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## A Comparative Study of Cultural Units in Tajik Legal Written Monuments of the 10th Century

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### Abstract

Researchers in the field of law, in compiling and clarifying various angles of the history of their era, place great emphasis on the role of legal documents in their general sense and insist on the importance of the hidden and unique cultural and legal documents of the time due to its special characteristics. Although, to recount historical events, cultural and legal languages and various expressions such as description, praise, admiration, memory, article, image, etc. can be used, but with the passage of time and distance from the origin of each event, the possibility of describing some of these events will be reduced and for this reason it can be claimed that law and culture are the only language of documents that shed light on the dark corners of history at any point in time. Based on the example of some onomastic units this article studies linguistic and cultural relationships between and some other peoples. This interconnection is based on deep cultural, historical, economic and socio-political roots. The data and results of this article indicate the closest contacts of the Sogdians (ancestors of Tadjiks) with Chinese, Hindus and Turks in the production of weapons, military affairs, trade, agriculture referred to in the Sogdian documents from Mount Mug. The article also deals with the linguistic and cultural relations of Tadjiks with the Slavic world on the basis of the ethnogeographic name 'Saqlob' (according to one of the hypotheses it means "Slovenia"), which is quite commonly used at an early stage of the development of the Tadjik language.

**Key words:** law, cultural study, Tadjik culture, cultural linguistics, onomastics.

### Introduction

Cultural relationship between Tadjiks and other peoples has deep historical, economic and socio-political roots. Depending on the geographic parameters, the states that existed on the territory of Tajikistan had close contacts with Chinese and Turks in all spheres of public life: religion, politics, diplomatic relations, economy, trade, cultural exchange, etc.

Xinjiang plays an important role at the crossroads of these cultural ties, where a large number of documents of religious and philosophical nature of the Buddhist, Manichean and Christian context was discovered. A significant part of them was made in the Iranian languages [1: 191].

It should also be noted that most of the documents (including Manichean content) written in the Sogdian, Bactrian, Hotano-Saka, Parthian, Middle Persian and Tadjik (Persian) languages were found in Turfan (north of the Chinese Takla Makan desert), which are mainly documents from the era of the Chinese Tang Dynasty (618-907) [1: 191]. There were also numerous Manichean communities representing various Iranian-speaking peoples.

Studies show the closest contacts of Sogdians, the ancestors of Tadjiks, with Chinese in the production of weapons, military affairs, trade, agriculture, which are mentioned in the Sogdian documents found in Mount Mug (in the Zeravshan Valley in 1932-1933).

A lot of interesting information about Sogdians is given in the works of Xuan Jian and Hoi Chao, Chinese travelers and researchers of Sogd, in the stories of Wei Tse, the Chinese ambassador to Sogd at the beginning of

the 7th century [1: 395, 379] In the Chinese sources, according to some researchers, Muslims are called ‘tashi’ or ‘Tadjiks’ [2: 372].

There is a great amount of information that needs scrupulous research in the sphere of religion and religious relations of Chinese with Sogdians and other Iranian peoples, who, before the establishment of Islam, preached Buddhism and Manichaeism and had the most famous temples with a huge amount of jewelry [3: 380]. This fact played an important role in the spread of Buddhism and Manichaeism in China.

Much interesting information about Soghd and other Iranian states of the medieval period is given in the writings and memoirs of Chinese historiographers, travelers and diplomats.

Tadjik-Persian classical literature occupies a special place in this direction, an outstanding example of which is the greatest creation of the famous "Shahnameh" by Abulkasim Ferdowsi.

"Shahnameh" is one of the outstanding monuments of writing of world literature, a national treasure of Tadjiks and other Iranian peoples. "Shahnameh", which consists of 60 thousand couplets and covers the reign of fifty legendary and historical rulers of ancient Iran, is divided into three large parts (mythological, heroic and historical). However, in reality, "Shahnameh" dates back to common Indo-European times and also covers the life and history of neighboring states and peoples, it also describes plots and lists the names of persons observed in the legends and myths of Chinese, Indians, Greeks, Turks, Slavs and other peoples.

## Methods

The linguoculturological research in this article is carried out by applying descriptive, analytical, onomasiological, comparative historical methods for characterizing the material using general scientific methods of direct observation, systematization, interpretation, generalization, and statistical analysis. Linguistic techniques of component, contextual and etymological and typological analyzes were also implemented. The factual material for this article is collected from "Shahnameh" by Ferdowsi and lexicographic publications with literal translation of the authors.

## Results and Discussions

"Shahnameh" by Ferdowsi is a heroic epic of Tadjiks and other Iranian peoples, the national pride of literature. "Shahnameh" is the greatest epic of humanity, which covers the mythical and legendary Tadjik-Persian history from the origins of the emergence of cultural and social life to the historical formation and national development. "Shahnameh" is the most ancient work that has come down to our times in full and thus creates the most complete picture of images and perceptions of the environment (both natural and man-made) through the prism of the vocabulary corpus [4: 19-20].

China as a geographical name and the name of the state in the "Shahnameh" is represented by the lexical unit ‘Čin’. This word in "Shahnameh" occurs more than 400 times both independently and in various combinations and phrases [5]. So, in the following example, the word ‘Čin’ means a country where, along with India and Kabul, Buddhism is the main religion and people pray in Buddhist temples:

*Guzashta az u qiblai mo but ast*

*Chi dar Činu Kobul chi dar Hindu Bast* [6: 4.235].

(In addition, our Qibla is an idol which is

In China and Kabul, in India and Baste)

The temple and the sacred place of idolaters in "Shahnameh" is closely connected with China and is considered to be one of the attributes of this country and personifies the wealth and luxury of the ‘Land of the Celestial Empire’:

*Hamebinam in dashti orošta*

*Chu butxonai Čin pur az xosta* [6: 4.307].

(And I see this steppe decorated

Like a Chinese temple full of treasures)

An interesting fact is that, according to Ferdowsi's descriptions, the Chinese Hakan owned not only power over ‘Čin’ (China), but also over Turks, who, judging by the information of this famous written monument, were considered to be an integral part of this huge state, alongside with Iran and India:

*Ki «Bar lashkar imruz farmon turost,*

*Hama kishvari Činu turkon turost»*[6: 4.134].

(Today the command of the army is entrusted to you,

All power in China and in the country of Turks also belongs to you (i.e. to Hakan of China)"

This is also evidenced by the combination of ‘Turki Čin’ (Chinese Turk) who, as a conqueror, is slandered by the local representative:

*V-az on joygoh barxurushidu guft,*

*Ki «Bo turki Čin ahriman bod juft»*[6: 4.199].

(And he set off from that place with malice on his lips: "So that a Turk of China was in the company with Ahriman)

The lexical unit 'Xāqān' occupies a special place in "Shahnameh", which in Fritz Wolf's dictionary is translated as 'Kaiser' (von Čin) and is found in "Shahnameh" more than 360 times, including 143 cases in the combination 'Xāqāni Čin' (the king of China), in 11 cases in isafet construction 'Xāqāni Čini' (the Chinese king) [5: 311]:

*Chu Komusu Manshuru Xoqoni Čin*

*Chu Bevardu chun Shanguli peshbin* [6: 4.95].

(Like Kamus and Manshur and Khakan of China,

Like Bevard and visionary Shangul)

It is interesting that 'Hakan of China' in this fragment is mentioned along with the famous Chinese hero Kamus (presumably from Khotan), the Indian king Shangul and no less famous commanders of that heroic era Manshur and Bevard.

In this article we mainly consider the examples from the famous poem in "Shahnameh" It is "The Poem of the Hero of Rustam and the Xāqān (King) of China", where Xāqān, summoned and generously gifted by Afrasiyab, the leader of the Turanians, has great authority not only over Turanian military leaders but also other heroes and vivid characters of this poem.

To express the meaning of "King of China, Emperor of China" in "Shahnameh" 'Čin' is also used in combination "Shāh-i Čin" (King of China), "Shahanshāh-i Čin" (King of kings of China), "Fayfur-i Čin" (Emperor of China):

*Yake shohi Xatlon, yake shohi Čin*

*Zi begona mardum turo nest kin* [6: 4; 201].

(The Shah of Khatlon, the Shah of China

Foreign people do not feel enmity towards you );

*Shahanshoi Čin shud az on noumed...* [6: 4; 203].

(And the king of the kings of China lost hope for life ...)

Frequently in "Shahnameh" the word 'Čin' is used with the ethnogeographic noun 'Saqlob', which some scholars associate with Slovenia. Possibly 'Saqlob' expresses "Slovenia", but in our opinion, this word refers to the Slavic lands and possessions, which are closer to China. Here are some examples:

*Sipohe biyomad bad-in son zi Čin*

*Zi Saqlobu Xatlonu Turonzamin* [6: 4; 191].

(And the army came, thus, from China,

From Saklab, Khatlan and Turanzamin)

*Uakero zi Saqlobu Shignonu Čin*

*Namonam, ki pay barnihad bar zamin* [6: 4; 197].

(None of Saklab, Shignan and China

I will not allow to step on the ground with their feet)

*Ki gar nomdoronu Saqlobu Čin*

*Ba Eron hama razm justandu kin* [6: 4; 225].

(And if the celebrities of Saklab and China

Are looking for battling and revenge in Iran)

Often along with the noun 'Čin' it is possible to find names of such countries as 'Rum' (Byzantium), 'Hind' (India), 'Turok' (Turkey), 'Xatlon' (Khatlon), 'Shignan' (Shugnan), 'Xutan' (Hotan), 'Shingan' (Xinjian) which either have borders with China or now they are a part of China.

Having based on many instances from "Shahnameh" and other examples of Tadjik (Persian) classical literature it should be noted that the Tadjik (Persian) language, including the language of "Shahnameh" by great Ferdowsi, holds a specific place in spreading of the word 'Čin' as the name of the country, i.e. China. Thanks to the Tadjik (Persian) language, the word 'China' has penetrated into English and German which has become to express the great country of China and ancient Chinese culture.

There is also an opinion that the formation of the name 'China' in Europe is connected with the name of ruling Jin Dynasty of China (11-4 centuries BC), which later was weakened by factorial fighting of nobility and separated into three empires (Zhao, Wei and Han), and this term was widespread by the European traveler Marco Polo. But it should be taken into consideration that "Shahnameh" was written in 10<sup>th</sup> century and the term 'Čin' in Iranian-speaking environment had already had a sustainable spread, and an Italian traveler Marco Polo (1254-1324) [7], who had taken a trip to China through Central Asia, had a chance to use a Tadjik variant of naming China and Chinese culture in particular.

In the Tadjik language dishware under the name 'čini' (china) is very common which is directly relevant to the term 'Čin' as it was first produced in China and this technology was then used in the production of this variety of china in other countries as well. This variety of china was also called 'fayfuri' where the word 'china' in the Russian language derives from. The word 'fayfuri' is formed by adding suffix -i of relative adjectives [8] from the name of China's emperor 'Fayfur' which has Tadjik (Persian) origin and is formed from 'Bay/ Fay' = 'God, idol' with 'pur' in the meaning of 'son', i.e. Son of God. In "Shahnameh" the word is found in the following distich, in particular:

*Chu ogohi omad ba Fayfur az in,  
Ki omad firistodaye sui Ćin* [6:8.340].  
(And Emperor received a word  
That some envoy came to China)

In “Shahnameh” the word ‘ćini’ is also used in the meaning of ‘a Chinese’ and «Chinese». In particular, in the following fragment where the battle between Rustam and other troops, the plural form of ‘ćini’, i.e. ‘ćiniyan’ is used in the meaning of ‘the Chinese’:

*Ba shamsher burd an zamon sher dast,  
Chapi lashkari chiniyon barshikast* [6:4.189].  
(And then the Lion (Rustam) reached out to his sword,  
And crushed the Chinese left flank of the army)

With the help of the word ‘ćini’ in “Shahnameh” the following constructions are formed which emphasize Chinese affiliation and raciness of one or another subject, for example, ‘deboi ćini’ (Chinese silk), ‘ćini parind’ (thin Chinese fabric made of silk), ‘dinori ćini’ (Chinese dinars), ‘zaboni ćini’ (the Chinese language” and so on. A large number of phrases are also marked figuratively with the help of ‘Ćin’ indicating subject and phenomenon peculiarities connected with China.

Therefore, Ferdowsi, for example, emphasizes quality and value of Chinese goods and produce as battle headgear made of Chinese steel:

*Zi pulodi Ćin targ bar sar nihod  
Hamekard badxohash az marg yod* [6:4.135].  
(From Chinese steel he put a headgear on his head,  
And remembered his foe about death)

In his other fragment Ferdowsi compares a variety of military camp flags with the Chinese market which according to the author’s observations is distinguished by its diversity of colors and authenticity:

*Havo shud zi bas parniyoni dirafsh  
Ću bozori Ćin zardu surxu bunafsh* [6:4.94].  
(From multiple silk flags, the Earth has become yellow,  
Red and purple like the Chinese market)

One of the most commonly used toponyms in written sources of that period is the word ‘Turān’ which is the name of the country (and town as well). According to many historiographical and lexicographical sources this toponym is used to denote the country or Prince Tur’s lands, one of the Aryan King Faridun’s sons who divided his lands between three Princes – Eradj, Salm (Sarm) and Tur. The last two that inherited peripheral lands and towns, considered central towns and land uptake to the youngest son Eradj quite unfair, which led to battles between Iran and Turan lasting for centuries.

There are a lot of different, sometimes contradictory opinions about the location of Turan. In many lexicographical sources Turan was regarded as Movarounnahr (lit. across the river), sometimes this river was believed to be Amu Darya (Jayhun) and sometimes Syr Darya (Sayhun) (‘Powers’, ‘Farhangi Rashidi’, ‘Farhangi Jahongiri’). Turān which consists of Tur anthroponym and suffix of correlation and place -ān can be also found in Pahlavi texts (I-IV centuries), according to geographers’ opinion extends to Aral Sea, often called Khorezm Sea. According to some sources Khorezm and Aronvide in particular are considered to be Prince Tur’s country. In the poem “Shahnameh” by Abulkasim Ferdowsi, which is the most famous written source of that period – (934-1020 rr.), ‘Turān’ is situated across Omu (Amu Darya) river and its leader is a notorious Afrosiab who is recorded under the name of Farnarasina فرنرھسينه in Zoroastrian book called “Avesta” [9]. In “Avesta”, religious Pahlavi books and ancient Aryan poems, as well as in “Shahnameh”, it is considered that Iranians and Turanians are Faridun’s descendants and representatives of one and the same race. The difference is that Iranians as the population of central Ariana has earlier become civil and become living in towns, but Turians residing on the outskirts and continued living in tents (yurts) and were occupied with animal breeding.

As far as ‘Turān’ and Ariana section are concerned, there are more extensive interpretations among Faridun’s descendants (Fereydun). Many orientalists believe that such territories like Khazaria, China, Indochina, Tibet, the east of the region in general should be included into ‘Turān’, and Salm (or Sarm, probably Sarmatians are connected with this name) includes Rum (Byzantium), Rus, Alanya and the west of the region in general [9].

This toponym mentioned in “Avesta” is often used due to its context in “Shahnameh” by Ferdowsi, for example in the following distich:

*Nigahdāri Erān-u Turān tuyi,  
Ba har jāy poshti dalerān tuyi* [9].  
(You are the guardian of Iran and Turan,  
You are the protector of brave men).

‘Turān’ is mostly used in poetry and prose of other authors and other written sources of that period as well.

Interesting information is contained in “Shahnameh” regarding the town/country called ‘Xutan’ which is nowadays situated as a town in north-western China, in Xinjiang-Uyghur autonomous region, where there is a river with the same name around 1035 kilometres in Karakorum crossing the Taklamakan Desert [7].

In “Shahnameh” this term is recorded twenty times to express the name of the town and sometimes the country as well:

*Buzurgoni Turon, saroni Xutan*

*Hama peshi Xoqon shudand anjuman* [6:4.133].

(The noblemen of Turan, the heads of Xutan

Gathered all together at Hakan)

It should also be noted that the origin of other Tadjik name of China, i.e. ‘Hitoy’, can be exactly connected with this name which, according to Vasmer, derives from Chinese word ‘K’itan’ [10:2.241].

A geographical name ‘Shingon/Shangon’ is also connected with this region of China recorded in “Shahnameh” for three times and denoting Xinjiang province in north-west China:

*Hama pokashon peshi Xusrav barem*

*Zi Shangonu Ćin hadyai nav barem* [6:4.199].

(And we shall take everyone to King Kusrav,

And there will be a new present from China and Shingan)

## Summary

A detailed lexicon research of classical period of the Tadjik language from cultural linguistics point of view is demonstrated by the fact that “Shahnameh” is a great work accumulating mental richness and reflecting all the material world of Iranian-speaking and neighboring peoples from ancient times, has also acquired status of Iranian world encyclopedia and countries and civilizations that overlap with it in the Eurasian space.

The results of the research given indicate the fact that linguistic phenomena studies of Tadjik classical period development provide a real phase in the process of cultural enrichment of peoples in the Eurasian space with interesting materials from ethnology and linguistics perspectives. This factor may provide a useful exchange of mental and material richness between neighboring peoples, interaction in the sphere of culture and religion at the intersection of Iranian, Chinese, Turkic and Slavic civilizations, and should be considered very important at this complicated stage of political and socio-cultural relations organization all over the world.

As it has been mentioned before, Khotan and Xinjiang are of great significance for developing of cultural and historical and religious intersection of Chinese, Iranian and other civilizations.

## Conclusions

The origin of the following proper names needs to be examined as well: ‘Shahd’, ‘Sapejob’, ‘Sind’, ‘Mochin’, ‘Shigni’, ‘Vast / Bast’, ‘Chingish’, ‘Chayon’i, ‘Bahr’, ‘Barbar’, ‘Kashon(i)’ and others.

Connection of the following proper names to China should also be established in further studies: ‘Manshur’ (the mane of the ruler and commander); ‘Shahd’, ‘Sapejob’, ‘Sind,’ ‘Mochin’, ‘Shigni’, ‘Vast / Bast’, ‘Chingish’, ‘Chayoni’, ‘Bahr’, ‘Barbar’, ‘Kashon(i)’ and others.

As a result, there is a huge space-time knowledge layer and materials revealing interaction and contacts of Tadjik people and other nationalities which provide detailed information about our ancestors’ life, their society on a single ancient space, the research which gives us the rich diversity of information and makes it possible to identify ethno-, linguistic and cultural peculiarities of their life in the diachronic aspect.

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