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Ch'ing i 清議 and Hsiang lun 詜論
by Shigeaki Ochi

Under the Chin Dynasty, 265–420 A.D., the Chinese term ch'ing i, 清議, literally 'unadulterated deliberation', came to have a specific institutional meaning of 'proper punishment meted out on a gentleman bureaucrat on the basis of hsiang lun, 詜論, literally "neighborhood judgment", that was proper public opinion among landed gentry in his home country. In actuality such social sanction was carried out by the ta chung chéng 大中正 who, consulting opinion of the upper-class gentry of the province of his jurisdiction, degraded or deprived the bureaucrat of the hsiang pin 詜品 or 'country grade'. Behind such institution was the Saû ma Family's need to retain support of the gentry bureaucracy to the dynasty, as the family had gained power by posing as champion of the then powerful landed gentry. As the autonomous function of the gentry gradually fell apart under successive dynasties, relative authority of the emperors increased, and the ch'ing i punishments became subject to the imperial amnesties at the time of accession, until finally under the Ch'în Dynasty, 557–589 A.D., the right of inflicting such punishments fell into the hand of the emperor.

On some Passages in a Memorial presented to Yang-ti of the Sui Dynasty by Chi’i-min-qâyan.

by Masao Mori

The present writer points out that some passages in a memorial presented to Yang-ti by Chi’i-min-qâyan in 607 bear striking similarity to the T’u-chüeh inscriptions as regards to their phraseology, and concludes that the Chinese texts are translations from the Turkic (T’u-chüeh).

1) In the memorial, we read: “Among the populace of T’u-chüeh, those who did not die came together again and became the populace.”
Such expression is not common in Chinese. On the other hand, in the inscriptions are found the following examples: “il ymä il bolq, budun ymä budun bolq. (The state also became the state. The populace also became the populace).”, “išikagmä išikdi, budun bolq. oğlümä olti. (Those who surrendered surrended and became the populace. Those who died died.)”, “ida tašda qalmış qurbanip yiti yüzd bolq. (Those who remained at wood and stone (?) came together and made seven hundred.)”, etc. The above-quoted passage in the memorial may be reflections from such a Turkic expression as: “ölüngüm olti, and a qalmış qurbanip budun bolq.”

2) We read in the memorial: (A) “Your Majesty the Emperor……grasping the four directions of the whole country, took the seat (of the Emperor)”, and (B) “The Sage, the preceding Emperor…..let me take the seat as the Great Qayan.” In these passages, any accession to a throne is expressed by the word “sat (to sit down, to take a seat)”. This word “sat” coincides with the Turkic word “olor- (to sit down, to take a seat)” which means “to accede to a throne”. The Turkic expression “özümün ol tüşri qayan olurtı ariñch (That Heaven had let me take the seat as the Qayan)” may be prototype of the above-cited Chinese passage (B). Moreover, in the inscriptions there are such expressions as “tört buluqdaqi budunuy qop almış (He grasped the whole people in the four angles (directions))”, etc. We may assume this Turkic expression to be prototype of the Chinese phrase, “grasping the four directions of the whole country”.

3) Ch’il-min-qa yan expresses his gratitude to Yang-ti that the preceding Emperor and Yang-ti nourished and revived (wǎ shè) himself and the populace of T’u-ch’ueh. In the inscriptions, the deeds of “igid-” and “tirgur-” of qa yans and tigin are highly praised. The word “tirgur-” means “to revive, to restore”. The word “igid-” in the inscriptions have been translated as “to raise, to elevate, to restore”. But, this word means “to nourish, to educate, to bring up, to cultivate” originally. Thus, the Turkic “igid-” and “tirgur-” coincide with the Chinese expression “nourish and revive” in the memorial.

4) In the memorial is a passage saying: “When I looked up, I saw only Heaven. When I looked down, I saw only Earth.” It is not improbable that such view of the world was introduced from China. But, as is seen in the inscriptions and other Chinese sources, T’u-ch’ueh worshipped Heaven, Earth and Water originally. Moreover, there are such expressions in the inscriptions as follows: “üzäß kük tärä, asra yayış yir (the blue Heaven over (us) and the black Earth under (us))”, “üzäß tärä asra yir (Heaven over (us) and Earth under (us))”, etc. In the light of such expressions, one feels that the above-cited Chinese passage must have been composed under Turkic influence.