

# The Story of Shunzi in Old Uyghur

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## ABSTRACT

This paper identifies three manuscript fragments from Turfan as an Old Uyghur version of the story of Shunzi 舜子, a medieval Chinese narrative about Emperor Shun acting as a filial son. In China, the story was part of the lore of filial sons (*xiaozhi* 孝子), popular throughout most of the dynastic period. Early versions of the Chinese story survive in Japan and Dunhuang, and these display obvious parallels with the Uyghur text. While this allows a positive identification of the content of the three Turfan fragments, the differences reveal that none of the known Chinese versions could have served as the source text for the translation. The Old Uyghur version, therefore, represents an otherwise unattested version of the story, which may have developed among the Uyghurs.

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## KEYWORDS

Old Uyghur, Turfan manuscripts, filial sons, Emperor Shun, Shunzi

The Turfan oasis in modern-day Xinjiang preserved not only the Buddhist tradition from the third century CE onward, but also the Confucian tradition before the Uyghurs moved there in the ninth century. The annals of Northern Dynasties record that noble families in the Gaochang kingdom eagerly studied the Mao version of the *Book of Poetry* 毛詩, the *Analects of Confucius* 論語 and the *Classic of Filial Piety* 孝經.<sup>1</sup> Chinese manuscripts of classical literature found at various sites in the Turfan region likewise testify to this.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the Old Uyghur manuscripts discovered around Turfan and at the Dunhuang library cave are religious texts. That Buddhist texts form the bulk of this material amply reflects the prosperity of Buddhism in the Uyghur kingdom. During the early phase of converting to Buddhism, Uyghurs were strongly influenced by Tocharian Buddhism. The Brāhmī manuscripts unearthed around Turfan demonstrate that Uyghur monks mastered Sanskrit and Tocharian languages, and the Brāhmī script as used by the Tocharians. Not only that, eleventh-century Uyghur Buddhist pilgrims who visited Dunhuang wrote wall inscriptions in the Brāhmī script.<sup>3</sup> Later on, Hong Hao 洪皓 (1088–1155), a Song envoy to the Jin 金 court, reported that Uyghur Buddhist believers in Yanshan 燕山 chanted sutras in an Indian language.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, early on they also came in contact with Chinese Buddhism and culture. According to Wang Yande 王延德 (939–1006), dispatched to Turfan by the Song court in 985, Buddhist temples of Turfan with temple name tablets (*biān é* 扁額) bestowed by the Tang court were in possession of the Chinese Tripitaka and copies of dictionaries such as the *Tangyun* 唐韻, *Yupian* 玉篇, and *Jingyin* 經音.<sup>5</sup> In addition, numerous manuscripts of the *Qianziwen* 千字文 written in Chinese and Uyghur scripts evidence that the Uyghurs practiced and learned Chinese with the help of such primers. It is very likely that many Uyghurs could write and speak Chinese freely. Considering such Chinese influences, it is reasonable to assume that the Chinese classics and literary works might have also been translated into Uyghur. However, such works have not yet been found, except for sporadic quotations from the *Lunyu* 論語 preserved in a Buddhist commentary<sup>6</sup> and a fragment tentatively linked with the *Guanzi* 管子.<sup>7</sup>

In this paper, we introduce an Old Uyghur version of the story of Shunzi 舜子 (i.e. Shun the Filial Son) for the first time. In addition to transcribing and translating the text, we would like to consider the textual affiliation of the Old Uyghur text with surviving Chinese versions of the story.

## 1. CHINESE VERSIONS OF THE STORY OF SHUNZI

The story of Shunzi is part of the pre-modern Chinese tradition of filial sons (*xiaozi* 孝子), which was extremely popular and survived in mainstream culture until relatively recently. Allegedly, the first collection of such stories that bore the title *Xiaozi zhuan* 孝子傳 was compiled by the West-

<sup>1</sup> *Beishi* (97.3215): ‘They have the Mao version of the *Book of Poetry*, the *Analects of Confucius* and the *Classic of Filial Piety*; they established instructor-officials and disciples in order to teach these’ 有毛詩、論語、孝經，置學官弟子，以相教授. Also see Ōtani 1936.

<sup>2</sup> Ōtani 1936: 224.

<sup>3</sup> Kitsudō 2017.

<sup>4</sup> *Songmo jiwēn* 松漠紀聞: 45. Also see Kitsudō 2013.

<sup>5</sup> *Songshi* 490.14112.

<sup>6</sup> Kudara 1980.

<sup>7</sup> See Zieme 2010.



ern Han bibliographer Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–6 BC) but modern scholars have shown that the attribution of such a work to Liu Xiang is problematic.<sup>8</sup> Before gradually developing into a paragon of filial piety sometime during the early dynastic period, Shun was celebrated as one of the sage emperors (i.e. Emperor Shun 帝舜), the first who obtained the throne purely based on merit, when Emperor Yao 帝堯 recognised his extraordinary character and ceded the throne to him, also marrying his two daughters to him. This is how the biography in the *Shiji* 史記 portrays him, and there are also references to the story in other early Chinese texts, most notably the *Mengzi* 孟子.<sup>9</sup>

Although early references repeatedly note his unwavering loyalty to his family in spite of their repeated attempts to kill him, as the story is integrated into the series of biographies of filial sons, it goes through a transformation. His identity as one of the primeval rulers at the dawn of civilisation loses its central significance for the plot and, instead, the emphasis is placed on his interaction with his father and stepmother. In most versions of the story, his succession to Yao's throne, if mentioned at all, is merely a reward for his filial conduct. Fittingly, Shun is no longer referred to as Emperor Shun but becomes Shunzi 舜子, that is, Shun the Filial Son.

Before the Tang period, the story is often depicted in tomb art along with stories of other filial sons. The name Shunzi, for example, appears as part of an inscription on a Northern Wei stone couch, originally part of the collection of C. T. Loo. The inscription says: 'Shunzi entering the well' 舜子入井時,<sup>10</sup> and even though the motif of being entombed in a well is also part of the pre-dynastic lore of Shun, the name Shunzi demonstrates that the engraving the inscription accompanies depicts specifically the story of Shun as a filial son, rather than a minor episode from the biography of the sage king. This, in turn, is further corroborated by the other engravings on the same couch, which likewise represent filial sons, showing that the story of Shunzi formed part of a set of narratives on the same theme.<sup>11</sup>

Apart from fragmentary inscriptional references, the earliest attested manuscript witnesses of the story of Shunzi come from Dunhuang. Although only two of the manuscripts are dated, the palaeographic and codicological features suggest that all of them date to the period between the mid-ninth through the late tenth centuries, when the region was under the so-called Guiyijun Military Governorship (*Guiyijun jiedushi* 歸義軍節度使). The story survives in three distinct versions. What we may call Version A appears in manuscript P.2621, as part of a medieval encyclopaedia (*leishu* 類書) identified by the title *Shisen* 事森 (Forest of Affairs) at end of the text. The manuscript is incomplete and thus only the final part of the encyclopaedia is present, with a total of forty stories. Of these, twenty or so are devoted to the theme of filial piety.<sup>12</sup>

At the end of the text, we find a colophon saying, 'Record of copying done by the student Yuanyi on the fourteenth day of the fourth month of the *wuzi* year' 戊子年四月十日學郎員義寫書故記. The *wuzi* year repeated every 60 years, and thus within the general period in question the date of the colophon could theoretically refer to 868, 928 or 988. Fortunately, the verso of the manuscript contains another colophon which records that the same Yuanyi, identified here more specifically as a student of the Jingtu monastery 淨土寺 at Dunhuang commandery, copied texts

<sup>8</sup> Knapp 2005: 48–52.

<sup>9</sup> *Shiji* 1.31–44, *Mengzi*: 192–211. On the theme of Yao's abdication in the early Chinese tradition, see Allan 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Nagahiro 1969, pl. 41.

<sup>11</sup> On the transformation of the image of Shun the sage king into that of a filial son, see Luo 2012.

<sup>12</sup> On the stories of filial piety in this manuscript, see Liu 2014.



in the fifth year of the Changxing 長興 reign, which would correspond to 934.<sup>13</sup> This second, unambiguously dated, colophon tells us that the *wuzi* year in the colophon following the encyclopaedia on the recto most likely refers to 928. This date is fully in accord with the general time frame of the colophons written by Dunhuang students.<sup>14</sup>

Interestingly, the text expressly identifies the *Shiji* as the source for the story of Shunzi, even though it is completely different from what we find there. Perhaps this reference identifies the ultimate origin of the biography of Shun, rather than naming the textual source behind this particular version. Alternatively, the attribution may have been a device to make this particular version of the story more authoritative. Still, the story clearly comes from a different source, as it is unlikely that the compilers of the encyclopaedia completely rewrote the *Shiji* narrative to make it fit the other similar stories in this section of the *Shisen*.

Version B of the story survives in manuscripts S.389, P.3536 and H.039 (i.e. 羽039), each of which contains a series of stories of filial sons. In neither manuscript are these texts identified with a title, making it difficult to talk about a single text. Modern scholars at times apply the title *Xiaozi zhuan* (Biographies of Filial Sons) to these texts collectively, even if this is naming is problematic on several grounds. First, *Xiaozi zhuan* is a known title of a work that has been difficult to trace in time, and using it in reference to unnamed texts immediately creates a false connection between the content of the manuscripts and a text that supposedly existed but is no longer extant. Second, the manuscripts contain a different combination of stories in different order and thus, even if the individual stories are more or less the same, it is questionable whether they can be considered collectively a single text. For example, manuscript S.389 contains the stories of Guo Ju 郭巨, Shunzi and Wenrang 文讓, whereas P.3536 has those of Shanzi 閃子, Shunzi, Xiangsheng 向生 and Wang Bao 王褒. In each manuscript the individual stories are unquestionably part of a series, yet their variable arrangement makes it difficult to decide whether these two collections are versions of the same text. As the story of Shunzi overlaps in the three manuscripts, we can see that parallel parts between the two texts are very close to each other textually and the differences are inconsequential.

In comparison with Version A, this version is less than half in length and omits some of the key elements of the plot. One of these is the motif of Shunzi discovering silver coins in the well, which buys him additional time when his father and stepmother want to fill the well with rocks. Interestingly, although this motif is absent from the main text of Version B, it is mentioned in the second of two short poems at the end of the story. Only without the presence of the motif in the story itself, the reference in the poem makes little sense.

Versions A and B share the basic narrative plot, according to which after Shun, also known as Chonghua 重華 (lit. ‘double pupiled’), loses his mother to illness, his father Gusou 瞽叟 (lit. ‘blind old man’) remarries. The stepmother is evil and tries to kill Shun, and the father—knowingly or unknowingly—becomes an accomplice to this. Version A also features the step brother Xiang 象 (already known from the *Shiji* narrative) who also participates in the plot to harm Shun. As the first attempt to kill him, his parents ask Shun to fix the roof of the barn and, once he is on the roof, they remove the ladder and set fire onto the building. Shun miraculously escapes unharmed by flying down with the help of straw hats. As the second attempt, his parents ask him to dredge an old well and then bury him inside with rocks. Shun escapes through a side tunnel and

<sup>13</sup> The Changxing reign of the Latter Tang only lasted four years so, technically speaking, the date given in the manuscript is wrong. Yet this was a common phenomenon in the Dunhuang manuscripts and dates sometimes used reign titles that had already ended in Central China.

<sup>14</sup> For manuscripts with students’ colophons in Dunhuang, see Li 1987 and Galambos 2015: 280–283.



flees to Mount Li 歷山 where he cultivates the land. He does very well and when his hometown is struck by famine, he goes back there to sell grain. By this time, his stepmother has become senile, his father has lost his eyesight and his step brother has become mute. At the market, he sells grain to his stepmother (who does not recognise him) but puts the money she pays him back into the bag with the grains. This raises the father's suspicion and he comes to the market where he recognises his son's voice. The two embrace and he recovers his eyesight. Version A also mentions that Shun's step brother regains his ability to speak.

Version C is a longer narrative entitled *Shunzi bian* 舜子變 and the title itself identifies it as part of a popular narrative genre known as transformation texts (*bianwen* 變文), common among the Dunhuang manuscripts. The text survives in manuscripts S.4654, P.2721 and H.039. In all three manuscripts, the text is part of a series of similar stories.<sup>15</sup> P.2721 has a colophon that claims that the copying was completed in the fifth month of the fifteenth year of the Tianfu 天福 reign (949). Version C is considerably longer than A and B and some of the motifs are much more developed. In addition, there are motifs not present in the other two versions. The part most relevant to our discussion of the Old Uyghur manuscript reads as follows:<sup>16</sup>

舜來歷山，俄經十載，便將米往本州。至市之次，見後母負薪，詣市易米，值舜余（糶）於市。舜識之，便崇（糶）與之。舜得母錢，佯忘安著米囊中而去。如是非一，瞽叟恠之，語後妻曰：「非吾舜子乎？」妻曰：「百丈井底埋卻，大石橰之，以土填却，豈有活理？」瞽叟曰：「卿試試牽我至市。」妻牽叟詣市，還見崇（糶）米少年。叟謂曰：「君是何賢人，數見饒益？」舜曰：「見翁年老，故以相饒。」叟耳識其音聲，曰：「此正似吾舜子聲乎！」舜曰：「是也。」便即前抱父頭，失聲大哭。舜子拭其父淚，与（以）舌舐之，兩目即明。母亦聰惠，弟復能言。市人見之，無不悲歎。

Having already been at Mount Li for ten years, Shun took some rice and went to his native prefecture [to sell it]. After arriving at the market, he saw that his stepmother carried firewood on her back to exchange it at the market for rice. She came to Shun who was selling rice at the market. Shun recognised her and sold some rice to her. When Shun received his stepmother's money, he secretly placed it inside the rice sack [of his stepmother] and left. This happened several times. Gusou felt this strange and said to his second wife (i.e. Shun's stepmother), 'Isn't this my son Shun?' The wife replied, 'We have buried him at the bottom of a hundred *zhang* deep well, which we filled up with rocks and earth. How could he be alive?' Gusou said, 'Just try and lead me to the market.' The wife led Gusou to the market, where they indeed met the young man selling rice. Gusou asked him, 'Who are you and why do you confer benefits on us time after time?' Shun replied, 'I see that you are of old age and this is why I wanted to help you.' Gusou recognised his voice and exclaimed, 'This is exactly like the voice of my son Shun!' Shun responded, 'You are right.' With this, he stepped forward and embraced his father's head, sobbing silently. He wiped his father's tears and licked his eyes with his tongue, at which point his two eyes could see [again]. The stepmother also regained her mental faculties and [Shun's] younger brother was able to speak again. The people at the market saw this and were all overcome with emotion.

<sup>15</sup> In fact, manuscript H.039 contains both Versions B and C.

<sup>16</sup> We only translate the most relevant part of the story here, even though we occasionally cite from other sections.





- 05 tyty . n' pw s'vyq 'sydy[ ]/n 'nynk 'wynyn 'kzykyn s'v  
 06 swyz y'nkyn kypyn t'nk'l'p qyl/[ ] 'wytrw 'wl . kwyz swz 'r pw  
 07 wqwl sw 'wtqwr'q m'nynk 'wqlw[ ] swyntsyt' rwr typ 'dyrtlyq  
 08 [ ] 'ykyly'w y'n 'ync' typ t[ ] y'nt'q '///[ ]  
 09 [ ] 子 swyntsyt' t'q m'n[ ]  
 10 [ ] p'klytym 'rty . 'mt[ ]  
 11 [ ] /tk's'r mn 'wql///[ ]  
 12 [ ] 'rk'y mw syz typ [ ]  
 13 [ ] typ y'n 'yrinc yrl[ ]  
 14 [ ] wr mn 't'm typ tyt[ ]  
 15 [ ] /wp 'wlwq 'wynyn s[ ]  
 16 [ ] yn t'qswrw k'yryk'ncyk q[ ]  
 17 [ ] cyk qylyqynk' 'wl kydynt' [ ]  
 18 [ ] 'wyz 'wql'nyn qyzyn syqy/[ ]  
 19 [ ] /ydy l'r . 'wqly nynk 'ysynk' kw[ ]  
 20 'wytrw 'wl [ ] 't'sy nynk 'nt[ ]  
 21 yt'ky 'wy[ ] t qwlwnwp '///[ ]  
 22 qy 'wq y[ ] kwysy 'cylyt' [ ]  
 23 ym' s'v swyzl'k'ly 'wdy . 'wyt[ ]  
 24 [ ] swyntsyt'wl [ ] kysy /[ ]  
 25 [ ] tyn yynck' [ ] 'ync' [ ]  
 26 [ ] w///// [ ]/[ ]

## 2.2 Transcription and Translation

- 01 [ ] s'ty/[ ]  
 ...  
 02 [ ] //r /-yn ärgüky-ä / [ ] ///k/[ ]  
 " ... small house ...  
 03 kunčuyunuz-nu[ŋ] tapı[gr] ]k'y[ ] ök ämg[äk-]  
 service of your wife  
 04 lig tolgak-lig bolmak /[ ] k sakınçım bo ok ol t[ep]  
 become painful [...] this is my thought, he (i.e. Shunzi) said.  
 05 teđi . nā bo savıg āšidi[p ]/n anıñ ünin ägzigin sav  
 As soon as he heard this word [...] compared his voice, tone, and  
 06 söz yañın kibin täñläp qyl/[ ] ötrü ol . köz-süz är bo  
 ... manner of speech, and then, the blind man distinctly recognised:  
 07 ogul šu otgurak mäniñ oglu[m] šüntsi ärür tep adırtlıg  
 'This young man is definitely my son Shunzi' and  
 08 [bilip] ikiläyü yana inčä tep t[edi] y-a antag "q///[ ]  
 again said: 'O! such ...'  
 09 [ 舜]子 šüntsi atlg män[in] oglum ]  
 [My son] Shunzi by name  
 10 [ ] bāklitim ärti . amt[ı ]  
 I have sealed [the well.] Now, ...



- 11 [ ]/tk's'r-mn oqlan [ ]  
If I .... son
- 12 [ ] ärgäy-mü-siz tep [ ]  
Would you be ... ?, he (i.e. father) said.
- 13 [ ] tep yana erinç y(a)rl(i)g [ ]  
... also poor ...
- 14 [ ]wr-mn atam tep teđ[i]  
'... I ..., my father', he (i.e. Shunzi) said.
- 15 [ ]/wp ulug ünin s[igtayu]  
... lamented loudly (and) ...
- 16 [ ]yn takşuru käyirkänçig k[ılık]  
... lamented and [his] compassionate conduct ...
- 17 [käyirkän]çig kılıkına ol kidintä [ ]  
... to his compassionate conduct, [the people] at the bazaar ...
- 18 [ ]öz oqlanın kızın syqy/[ ]  
... his own son and daughter (acc.) ...
- 19 [ ]/ydy-l'r . oqlı-nın işinä kü[dükinä]  
... to his son's work ...
- 20 ötrü ol [ ] atası-nın ant[ag]  
Then ... his father thus ...
- 21 yt'ky'wy[ ]qu]t kolunup "[ ]  
... asks for ...,
- 22 ky'ok i[kı] közi açıldı "[ ]  
[two eyes] were opened ...
- 23 ymä sav sözlägäli udı . öt[rü]  
Also he (i.e. his younger brother) was able to speak words. T[hen...]
- 24 [ ] şüntsi ol [üdü]n]kysy / [ ]  
... Shunzi, at that [time], ...
- 25 [ ]-tyn yinçgä [ ] inçä [tep tedi]  
... fine ... [said] thus ...
- 26 [ ]w///// [ ]/[ ]

### 3. NOTES ON THE UYGHUR TEXT

**02-03)** This seems to be part of the dialogue between Shunzi and his blind father who cannot see his son. This is the time when Shunzi sees that his mother has become senile and has a hard life, dwelling in a small house (02: *ärgü-kyä*) and carrying firewood on her back to the market. The Uyghur text has *qunçuyunjuz-nung tapı[gi]* 'service of your wife,' referring to his giving some money or rice to his mother.

**05-06)** *nä bo savıg äşidi[p ]/n anıñ ünin ägzigin sav söz yañın kibin täñläp qyl/[ ]* 'As soon as he heard this word [...] compared his voice, tone, and manner of speech.' As to the temporal



clause of *nä ... -(X)p* converb ‘when’ or ‘moment.’<sup>21</sup> *tänläp* could be also read as *tınlap*. In this case, the sentence means ‘As soon as he heard this word [...] heard his voice, tone, and manner of speech.’ Both phrases correspond to the words ‘based on your voice, you are exactly like my son Chonghua’ 據子語音, 正似我兒重華 in Version A; ‘your voice is like that of my son Shun’ 子之語聲, 似吾舜子 in Version B; or ‘He recognised his voice and exclaimed, “This is exactly like the voice of my son Shun!” 耳識其音聲, 曰: 「此正似吾舜子聲乎! 」 in Version C. This is different, however, from Versions D1 and D2, which do not mention Gusou’s recognition of his son’s voice.

**06-07** *közsüz är bo ogul šu otgurak mänin oglu[m] šüntsi ärür*; ‘the blind man distinctly recognised: “This young man is definitely my son Shunzi.”’ In the Chinese versions, Shunzi’s father is called Gusou 瞽叟/瞽瞍 (i.e. ‘blind old man’), or simply Sou 叟/瞍 or Gu 瞽 (‘blind’). The Uyghur *közsüz är* ‘blind man’ corresponds to this. *Šu (sw)* is problematic but may be significant from the point of view of Old Turkic studies. *Sw* is transcribed here as *šu* but can also be read as *so*. Reading it as *so* fits the Uyghur pronunciation of Chinese 叟/瞍 (LMC *səu*).<sup>22</sup> This, however, would render the sentence grammatically problematic, which is why we propose to read it tentatively as *šu*. This would match the demonstrative pronoun *šu* ‘that’ in Modern Turkic languages, even though *šu* as a demonstrative pronoun has not been attested in Old Turkic so far.<sup>23</sup> In the Chinese versions, *šu* seems to correspond to *zheng* 正 (‘just’) of Versions A and C. It could also function as an emphasis or represent a variant form of *oš* ‘just’, possibly forming a hendiadys with *otgurak*.<sup>24</sup>

**07** *šüntsi*. This is the Old Uyghur transliteration of the name Shunzi 舜子. The Uyghur pronunciation of 舜 (LMC *syn*) is \**swn*, while 子 (LMC *tsz*) is usually transcribed as *sy* /*si*/.<sup>25</sup> Yet there are also examples of 子 being transcribed as *tsy*, as it is the case with the word *dizi* 弟子 (LMC *thiaj* ‘*tsz*’, ‘disciple’) written in Old Uyghur as *tytsy* /*titsi*/. Therefore, *šüntsi* definitely corresponds to 舜子.

**08-09** *ikiläyü yana inčä tep t[edi] y-a antaq ”q//[ 舜]子 šüntsi atlg män[in oglum]*. ‘Again he said: “Oh, such ..... [My son] Shunzi by name...”’ This passage seems to describe the father’s suspicion that the boy might in fact be his son Shunzi. The corresponding parts in the Chinese versions read ‘Sou felt this strange and said to his wife: “Isn’t this my [son] Chonghua?” 叟怪之, 語妻曰: 「氏 (是) 我重華也? 」 (Version A); ‘Gusou felt this strange and said to his second wife (i.e. Shun’s stepmother): “Isn’t this my son Shun?” 瞽叟恠之, 語後妻曰: 「吾舜子乎? 」 (Version C). In the Chinese versions, this part precedes the scene in which the father recognises Shunzi’s voice. If our identification is correct, however, the Uyghur passages are partially rearranged.

**10** *bäklitim ärti* ‘I have sealed [the well].’ These words are uttered by Gusou, who had sealed the well to kill Shunzi at the instigation of his wife. In the Chinese versions, when Gusou voices his suspicion that the boy might be his son, his wife says to him: ‘He is at the bottom of a hundred *chi*

<sup>21</sup> See Erdal 2004: 476.

<sup>22</sup> The reconstruction of Late Middle Chinese pronunciation in this paper is based on Pulleyblank 1991. For the Uyghur pronunciation corresponding to 叟/瞍, see Shōgaito 2003: 58, 81.

<sup>23</sup> Erdal 2004: 211, fn. 346.

<sup>24</sup> *Oš* is attested once in Old Uyghur; see Wilkens 2016, vol. 2: 808, l. 10918.

<sup>25</sup> Shōgaito 2015.



deep well, with large rocks pressed on him, how could he be alive?’ 百尺井底，大石鎮之，豈有治（活）理？ (Version A); ‘He is buried at the bottom of a hundred *zhang* well, with large rocks piled on top of him, filled up with earth, how could he be alive?’ 百丈井底埋卻，大石播之，以土填卻，豈有活理？ (Version C).

12) [ ] *ärgäy-mü-siz tep* ... ‘Would you be ...?’ he (i.e. the father) said. This may be the part where the father asks whether Shunzi is really his son.

14) [ ] *wr-mn atam tep ted[i]* ‘...I ..., my father,’ he (i.e. Shunzi) said. This is when Shunzi reveals himself to his father. This matches Versions A, C, D1 and D2.

15) [ ] */wp ulug ünin s[ıgtayu ]* ‘... cries out loudly ...’ This is the part where Shunzi embraces his father and sobs bitterly.

16) [ ] *yn takşuru käyirkänçig k[ılık]* ‘... lamented and ... [his] compassionate conduct ...’ The missing portion of *k[ılık]* can be reconstructed based on the use of the same expression in line 17. The word *käyirkänçig* means ‘pity, mercy’. Explaining this word, Marcel Erdal writes that ‘*käyirkänçig* may have been created on the analogy of *erinçkänçig*, in which *erinç* is used as a synonym of *käy* [sorrow].’<sup>26</sup> He draws attention to examples in the *Altun Yaruk sudur* (*Suvarṇaprabhāsot-tama sūtra*):

- a) *ol iki tigitlär munçulayu yañın käyirkänçig kılını ulıy sıgtayu talp yüküp* (AY620.10); ‘At that time the two princes cried sorrowfully in anguish’ 時二王子悲泣懊惱 (T16. No. 665, 452b05)
- b) *açig ünin käyirkänçig* (AY633.5); ‘sound of lamentation’ 哀聲 (T16. No. 665, 453b16)
- c) *ilıglärin kötrüp .. yalvaru täginürlär käyirkänçig* (AY640.20); ‘raised his hand to speak sorrowfully’ 舉手以哀言 (T16. No. 665, 453a23)

We may add another example from the Uyghur *Daśakarmapathāvadānamāla*:

- d) [bodis](a)(t)(a)v sıgün [beş yüz sıgün]larnıñ *bo munçulayu k[älyir[känçig sav]ların äşidip* ‘Bodhisattva-maral deer heard such compassionate words of [500 Maral deers], ...’ (DKPAM #00773-#00775, Wilkens 2016, vol. 1: 244)

In the examples from the *Altun Yaruk sudur*, the term *käyirkänçig* does not have a corresponding word in the Chinese *Jin’gangming zuishengwang jing* 金光明最勝王經. Examples b) and c) are concerned with *ai* 哀 ‘lament, pity’. In this respect, we may go with Erdal’s explanation but then would still have to clarify what the expression *käyirkänçig kılık* (‘compassionate conduct’) means in the context of this particular story. Version C says that ‘the people at the market saw this and were all overcome with emotion’ 市人見之無不悲歎, and the expression ‘compassionate conduct’ probably relates to this scene. Yet in line 17 of the Uyghur text, we have the words ‘to his compassionate conduct, [the people] at the bazaar’. Obviously, the agent of ‘compassionate conduct’ is not

<sup>26</sup> Erdal 1991: 365.



the people, but Shunzi. Our tentative proposal is that *käyirkänčig kılık* expresses *xiaoxing* 孝行 ‘filial conduct,’ which is the main theme in the story of Shunzi.

**17-19)** *ol kidintä ~ işinä kü[dükiñä]*. The counterpart for this in the Chinese versions is probably the scene of people surrounding Shunzi and his father in the bazaar, and contrasting his filial conduct with the foolishness of their own children.

**22)** *i[ki] közi açiltı*. According to the context of the story, this part means his ‘two eyes were opened,’ which parallels similar expressions in the Chinese versions: ‘his two eyes opened again’ 兩目重開 (Version A); ‘his eyes could see again’ 眼得再明 (Version B); ‘his two eyes could see’ 兩目即明 (Version C), 兩眼即開明 (Version D1), 兩目即開明也 (Version D2).

**23)** *ymä sav sözlägäli udı* ‘Also he (i.e. his younger brother) was able to speak again.’ This corresponds to the part where Shunzi’s step brother, who became mute as a result of trying to kill Shunzi, regains his ability to speak. In the Chinese versions, this is expressed as ‘his younger brother was able to speak again’ 弟復能言 (Versions A and C).

**24)** *kysy*. This can be read as *kisi* ‘wife’ or *kişi* ‘man’ but neither readings seem to fit the context. It may, therefore, be a component of a different word.

**24)** *šüntsi ol [üdüñ ]kysy / [ ]* ‘Shunzi, at that time, ...’ This may correspond to the part expressed in Chinese as follows: ‘At that time, Shunzi led his parents back to their home’ 當時舜子將父母到本家庭 (Version C).

**25)** *yinčgä* ‘fine.’ This might be part of the commendation uttered by Shunzi’s father: ‘Gusou said, crying, ‘My filial son...’ 瞽叟泣曰：「吾之孝[子]」 (Version C).

Although the Old Uyghur version preserves only part of the climax scene of the story, the plot has correspondences with Chinese versions A and C, as well as D1 and D2. If the Uyghur version had been translated from Version A (i.e. a story inserted in a *leishu* encyclopaedia), these fragments would have exceptional value for the history of Old Uyghur literature, especially since no such material has been found before. If it is a translation of a transformation text (*bianwen*) such as Version C, it would be an equally important new discovery.<sup>27</sup> In either case, we are dealing with a unique manuscript with a text that has not been identified in Old Uyghur before.

In his study of the transformation text of story of Shunzi (i.e. Version C), Yasushi Arami shows that P.2721 (Version C) was rewritten on the basis of Version A, gradually adding new elements not present in the original. His analysis suggests that the transformation text essentially continued to be rewritten.<sup>28</sup> One of the reasons why the Old Uyghur text differs from any surviving Chinese versions may, therefore, be the result of this particular feature of transformation texts. It is also possible that some re-writing and embellishment was done by the Uyghurs. Nonetheless, the surviving part of the Old Uyghur text may not be enough to conclusively determine whether it is

<sup>27</sup> A famous transformation text known in Old Uyghur is the story of Mulian 目連 (Maudgalyāyana); see Zieme 2011: 150–156.

<sup>28</sup> Arami 2010: 30.



a Confucian story of filial sons or a Buddhist transformation text. Considering the significance of Buddhism in the Uyghur kingdom and the fact that the Uyghur text was copied on the verso of a Chinese Buddhist manuscript, the Old Uyghur version is likely have included Buddhist elements.

#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper, we examined three fragments from the Turfanforschung in Berlin, containing the Chinese text of the *Dafangguang baoqie jing* on the recto and an Old Uyghur text on the verso. The presence of a known Chinese scripture allowed us to reconstruct the spatial arrangement of the three fragments, greatly facilitating the interpretation of the Old Uyghur text. This turned out to be an unknown version of the story of Shun the Filial Son, which was one of the most popular and widely known stories of filial sons in the Chinese tradition. Comparing the Uyghur text with Chinese manuscripts from Dunhuang and pre-modern Japan, we found matches in most Chinese versions but we could also confirm that neither of them could have served as the source text for the translation. Perhaps the closest match was Version C, a transformation text that was an extended version of the story with Buddhist elements. Unfortunately, none of the details or motifs that could provide a conclusive identification survive, which is why the question whether the Old Uyghur text was a transformation text or a native Chinese story of filial son remains open.

Despite the similarities with Version C of the story, the Old Uyghur text also had some interesting discrepancies with available Chinese versions. One such discrepancy was that parts of the plot may have been rearranged, although the text is too fragmentary to be certain. In general, as such non-elite texts continued to evolve, it is likely that one of the reasons for the discrepancies is that the Old Uyghur version represents a further development of the story, part of which may have happened among the Uyghurs after the story had already been translated.

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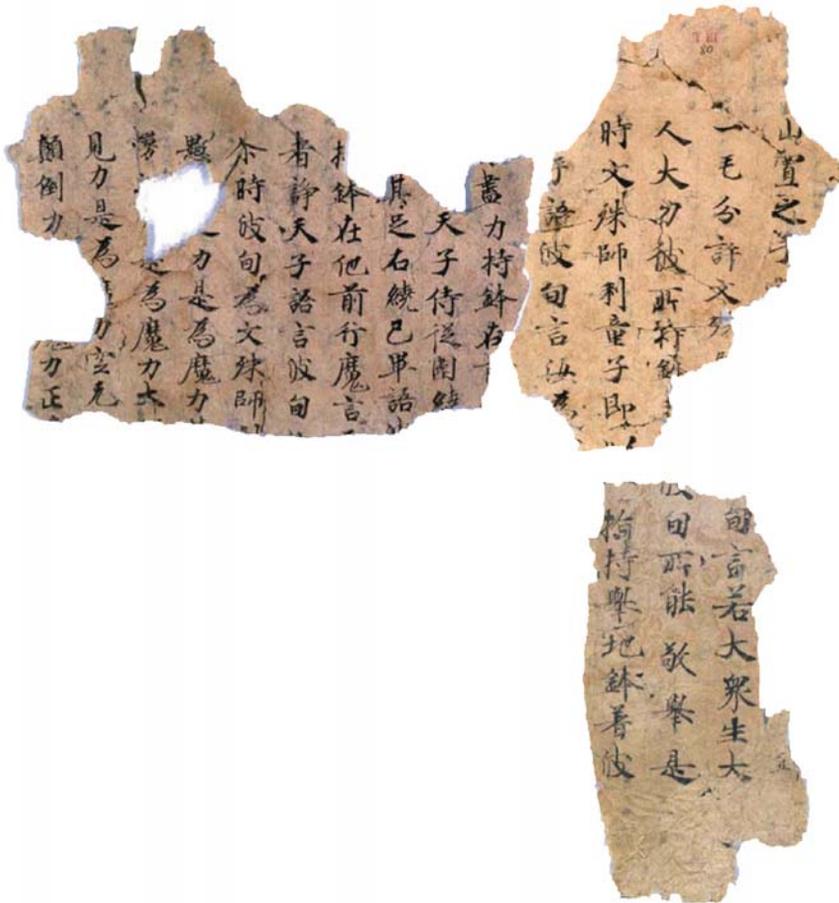


Fig. 1. Arrangement of the three fragments based on the Chinese text. (Depositum der Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften in der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung)



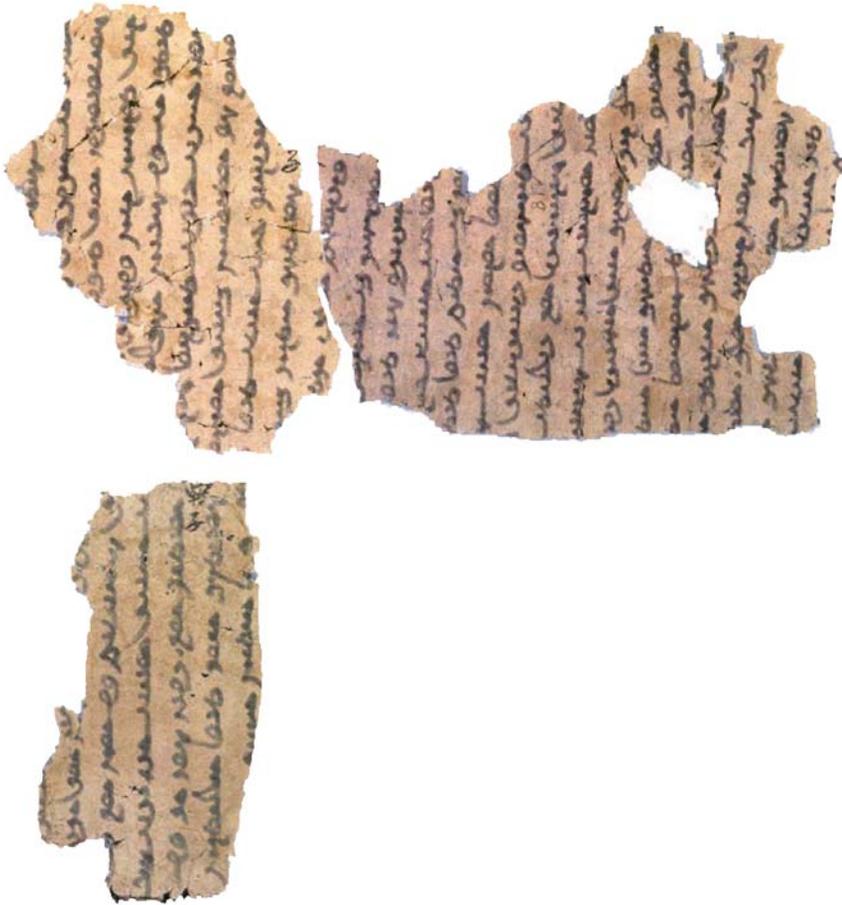


Fig. 2. Arrangement of the fragments with the Uyghur text. (Depositum der Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften in der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung.)