

In a former article,<sup>1</sup> I expressed the view that when it comes to the explanation of titles used by Turks or Mongols “ je ne peux avoir qu’une extrême méfiance envers toutes tentatives d’explication se basant sur des langues non-turques. . . . Les Turcs, créateurs des plus grands empires nomades, n’auraient-ils pas su donner des titres turcs à leurs fonctionnaires ? ” It is mere commonsense that one must be twice as careful in giving to a Turkish or Mongol word a non-Altaiic etymology, as when remaining within the Altaiic field. Whether my explanation of *qapqan* is sound remains to be seen ; but I have endeavoured to explain a word occurring only in Altaiic by Altaiic facts. I can only repeat what I have said in the above-quoted article : “ Je suis prêt à accepter chaque explication justifiée quelle que soit la langue qui en est la base,” but the Iranian and Korean etymologies of Altaiic *qapqan* are not even justified in their own field and are so much the more unacceptable for Altaiic.

The historical conclusions based on these etymologies should be discarded. In rejecting them I think it is of value to have clearly before one’s eyes the set of arguments advanced by Altheim : (1) A word is found on a third-century ostrakon, discovered in Dura-Europos. (2) This word is identified with one occurring five centuries later in a Turkish inscription. (3) An Iranian etymology is provided for it. (4) The *same* word is used to prove that there were Turks in Persia in the third century.

The chain of reasoning itself is obviously false, even if the facts quoted were accurate. This is, however, as I think I have shown, not the case.

<sup>1</sup> A propos . . . p. 551.

#### CORRIGENDUM

JRAS. Parts 1 and 2, 1954. Page 62, line 24. For BHSM read BSHM.