

A secular document in Tocharian A kept in the Berlin collection

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In this lecture, I will introduce some Tocharian A fragments that may shed light on the historical background of this language. As an introduction, THT1017 (= A383) and 1487 will be treated. The peculiarities of their format and script lead one to think that they belong to the same folio with some missing part between them. It implies that they could be identified as the fragments of an annal of the ancient kingdom of *Ārsi* (THT1487b3 *Ārsi ype*) and are possibly the piece that Sieg and Siegling once referred to without giving inventory number (*Tocharische Grammatik*, p. 241). In these fragments I noted three personal names which are probably names of kings or names of members of the royal family of this kingdom, so far unattested in other resources. In addition, there is a word *kuś** which certainly denotes the ancient kingdom of Kucha (Chin. *Qiuci* 龜茲) in the place of ‘*Kuśa*’ given in Dr. Gerd Carling’s *Dictionary* (p. 155a).

It is known that there are two fragments of monastery records written in Tocharian A, i.e. THT4022 and 4023 from Shorchuk, as already pointed out by Prof. Melanie Malzahn (*Instrumenta Tocharica*, p. 290 n. 48). Having discussed them with a tentative reading and Chinese translation in the Turfan Forum 2010, I will put the fresh focus on THT1519 in the present lecture.

The fragment THT1519 seems to me a broken Tocharian A secular document concerning expenditure of some products. In spite that only five lines remain and about half of this sheet of account is missing, THT1519 is of special interest because [1] it gives us some hapax legomena, including Chinese units of measure; [2] it contains two ungrammatical forms which suggest that the scribe might be a Tocharian B speaker; [3] it shows the Tocharian A forms of two foreign titles *cor** (Old Turk. *čor*) and *coppām** (Old Turk. *čupan*, Bactrian *σοπανο*, Chin. *chūbàn* 處半, Khot. *chaupam*, etc.). In conclusion, although the historical background of Tocharian A remains obscure, these fragments may help us to pursue the history of this language.

[List of hapax legomena found in THT1519]

<i>āru</i>	nom.sg. of <i>āru</i> ‘name of product’
<i>klašt</i>	nom.sg. of <i>klašt</i> ‘name of product’
<i>coppām</i>	obl.sg. of <i>coppām*</i> ‘Chinese official title <i>chūbàn</i> 處半’
<i>wsokām</i>	nom./obl.pl.(or du.) of <i>wsok*</i> ‘product made from grain (cognate with Toch.B <i>wāsok*</i>)’ or obl.sg.m. of <i>wsok</i> ‘joyful’
<i>śākām</i>	obl.du.(or pl.) of <i>śāk*</i> ‘measure of volume (cf. Toch.B <i>cāk</i>)’
<i>śākās</i>	obl.pl. of <i>śāk*</i> ‘measure of volume (cf. Toch.B <i>cāk</i>)’

<i>śāṅkāṃ</i>	obl.pl. of <i>śāṅk*</i> ‘measure of volume (cf. Toch.B <i>śāṅk</i>)’ [This form seems to be provided with the Toch.B plural ending <i>-ṃ</i> .]
<i>śāṅkāṃs</i>	obl.pl. of <i>śāṅk*</i> ‘measure of volume (cf. Toch.B <i>śāṅk</i>)’ [This would be the contaminated form between <i>śāṅkāṃ</i> mentioned above and <i>*śāṅkāś</i> , the expected form of Toch.A.]
<i>śrāyāsac</i>	all. of <i>śrāyāñ*</i> (pl.) ‘old of people (cognate with Toch.B <i>śrāñ*</i>)’
<i>ṣikaśā</i> (or <i>ṣinuśā</i>)	perl.sg. of <i>ṣikaś*</i> (or <i>ṣinuś*</i>) ‘unknown meaning’

Key References:

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