

SOVIET DUNGAN NATIONALISM:
A FEW COMMENTS ON THEIR ORIGIN AND LANGUAGE

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Is Soviet Dungan a Chinese Language?¹

Dungan (*Dunganskii iazyk*) is recognized in the U.S.S.R. as the national language of a small ethnic minority living in the Kirghiz S.S.R., the Kazakh S.S.R., and the Uzbek S.S.R. The Soviet Dungans, as we may call them to distinguish them from other Chinese Mohammedans sometimes known as Tung-kan hui 東干回 in China, are descended from two groups of Chinese Mohammedan refugees: those who fled with Po Yen-hu 白彥虎 to the Semirech'e in 1877 on the collapse of the Moslem Amirate of Kashgaria before the Chinese armies under Liu Chin-t'ang 劉錦棠, and those who crossed from the Ili Valley into Russia upon completion of the Treaty of St. Petersburg in 1881. They have flourished under the communist regime, both as revolutionaries and as collective farmers They have been remarkably tenacious of their Chinese and Moslem customs They live in Chinese-style houses, sleep on *k'ang* (炕), eat with chopsticks, use Chinese ingredients in cooking and observe Chinese birth, death and marriage customs. Although they have adopted the balalaika and the accordion, the matter of their songs and, to a large degree, their form remain Chinese.²

1) "Soviet Dungans," for reasons of simplification, are referred to throughout this work simply as "Dungans." They are the Chinese Mohammedans who migrated from China to Russia a century ago and who have since been living in the territory of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. The term "Chinese Mohammedans" in this paper includes only the Mohammedans living in China, but not the "Dungans," although a century ago the "Dungans" were, in fact, "Chinese Mohammedans." In Chinese, the "Chinese Mohammedans" are called *Hui-hui* 回回, *Hui-tsu* 回族 or *Hui-min* 回民. Dungan and Soviet scholars tend to refer to all "Chinese Mohammedans," both in China and in the Soviet Union, as "Dungans." When this happens I will clarify the point by writing: Dungans [Chinese Mohammedans].

2) Svetlana Rimsky-Korsakoff, "Soviet Dungan: The Chinese Language of Central Asia. Alphabet, Phonology, Morphology," *Monumenta Serica* 26 (1967),

The quotation above appeared in an article I wrote on the Dungan language in 1967 but ten years later I was fortunate enough to visit the Dungans for the first time.³ I have found that they no longer live in Chinese-style houses, that while *k'ang* still exist they are becoming rare, although they do use Chinese blankets. As for Chinese ingredients in their cooking, they use plenty of garlic, vinegar and *chiiu-ts'ai* 韭菜, but not soy sauce.

I have made many friends among the Dungans both in the cities and in the kolkhozes and was treated with friendliness and warmth. The Dungans are an overwhelmingly hospitable people; not only were lavish feasts provided, but everyone tried to help me in my research and to make my stay fruitful and interesting. There was only one dark cloud in the otherwise blue sky that persistently offended my hosts and embarrassed me—the question of whether the Dungan language is a Chinese language or not. I clearly thought that it was.⁴ But as not one person agreed with me in Central Asia I have decided to publish my polite talks and heated debates with the Dungans on this point in order to enlarge this discussion.

The Dungans do not regard themselves in any respect as Chinese.

pp. 353–355. This article was based on a Master of Science thesis in linguistics submitted to Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. The thesis was written under the supervision of Father Paul L-M Serruys CICM, who was my teacher and who had actually suggested Dungans as the topic of my research. I am deeply grateful for the tolerance and generosity with which he guided my work and for introducing me to Dungan studies which, since then, have become one of the main interests in my life.

3) I went to the U.S.S.R. in 1977 on a three-month exchange visit between the Australian National University and the Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences, Moscow. I stayed one month in the Kirghiz S.S.R. and in the Kazakh S.S.R. I worked with Dungan scholars from the Dungan sections of the Academy of Sciences in Frunze and Alma-Ata. I visited a mosque in Dzhambul. The rest of the time I spent travelling and living in the Dungan kolkhozes in the Kirghiz S.S.R. and the Kazakh S.S.R.

4) See the xerox copies of two pages from a Dungan primary school textbook written by Kh. Bugazov, *Xuejdzü jyan: 1 xo te 2 xoti tsjok'uəfu* [Dungan language: A textbook for the First and Second Classes], 3rd ed. (Frunze, 1977), pp. 14–15 and pp. 28–29, and a xerox page from the Dungan newspaper *Şijyətı ts'i* [October banner], 12 April 1977, reproduced on the following pages.

In Russian they call themselves ДУНГАНЕ (*Dungane*), i.e. Dungans and in the literature written in their own language as хуэйзүй (*xuejdzũ* 回族), i.e. Mohammedans.⁵ They also insist that they do not speak Chinese but the "Dungan language," and regard the two dialects they speak, i.e. the Kansu and Shensi dialects, as "Dungan dialects."

Dr. M. Īa. Sushanlo, a Dungan historian and the head of the Dungan section in the Department of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Kirghiz S.S.R. in Frunze, admitted that the root of the Dungan language is Chinese. Dungan scholars who visited China some years ago said that they could understand the Mandarin, the Kansu and the Shensi dialects spoken in China. However, the famous Dungan poet Īa. Shivaza told me that when he visited Peking and Lanchow in 1957 as a member of a delegation of Soviet writers that the people in Peking understood when he spoke but not vice versa.⁶ Shivaza's observation was confirmed by the majority of the Dungans who told me that they could understand nothing in either the Mandarin or the Kansu and Shensi dialects spoken in China. I had the feeling that many Dungans, specially those living in the kolkhozes never gave this problem much thought; they were Dungans and they spoke a Dungan language. To them, a Dungan and a Chinese could be distinguished from one another solely on the basis of their origin. The Dungans therefore explained to me that in the *selo* Miliānfan (Kirghiz S.S.R.) there were two Chinese who became Moslems, but they, of course, were not Dungans, they were "Chinese Mohammedans."

However, M. Kh. Imazov, a phonetician and a senior scientific worker of the Dungan section in the Kirghiz S.S.R.'s Academy of Sciences' department of Oriental Studies, felt strongly about this question. He especially stressed that the Kansu and Shensi dialects spoken by the Dungans are not Chinese dialects, but two Dungan

5) The names and the book titles are transliterated in this paper according to the Library of Congress transliteration of the Cyrillic alphabet. As the Dungans use the Cyrillic alphabet plus five additional letters, i.e. ө, ң, ж, ь and Ү, I use my own transliteration. For the grid of Dungan initials and finals and the tables of these two transliterations see Rimsky-Korsakoff, "Soviet Dungan," pp. 418-421.

6) He thinks that the Dungan language is closer to ancient Chinese.

dialects. He pointed out that the Dungans speak хуэйзү йүян (*xueǐdzǔ iyian* 回族語言). The Dungans are divided among themselves on this point, with some wishing to continue to call their language жун-ян йүян (*tʃuŋ-ian iyian* 中原語言).⁷ One of the many arguments that I have heard to support the latter point is that the vinegar they use is called жун-ян цǔ (*tʃuŋ-ian ts'ǔ* 中原醋) and not хуэйзү цǔ (*xueǐdzǔ ts'ǔ* 回族醋). Imazov said that the word жун-ян (*tʃuŋ-ian* 中原) was used to denote the Dungan language in the past, but had ceased to do so in present times. This is partly true. The newly published textbooks use хуэйзү йүян (*xueǐdzǔ iyian* 回族語言) for "Dungan language,"⁸ while the textbooks and dictionaries written during the period from 1936 to 1960 use жун-ян хуа (*tʃuŋ-ian xua* 中原話) or жун-ян йүян (*tʃuŋ-ian iyian* 中原語言).⁹ Meanwhile the term жун-ян (*tʃuŋ-ian* 中原) is still used both by the city Dungans and in the Dungan kolkhozes. In the kolkhoz "Oktjabr" (*selo* Dunganovka), located at the outskirts of Dzhambul (Kazakh S.S.R.), for instance, Badyr Dzhamalov's family told me that they speak жун-ян хуа (*tʃuŋ-ian xua* 中原話) and in the *selo* Masanchin (Kazakh S.S.R.), I was told that this *selo* has 5,500 people among whom more than 4,000 were жун-янжын (*tʃuŋ-ianžin* 中原人).

7) A problem arises here: is ян (*ian*) the character 言 or 原? 中原 is a common name simply for China (or for Honan). Tu Sung-shou 杜松壽 on page 226 of his work "Tung-kan yü-tz'u-er lien-hsieh kuei-tse" 東干語詞兒連寫規則, *P'in-yin wen-tzu hsieh-fa tzu-liao hsüan-chi* 拼音文字寫法資料選輯 (Peking, 1957) writes that in old China the Dungans were called 老回回, in Russian they are called 東干人 and they call themselves 中原人. But, from my point of view ян (*ian*) cannot stand for Mandarin *yüan* 原, which in Dungan is йүян (*iyian*). That it stands for Mandarin *yen* 言 is clear from the terms хуэйзү йүян (*xueǐdzǔ iyian* 回族語言) and жун-ян йүян (*tʃuŋ-ian iyian* 中原語言) mentioned above and from the phrase фуму йүян (*fumu iyian* 父母語言) for "native language."

8) E.g. Kh. Bugazov, *Xueǐdzǔ iyian: 1 xo te 2 xoti tʃiǎk'uǎfu* [Dungan language: A textbook for the First and Second Classes], 3rd ed. (Frunze, 1977).

9) Ы. Ыаншансин, *Tʃuŋ-ian xua: wǎnfa te ǰiefa tʃiǎk'uǎfu t'utiŋ ǰyǎt'ontǐ 3 xo te 4 xoti tʃiǎk'uǎfu* [Dungan language: Grammar and orthography for the Third and Fourth Classes] (Frunze, 1956). A.A. Kalimov (ed.), compiled by Ы. Ыаншансин and L. Shinlo, *Wurus-Tʃuŋ-ian xuatian* [Russian-Dungan dictionary] (Frunze, 1959). Ы. Ыаншансин, *Tʃuŋ-ian iyandi ǰiefa lǔfu* [Orthography of the Dungan language] (Frunze, 1960).

ЧУАН ШЫЖЕДИ ПРОЛЕТАРМУ ЛЯНХЭЧЕНЭ

ШЫҮАДАН ЧИ

ЗНАМЯ ОНТЯВРЯ

БОСЫ 1957
НИНДИ ЧИҮӨ ЧИ 1
ЧУЛИ ШЫДИ

ХЫРХЫЗСТАН КОММУНИСТ ПАРТИЯДИ ЖУЩИП
КОМИТЕТ, ХЫРХЫЗ ССР ЗУЙГО СОВЕТ ДЭ
МИНИСТРМУ СОВЕТДИ ЖИГУАИ

№ 28 (1977)

1977 яни, сыйгүө 12, щешапбэ. Ин чи чүди лән блн.

Жүчәнсы 2 яни.



ЗУГУАДИ ТАДИОНИ

СССРди Жушци Стат-уравленне боди шипи фэ-сы ган сыйгүө чү 1 Зүгүди жакү жуниги 102 милтон тейтар чуптивиги зо жуоп-жя. Калси шисыди жакү жулуанли, дүо жуниги жи лэны. Жам бирфолкали Тар-живистан, Узбелетан, Уыр-хыстанди кыахот до сов-хоз на да чипши жуи жуоажжисипи. Эо жуи жуоажжиди сышоп дүижкун жуоо мянхуа хонжаму шө-

РЕСПУБЛИКАШОНДИ ТАНДО ХУӨ

Жуи чунгли жуоажжиди лан совхоз е жуиүгө-йүшип. Республикашон гунхуи жуи-хүө йитиги ган йитиги шипиди куанли. Иан Хырхыз ССР ан 13,511 тейтар дүош илан-Жушци Статуйравленне бо-до 13 процент, жакү лигу да хеди шип ган сыйгүө чү 1 ре-йүшип дүошди — 4907 тейтар кубыакашоп кэжи ба 208.075

тестар жуоажжиди жуишисе, жуиы йилче жуоажжиди 38 процент. Эыо Чүй лян Талас чүанли жуици дүо, жэр ба вушун жакү процент жуоажжиди кэжи жуишопан. Ба лэныш лян дүош (чүгүө йүшип) кэжи жуи валдыйли, дэли 91 дүо процентшопан. Киров лян Аламедин районшонди кэж-хон лян совхоз боди фэсы ба лэныш кэжи жуи валли. Он областшон жуи лэнышди хуө е лүкүрдисипи, ба 81 дүо про-цент лэныш лян дүош (чүгүө йүшип) жэр кэжи жуишопан.

Ба сан тирди йн тир мин-хуа е жуишопан. Араван лян Ленин районшонди кэжхон лян совхоз ба мянхуа жуици куэдишын.

Жуи нефси хуө шипиди куандисипи. Ба 31 процент нефру, 8 процент йишү кэжи

Ж И Н Т Я Н С Ы КОСМОНАВТИКАДИ ЖЫЗЫ



Щейнаршопсы Ю. ГАГАРИИ лян С. П. КОРОЛЕВ.

Шыжешон туфран-тусы йнда Советди амыло тушү дэли космосшонди ко йитиги гуали болжер 20 январди. Совет Лялбонди бийшип Ю. А. Гагарин туфран-тусы лян эрланшонди сечипи ги амылү ба ву космосди лян амы факжонди йамяр да Дарьян тушлушон дэли йүзлөв до планета жуишяди амыдун станцияшонли, да азу йитге амыди космос чүан дэли шын дохуан жакү эришяса да орбита станцияшонли, да космосшон амыди жакүдун амышон дэли ви факжон куэцү до амышын жакү амыди да амыжю хуөди филофшонли.

Чөү Комаунист партия, Совет гуйжа, чун амин-жакүдун цонши, совет космонавтика дэли да чангун-туанйуарди куажушисипи, вон йүзлөв, Германияшон до Маршон фидисипи. КПССди ди ХХУ сьезд ги амыди космонавтика амычип ба да амыну гэхали. Ианчан-ди ву лян лигу амышын жакүди амыи хондо кэжи б

Figure 3. Dungan newspaper Şüyeti iş'i [October banner], 12 April 1977.

Ба жыды минзы лян цинмин ё на да зы щени.

Ди 57 лянци. Ба дихади дур дү тынди щешон. Сангэ ларди вифыншон ба ниму жыдоди эрвазыма, пувазыди минзы тяншон.

Шэбазы лян... ээ тухо литу няндини. Вэму класс лигу зыю Лабир, Ягүр да... нянди хо, Кэлир лян... бу тошуэ. Ро-за, Лавар лян... ганжиндихын. Жүмар, Санжер да... чү чен-бондини.

Ди 58 лянци. Ба ниму классшон нянди бугуан нэгэ вү-гэ эрвазы дэ вүгэ пувазыди минзы лян цинмин жо цыйан щечүлэ.

Е л а з ы: Лэжэр Хиязов, Алла Завазева,
Саша Лебедев, Мэрян Лалазова.

Ди 59 лянци. Ба дихади чынпу дэ щёйжунг минзы тынди щечүлэ.

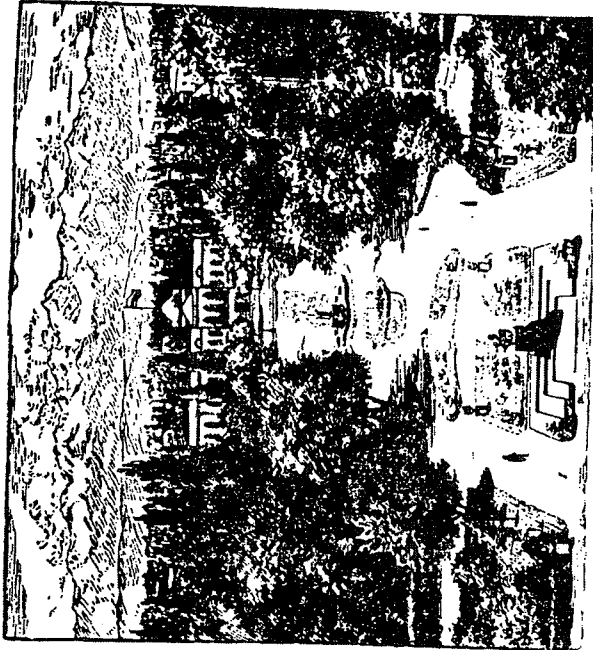
Ниму кан: жыце минзыди ту йнгэ зы лян са зы щешини.

Москва, Ленинград, Волгоград, Ташкент, Алма-Ата, Фрунзе, Ош, Пржевальск, Жамбул, Эрлах, Мигёнчуан, Масанчын, Сохүдү, Жялпак-Тюбе, Кенбулун, Кара-Су.

Ди 60 лянци. Ба дихади областди, зыху районди мин-зы тынди щешон. Ба область дэ районди минзыди ту йнгэ зы лян да зы щеди бэ вондён.

Жамбул область, Кара-Су район, Чүй район, Жеты-Огуз район, Онг область, Курдай район, Кант район, Атма-Ата область.

Ба чынпуди, щёйжунди, областди, районди минзы ту йнгэ зы ё лян да зы щени.



ФРУНЗЕ ЧЫНПУ.

Ди 61 лянци. Ба ниму жыдоди чынпу, щёйжунг дэ районди минзы жо зымуди суйфа щешон. Минзыди ту йнгэ зы лян да зы щеди бэ вондён.

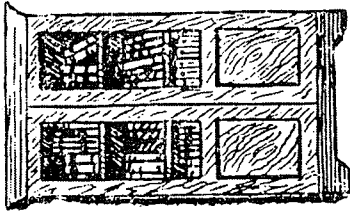
Б и л ү н: Кенбулун цунжуон,
Масанчын щёйжунг,
Фрунзе чынпу.

Чүй район.

Ди 62 лянци. Ба дихади хонзыди, чонзыди минзы тынди щешон. Ниму кан: жыце минзыди ту йнгэ зы лян да зы щешини.

Совет чонзы, Абай хонзы, Пушкин хонзы, Хун чонзы, Пржевальский хонзы, Октябрь чонзы, Клев хонзы, Токто-гул хонзы, Революция чонзы.

Figure 2. A Dungan textbook by Kh. Bugazov, Xuejdzü iyjan: 1 хо те 2 хоти тшюк'уэфу [Dungan language: A textbook for the First and Second Classes]. 3rd ed. Frunze, 1977, pp. 28, 29.



Гүй, мый, зүэ, түй, дүй, чүй.
Ниму фэ: готудн хуади йршон
щеди са зы?

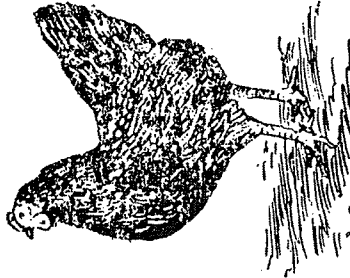
Гүй.

Жы дусы сангэ зы дүйхадн йнгэ жежерди хуа.
Хуади йршон щеди й зы.

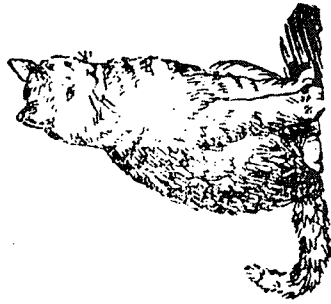
Ди 27 яници. Ниму зыжи сылэнди ще сан жү дуар хуа.
Жё дуар лигу лэ сангэ зы дүйхадн йнгэ жежерди хуа
зэмусы жё жыгэ хуади йршон лэ й зы.

Б и л у н: Вэди гүй тышни.

Ди 28 яници. Ба дихади хуарди минзы тынди щенон.
Жё жыгэ хуади йршон лэ й зы.



Жир.



Мор.



Хур.



Тур.

Ниму кай, хуади йршон щеди са зы.
Ниму зыжи сылэнди ээ ще шы жү сангэ зы дүйхадн
йнгэ жежерди хуа. Хуади йршон жё лэ р зы.

Б и л у н: бир, тор, сор, вэр.

Жы дусы сангэ зы дүйхадн йнгэ жежерди хуа.
Х у а д н йршон щеди р зы.

Ди 29 яници. Ба дихади хуа нялли, шму тынди щенон.
Ниму фэ: жы дусы жыгэ жежерди хуа зэмусы жыгэ
зы дүйхадн жежер.



Луэ.

Луэ, хуа, куэ, зүэ, шүэ, луэ, чүэ, жүэ.
Ниму кан: готудн хуади йршон лу щеди са зы.

Figure 1. A Dungan textbook by Kh. Bugazov, Xuëidzū iyian: 1 xо te 2 xoti tšjak'uefu [Dungan language: A textbook for the First and Second Classes]. 3rd ed. Frunze, 1977, pp. 14, 15.

中原人), i.e. Dungans.

Imazov argues that as a language is shaped by certain features—racial, economic, territorial and psychological—Dungan is not a Chinese language; since the Dungans have lived in Kirghizia and Kazakhstan for the last 100 years and because languages change and develop, the Dungan language is an independent language.¹⁰ He goes on to say that the Chinese Kansu dialect is quite different from the Dungan Kansu dialect both phonetically and syntactically. The examples he gives are: a) Dungans use *сы* (*si* 死) “to die” when talking about the death of birds, animals, Chinese and all other non-Moslem people, but they use *ван* (*wan* 完) for themselves and for other Moslems; b) Dungans use the plural suffix *му* (*mu* 們) more often than the Chinese, e.g. the Dungans say *колхозму* (*kolkhozmu*) “kolkhozes,” *районму* (*raionmu*) “regions,” *дуйвуму* (*tuiwumu* 隊伍們) “ranks, detachments,” *гуму* (*kumu* 狗們) “dogs,” *ловаму* (*lowamu* 老鴉們) “crows”; c) Dungans use specific verbs for specific items when shopping, e.g. *жян гуа* (*tsjan kua* 揀 or 揀瓜) “to choose or pick a melon,” *чын гуэзы* (*tsʃiŋ kuədzi* 稱果子) “to weigh apples,” *чын тон* (*tsʃiŋ-t'on* 稱糖) “to weigh sugar” and especially *да жу* (*da zu* 打肉) “to buy meat” and *да жу ю* (*da tsiu* 打酒) “to buy wine.”

The evidence, contrary to the conclusions reached by Imazov, appears to me to support a close relationship between the Dungan language and Chinese: a) the distinction between 死 and 完 is a religious one, and 完 can be used in Chinese to mean “to die”; b) 們 during the Yüan dynasty was used as a plural suffix for horses and cattle, i.e. 馬們 and 口頭們;¹¹ c) Chinese use the same verbs, i.e. 揀 and 稱 for shopping,

10) I. I. Iusupov in his work *Kolkhoznoe selo Masanchin* (Frunze, 1967) is of the same opinion. He writes that “the Dungans of the Soviet Union, living in completely new political, economical and cultural conditions, have formed into a *narodnost'* [people] which is significantly different both in material and spiritual culture (dwellings, clothes, food, language, literature etc.) and in psychological features from the Dungans [Chinese Mohammedans] who live in the Chinese People's Republic” (p. 3). Note the use of the term “Dungans” for the Mohammedans in China.

11) Both 馬們 and 口頭們 occur in the textbook *Lao Ch'i-ta* 老乞大. See Dyer (née Rimsky-Korsakoff), “Structural Analysis of the *Lao Ch'i-ta*” (unpublish-

while the verb 打 is also fairly common, e.g. 打油 "to buy oil," 打酒 "to buy wine."

Imazov further asserts that the Dungan language is quite different from the Chinese language because it is influenced by the Turkic and the Russian languages. This is a very common argument among Dungan scholars and is one which they also apply to the Chinese Mohammedans in China; whenever the Dungan historian M. Sushanlo mentions that the Chinese Mohammedans in China speak the local dialects, he always stresses that they use many Arabic, Persian and Turkic words.¹² The Dungan linguist, İu. İanshansin counted about 300 Arabic, Persian and Turkic words in the language of the Soviet Dungans.¹³ However, I found very little Arabic, Persian or Turkic influence in the Dungan primary school textbooks with the exception of *a*) personal names, e.g. Abdurakhman, Fatima, Mukhamed, and *b*) the names for all the days of the week, e.g. жума (*tşuma*) "Friday, a week," шанбэ (*şanpε*) "Saturday," дўшанбэ (*tūşanpε*) "Monday," чашанбэ (*tş'aşanpε*) "Wednesday." But probably in colloquial speech, especially that spoken by the elder Dungans, there will be found more variety.

As for the extent of Russian influence on the Dungan language, I wrote in 1965:

Generally speaking, the Dungans, though living in U.S.S.R., have kept their dialects fairly pure. The reason for this most probably is that they are living in groups, within their own villages or collective farms. An analysis of the entries in the Russian-Dungan Dictionary shows that about 9 per cent of Dungan words are Russian. But parallel to these Russian words, in most cases, a Dungan version is also given or the meaning is explained by a phrase or a sentence.

Dungans do not use Russian verbs, adverbs, pronouns, adjectives,

ed Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Chinese, Australian National University, 1977), pp. 224-225.

12) M. Sushanlo, *Dungane (istoriko-ètnograficheskiï ocherk)* (Frunze, 1971), pp. 55, 71, 73. Hereafter Sushanlo, *Dungane*.

13) İu. İanshansin, *Xuşıdzū İyjan r'oxma foŋ-İan* [The Tokmak dialect of the Dungan language] (Frunze, 1968), pp. 43-51.

КОСМОНАВТИКАДИ ЖЫЗЫ (今天是 *Kosmonavtika* 的日子)
 "Today is Cosmonautics Day."¹⁶ I would like to add here that these difficulties would occur mainly in newspaper editorials, in political texts and in works on agriculture where Russian words such as гектар (*gektar*) "hectare," колхоз (*kolkhoz*) "kolkhoz, collective farm," совхоз (*sovkhos*) "sovkhos, State farm," район (*raion*) "region," процент (*protsent*) "per cent" occur in every line. Dungan literature, however, both prose and poetry, contains very few Russian words.

As a person with distinct links with China and Russia,¹⁷ I was somewhat surprised that the Dungans have apparently lost their link with China, with its language and culture. I do not think the explanation for this lies in the present relationship between the Soviet Union and China. The reason for the absence of ties should probably be attributed to: *a*) their lengthy residence in the Soviet Union (100 years); *b*) their knowledge that Moslems were suppressed and massacred by the Chinese during the Ch'ing dynasty; *c*) Dungan prosperity, both as city dwellers and as collective farmers, under Soviet rule. They are happy and settled and have no need to look back into the past with longing; *d*) as an emigrant community outside China, in their attempt to preserve their national identity, the Dungans, like many overseas Chinese living in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, are extremely conservative and nationalistic; *e*) as a small ethnic minority, Dungans want to be regarded as an independent community, speaking an independent language, hence their use of "Dungan language," "Dungan dialects," "Dungan people," "Dungan food," "Dungan vinegar."

Although there does not seem to be a link between the Dungans and China, they did, however, show a definite interest in Mohammedans elsewhere in the world. They were interested in the distribution of Moslem communities and the mosques in other countries. They asked such questions as: "How many Mohammedans are there in Indonesia?"

16) See the xerox copy of the newspaper (Figure 3). The last example is the heading above the photograph.

17) I am a Russian born in China. I lived in China for the first twenty years of my life.

conjunctions, prepositions, particles etc. The only Russian words that are adopted are nouns or adjectives that are formed from these nouns. Russian grammatical endings are not used. Dungan drop Russian suffixes and use their own.¹⁴

Îu. Tsunvazo, the famous Dungan linguist from the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh S.S.R. in Alma-Ata, accused me of being a "Chinese chauvinist."¹⁵ He went on to say that as China has so many dialects and as many of those dialects are incomprehensible to speakers of the others, there is no such thing as a "Chinese language," but many Chinese languages. I then pointed out to him that Dungans did not speak a "Dungan language," but two languages, i.e. a Kansu language and a Shensi language.

Obviously there will always be different views on the question as to whether the Dungan language should be considered a Chinese language or an independent language. On the one hand, a Chinese cannot read the Dungan newspaper ШЫҢҮӘДИЧИ (Şiyati tş'i) [October banner], simply because it is written in the Cyrillic script; on the other hand, if I were to re-write a page of this newspaper in Chinese characters, starting with the title 十月的旗, I feel that most Chinese could probably read this newspaper easily, having only occasional difficulty with such Russian words as: Коммунист партияди жунцин комитет (Komunist partiâ 的中心 komitet) "The Central Committee of the Communist Party," КПС Сди ди XXV съезд (KPSS 的第 XXV s'ezd) "The XXVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," Жинтяны

14) Dyer (née Rimsky-Korsakoff), "The Dungan Dialect: An Introduction and Morphology" (unpublished Master of Science dissertation, Department of Linguistics, Georgetown University, 1965), p. 55.

15) "Chinese chauvinists" and "Chinese Great Han elements" are fairly popular terms among Dungan scholars. For instance M. Sushanlo in his work *Dungane* writes that the legend which states that the Dungans are the descendents of the 3,000 Arabs (sent to China by Mohammed during T'ang T'ai-tsung's time, r. 627-650) and their Chinese wives was invented by "Moslem reactionary clergy" and "Dungan feudal lords"; "Chinese Great Han elements" used this legend to prove to the people the close origin of the Chinese and the Dungans [Chinese Mohammedans] and to convince the people that Chinese are the Dungans' maternal uncles (p. 46).

or "How many mosques are there in Sydney?" However, some Dungans in Central Asia used the word "Dungan"¹⁸ for the Chinese Mohammedans in China¹⁹ as well as for all the Mohammedans in the world. Dungans, both from the Academy of Sciences and the kolkhozes asked questions such as "How many Dungans live in Canberra?" or "Where are the Dungans in the world located?" It seemed that they identified these "Dungans" who, for example, lived in Canberra, with themselves and were therefore surprised that one of the Canberra "Dungans," i.e. a Chinese Mohammedan, regarded himself as a Chinese. The question they asked was: "How can he be a Chinese if he is a Dungan?"²⁰

The Origin of the Soviet Dungans

The question of the origin of the Chinese Mohammedans has never been solved satisfactorily. In Central Asia, besides being told that the Soviet Dungans are not Chinese and that the Dungan language is not a Chinese language I did not obtain any new insights as to the

18) The most probable theory of the origin of the word "Dungan," i.e. *tung-kan* 東干 "eastern branch" is that this term appeared first in the province of Hsinchiang during the second half of the 18th century to distinguish the refugees from the persecution in the East from the native Chinese Mohammedans. There are several other theories on the etymology of this term; e.g. in the preface entitled "From the Editor" at the beginning of the book *Dungane* written by M. Sushanlo, G.G. Stratanovich states that the Dungans do not call themselves "Dungans" and that it is not accidental that out of all the groups which are regarded as the ancestors of the Soviet Dungans only the "Tung-pei Hui-hui" call themselves by this term. They do so because they are, in fact, the migrants from the left bank of the Yellow River. He thinks that the term "Dungan" is written in Chinese by the two characters meaning "east" and "bank" which express the relationship of the Yellow River to the area where the "Dungans" [Chinese Mohammedans] were settled and means "*levoberezhnye*," i.e. "leftbankers."

19) E.g. I.I. Īsupov and M. Sushanlo, see n. 10 and n. 15.

20) Mr. Lu Ta-wei of Canberra, a Chinese Mohammedan, regards himself as a Chinese, but he told me that his grandfather definitely did not regard himself as a Chinese but as a *Hui-hui*. The surname Lu comes from Jallaluddin 哲喇魯丁.

origin of the ancestors of the Soviet Dungans.²¹ Were they originally a Turkic, Arabic or Iranian people who migrated to China and adopted the language, culture, economy and agriculture of the surrounding Chinese population? Or did they originally descend from the Uigurs²² or other non-Chinese stock? Waldemar Jochelson thinks that somatologically Dungans should be regarded as Mongolized Turks.²³ *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Ènfsiklopediia* classes Chinese Mohammedans as "near to the northern Chinese Mongoloid type."²⁴

The Chinese scholars who have worked on this problem, Lin Kan 林幹, Pai Shou-yi 白壽彝 and others, have come to the conclusion that the *Hui-hui* are to be regarded as a national minority which traces its origin mainly to the immigration of Arabic, Persian and Central Asian followers of the Mongol armies, and partly to earlier Arabic immigration in T'ang times.²⁵

The Soviet Dungans have persistent legends that their forefathers settled in China in T'ang times. In 1942 Professor Vrubel wrote down a legend he heard in the village of Aleksandrovka that the Arabs (or Persians) who came to China summoned by the T'ang Emperor, T'ai-tung, had laid the foundation of the Dungan nation.²⁶

21) On the historical background of the Chinese Mohammedans which is based on a number of Chinese, Soviet and Western sources see Dyer, "The Dungan Dialect," pp. 19-46.

22) *Der Grosse Brockhaus*, 16th ed. revised (Wiesbaden, 1952), vol. 3, p. 387.

23) Waldemar Jochelson, *Peoples of Asiatic Russia* (The American Museum of Natural History, 1928), pp. 104-105.

24) Vol. 46 (1957), pp. 419-420.

25) Lin Kan (in Russian, Lin' Gan'), "Ob Ètnogeneze Dungan," *Sovetskaia Ètnografiia* 1954, no. 1, pp. 42-52. Pai Shou-yi 白壽彝, *Hui-hui min-tsu ti hsien-sheng* 回回民族底新生 (Shanghai, 1951). Pai Shou-yi 白壽彝, Han Tao-jen 韓道仁, Ting Yi-min 丁毅民 and others, *Hui-hui min-tsu te li-shih ho hsien-chuang* 回回民族的歷史和現狀 (Peking, 1957).

26) As told by G.G. Stratanovich in "Vopros o proiskhozhdenii dungan v russkoi i sovetskoi literature," *Sovetskaia Ètnografiia* 1954, no. 1, p. 54, who lists scholars who have subscribed to this view of the origin of the Dungans. The theory is also to be found in Robert B. Ekvall, *Cultural Relations on the Kansu-Tibetan Border* (Chicago, 1939), p. 8.

But the most recent discussion concerning the origin of the Soviet Dungans by Soviet and Dungan scholars can be found in the introduction of a work on Dungan popular tales and legends.²⁷ This introduction, written by B. Riftin and M. Khasanov and entitled "The Artistic World of the Dungan Tale" mentions several versions of the origin of the Dungans, starting from the legends and ending with the views of the Dungan and Soviet scholars of today. As this work was published in 1977 I think it would be useful to translate and summarize these versions here. One asks whether the word "Dungans" could be a distorted Turkic word *turgan* "those that stayed behind, those that are waiting, those that are waiting to be counted"? A well-known old legend is given to support the possibility.²⁸ Another notes that Dungans call themselves *lao-hui-hui* "venerable Mohammedans." According to a beautiful legend told by the old story-tellers (which is similar to the legend written down by Professor Vrubel in the village of Aleksandrovka in 1942), after a dream on the "18th day of the third moon" in 628, the Emperor T'ai-tsung sent ambassadors with a letter to the western prophet "Mokhammad" who in turn sent 3,000 Arabs to China who settled there and eventually took Chinese women as wives. According to this legend Dungans are descendents of Arabs and their Chinese wives, which explains why they have adopted the Chinese language and culture on the one hand and have kept their religious ties with the Moslem world on the other.²⁹ The Dungans are of the Sunni sect and Hanifi school of law.³⁰ The authors mention

27) B. Riftin (ed.), *Dunganskie narodnye skazki i predaniia*, comp., written down and trans. by B. Riftin, M. Khasanov and I. Īusupov (Moscow, 1977).

28) *Ibid.*, p. 5. See Kh. Īusurov and V. Shakhmatov (comp.), *Dunganskie skazki* (Alma-Ata, 1946; 2nd ed. Alma-Ata, 1952), p. 5.

29) Riftin (ed.), *Dunganskie narodnye skazki*, pp. 5-7. This legend was written down in 1941 by the Dungan historian Kh. Īusurov as told to him by the famous narrator of folk tales, Khiiā Vuakhunov. See Kh. Īusurov, "Vosstanie dungan v Severo-Zapadnom Kitae i pereselenie ikh v Semirech'e (1860-1890 gg.)" (Master's dissertation, Frunze, 1948), pp. 33-41. This legend is given in full by M. Sushanlo in his book *Dungane*, pp. 43-46. He rejects this theory (see n. 15 above) and adds that the Moslem clergy of Hsinchiang and Semirech'e area spread this theory to show that the Dungans have a special place in the Moslem world because they are the descendents of the Prophet himself.

30) Riftin (ed.), *Dunganskie narodnye skazki*, p. 7. See M. Sushanlo, *Dungane*, p. 244.

that this legend has no actual confirmation in the historical texts. Some scholars, such as G.G. Stratanovich, think that the ancestors of the Dungans came from a section of the settled population of the once powerful Kitan empire, which existed during the 9th to 12th centuries in the northern part of China, especially from among the Manchu ethnic groups.³¹ Other scholars, such as the Dungan historian M. Sushanlo, put forward the hypothesis that the Tanguts played an important role in the formation of the Dungans.³²

With respect to the origin of the Dungans, the only thing that one can be guided by at present, continue Riftin and Khasanov, are the deductions of the anthropologists who are conducting detailed investigations on the Dungans. They quote Professor N.N. Cheboksarov who points out that

while the North-Chinese type generally predominates, the Hui have characteristics of the complex intermingling of various Mongoloid, mainly Pacific, elements with Europoid admixtures, belonging chiefly to the Indo-Pamir group. This reveals, of course, the complex ethnic history of the Hui, where side by side with Chinese (Han) groups other components participated such as Iranian or Turkic and, perhaps, Manchu and Mongol, while in the south Arabian and Malayan components were also added.³³

Riftin and Khasanov go on to say that because of the complexity of the ethnic history of the Chinese Mohammedans who are scattered in different parts of China, the ethnographers usually talk about three groups of Chinese Mohammedans: the largest, north-western group, which also can simply be called the northern group, the south-eastern group and the south-western group. All three groups speak the local Chinese dialects. The fact that they do not possess their own language and that contacts are not maintained among the various groups, especially between the northern and south-eastern groups, gives some ethnographers, e.g. A.M. Reshetov, grounds for believing that the

31) Riftin (ed.), *Dunganskie narodnye skazki*, pp. 7–8.

32) *Ibid.*, p. 8. See M. Sushanlo, *Dungane*, pp. 52–53, 64–72.

33) Riftin (ed.), *Dunganskie narodnye skazki*, p. 8. The quote comes from chapter IV entitled “Antropologicheskii sostav naseleniia” in N.N. Cheboksarov and others (ed.), *Narody Vostochnoi Azii* (Moscow, 1965), p. 87.

Chinese Mohammedans should not be regarded as a special nationality, but rather as an ethno-confessional group within the Chinese community.³⁴ In the Soviet Union, Riftin and Khasanov conclude, the Dungans of Central Asia and Kazakhstan unquestionably form an independent *narodnost'* (people). They have their own literary language, based on the Kansu dialect, which has acquired many new Russian, Kirghiz and Kazakh words.³⁵

According to western, Chinese, Dungan and Soviet scholars, the ancestors of the Chinese Mohammedans in the north³⁶ could have come from one or two or a mixture of several of the following groups: Persians, Arabs, Mongols, Manchus, Turks, Tanguts, Kitans, Uigurs and Tibetans.³⁷ Furthermore, to add to the confusion, one must remember that such terms as "*Hui-hui*," "*Hui-tsu*," "*Hui-min*" or "Chinese Mohammedans" are very ambiguous as they usually cover both the sinicized Mohammedan minorities and the Chinese in general who have adopted Islam. One must also take into account the fact that there was considerable intermarriage between these sinicized Mohammedan minorities and the Chinese who adopted Islam. Among the Chinese scholars, Pai Shou-yi 白壽彝, Lin Kan 林幹, Han Tao-jen 韓道仁, Ting Yi-min 丁毅民 and others think that by the 15th century Moslem settlers in China had fully adopted the Chinese language and Chinese surnames. If the Moslems in China spoke the local Chinese dialects,

34) Riftin (ed.), *Dunganskie narodnye skazki*, pp. 8-9. See A.M. Reshetov, "Ob ètnicheskom svoebrazii khuèi i urovne ikh ètnicheskoi konsolidatsii," *Ètnicheskaià istoriia narodov Azii* (Moscow, 1972), p. 144 and p. 147.

35) Riftin (ed.), *Dunganskie narodnye skazki*, p. 9.

36) This includes Dungans but not the Chinese Mohammedans in the south, who, according to Professor N.N. Cheboksarov, have Arabian and Malayan components.

37) As early as the 7th century Arab and Persian traders were travelling to China. During the Yüan dynasty Mohammedan people of Central Asia voluntarily joined the Mongol armies or were brought involuntarily by the Mongols into China. Their first stop being Hsinchiang, Kansu, Ch'inghai and Shensi, many Mohammedans settled there. The Dungan scholar Kh. ū. ūsurov has suggested that the Dungans are descended from a group of Tibetans who settled in north-west China in T'ang times.

adopted Chinese culture, and intermarried with Chinese, can one speak of pure Chinese Mohammedans? On the other hand, although Chinese Mohammedans are scattered, they live in compact groups. Perhaps the genuinely unifying factors among the various Chinese Mohammedan communities are territory and religion, not race.³⁸

38) The same may be true of the Dungans as well. From a layman's point of view, some of the Dungans in the Soviet Union look like Chinese, some resemble Japanese and some have distinct Turkic and Mongolian features. Some Dungan men take Kazakh, Kirghiz and, to a lesser degree, Russian women as wives, who, after marriage, adopt the Dungan language and culture, thereby adding to the racial mixture among the Dungans while at the same time maintaining Dungan unity.

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