

THE MONGOL-TUNGUS CONNECTIONS*

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Ramstedt, Poppe and other ingenious founders of Altaistics as a field of science discovered a large amount of sound laws valuable to this date. Because of the scarcity of materials an investigation of these languages employing methods of linguistic geography has not been possible so far. Due to the efforts of scholars like Vasilevič, Cincius, Novikova and others, such a research is now feasible. This article can be considered an abstract of my book, *Mongolo-Tungusica*, a study of the linguistic geography of the Mongolian and Tungus languages (combined with statistics).

0. The question whether the languages of the Turks, Mongols, Tungus, Koreans, Japanese, Samoyeds, Fins, Ugrians, Yukagirs and some other peoples are related is controversial; my experience in this broad field is limited to the languages of the three first-mentioned nations. Therefore, I want to content myself with an investigation of the Mongol-Tungus connections. However, some methodological and general insights may be drawn even from this small attempt. Every science has an Alpha and an Omega; the Alpha is 'I don't know,' and the Omega is 'I've been wrong.' Therefore, the future may show whether this description of mine is useful or part of the enormous rubbish which scholars have always produced.

My method differs from Ramstedt's. We must be grateful to the ingenious founder of *Altaistics as science* for his discovering so many sound laws which are valid to this date. On the other hand, at Ramstedt's time vast Siberian linguistic territories were still white spots on the map; thus linguistic geography, especially in Tungusology, was hardly possible until quite recently. It was not until the meritorious investigations of such scholars as Vasilevič, Sunik, Cincius, Novikova, Poppe, Ikegami, Hiu Lie and others that a basic change in this respect can be stated. My method will be that of linguistic geography, combined with statistics.

1. My first question is: Do Mongolian words exist which can be found only in *some* Tungus areas, but which are lacking in others; is it possible to ascertain basic areas of Mongol-Tungus contacts?

I found three basic areas. Each of these areas contains a particular amount of Mongolian words which only partially converges with the amounts of the

* I wish to thank the Language Research Institute, Seoul National University, for their kindness in editing this article. I also would like to add that a book of mine dealing with this subject has just been published: *Mongolo-Tungusica*, Otto Harrassowitz: Wiesbaden, 1985.

respective other two areas but shows many specific expressions characteristic for only one area. The three basic areas are these:

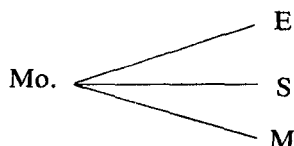
a) Eastern Evenki (E). This is the territory reaching from some dialects of the Upper Lena to the Okhotsk ocean and Sakhalin. Here is an example: *činaka* 'scoop' < Mo. **sinaka*, appearing only in E, lacking in the two other areas.

b) Evenki of Manchuria, with Solon as its main representative (S). Mo. *saya-* 'to milk,' e.g., is found only in S, and in no other basic area.

c) The third area is Manchu-Jurchen (M). The Mo. word *araya* 'eye-tooth,' e.g., occurs in M as *argan*, but is found neither in S, nor in E.

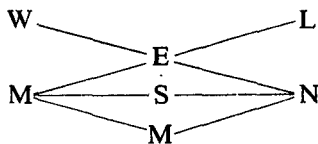
By the way, the vocabularies of E and S are relatively close to each other and show only a few diverging forms. M, however, deviates enormously.

As a first result, we may draw this scheme:



We call E, S, M "the autonomous areas."

2. The situation is different in Western Evenki (dialects of the left and—still more—right tributaries of the Yenissey, above all the two Tunguskas, W). When a word occurs in W it is always found in E, too—but there are many words in E which are not found in W. This means that words common to W and E either form a vocabulary belonging to a previous age, whereas younger Mo. loanwords have entered only E but did not reach W, or that these common words reached W via E, or that both solutions are possible, side by side. Also, Mongolian words to be found in Lamut (L) always appear in E, as well. The most sophisticated situation is that of the Nanay-Udehe group (N). Its Mongolian words partially coincide with those of E (e.g., Nanay *keltē-* 'to cut off' = E *kelte-* = Mo. *keltele-*), partially with those of S (e.g., Ulcha *bulti* 'all' = S *bultu* = Mo. *bultu*), and partially with those of M (e.g., Ulcha *gasan* 'village' = M *gašan* = Mo. *gačaya*). We shall call W, L, N "the dependent areas." The Mo. vocabulary entered them only in an indirect way. We may complete our scheme, as follows:



Here is a statistic. I ascertained 609 Mo. words appearing in at least two areas. The number of Mo. words in the respective Tungus areas is as follows:

M	=	482	
S	=	458	
E	=	450	(this means that the autonomous areas are numerically strongest)
N	=	324	
W	=	182	
L	=	128	

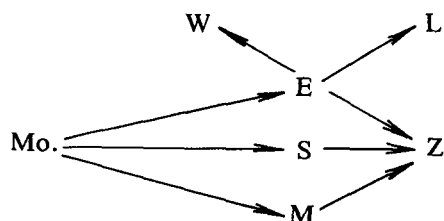
3. A word may appear in all six areas. In geographical order this would mean a combination WESMNL. I determined 57 words of this type. But a Mo. word may also be found in only five areas, e.g., WESMN, or in four, e.g., ESMN, down to two areas, e.g., SM. All these combinations show their own specific characters. Behind the statistics, won from the evaluation of the combinations, the history of Mongol-Tungus contacts is hidden. Finally, when summarizing all these combinations we may draw from them our inferences about Tungus history and prehistory. These inferences have been won on a statistic basis but they enable us to make qualitative assertions.

In order to do that we have to find out whether several age layers of Mo. words in Tungus exist. This question can be answered positively. Here is an example from M. In M, proto-Tungus *k- has become x- and *-rg- has become -j-. Therefore, it is obvious that such a word as M *kargama* 'saddle-cloth' = Mo. *qargam* must be a recent loanword. On the other hand, *xuju-* 'to blow bellows' = Mo. *köyerge* 'bellows' belongs to an old layer, the Mo. word is treated just as proto-Tungus words. But what about M *xargi* 'rapids' = Mo. *qargi*? This word cannot be ancient—in this case it ought to have developed to **xaji-*, nor can it be a quite recent loanword, because in that case we should expect **kargi*. Thus it belongs to an intermediary layer, in which the sound transition *rg->-j- was already past, whereas proto-Tungus *k was still k-, not yet x-. Reflections of a similar type result in four Mo. layers in M. The same holds true for E and S.

The oldest layer, which one might eventually claim as proof for a Mo.-Tu. relationship, contains only 50 words (most of them typical cultural loanwords, such as 'bellows'). For this reason we are compelled to reject the relationship thesis as unlikely and to prefer an explanation of Mo.-Tu. common elements by contacts. Another method which also results in about 50 old elements is the so called *ü test.¹

¹ The ü test is based on the fact that only three correspondences Mo. ü = E/W/S i are found. According to the law of probabilities (*ü constitutes about a sixteenth to a seventeenth of the respective vocabularies) the number of the layer of oldest contacts results in about 50 words—an amount much too small for proving relationship.

All this means that we may complete our scheme as follows:



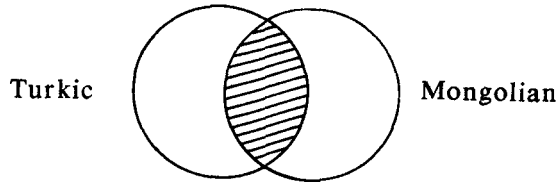
4. The question arises: Are the different Mo. age layers in Tungus identical, or partially identical to different layers of Mongolian dialects? I think we may give a positive answer. It can be demonstrated that in M, S and a very old layer of E the loanwords show features resembling modern Dagur, and in later epochs such which are identical to Dagur. Here are some examples:

Meaning	Common Mo.	Dagur Mo.	Tungus	Feature
'plough'	<i>anĵa/usun</i>	<i>anĵu</i>	M <i>anĵa</i>	- <i>sun</i> lacking
'Venus'	<i>čolbon</i>	<i>čolpon</i>	S <i>čolpon</i>	-p- after consonants preserved
'hare'	<i>taulai</i>	* <i>taula</i> (<i>tawl</i>)	S <i>taola</i>	no -i̇

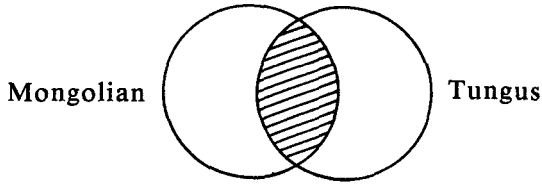
5. Another problem, leading us still deeper into the history of Altaic contacts is the representation of Turkic words in Tungus. As I said, we find 609 Mo. words which are documented in at least two Tungus areas; 177 of them are common both to Turkic and Mongolian; and this means that they belong to all three Altaic languages: Turkic, Mongolian and Tungus. Here are the results of my investigations on this subject:

a) Turkic and Mo. very often differ either in the form or in the meaning of their words. Turkic **hāla* 'coloured,' e.g., is = Mo. *alag*, where the Mo. word shows an additional -g; as an example of a semantic deviation I may allege Turkic *and* 'oath' = Mo. *anda* 'sworn brother.' How does Tungus behave here? I found 94 essential (formal or semantic) deviations between Turkic and Mo., i.e., 53%. In all, I repeat *all*, cases Tungus agrees with Mo. This cannot be a mere accident. I feel that the explanation is justified that Turkic loanwords always entered Tu. via Mongolian.

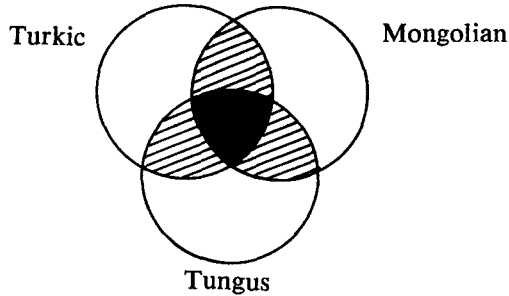
b) There are several hundred Mo.-Tu. comparisons (which belong to more than one area); there are also several hundred Turkic-Mo. comparisons. Here we realize clear causal contacts. But there are only 9 plausible (which does not mean: pertinent) Turkic-Tu. comparisons (with the exclusion of Mongolian), namely such comparisons as Turkic *āč* 'hungry' = Evenki *āč'in* 'lack, non-existent.' It is evident that the 9 examples may easily be explained as a mere accident, as cases comparable to Greek *pente* '5' = Jemez (Rio Grande) *pentō*. This means that we find a Turkic-Mongolian overlap:



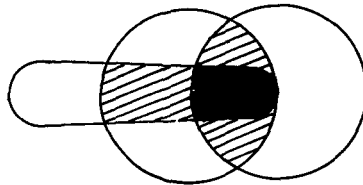
And we find a Mongol-Tungus overlap:



But we find no Turkic-Tungus overlap. This means, however, the total relation Turkic-Mongolian-Tungus is not that of related languages:



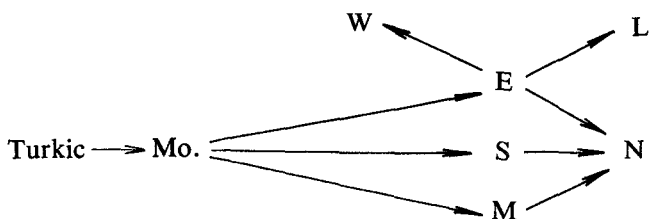
But it is such:



This fact tends to the same explanation as a): Words which are common to Turkic, Mongolian and Tungus have always entered Tungus via Mongolian.

c) By a detailed investigation of the combinations and their statistics it can be proven that an oldest layer of Mo. words in Tungus exists, one which has entered the Tungus original homestead Manchuria, i.e., a territory in which

E, S and M were closely adjacent. *This oldest layer of Mo. words contains no Turkic loanwords.* In other words, the Mongols had at that time no contacts with the Turks. It is only in a later period that Turkic loanwords are found. Consequently we may definitely complete our scheme:



6. Now I want to describe my opinion concerning the historical development of the Turkic-Mongolian-Tungus contacts.

Nowadays, Soviet scholars suppose that the Tungus "Urheimat" is Manchuria and a certain region west of it. This thesis is corroborated by the following facts:

a) Anthropological facts. The Yenisey territory is mostly occupied by the so-called Katanga type. But the genuine Tungus type—which is characteristic for all other Tungus, either in pure form or as an essential basis—is the Baikal type. This one is found much further eastward. The Yenisey territory cannot be the original Tungus homestead, but it may be pre-Samoyedic.

b) The river names in the Yenisey region contain many foreign non-Tungus elements. It is well-known that river names very often preserve archaic extinguished linguistic elements.

c) The material culture of the Tungus can be divided, according to Levin's and Potapov's investigations, into these areas: (1) Yenisey area (anthropologically corresponding to the Katanga type, linguistically to W), (2) a vast territory from Baikal to Sakhalin (anthropologically corresponding to the Baikal type, linguistically to E), which in many cases covers the territory of the Lamut, as well. This ethnological area presumably represents, at least in many cases, the original Tungus culture (as, e.g., is proven by the similarity of Evenki and Manchu cradles) (3) Still another territory (Amur region) corresponds anthropologically to a mixed Baikal-Amur type population and linguistically to N. This ethnological-anthropological mixture is due to the Gilyak substratum.

d) Okladnikov has recovered several archaeological provinces which we may interpret as substrata of the modern Tungus populations. A striking fact is that a skull found at the Šilka (close to Manchuria) corresponds to the Baikal type, whereas the skull finds in the Baikal area are rather pre-Samoyedic. In this respect the anthropological term Baikal type is inadequate, and it ought to be

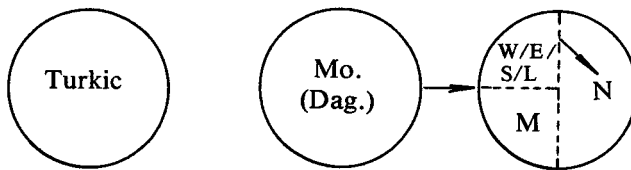
replaced by another term, e.g., Tungusid type.

e) Last, but not least, the Manchu tribal tradition, which asserts the original homestead of the Manchu to have been at the Changbaishan, ought to be taken seriously.

According to Tugolukov, Evenki history has run as follows: In the Chinese sources (Hou-han shu, remainders of Wei-shu) the U-wan 烏丸 are mentioned. In the third century the U-wan were defeated by Tsao-Tsao and expelled from southern Manchuria. U-wan is nothing else but Ewen, the self-designation of Evenkis, Solons and Evens, i.e., Lamuts. At this time they were still horse-breeders. It is in the 5-7 centuries that they occur again in the Chinese sources, but now more westward: in the Transbaikal region and as reindeer breeders. Under the pressure of the Jurchen (1125) and later on of the Mongols, some of the U-wan tribes moved northwest (Yenissey region) and north-east (Okhotsk and Lamut territory). Here they assimilated several substrata (Katanga type, Chukchee, etc.), at least in a linguistical respect. This description agrees with the anthropological, ethnological and archaeological facts, and it suits very well the results won by us by a linguistic investigation.

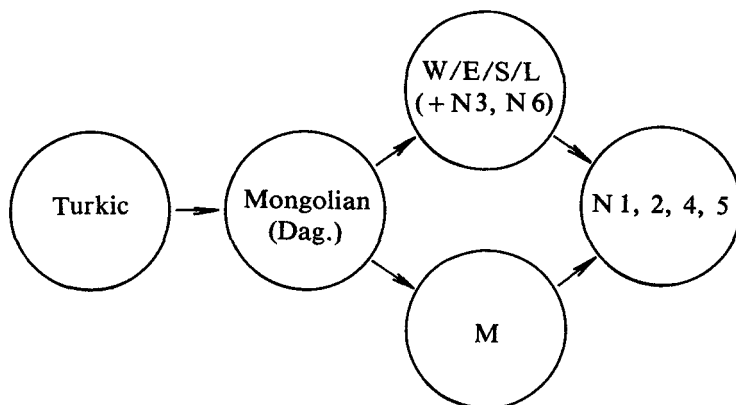
7. Finally I wish to present a description of the development of Turkic-Mongolian-Tungus contacts:

First period. No contacts between Turks and Mongols have occurred. The Tungus still form a rather tight linguistic community (surely with some slight dialectical differences). The Mongolian words which entered Tungus resemble modern Dagur, at least in some respects, and they are "Daguroid." The prestige of N is spoken at the eastern border and gets its Mongolian loanwords via WESL. To give a scheme:



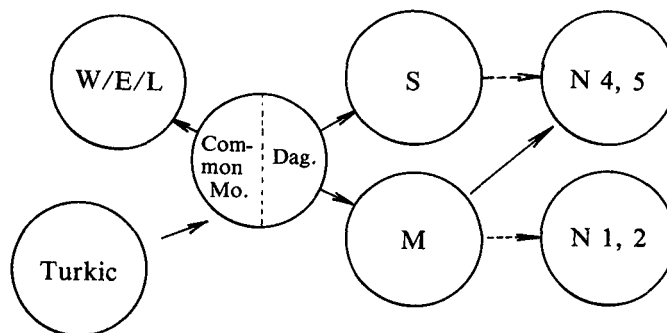
This is the oldest layer of Mongolian loanwords. Its time is indeterminable.

Second period. The Mongols have come into contact with the Turks. The Mongolian loanwords in Tungus continue to be Daguroid. Three Tungus groups have developed. WESL still form one group, but are in contrast to M. These groups get both archaic Mo. loanwords, independently from each other. The ancestors of the modern Orok (N 6) and Kili (N 3) still belong to WESL. N gets loanwords both from M and from W/E/S/L. Here is the scheme:



Time: Up to the third century A.D.

Third period. The Uwan/Ewen move westward. The ancestors of W/E/L thus separate from S. The ancestors of S remain in their original home-country of Manchuria (at the Nonni, etc.). In the new territory W/E/L gets common Mongolian (non-Daguroid, non-Dagur) loanwords. The separation into three autonomous areas has started. The Daguroid/Dagur layer keeps on influencing only S and M. A Nanay invasion interrupts the direct contact between S and N 1, 2 (Udehe-Oroch). N 1, 2 separates widely from N 4, 5 (Nanay-Ulcha). M influences N, particularly N 4, 5. The Solon influence on N 4, 5 is only small. Here is the scheme:



The fourth period reaches to our time. In relation to period 3 we state the following changes:

a) The older Turkic influence has stopped (since the Turks have left Mongolia). But we find a strong Yakut influence on W, E, L (whereas the Evenki impact in Yakut is much smaller).

b) W and L have become particular units, L strongly differentiated from E, this fact being at least partly due to the Yakut invasion. W separates from E only slightly (by the influence of the pre-Tungus substratum).

c) Oroks and Kilis have been nanaicized—but their original Evenki origin is very obvious in anthropological and ethnological respects, in smaller traces (but more in Kili) also in a linguistical respect.

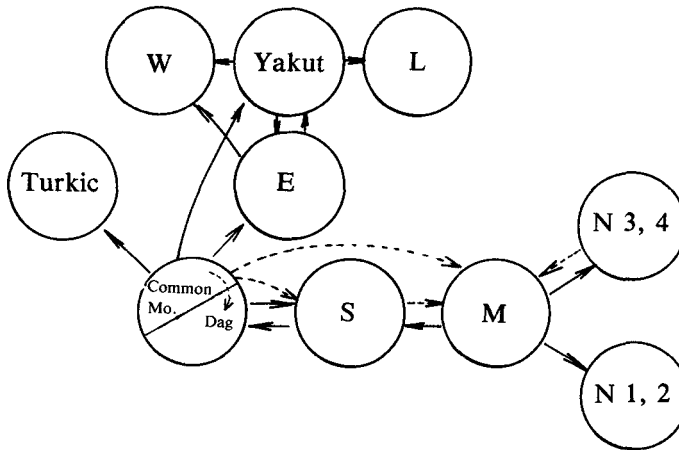
d) Loanwords of Common Mongolian enter Dagur, Solon, Manchu.

e) Due to their seizure of power the Manchu influence S and N quite enormously, but only few S and N terms enter M.

f) Numerous Tungus loanwords enter Mo. (in former periods these were only few), and many loanwords are exchanged amongst the Tungus themselves.

g) Mo. exerts a strong influence upon Turkic (this influence was rather small in former periods, I have not registered it in the other schemes).

Time: 12 century up to our time. To be sure, this period may still be subdivided: the Yakut influence is rather late, the strong M impact is still later. Here is the scheme:



8. I feel that the time has come to replace the theory of Altaic relationships by a many-coloured and vivid picture of historical contacts. Facing this situation, the question arises: In case Korean is not an isolated language—to which of the Altaic languages may it be related with the relatively highest measure of probability? The nearest geographic area is that of the Tungus. The Changbaishan, original home-country of the Manchu, is, as you know, the frontier mountain between Manchuria and Korea. But I do not wish to involve myself in this question, since it is a purely Korean matter. This is not my field.

I have only been able to draw some general lines. May I ask you to read attentively my book *Mongolo-Tungusica*, which has just been published and

to check it critically. Much that I have written may turn out to be wrong by future investigation. However, sometimes it may be useful to confront new problems and to look at old problems anew.

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