

# An Eleventh-Century Turkic Bilingual (Turko-Slavic) Graffito from the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev

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## Contents

- I. Graffito 153
- II. A Linguistic Analysis
- III. The Graffito's Turkic Elements
- IV. The Graffito's Date and Provenance

## I. GRAFFITO 153

Among the 292 medieval and early modern graffiti found in the St. Sophia cathedral in Kiev through 1974, there is one unusual text, graffito 153,<sup>1</sup> which their editor, Serhij Vysoc'kyj, calls "pretty enigmatic" (*dovol'no zagadočnaja nadpis'*).<sup>2</sup>

This graffito was found in the southern outside gallery (first floor), where it was one of several carved on the fresco of St. Onufrius.<sup>3</sup> The inscription was carved in a double-line style, reminiscent of some texts dated from the second half of the eleventh century, such as the "Izbornik Svjatoslava" of 1073 and the "Arxangel'sk Gospel" of 1092.<sup>4</sup> It consists of four lines, of which the first is almost totally illegible, and reads as follows:

1. <sub>5</sub> M[Ѐ ] . . . ϕ . . .

<sup>1</sup> The corpus of the graffiti from the St. Sophia in Kiev was published (in Russian) by Serhij Oleksandrovyč Vysoc'kyj in two books: nos. 1–98 in *Drevnerusskie nadpisi Sofii Kievskoj XI–XIV vv.* (Kiev, 1966), and nos. 99–292 in *Srednevekovye nadpisi Sofii Kievskoj (po materialam graffiti XI–XVII vv.)* (Kiev, 1976). A photograph and graphic reproduction of graffito 153 was published in *Sred Nad*, pp. 330–331 (plates LX–LXI), with Vysoc'kyj's commentary on pp. 63–67; the photograph and graphic reproduction appear here on p. 166. For a list of abbreviations, including abbreviated titles, see p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Vysoc'kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 63. Vysoc'kyj laments that it contains several unknown words, such as бяка, вябу, цю; *ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Vysoc'kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 63, and map, p. 132.

<sup>4</sup> See Karskij, *SKP*, pp. 374, 375, 377; also Vysoc'kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 63.

<sup>5</sup> A monogram which Vysoc'kyj tentatively interprets as a substitute for the Cyrillic letter В; *Sred Nad*, p. 64.

2. ТАТЪКЮШЪ ПОПИНЪ БЪЛОВЪЖЪСЪ
3. КЫЙ ∞<sup>6</sup> БАКАЧУАСИИВАНЪ ЧЮРАБЫБО
4. ЖИС АЛЪ<sup>ТИ</sup> АЛЪТИАЛЪБАБУ ∞

Vysoc'kyj rightly assumes that the sign ∞ divides the inscription into two parts.<sup>7</sup>

For some reason which he does not explain, the editor does not give a reading or translation of the first part. He only discusses the individual words occurring there: ТЯТЪ, or possibly ВТЯТЪ, is a verbal form from ТАТИ 'to cut' ("рубить, сечь, зарубить, рассекать") кюшъ is a personal name; попинъ means "bishop created from the priest"; Бъловъжъсъкый means "from the town of Běla Věža. "Thus," writes Vysoc'kyj, "in the first half of the inscription one speaks about the killed *popinъ* (bishop) named Kjuš (?)."<sup>8</sup>

Vysoc'kyj reads, or interprets, the second part of the inscription as бякя чу, а си Иванъ чю рабы божие ялъ, ти ялъ, ти ялъ вябу.<sup>9</sup> He comments on the individual words as follows:

- бякя — probably a curseword related to Russian бяка 'bad-boy';<sup>10</sup>  
 чю and чу — probably the imperative from чоути 'to feel, hear, be conscious, know' ("чувствовать, ощущать, слышать, знать, сознавать");  
 си — demonstrative pronoun "this" ("этот");  
 ял (алъ) — occurring three times, this is the past tense from the verb яти 'to take' ("взять, брать, схватить");  
 вабу — probably a derivative from вабити "to bait, decay" ("приманивать").

Instead of a translation, Vysoc'kyj gives the following interpretation of the graffito-inscription:

The first half of it [the inscription] possesses all the component elements of a typical epitaph: the abbreviated date of the event and the name of the person

<sup>6</sup> In some Old Rus' manuscripts this sign substitutes for a period. See Karskij, *SKP*, p. 224.

<sup>7</sup> Vysoc'kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 64.

<sup>8</sup> Vysoc'kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 64. In Kievan Rus' in the eleventh to twelfth century the term *popinъ* (in opposition to *popъ* 'priest') seems to have been used to designate the leading prelates of the non-monastic "white" clergy, from among whom bishops were often selected. See Mixail Dmitrievič Priselkov, *Očerki po cerkovno-političeskoj istorii Kievskoj Rusi X–XII vv.* (St. Petersburg, 1913), pp. 324–25.

<sup>9</sup> Vysoc'kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 66.

<sup>10</sup> The modern Russian word *bjaka*, however, is from children's language. See Max Vasmer, *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, vol. 1 (Heidelberg, 1953), p. 160.

killed. Kjuš was probably the name of a church dignitary, called [in the epitaph] “popinъ of Beloveža.” The second part of the inscription is totally unusual. It is an additional note about some tragic events which resulted in the demise of the “popinъ” and the capture of “God’s servants,” due to the cunning of “this Ivan,” whom the inscriber called “bjaka.” The end of the inscription contains a kind of a magic incantation or repentance, in which the phrase “he took” (взял) occurs three times. Most likely the author of the inscription is accusing Ivan of an offense against God and St. Onufrius.<sup>11</sup>

## II. A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

Bohdan Struminsky, not satisfied with Vysoc’kyj’s interpretation, discovered that there is possibly a Turkic “*izāfet* II construct” (/ø/ + /sin/) <sup>12</sup> in line 3: БАКА ЧУА-СИ. Communicating this idea to me, he sparked my interest in this graffito. Soon I was able to confirm Dr. Struminsky’s suspicion that the inscription contains Turkic elements.

In this short text there appear eight Turkic words and/or sentences. The distribution of the Slavic and Turkic elements is remarkable, for whereas the former convey the religious (Christian) context, the latter make up the gist of the text.

Let us look closely at the Turkic elements.

1–2. ТАТЪКЮШЪ. I explain this as a typical Turkic compound designating the personal name of the *popinъ*. The two elements are ТАТЪК, and КЮШЪ. The letter к stands for both the final consonant of ТАТЪК and the initial consonant of КЮШЪ. This dual function is attributable to Old Turkic’s dislike of geminata (in this case, кк).<sup>13</sup>

ТАТЪК is Turkic *tätük* ‘quick-witted, intelligent’. The word (and personal name) is well known from Old Uighur and Middle Turkic texts (Kāšgārī, *Qutadγu Bilig* [= *QB*], *Codex Cumanicus* [*CC*], Chaghatai court literature).<sup>14</sup> It also occurs as the name of a Polovcian

<sup>11</sup> Vysoc’kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 67.

<sup>12</sup> On the Turkic *izāfet* II construct (“possessive compound”), see Robert Underhill, *Turkish Grammar* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 93–96; Ludwig Peters, *Grammatik der türkischen Sprache* (Berlin, 1947), pp. 31–35; Kononov, *Grammatika*, pp. 411–13. See also the monograph by Salij Sergeevič Majzel’, *Izafet v tureckom jazyke* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1957), especially pp. 30–43.

<sup>13</sup> See Omeljan Pritsak, “Das Altürkische,” in *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, ser. 1, vol. 5, pt. 1, 2nd ed. (Leiden/Cologne, 1982), p. 33.

<sup>14</sup> Two forms of the name existed: *tätük* and *tätüg*. See Räsänen, *EtWb*, p. 476; Clauson, *EtDicTurk*, p. 455; Nadelaev, *DrTjurSl*, p. 556.

leader in the year 1185: тѣтий *Tětij*.<sup>15</sup> Old Uighur *tädük* and Chaghatai *täyik* ~ *tätük* suggest that here we have the participial form in /duk/ of the verbal root \*tät-, i.e., \*tät-dük > *tätük* > *tätik* (cf., e.g., CC, Ottoman *tetik*). The word occurs with personal names, e.g., CC *tetik Salomon* ‘the wise Solomon’.<sup>16</sup>

The -ю- in кюшъ indicates that this word is a front syllabic. One can assume that -шъ reflects the final -č, following the older (pre-Ottoman) pattern of texts in Arabic script, where the letter ش stands for /č/, a phoneme that does not exist in the Arabic language.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, the possibility that -шъ reflects the “Kazakh” development (-č > -š) seems to be very remote.<sup>18</sup> *Küč* (literally “strength”) is well attested as a personal name in the Turkic languages, beginning with the Old Turkic and Old Uighur texts, e.g., *Küč Kül*, *Küč Temür*, *Qilič Küč*.<sup>19</sup> It also appears in Rus’ in 1147 as the first component of a Polovcian clan name.<sup>20</sup>

3. БАКА. А in БАКА stands for two front wide vowels: palatal /ä/ and labial /ö/. Hence БАКА renders Turkic *bökä* (which occurs as an appellative meaning “strong warrior, athlete; big snake”) and as a personal name, e.g., *Käšgārī Bökä Budrač*.<sup>21</sup> *Bökä* can also

<sup>15</sup> Тѣтий appears in the Laurentian Chronicle; see *Lavrent’evskaja letopis’*, ed. E. F. Karskij, *PSRL*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Leningrad, 1927) col. 396. This typical Polovcian (Qipčaq) form, with the development -üg > -ij, has been recognized by Ananiasz Zajączkowski in his *Związki językowe*, p. 35.

<sup>16</sup> Kaare Grønbech, *Komanisches Wörterbuch: Türkischer Wortindex zu Codex Cumanicus* (Copenhagen, 1942), p. 243.

<sup>17</sup> On this usage see Norman Golb and Omeljan Pritsak, *Khazarian Hebrew Documents of the Tenth Century* (Ithaca, New York, 1982), p. 128.

<sup>18</sup> I propose the following hypothesis instead: the Turkic designation for *popinъ* was probably a word beginning with a *k/q*, most likely *qoža* (literally, “lord” < Persian), as in the Codex Cumanicus (= *dominus*); see K. Grønbech, ed., *Codex Cumanicus: Cod. Marc. Lat. DXLIX in Faksimile* (Copenhagen, 1936), fol. 45v, l. 17. In that case, the *čq-* of \**küč qoža* would automatically result in a *sandhi* development (-šq-: *küšqoža*), since *č* before *k/q* and *t* is always *š* (see, e.g., Räsänen, *MLTS*, pp. 182–83). This would then extend to *popinъ* — a substitute for *qoža*; hence \**küš-qoža* = *küš-popinъ*.

<sup>19</sup> For examples, see Räsänen, *EtWb*, p. 306; Clauson, *EtDicTurk*, p. 693; and Nadeljaev, *DrTjurkSl*, pp. 322–23.

<sup>20</sup> *Ipa’evskaja letopis’*, ed. Aleksej Aleksandrovič Šaxmatov [= *PSRL*, vol. 2, 2nd ed. (St. Petersburg, 1908)], col. 342; Соудимира Коучебича. The “family name” \*Коучебич- is in reality a clan name; ёба represents Polovcian *oba* ‘clan; tribe’ (see fn. 22), and коуч- stands for *küč*, which is under discussion.

<sup>21</sup> *Käšgārī, Dīwān luġāt at-Turk*, facsimile ed. by Besim Atalay (Ankara, 1941), p. 545, l. 15. On *bökä*, see Räsänen, *EtWb*, p. 83; Clauson, *EtDicTurk*, p. 324; and Ėrvand Vladimirovič Sevortjan, *Ėtimologičeskij slovar’ tjurkskix jazykov*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1978), pp. 211–12.

be detected in the name of a Polovcian clan, mentioned in the Hypatian Chronicle under the year 1180.<sup>22</sup>

4. чyаси. This should be analyzed as чyа, with the third-person possessive suffix (“article” /sin/). Remarkably, here /i/ is still front, since in Slavic it is rendered by *u* and not by *ы*; чyа stands for \*čōya [čofia]. There was no Slavic sign for the glottal spirant [ɦ], an allophon of the uvular spirant [ɣ],<sup>23</sup> for which in Slavic the letter *г* (*g*) was used (see below чара); therefore the consonant remained unrepresented.

The etymon is Turkic čōya ‘child’, which is probably related to another Turkic word, čāya ‘infant’.

čōya is attested in Chaghatay<sup>24</sup> and in the Ottoman dialects:<sup>25</sup> the form čāya is known in the Chaghatai, Turkmen, and all Ottoman dialects.<sup>26</sup> *The Secret History of the Mongols (Manghol un niuca tobca’an/Yüan-ch’ao pi-shi*, ca. A.D. 1240), written in Mongolian, has the word in the form caḥa ‘child’.<sup>27</sup> It was known in Rus’ from at least ca. 1200, since it occurs as чара čaga in the *Igor’ Tale*, but with the specific meaning “girl-slave.”<sup>28</sup>

The spelling чyа reflects the original \*čōfia; Slavic /u/ was selected for the Turkic half-closed /ō/, since Slavic /o/ was half-open. See also čor spelled as чюр čjur on p. 157. In our graffito the word čō[ɦ]asi appears with the meaning “son of,” that is, it replaces the usual word oyl (oyl-i).<sup>29</sup> This is the only instance of such replacement known to me.

<sup>22</sup> *PSRL*, vol. 2, 2nd ed., col. 623. The name occurs in the accusative: бaкoбoй. In this form \*-oba is *oba*, the Polovcian designation for “clan, tribe”; see Zajączkowski, *Związki językowe*, pp. 38–40. The first component was \*бaкa, but the final -a dropped because the following word had the initial vowel *o-* (*o-ba*). On this syncope see, e.g., Ottoman *ne ücün > niçün* ‘why?’, and Kirghiz *kara at > karat* ‘black horse’; see also Räsänen, *MLTS*, p. 56.

<sup>23</sup> On the Turkic glottal spirant [ɦ] see, e.g., Kononov, *Grammatika*, pp. 30–31. I prefer not to suspect the northwest (Karachay-Balkar) development (*-oya > -u’a/-ua-*) here; see O. Pritsak, “Das Karatschaische und Balkarische,” in *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden, 1959), p. 351.

<sup>24</sup> See Lazar’ Budagov, *Sravnitel’nyj slovar’ turecko-tatarskix narečij* (St. Petersburg, 1869; reprinted Moscow, 1960), p. 495, s.v. čwy’, čwyh ‘cub, whelp’; Radloff, *Wb*, vol. 3, col. 2012, id.

<sup>25</sup> *Derleme 3* (1968): 995.

<sup>26</sup> Räsänen, *EtWb*, pp. 92 and 113 (s.v. čočuk), and *Derleme 3*: 1033.

<sup>27</sup> *Yüan-ch’ao pi-shi*, ed. Ye Teh-hui (1908), §68.

<sup>28</sup> See Karl Heinrich Menges, *The Oriental Elements in the Vocabulary of . . . the Igor’ Tale* (New York, 1951), p. 64.

<sup>29</sup> On the formula *oyl-i*, see O. Pritsak, “Bolgaro-Tschuwashica,” *UAIb 31* (1959): 309.

4. чюр. Like the simplification of the geminata *-k* (Tätü-*k*) + *k* (*Küč*) to *k*, the two *r*'s (*čo-r* + *r*-aby) were streamlined to only one *p* (*r*).

*Čör*,<sup>30</sup> also spelled *čör-in*,<sup>31</sup> is a Turkic title for a military commander. It is known in the original documents from Old Turkic times (e.g., *Kül Čör*, *Tadiq Čör*, *Tarduš Inanču Čör*).<sup>32</sup> *Čör* is found in the work *De administrando imperio* by Constantine Porphyrogenitus (ca. 948) as a high Pečeneg title Κουαρτζι τζουρ.<sup>33</sup> The title *čör* (also *čörin*) occurs in two Poros'sja Černye Klobuki place-names of 1190.<sup>34</sup> In late Old Russian the title appears in the "Nikon Chronicle" (under the year 1526); interestingly enough, there, as in our graffito, it is spelled with ю: чюра.<sup>35</sup> Originally the word

<sup>30</sup> As the transcriptions into Tibetan and Khotanese show, the vowel in the word was /ō/; see Sir Harold Bailey, "Turks in Khotanese Texts," *JRAS* 1939, p. 91, and Clauson, *EtDicTurk*, pp. 427–28. The word had a doublet with the suffix *-a*; *čōra*, but the date it emerged is unknown.

<sup>31</sup> Attested in Naršaxī's *Ta'rix i Buxārā*, ed. Redawī (Teheran, 1317 [1939]), p. 6, قرا چورين *Qara čörin*, as the title of a member of the Old Turkic dynasty. On the suffix /in/, see O. Pritsak, "Tschuwaschische Pluralsuffixe," in *Studia Altaica: Festschrift für Nikolaus Poppe* (Wiesbaden, 1957), pp. 148–49.

<sup>32</sup> See Clauson, *EtDicTurk*, pp. 427–28; Nadelaev, *DrTjurkSl*, p. 157 (s.v. *čur*).

<sup>33</sup> *De administrando imperio*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik (Budapest, 1949), pp. 166, 168.

<sup>34</sup> According to the Hypatian Chronicle, the two towns, apparently named after their respective military leaders, were situated in the basin of the river Ros' (south of Kiev), where the Kievan rulers had settled military colonists called "Black Hoods" (Černye Klobuki), chosen mainly from among the allied Torki-Turks. One town was Кульдюрево (*PSRL*, vol. 2, 2nd ed., col. 672), which is clearly a Slavic derivation (*-ev-ol-ov-o*) from the very well attested Turkic title *Kül čör*; -дю- (instead of -чю-) indicates that in this case, the sequence *l-č* developed (because of *sandhi*) into *-lž-*. On *-evol-ovo* derivations, see Max Vasmer, *Schriften zur slavischen Altertumskunde und Namenkunde*, ed. Herbert Bräuer, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1971), pp. 353–54. The second town was named Чюрнаевъ (*PSRL*, vol. 2, 2nd ed., col. 669); apart from the Slavic suffix (*-ev-ъ*; see above), the Turkic elements are the stem *čörin* (a variant of *čör*, discussed above) and the "vocative" element /a/ ~ /aj/; see Annemarie von Gabain, *Alttürkische Grammatik*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1950), pp. 154, 343, and M. Räsänen, *Materialien zur Morphologie der türkischen Sprachen* (Helsinki, 1957), p. 56. Due to "Mittelsilbenschwund" (see v. Gabain, *ibid.*, pp. 43–44, 47), \**čörinaj* developed into *čörnaj*.

On the localization of these two towns, see Barsov, *MIGSR*, pp. 215 and 12. The existence and usage of the title *čör* ~ *čörin* among the Černye klobuki is of importance to the interpretation of our Kievan bilingua, where the title *čör* also appears.

<sup>35</sup> *PSRL*, vol. 13, ed. Sergej Fedorovič Platonov (St. Petersburg, 1904; reprinted Moscow, 1965), p. 45 and *passim*.

probably corresponded to the usage in Kirgiz epic, where *čoro* (< *čōra*) means “member of the prince’s retinue.”<sup>36</sup>

5. АЛЪТИ. Here, as in the case of the first syllable vowel in the word БАКА, the letter А stands for /ö/. The word is Turkic *ölti* ‘he died’, from *öl-* ‘to die’.<sup>37</sup> Interestingly enough, the *-d* at the beginning of the suffix of the definite past tense *-di-* follows the development known from Old Turkic inscriptions; where */d-/* before *r, l, n* became */t/*.<sup>38</sup> The repetition of *ölti* is understandable: since the graffito names two persons (one in each part), it repeats the formula “he died.”

6. АЛЪБА. The occurrence of this word in the graffito is of special interest for Turkology. The only correspondent form known to me is Wilhelm Radloff’s notation Teleut *älbi*, from the northeastern territories of the Turkic world. According to Radloff, the word means “die Kraft, die einem Heilmittel, einem Gebete innewohnt.”<sup>39</sup> But the word and its meaning have better documentation in Mongolian. The *Secret History of the Mongols* contains the word *elbesün* (*/sün/* is the suffix of *nomen unitatis*), which in Chinese is translated as 禱 神 *ch’i-tao* ‘prayer’.<sup>40</sup> From the stem *\*elbe-n-*, the verb *elberi-* ‘to respect or honor parents or elders’<sup>41</sup> was constructed in Mongolian (it also occurs in Modern Mongolian); and from the latter came the noun *elberil* ‘veneration, respect, filial piety’ (in Chinese *hsiao*).<sup>42</sup> On this basis, it is possible to establish the Old and Middle Turkic word *\*älbä*, with the meaning “(filial) respectful, memorial.”

7. бу. This is the common Turkic demonstrative pronoun for “this,” used as a copula, especially in commemorative inscriptions, e.g., Old Volga Tatar *ziyārāti bu* ‘this is the memorial stone’.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Konstantin Kuz’mič Judaxin, *Kirgizsko-russkij slovar’* (Moscow, 1965), p. 868.

<sup>37</sup> On *-öl-*, see, e.g., Clauson, *EtDicTurk*, pp. 125–26.

<sup>38</sup> See O. Pritsak, “Die Herkunft der Allophone und Allomorphe im Türkischen,” *UAJb* 33, nos. 1–2 (1961): 142–45.

<sup>39</sup> Radloff, *Wb*, vol. 1, col. 832.

<sup>40</sup> *Yüan ch’ao pi-shi*, ed. Ye Teh-hui, §174.

<sup>41</sup> The original Mongolian form was probably a deverbal noun in */-n/*: *\*elbe-n* (see Teréz Mária Szabó, *A kalmük szóképzés* [Budapest, 1943], p. 45, §110), since the verb *elberi-* was a deverbal formation in */-ri/* (see *ibid.*, p. 30, §54). The suffixes */-n, -d, -r/* were disappearing before the suffix of the *nomen unitatis* in */-sün/*; see O. Pritsak, “Mongolisch *yisün* ‘neun’ und *yiren* ‘neunzig’,” *UAJb* 26, nos. 3–4 (1954): 243–45.

<sup>42</sup> See Ferdinand Lessing, ed., *Mongolian-English Dictionary* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960), p. 307r.

<sup>43</sup> See O. Pritsak, “Bulgaro-Tschuwaschica,” *UAJb* 31 (1959): 309.

## III. THE GRAFFITO'S TURKIC ELEMENTS

Now it is possible to establish the text and the translation of the Kievan bilingual inscription (the Turkic words and phrases are italicized in the original):

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Tätük</i> [K]üč porinъ bělo-<br/>věz"s"kyj,<br/><i>Bökä Čö[h]asi</i> Ivan Čor,<br/>[ra]by božije,</p> <p><i>ölti, ölti.</i><br/><i>älbä bu.</i></p> | <p><i>Tätük</i> Küč, the senior priest (<i>porinъ</i>) of <i>Bëla Vëža</i>, [and]<br/><i>Bökä</i>'s son Ivan Čor,<br/>the humble men (literally "God's servants" = θεοῦ δούλοι),<br/>died [and] died [that is, both died].<br/>This [is their] respectful memorial.</p> |
|---|---|

At this point let us appraise the graffito from the standpoint of Turkology.

## A. Graphic Considerations

1. The Slavic Cyrillic alphabet was not well suited for the rendering of Turkic vocalism, hence in some cases one Slavic letter stands for two Turkic phonemes. The correspondences are as follows:

- (a) A = ä: АЛЪБА *älbä*, ТАТЪК *tätük*, БАКА *bökä*;  
A = ö: АЛЪТИ; *ölti*, БАКА *bökä*;<sup>44</sup>
- (b) y = u: бу *bu*;  
y(ю) = ö: чуа *čö[h]a*, чюр *čör*;
- (c) ъ = ü: ТАТЪК *tätük*; cf. ТЪРК- - < *Türk* (ТЪРКЫ, *PSRL*, vol. 1, col. 204);  
ъ = marker of the syllabic juncture: АЛЪБА *äl-bä*, АЛЪТИ *öl-ti*;
- (d) ю = ü: КЮШЪ *küč*;  
= o (after č):<sup>45</sup> чюр *čör*.

The remaining cases contain no surprises:

A = a: чуа *čö[h]a*

и = i: АЛЪТИ *ölti*, чуа *čö[h]asi*; as noted above, the language of the graffito still has only one *i*; the palatal opposition (*front: back*) in high unrounded vowels has not yet occurred.

<sup>44</sup> I do not see any reason to assume here the later Karaim Halyč development: ä, ö > ä. On this, see O. Pritsak, "Das Karaimische," in *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, vol. 1 (Mainz, 1959), p. 327.

<sup>45</sup> The consonantic phoneme /č/ was palatal in Old Slavic; see Nikolaus S. Trubetzkoy, *Altkirchenslavische Grammatik* (Vienna, 1954), p. 78.



2. In consonantism four cases should be singled out:

(a) the rendering of the final -č in the “Arabic” fashion, by means of -шъ: кюшъ *küč*;

(b) the marking of the morphonic boundary by the “hard” sign (ъ): АЛЪБА *äl-bä*, АЛЪТИ *öl-ti*;<sup>46</sup>

(c) absence of the glottal spirant [fi]: чуаи *čö[fi]asi*;

(d) avoidance of geminata, in the Old Turkic fashion: ТАТЪКЮШЪ for *Tätük Küč*; чюрабы for *čör + rabı*.

### B. Phonology

#### 1. General Characteristics:

##### (a) Attested vocalism:

First (stem) syllable

*ü u*

*ö o*

*ä*

Non-initial syllable

*i ü*

*ä a*

##### (b) Attested consonantism:

Single consonants

*k t č s*

*b*

*r l*

*fi (glottal spirant)*

Clusters

*lb lt*

#### 2. Initials

##### (a) Vowels

*ä*: АЛЪБА *äl**ä***

*ö*: АЛЪТИ *öl**ti***

##### (b) Consonants

*b*: БАКА *bökä*, бу *bu*;

*k*: КЮШЪ *küč*;

*t*: ТАТЪК *tätük*;

*č*: чуа *čö[fi]a*, чюр *čör*.

#### 3. Medials:

##### (a) Vowels

*ä*: ТАТЪК *tätük*

*ö*: чуа *čö[fi]a*, чюр *čör*

*ö*: БАКА *bökä*

*u*: бу *bu*;

*ü*: КЮШЪ *küč*;

##### (b) Single Consonants

*k*: БАКА *bökä*;

*t*: ТАТЪК *tätük*;

[fi]: чуа *čö[fi]a*

##### (c) Consonant Clusters

*lb*: АЛЪБА *äl**lb**ä*;

*lt*: АЛЪТИ *öl**lt**i*.

<sup>46</sup> On the structure of the Old Turkic syllabic system, see O. Pritsak, “Turkology and the Comparative Study of Altaic Languages: The System of the Old Turkic Runic Script,” *Journal of Turkish Studies* (Cambridge, Mass.), 4 (1980): 84–87.

## 4. Finals (Stem):

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| (a) Vowels  | (b) Consonants                  |
| <i>a</i> : ч <sup>ы</sup> а čō[fi]a;              | <i>k</i> : ТАТЪК <i>tätük</i> : |
| <i>ä</i> : АЛЪБА <i>älbä</i> ; БАКА <i>bökä</i> ; | <i>č</i> : КЮШЪ <i>küč</i>      |
|   | <i>l</i> : АЛЪ <i>öl-</i> :     |
|   | <i>r</i> : ЧЮР <i>čör</i> .     |

## C. Morphology

## (a) Attested suffixes

1. Possessive of the 3rd person /sin/: ч<sup>ы</sup>аси čō[fi]a-si;
  2. Definite past 3rd person /di/: АЛЪТИ *öl-ti*.
- (b) demonstrative pronoun: бы *bu*; functions as a *copula*.

D. *Haraxes*

1. The formula *čō[fi]a-si* substitutes for the usual one *oγl-i* ‘the son of’;
2. Lexical: *älbä* with the meaning “(filial) respectful, memorial.”

## E. Conclusion

Although the Turkic linguistic material of the Kievan bilingua is rather limited — 6 nouns (*älbä*, *bökä* *čō[fi]a*, *čör*, *küč*, *tätük*), one pronoun (*bu*), one verbal root (*öl-*), one possessive suffix *-si*, and one verbal form *-ti* (*öl-ti*) — one nevertheless has good reason to define that language as the *lingua franca* of the Torki (= Търкы *Türk*) Černye Klobuki (Black Hoods) in the eleventh to twelfth century. That language definitely had a southwestern (Turkmen, Oghuz) character. Not only are all the nouns preserved best in the living Oghuz languages, but also they occur in a very similar, if often somewhat older, phonetic form (*k-*, *t-*; *-k-*, *-t-*). On the other hand, at least three isoglosses connect the language of the graffito with Old Turkic: (a) the existence of only one vocalic phoneme /i/;<sup>47</sup> (b) the vocalic sequence *ä - ü* in *tätük*; (c) the treatment of the initial *d-* in the suffix /di/after /l/: \**l-d* > *lt*.

Under no circumstances can this language be connected with the

<sup>47</sup> The scribe of the graffito does not make use of the Slavic sign ы, but writes the vowel as и in ч<sup>ы</sup>аси.

Polovcian (Qipčaq) language, as the difference in the forms for the word “quick-witted” clearly demonstrates: Kievan graffito: ТАТЪК *tätük* and Polovcian from Rus’ (1185): ТЪТИЙ *tëtij*.

#### IV. THE GRAFFITO’S DATE AND PROVENANCE

The illegible first line of the graffito apparently gave the date of the inscription. Vysoc’kyj suggests that the initial word was М[ЦА] ‘in the month of’, and that the next word was the name of the given month, which could have been either June (\*июня) or July (\*июля) in terms of the space available.<sup>48</sup>

Since the next recognizable letter is ф, which in numbers stood for “500,” one can speculate that reference was being made to the sixth hundred of the sixth millenium *Anno mundi*, which began on 1 September A.D. 999 and ended on 31 August A.D. 1092. Since the Cathedral of St. Sophia was probably constructed between 1037 and 1046,<sup>49</sup> the date of the graffito can be narrowed to between 1046 and 1092, most likely near the end of that time, that is, the 1080s or 1090s. Hence it would appear that Vysoc’kyj’s generalized date of the “12th century”<sup>50</sup> should be antedated by a few decades. Contrary to the speculations of Vysoc’kyj, the graffito does not elaborate on the circumstances in which Tätük Küč, and Ivan Čör died; it gives no indication whether foul play was involved or whether they died at the same time.

Two towns with the name Běla Věža were known in the Old Rus’ sources.<sup>51</sup> The first, the commercial center of Khazaria, Sarkel on the Don River, was destroyed by Svjatoslav in 965.<sup>52</sup> The second,

<sup>48</sup> Vysoc’kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 64.

<sup>49</sup> See A. Poppe, “Zasnouvannja Sofiji Kyjivs’koji,” *UIŽ*, 1965, no. 9, pp. 97–104; idem, *Państwo i kościół na Rusi w XI wieku* (Warsaw, 1968), pp. 50–68, and S. Vysoc’kyj’s rebuttal, *Sred Nad*, pp. 240–57.

<sup>50</sup> Vysoc’kyj, *Sred Nad*, p. 38.

<sup>51</sup> I do not see sufficient reason to assume that there was a third Běla Věža in the Perejaslav principality, as many scholars suggest, following Nikolaj Barsov. See Barsov, *MIGSR*, p. 18; idem, *Očerki russkoj istoričeskoj geografii* (Warsaw, 1873), p. 142; Myxajlo Hruševs’kyj, *Istorija Ukrajinj–Rusy*, vol. 2, 2nd ed. (Lviv, 1905), pp. 320, 348; Arsenij Nikolaevič Nasonov, “*Russkaja zemlja*” i obrazovanie territorii drevnerusskogo gosudarstva (Moscow, 1951), p. 221; Vysoc’kyj, *Sred Nad*, pp. 65–66. The recent topographical study of the Perejaslav principality by M. P. Kučera, “Perejaslavskoe knjažestvo,” in L. G. Beskrovnij, ed., *Drevnerusskie knjažestva X–XIII vv.* (Moscow, 1975), pp. 118–43, makes no mention of a Běla Věža in Perejaslav.

<sup>52</sup> *Povest’ vremennyx let*, ed. Dmitrij Sergeevič Lixačev, vol. 1 (Moscow and

which in some sources was also called “Staraja” Běla Věža, was located on the southern frontier of the Černihiv principality, close to the source of the Oster River.<sup>53</sup> Volodimer Monomax mentioned it in his “Memoirs” (*Poučen’e*) in connection with the events of 1085.<sup>54</sup> It is reasonable to assume that Tătük Kūč was a senior priest (*popinъ*) in the Běla Věža of Černihiv. Like Osters’kyj gorodok (to which it was connected by the Oster River), Běla Věža must have been a stronghold of the Vsevolod dynasty in the south. In 1149 Jurij Dolgorukij stayed there for an entire month, waiting for support from the Polovcians, before he attacked Perejaslav.<sup>55</sup> Tătük Kūč and Bökä’s son Ivan Čör apparently belonged to the upper strata of the Černye Klobuki, the Turkic mercenaries who served the Kieven princes and even became Christian.<sup>56</sup> If our chronological hypotheses are correct, their suzerain was Vsevolod Jaroslavič, father of Monomax, who between 1078 and 1093<sup>57</sup> alone ruled all of Rus’, especially the lands of Kiev, Černihiv, and Perejaslav. This would readily explain the inclusion of the senior priest from the Běla Věža of Černihiv in a graffito on the walls of Kiev’s St. Sophia cathedral.

The inscription was carved by a professional scribe as an expression of filial piety (Turkic *albā* = Chin. *hsiao*). One can speculate, therefore, that the senior priest Tătük Kūč and the high military commander (*čör*) Ivan were brothers. Apparently they were killed at the same time and Ivan’s son (the only possibility, since the senior priest could not have been married) had the inscription carved to

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Leningrad, 1950), p. 47. On Sarkel, see Svetlana Aleksandrovna Pletneva, *Xazary* (Moscow, 1976), pp. 48–70.

<sup>53</sup> See *Kniga bolšomu čertežu* [ca. 1627], ed. K. N. Serbina (Moscow and Leningrad, 1950), pp. 103, 107–109; A. K. Zajcev, “Černigovskoe knjažestvo,” in *Drevnerusskie knjažestva X–XIII vv.* (Moscow, 1975), pp. 80, 124, and map facing p. 80.

<sup>54</sup> *PVL*, ed. D. S. Lixačev, vol. 1 (1950), p. 160.

<sup>55</sup> See Hruševs’kyj, *Istorija Ukrajiny-Rusy*, 2: 157–72.

<sup>56</sup> On Černye Klobuki, see Petr Golubovskij, “Ob uzax i torkax,” *ŽMNP* (St. Petersburg), July 1884, pp. 1–21; Dmitrij A. Rasovskij, “O roli Černyx klobukov v istorii Drevnej Rusi,” in *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, vol. 1 (Prague, 1927), pp. 93–109; D. Rasovskij, “Rus’, Černye klobuki, i Polovcy v XII v.,” *Izvestija na Bŭlgarskoto Istoričesko Družestvo* (Sofia), 16–18 (1940): 369–78; S. A. Pletneva, “Kočevniki vostočnoevropejskix stepej v X–XII vv.,” in *Stepi Evrazii v epoxu srednevekoviija* (Moscow, 1981), pp. 213–23.

<sup>57</sup> This dating is also suggested by paleography, as being “ca. 1073–1092”; see above, p. 152.

commemorate them. Possibly he had become a priest like his uncle and was associated with the clergy of St. Sophia, hence his access to that church and/or opportunity to have the inscription carved there professionally.

As was noted above, Volodimer Monomax mentioned Béla Věža in connection with the year 1085. He described one memorable encounter thus: "On the following morning, which was the Lord's Day [Sunday], we marched [from the banks of the Sula River] toward Béla Věža. With the help of God and of the Holy Virgin, we killed nine hundred Polovcians and captured two princes, Asin' and Sakz', the brothers of Bagubars, and only two men [of their force] escaped."<sup>58</sup> We can reasonably assume that during such an important battle some of the Rus' warriors were killed. If Černye Klobuki were among the warriors, two of their leaders might well have been killed. The death of a *čōr* and *popinъ* from the Černye Klobuki would surely have been worthy of immortalization in Kiev's St. Sophia cathedral. The genealogy of the relevant Černye Klobuki clan was, hypothetically:

Bökä

---

Tätük Küč, *popinъ*  
d. ca. 1085

Ivan, *čōr*  
d. ca. 1085

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N.n

(the person who carved, or  
commissioned, graffito no. 153).

\*

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Graffito no. 153 found in the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev has significance for the history of Eastern Europe, for it is the only known inscription to honor the Černye Klobuki of princely Rus'. Its importance for philology and cultural history lies in its unique bilingual, Turkic-Slavic, character.

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<sup>58</sup> *PVL*, ed. Lixačev, 1: 160.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- Barsov, *MIGSR* = Barsov, Nikolaj. *Materialy dlja istoriko-geografičeskogo slovarja Rossii*. Vilnius, 1865.
- CC = *Codex Cumanicus*
- Clauson, *EtDicTurk* = Clauson, Gerard. *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish*. Oxford, 1969.
- Derleme* = *Türkiye'de halk ağzından derleme sözlüğü*. New series. Ankara.
- JRAS* = *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*. London.
- Karskij, *SKP* = Karskij, Evfimij Fedorovič. *Slavjanskaja kirillovskaja paleografija*. Leningrad, 1928.
- Kononov, *Grammatika* = Kononov, Andrej Nikolaevič. *Grammatika sovremennogo tureckogo literaturnogo jazyka*. Moscow and Leningrad, 1956.
- Nadeljaev, *DrTjurkSl* = Nadeljaev, V. N., et al., eds. *Drevnetjurkskij slovar'*. Leningrad, 1969.
- PSRL = *Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej*
- PVL = *Pověst vremennyx lët*
- QB = *Qutadyu bilig*
- Radloff, *Wb* = Radloff, Wilhelm. *Versuch eines Wörterbuches der Türk-Dialecte*. 2nd ed., by O. Pritsak. 4 vols. The Hague, 1960.
- Räsänen, *EtWb* = Räsänen, Martti. *Versuch eines etymologischen Wörterbuchs der Türkischen Sprachen*. Helsinki, 1969.
- Räsänen, *MLTS* = Räsänen, Martti. *Materialien zur Lautgeschichte der türkischen Sprachen*. Helsinki, 1949.
- UIŽ = *Ukrajins'kyj istoryčnyj žurnal*. Kiev.
- UAJb = *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher*. Wiesbaden.
- Vysoc'kyj, *Sred Nad* = Vysoc'kyj, S. O. *Srednevekovye nadpisi Sofii Kievskoj*. Kiev, 1976.
- Zajączkowi, *Związki językowe* = Zajączkowski, Ananiasz. *Związki językowe połowiecko-słowiańskie*. Wrocław, 1949.
- ŽMNP = *Žurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosvješćenija*. St. Petersburg.

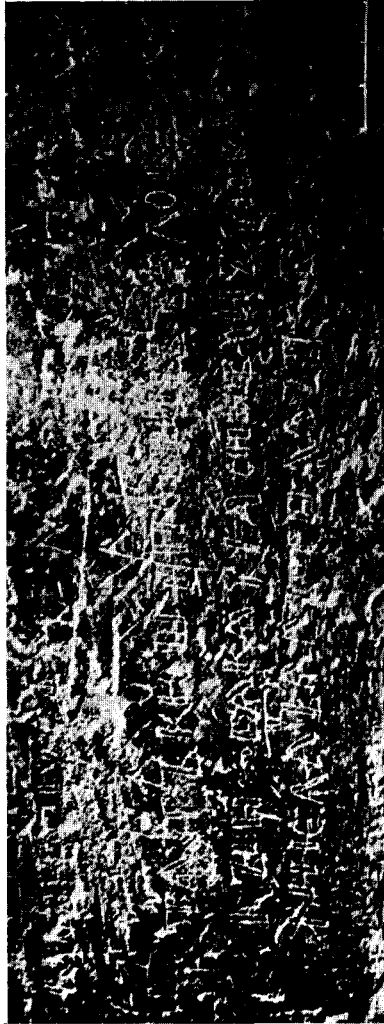
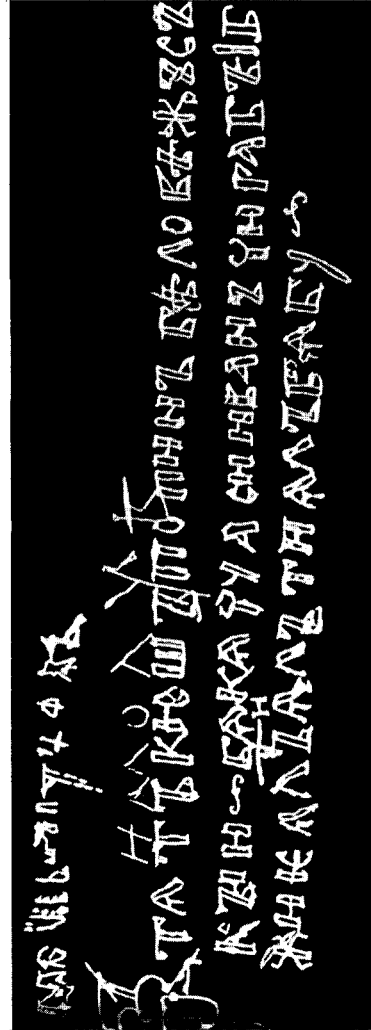


Photo of Graffito 153



Drawing of Graffito 153

Source: S. O. Vysoc'kyj, *Srednevekovee nadpisi Sofii Kievskoj* (Kiev, 1976).

### The Kievan Bilingual Graffito