded without the explicative *ton* ("garment") in the epic Er Töštük (Sarıpbekov & Mukasov 1996:174). The meaning of *äräńčü* in Old Uyghur may correspond to the Kyrghyz term rather than denoting a kind of trousers. In the absence of further evidence, it seems likely that Kyrghyz *erenče* is the result of a reinterpretation of the old word *äräńčü* whose morphology was

on the fabrics and their respective etymologies[2] as well as on the economic history connected with them.[3] However, in art-historical studies such as the important publication by Lilla Russell-Smith (2005) on the Uyghur contribution to Dunhuang art, the particular hairdo of certain women, depicted as donors in the murals of Dunhuang, has been one means to identify them as Uyghur women.

In this study, we would like to present our new interpretation of two Old Uyghur passages in which a particular headdress for women, known as the *bogtag* in Mongolian[4] or 罟罟 ~ 姑姑 *gugu* in Chinese, is mentioned under its Uyghur name.

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opaque. Originally, *äräńčü* may have been derived from *ärän* "man, men" with the extremely rare suffix *+čU*, as Röhrborn (2017:224) proposes. The same suffix was used to explain the abandoned reading *artču*. However, it is also conceivable that we are dealing with a foreign lexeme that came to be associated with *ärän* only later. In Modern Uyghur, *äräńčä* denotes a "man's shirt with collar" (see Nadžip 1968:67b). Jarring (1992) presents two further instances of *äräńčä* with relation to garments. The first one, *äräńčä tumaq* means "the *tumaq* for men" (Jarring 1992 IV:3). A *tumaq* is a fur-cap. In the second one, *äräńčä* denotes "slippers for men" (Jarring 1992 XI:4). As Modern Uyghur tends to lower its word-final high vowels, it is phonetically possible to derive these forms from *äräńčü*. However, in view of the semantics, they are perhaps more plausibly explained as *ärän* "man, men" plus equative suffix (Nadžip's interpretation of *äräńčä* as a "contracted form" of *ärlärčä* is rather unlikely). Taking all the above into account, Old Uyghur *äräńčü* denoted a garment for the upper body rather than a type of trousers.

2 Zieme 1995.

3 Raschmann 1995.

4 For the Mongolian word see Doerfer 1963:210-212. On p. 212 he proposes – with some hesitancy – a Turkic etymology, namely a noun formed by the suffix *–k* from a denominal verb **bogta-* ("to bundle"): *bog+ta-k*. He gives also examples for depictions of Mongol rulers' wives wearing this headdress and refers to European travelers who describe it. A very useful overview of the documentation of the Mongolic term *bogtag* in early European and Islamic sources is provided by Ulambayar (2009a:33 sqq.). The form *boqtaq* attributed there to the *Muqaddimat al-Adab* was in fact recorded by Ibn Muḥanna. Schönig (2000:70) says that the Mongolian word was copied into Chaghatay and Ottoman (the latter only attested in Radloff's dictionary!). He considers Doerfer's etymology a plausible option which would make the Chaghatay and Ottoman words re-borrowings. In Kincses-Nagy's study on Mongolic loans in Chaghatay (2018) the word is not discussed. We cannot expand on the etymology of Mongolian *bogtag* here but it should be mentioned that the verbal forms quoted below from the *Secret History of the Mongols* point to a base noun without a velar ending. This would speak

This "spectacular framed construction" has roots in the steppe culture of Inner Asia (Allsen 1997:16). Allsen (ibid.) mentions not only the caps of the Scythians but also a two-foot long hat found with a female mummy excavated in Toyoq and dated around 300 BCE.

A very important literary account is found in 宋雲 Song Yun's travelogue in which he refers to his stay in the Hephthalite realm in 519 CE and gives a detailed description of the queen's high headgear adorned with precious materials.[5] Scholars have compared this headgear with the Mongol hat described in Chinese sources under the name 罟罟 ~ 姑姑 *gugu*. This Chinese term is often regarded as being of foreign origin.[6] Igor de Rachewiltz (2004:310, 352) considered the possibility of a term borrowed from Khitan, whereas Allsen (1997:16, footnote 31) suspected an Iranian or, more generally, Indo-European origin. As the various variants clearly indicate, the assumption that we are dealing with an original foreign term is certainly correct.

II.

In the *Secret History of the Mongols* (henceforth: SH), *gugu* appears — in yet another transcription 固姑 — in the Chinese glosses[7] as equivalent to *boqta* in the Mongolian text (§74). To be precise, the noun *boqta(q)* is not documented as such in the SH, but only appears three times in the derived verb *boqtala-* "to put on the

against a reconstructed verb **bogta-* in Turkic. The Mongolian word could be a loanword from a language other than Turkic. The alternation between the forms *boqta* ~ *boqtaq* is an unexplained phenomenon of Mongol phonology, also seen in *yasa* ~ *yasaq* "law". In these pages we will use the transcription *bogtag*.

5 Allsen 1997:16.

6 The Ricci dictionary documents the forms 罟罟冠 *guguguan* "coiffure des femmes nobles mongoles" (Nr. 6147, III:810a) and 故故 *gugu* (apart from other meanings) "coiffure des femmes de noblesse mongole" (Nr. 6127, III:805a). Ancient texts, which could have confirmed a pre-Yuan existence of the word *gugu*, are not quoted there.

7 The term *gloss* here refers to the Chinese interlinear translation of the Mongolian passage.

boqta".[8] The passage *ukitala boqtalaǰu qoǰitala büseleǰü* is translated by de Rachewiltz as follows "pulling firmly her tall hat over her head, tying tightly her belt to shorten her skirt".[9]

In §254 we find two further occurrences of the verb *boqtala-*, there glossed 梳頭 *shutou*, literally "to comb the head". This expression can also refer to "putting on headgear" (Giles 1912:1240b, no. 10,025: "to comb the hair, to dress the head").[10] De Rachewiltz (2004, I:185) translates accordingly. The first passage: *horaitala boqtalaǰu qoǰitala büseleǰü* 'pulling firmly her tall hat over her head, tying tightly her belt to shorten her skirt". The second passage: *niyitaitala boqtalaǰu niduratala büseleǰü* "fastening her tall hat over her head, fixing her belt to tighten her waist". The fact that the Mongolian *boqta* is explained by means of Chinese *gugu* indicates that, at least to the translator, the latter has nothing to do with *kekül* or *kökül* (attested in SH §56 as 鬌挐 "tuft of hair in front").[11]

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[8] See also *boγtula-* "To put the boγtu cap on a woman, i.e. to marry her off; to become engaged" (Lessing 1982:111a). Note that Lessing's transcription does not distinguish between *o* and *u* except in initial syllables. A historically more correct reading would be *boγto, boγtola-*.

[9] De Rachewiltz 2004, I:18-19 (there presented in verse form). For the Chinese 固姑冠带着 see Pankratov 1962:71 (§74).

[10] This is reminiscent of French *se coiffer*, which likewise may refer to arranging the hair or to putting ornaments in the hair or hats on the head.

[11] Already Allsen (1997:16, footnote 31) has remarked that this word is unrelated to Mongolian *kükül* (= *kökül*). Before him, Pelliot (1930:259) had expressed his reservations. This lexeme occurs widely, and was borrowed by Persian and numerous Turkic languages and occasionally re-borrowed from there by Mongolic languages. It is therefore difficult to determine the original pronunciation and meaning of the Mongolic word. The written Mongolian spelling KWYKWL can be interpreted as *kükül* ~ *kökül* or as *kököl*, a secondary (labial harmony) development of **kökel*. Ordos *gukul* "forelock; side pigtails" could go back to either **kökül* or **kükül*, whereas most of the central Mongolic dialects are indecisive. The written Mongolian spelling K'KWL may represent an older form **kekül*, but could also be a historically incorrect archaizing spelling. Some modern Mongolic forms, notably Eastern Yugur *hkol* "small braid on top of the head" and Mongghul *kugol* "braid, pigtail", suggest an original form **kökel*. Haenisch' trisyllabic reading *keguli* in the SH was due to an incorrect morpheme boundary read into the transcription 客古里顏 *keguliyan*, which includes the reflexive possessive *–i'en*. The stem could be read *kegül*, but *kekül* or *kökül* is also possible in view of the usage of 客 and 古 seen in other words. The original meaning in

The *gugu* has been mentioned in several Chinese sources. In a description of the Mongols by 趙珙 Zhao Gong in his work 蒙韃備錄 *Mengda beilu* we read:

> "Die Frauen der Stammeshäuptlinge tragen alle die *Gugu*-Kopfbedeckung.[12] Ihr (Gestell) wird aus Eisendraht geflochten; es sieht so ähnlich aus wie eine 'Bambusfrau'.[13] Es ist etwa drei Fuß lang, mit rot- und blaugewirktem Brokat überzogen und mit Perlen und Gold geschmückt. Oben ist noch ein Stab, den man zum Schmuck mit rotem und blauem Stickgarn (umwickelt) hat." (transl. Olbricht & Pinks 1980:79).

Women were often buried with their *bogtag*s. For example, in a cave burial from Nartiin Xad a deceased woman was buried not only with her three garments but also with her *bogtag*.[14] In a *maṇḍala* dated ca. 1330-32 CE the wives of Tugh Temür and his older brother are wearing *bogtag*s (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).[15]

Mongolic seems to be have been "forelock (of a horse), tuft of hair over the forehead (in humans)" rather than "braid, plait". For the sources of the Mongolic forms see Nugteren 2011:425.

[12] This term appears here as 顧姑.

[13] See the note in Olbricht & Pinks 1980:81: "ein aus Bambus geflochtenes Korbgestell …".

[14] Oka 2015:399. See the very instructive list in Ulambayar 2009a:44, Table 3 "Old Mongol Women's Burials with Birch Bark Headgear". We do not feel competent to discuss the material aspects of the *bogtag*/*gugu* in detail. It can be roughly described as a frame covered by a fine fabric. Its construction involved two main parts, the lower cap placed on the head, and the column- or funnel-shaped structure on top of it. Each part had a separate cloth covering. Its shape, size and manufacturing process have been quite variable. The internal frame has been made of birch bark, wicker, or metal wire. A comparison of various construction types is given by Song & Xie (2007:8, fig. 20).

[15] Oka 2015:405, plate 11.2.

III.

In Old Uyghur, the name of the headdress was hitherto unknown. But a closer look at the corpus of Old Uyghur secular documents has revealed that the headdress was known among the Uyghurs under its Chinese designation. The first attestation is found in a register of taxes and deliveries from the Mongol period. The document was first edited by Wilhelm Radloff as no. 38 of the edition *Uigurische Sprachdenkmäler* published posthumously by Sergej Malov.[16] A re-edition and translation into German was published in 1995 by Simone-Christiane Raschmann.[17] The lines were transcribed as *särmiškä tokka kükükä bir böz berdim* and translated as "Ich habe Särmiš, Toq und Kükü eine (Lage) Baumwollstoff gegeben".[18] Thus, all three words in the dative case are interpreted as personal names.[19]

In the light of the second instance quoted below we propose to consider *kükü* as a rendering of the Chinese term 罟罟 ~ 姑姑 *gugu* (or one of the other variants).[20] The Yuan pronunciation according to Edwin G. Pulleyblank (1991:111, 110) is *kuˇ kuˇ* or *ku ku* respectively. The second word in the dative could very well be *tog* ("banner") so that a translation of the sentence would be "I gave one piece of cotton cloth to Särmiš (for the fabrication) of a banner and a Gugu". Alternatively, *särmiš* could perhaps be read *sarmaš* which is attested in Kāšgarī as "being wrapped in one another" (Clauson 1972:852a), so that it may denote a kind of garment. The purposive function of the dative suffix is represented by the suffix *+lXk* in three other instances[21] in the so-called family archive edited in 1987 by Hiroshi Umemura. The lexical item *kükülük* was

[16] Radloff 1928:55-56 with corrections on p. 223. Catalogue information on this lost piece is given in Raschmann 2009:157-158 (no. 460).

[17] Raschmann 1995:153-155 (no. 81).

[18] Raschmann 1995:154.

[19] In his new edition of this manuscript Márton Vér (2019:191-194) presumes, too, that three names are mentioned. He transcribes *kükü* as *köykü*.

[20] The word is encountered in the Korean work 高麗史 *Korye Să* (composed in 1451 CE). See Pelliot 1930:259 (no. 20).

[21] The instance in line 34 is damaged so we refrain from quoting it here.

transcribed as *kökülüg* in the edition and translated with a question mark as "homemade".[22]

As a new reading and translation we would like to propose: *samsıka kükülük torku [bir y]arım stırka altımız* (lines 36-37)[23] "we bought woven silk for one and a half *stater* as fabric[24] for a *gugu*". The structure of the following sentence is not altogether clear: *tonluk tavarka bir y(e)g(i)rmi stır kükülük torkuka iki stır birlä üč y(e)g(i)rmi stır [t]avar ömänkä üč stır berti*[25] "he spent 11 *stater* for fabric intended for a garment, 2 *stater* for silk intended for a *gugu*, altogether 13 *stater*, as well as 3 *stater* for woven garments" (lines 88-92).[26] As already remarked by Peter Zieme (1976:240), the list of purchased items contains among other things clothes intended for a wedding. A *gugu* fits this context well. We may add that generally a *gugu* or *bogtag* was made of fine materials,[27] which applies here as well.[28]

IV.

If we look for pre-Yuan text examples, the detailed description of a headdress provided by Xuanzang's account of Tokharistan comes to mind. The Old Uyghur translation runs as follows:

> *... ärsär müyüz üzä ärsär didim kädär öŋtü[n] iki adrı . anı üzä ögüg kaŋıg ukıtur . üstünki adrıs[ı] üzä atag ukıtur . altınkı adrısı üzä ana[g] ukıtur ata anata kayusı öŋrä ölsär*

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22 Umemura 1987:59 (glossary).

23 Umemura 1987:40-41.

24 *samsı* < Chinese 氈絲 *san si*; Yuan pronunciation *sam sz̩*. The same word survives in Yellow Uyghur as *samsı* "silk fabric; fabric" (Lei 1992:313b).

25 Spelled wrongly <pʾrty> in the manuscript.

26 Umemura 1987:45.

27 See the quote from the 蒙韃備錄 *Mengda beilu* above. An example of an ornament in gold and carnelian is given in Denney 2010:82a, fig. 114.

28 A further argument in favour of our interpretation is the parallel formation *bürkälük käŋši* "woven silk for a cap" (Umemura 1987:42, line 54) based on **bürkä* "cap", re-borrowed from a form related to Mongolian *bürkü* "a summer hat" (Lessing 1982:150a), which in its turn is a borrowing from Turkic *börk* "hat". *käŋši* is a Chinese word, according to Umemura from 絹織 *juan zhi* (Yuan: *kjɛn`tʂi˘*).

> *ötrü ol adrısın ketärür . birök kadın atası kadın anası ikigü [bir]lä ölsär ötrü didimın k[ä]dmäz ketärür*
> "[the married women all] wear a headdress, either [made of wood] or of horn, and which has a forked structure at the front part. By means of the upper forked structure one alludes to the father. By means of the lower forked structure one alludes to the mother. (Depending on) which of the parents dies first, one removes the forked structure (representing him or her). If the father-in-law and the mother-in-law both die together, then (a woman) does not wear the headgear (anymore) but removes it."[29]

Unfortunately, this passage is damaged at the beginning. In the lost part the information is missing that this headdress is more than three feet high, as the Chinese original tells us (高三尺餘). What we translate as forked or bifurcating structure (Old Uyghur *adrı*) renders Chinese 岐 *qi*.[30] This is translated as "branch" by Li Rongxi (1995:159). The actual shape of this structure remains somewhat obscure. It is remarkable that the term *didim* is used here as a translation of Chinese 冠 *guan*.[31] The Middle Iranian loan *didim* usually means "diadem, crown" etc. Although the description in the biography of Xuanzang resembles the later *bogtag*, no native Turkic term is used by the translator. We can therefore surmise that this kind of headdress was unknown to the Uyghurs when the translation was produced.

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[29] Dietz, Ölmez & Röhrborn 2015:180 (lines 1612-1624). The removal of the woman's headgear reported here seems to have a faint echo in Rašīd ud-Dīn's descriptions of Güyük Khan's death: "Sorqoqtani Beki, as is the custom, offered her words of advice and consolation and sent her clothing and a *boqtaq*" (Boyle 1971:185).

[30] Some types of *bogtag/gugu*, as the one shown in Song & Xie (2007:7, fig. 16), feature a forked frame, while others have a forked structure with a transverse bar on top, resulting in a triangular shape, as in Ulambayar (2009b:115) and Xarinskij et al. (2018:101-102, fig. 5, 6). The forked structure reminds us of the term *adrı*, although it is unclear how breaking off parts of the frame would still result in a wearable hat.

[31] The character 冠, which can refer to several types of formal headgear as well as to the crest of birds, appears also in the later term 罟罟冠 ~ 姑姑冠 *gugu guan*.

The passage in the biography of Xuanzang was quoted nearly verbatim from chapter 12 of the 大唐西域記 *Da tang xiyu ji* (Taishō no. 2087, p. 940b) (completed in 646 CE) in which the country of Himatala is described:

> 其婦人首冠木角，高三尺餘，前有兩岐，表夫父母；上岐表父，下岐表母，隨先
> 喪亡，除去一岐，舅姑俱沒，角冠全棄。
>
> "Their married women wear a wooden horn about three feet high as a headdress, with two branches in front to represent their husbands' parents, the upper branch indicating the father and the lower one standing for the mother. When one of the women's parents has died the branch indicating the deceased person is removed; when both parents have died the horn headdress is discarded altogether."[32]

The original symbolic meaning seems to refer to the woman's in-laws only.[33] The passage is a bit clearer than the counterpart in the biography, although it remains unclear why first a woman's in-laws are mentioned and then her own parents. Xuanzang obviously describes remaining tribes of the Hephthalite confederation after they were vanquished by the Sasanians and the Western Turks around the year 560 CE. It is remarkable that the length of three feet tallies with the usual length of the Mongolian *bogtag* which was two or three feet in length (Allsen 1997:17).

V.

There are several paintings of the Turfan oasis with female donors wearing the *bogtag*. One example, with a feather on top, was found

[32] Li 2016:320.

[33] Odoric of Pordenone (1286-1331 CE) mentions in his account of his journey to China that the *bogtag* of the Mongols symbolizes a man's foot which would allude to a woman being under the dominion of her husband. In a similar vein are Riccoldo da Monte di Croce's (1243-1320 CE) remarks. See Gießauf 2007:89-90. Perhaps this interpretation given by the European travellers is simply a misunderstanding of an original symbolic meaning of kinship ties, which the Mongols expressed through the headdress.

in cave no. 3 of the caves of the third valley (Turfan promontory).[34] Another one is a donor figure from the small temple no. 3 in Bezeklik.[35] The context is a series of murals representing Amitābha's paradise. A mural from cave no. 17 in Bezeklik (Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, inventory number: III 4453)[36] shows a female donor with a *gugu* or *bogtag*.[37] Because the painting is dated to the 10th or 11th century – the reason for this is altogether unclear – it is argued in the catalogue description that the headdress originated among Uyghur women. However, it is more likely that the *gugu* or *bogtag* was introduced to the Uyghurs by the Mongols under its Chinese designation.[38] This would mean that the mural has to be dated to the Yuan dynasty.[39] This would tally with the appearance of the loanword *kükü* and its derivative *kükülük* in secular documents from the Mongol period.

VI.

In conclusion, the most reasonable explanation for Old Uyghur *kükü* seems to be a borrowing from Chinese *gugu*, although the hat itself came from the Mongols. The Chinese word seems to lack pre-Yuan attestations, and is written with various combinations of characters with different original semantics and different tones, which suggests that *gugu* is not a native Chinese lexeme.

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34 Grünwedel 1912:213 (fig. 477).

35 Grünwedel 1912:235 (fig. 506).

36 See the plate below. We would like to thank Lilla Russell-Smith for providing the photo.

37 Yaldiz et al. 2010:225 (no. 326).

38 See Denney 2010:82b: "During the expansionist Mongol period their signature garments, recognizably Mongol, spread to the far reaches of the empire, with some local variations—a more slender *gugu* for women of the western part of the empire, for example, and the use of local textile products for men's waisted robes, […]."

39 In Annemarie von Gabain's (1973,1:118) opinion, all paintings represent a "relatively late style". Moriyasu (2008:204) has argued against dating the Uyghur wall-paintings at Bezeklik in general too early. He himself opts for the 11th – 12th centuries. In his article he also discusses paintings and inscriptions from the Mongol period.

Although it is used in the context of Mongol ladies, *gugu* is unlikely to be derived from Mongolic (notably *kükül*, *kökel*, etc). Theoretically, the loss of the *–l* could be attributed to the Chinese phonemic system,[40] but the fact that the Mongolian word originally meant "forelock" or "pigtail" constitutes a semantic problem. Direct borrowing of Old Uyghur *kükü* from the Mongolic word can be excluded, because there is no reason why the *–l* should be lost in Turkic.

There are no alternative Mongolic or Turkic etymologies or comparable forms before the Mongol era. The suggestions that we are dealing with a Khitan (de Rachewiltz) or Indo-European (Allsen) loanword are in principle acceptable, but would have to be confirmed by a plausible source form, be it documented or reconstructed.

[40] In online research, among other places in Song & Xie, we encountered a trisyllabic Chinese transcription 古库勒 *gukule, which we have not been able to trace back to a specific source. If this were an early form, the *kükül etymology would be more convincing.*



Plate (III 4453):
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