

## A Mongolian word in Hungarian Hungarian *bóda* [bōda] 'handle of different arms'

There does exist a long discussion on possible Mongolian loanwords in Hungarian. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, scholars as G. Bálint (1877), B. Munkácsi (1901) and others tried to find out that words with similar forms and meaning in Hungarian and in Mongolian are related or are borrowed, and if borrowed, are they directly copied from Mongolian or borrowed through intermediary languages. The discussion was closed by a very detailed and well argued paper by Ligeti (1935), which unfortunately did not appear in a language other than Hungarian. Ligeti made clear that we cannot suppose direct Mongolian loanwords in Hungarian, but we have to deal with two other groups. There exist a few words which are for phonetic reasons Turkic loanwords in Hungarian, but the word could be hitherto not detected in Turkic, only in Mongolic. To the other group pertain words which are clearly of Mongolic origin and were transmitted to Hungarian through Cuman (*nyögér* 'name of a group of military people in Medieval Hungary', *daku* 'a short fur coat'). In the last decades a few new words enriched both groups. One of them is the words cited in the title.

I am dealing with the word in Róna-Tas – Berta – Károly (2011/1, 136–138) in details; here I give only a brief summary with a few new and additional data. The word first occurs in the Hungarian sources in 1395 in the Wordlist of Königsberg, which excludes the possibility that it would be of immediate Ottoman origin. The Hungarian word is well known in the 15<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is noted in 1430 in the Wordlist of Schlägli, we find it the Transylvanian historical dictionary of A.T. Szabó (1976/1, 978) cited from the year 1584: *bolda* 'Griff, handle'. It lives in several Hungarian dialects in East and South Transdanubia (B. Lőrinczy 1, 504). The word is not present in Old Turkic and appears only in some late Middle Turkic sources: *baldaq* 'anneau auquel le ceinturon du sabre est attaché' (AChag), *balčag* 'konec rukojatki (éfesa) meča' (AChagB), *baldaq* 'der Säbelgriff' (AChagR), *balčag/q* 'hand-guard, hilt (of a sword)' (AChagS 126v: 29), *baldaq* 'Säbelgriff, Stiel' (AChagSSK), *balčaq* 'guard (of a sword)' (AMGh), *balčaq* 'kılıç sapı' (AOtT).

In the modern Turkic languages we find the word in the Northwestern (Kipchak) languages as: *baldak* 'kol'co, kolečko' (Tat), *baldaq* 'kol'co, kolečko (bez kamnja)' (Bashk), *baldak* 'éfes, kostyl', podstavka pod ruku u ohotnikov s

lovčej pticej' (Kirg), *baldaq* 'crutch; (finger)ring' (Kaz), *baldaq* 'kostyl', podstavka' (Kkalp), *baldak* 'rukojatka kinžala' (Nog); in the Southwestern (Oguz) Turkic languages *baldak* 'stebel', *baljak* 'ëfes sabli' (Tkm), *baldak* 'suspensory ring of a sword scabbard or belt' (Tt); and in the Southeastern Turkic languages as: *baldâq* 'gladkoe kol'co (bez kamnja)' (Uzb), *baldaq* 'bar, cross-piece, ladder-peg, step of a ladder' (TurkiJ), *baldaq* 'a mace or truncheon with a wrist-strap' (TurkiSh), *baldaq* 'matica-žend' pod potolkom, gde ženščiny sohranjajut moločnye produkty; verhnjaja polkaperekladina u ljuł'ki; podstavka dlja lovčej pticy' (TurkiL), *baldaq* 'zadvižka, zasov; stupenka' (MUyg). I did not find it in the Northeastern or Siberian languages, but it is present in Yakut where it is an immediate Mongolian loanword: *bartax* ~ *battax* 'poduške u stolbov v domah, na kotoruju kladetsja matica ili perekladina; kostyl', veselka'.

The word occurring in the Turkic sources can be reconstructed as *\*baldag* or *\*baldak*. This cannot be a genuine Turkic word, because there does not exist a Turkic suffix *\*±dag* or *\*±dak*.

The word does exist in Mongolic: *baldag* ~ *bardag* 'knob, hilt of a sword' (Lessing). *baldag* (Khalkha), *baldag* (Kalmuck), *baldag* (Buryat), *baldak* (Ordos), *bardag* (Monguor), etc. everywhere with the special meaning 'hilt of the sword, knob'. It can be morphologically analyzed. In Mongolian we find a deverbal suffix *-dAg* (Poppe 1964: 94), forming in most cases the nomen usus (see *yabudag* 'someone who usually goes' < *yabu-* 'to go'). The suffix also has another function, however: it forms nouns and adjectives denoting something which is like the action as in *mokudag* 'blunt, dull' from *moku-* 'to be blunt etc.', *burgildag* 'stormy' < *burgila-* 'to frequently rise in clouds'. Since Mongolian has both *bardag* and *baldag* with the very specific meaning 'hilt of a sword, knob', we may suppose that the Mongolian word is an inner Mongolian development *baldag* ~ *bardag* < *\*baridag* < *bari-* 'to hold'. It entered the Turkic languages as a term for military weapon.

Also, the distribution of the word in the Turkic languages points to its Mo origin, as was already supposed by Räsänen (1969: 60). The final *-k* in the present north-western and other T languages may be due to two different Mongolian transmissions (Cuman *\*baldag* ← Mongolian *baldag* → Turkic *baldak*). The irregular T *-k* shows that the word was transmitted through a West Mongolian dialect (see Kalmuck *baldäg* 'Griff, Stiel (des Schwertes)') or by a Mongolian language like Ordos (*baldak*).

The Turkic forms with /č/ were originally different words. The Mongolian word *\*bolčagu* is present in several Mongolian languages, as Khalkha *bolcū*, *bulcū*, Buryat *bulsū*, Ordos *bolčaŋ*, *bolčogor*, all with the meaning 'blunt, blunt end of an arrow' from the Mongol verb *\*bolčoyi-*, see Ordos. This Mongolian word has nothing to do with the Turkic forms like *balčak* (in contrary to Starostin – Dybo – Mudrak 2001 134). The Turkic word forms may go back Mongolian *baričaga* '\*grasp' which very early changed its meaning to 'pledge, assurance, guarantee, security' but originally has meant the object 'held by the lender or loaner back as pawn', i.e. what has been seized, grasped (*\*bari-čaga*). Another

possibility is that *\*balčak* is a secondary Turkic form, where the Mongolian suffix *-dag* was replaced by the Turkic diminutive suffix *+čak*, perhaps because the *balčak* was smaller than the *baldag/baldak*.

The semantics of the Mongolian and Hungarian words is also a clear argument of the ultimately Mongolian origin. It was used for several types of handles, used for arms and weapons. It pertained to the vocabulary of the warriors of the 13<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The labialisation of the first vowel before /l/ and the disappearance of the /l/ are Hungarian developments, well documented in other cases. Though it is not noted in the Codex Cumanicus, the Hungarian word was most probably copied from Cuman. As the copied form we can suppose a form like *\*baldaw*, or *\*baldau*.

The rare occasion that this word escaped Ligeti's attention can be perhaps due to the fact, that Gombocz (1912, 213) did not accept the Turkic origin of the word. The origin of the Hungarian word was also obscure for the authors of the newest Hungarian Etymological dictionary (see Benkő 1993–1997/1, 114). Though they cited some Turkic parallels, according to them the word is of unknown origin.

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