

In his interesting notice "Le Nom turc du vin dans Odoric de Pordenone,"¹ P. PELLLOT has called attention to the word *bor* as a Turkish designation of grape-wine, adding also that this word occurs in a Mongol letter found in Turfan and dated 1398.² I can furnish additional proof for the fact that *bor* is an old Mongol word in the sense of wine, although, of course, it may have been borrowed from Turkish. In the Mongol version of the epic romance of Geser or Gesar Khan we find an enumeration of eight names of liquor, all supposed to be magically distilled from *araki* ("arrack, brandy"). These are: *aradsa* (*araja*), *xoradsa* or *xuradsa*, *širadsa*, *boradsa*, *takpa*, *tikpa*, *marba*, *mirba*.³ These terms have never been studied, and, with the exception of the first and third, are not even listed in Kovalevski's and Golstuntki's Mongol Dictionaries. The four last words are characterized as Tibetan by the Tibetan suffix *pa* or *ba*. *Marwa* (corresponding in meaning to Tibetan *č'an*) is well known as a word generally used throughout Sikkim and other Himalayan regions for an alcoholic beverage.⁴ As to *tikpa*, it seems to be formed after the model of Tibetan *tig-č'an*, the liquor for settling (*tig*) the marriage-affair, presented by the future bridegroom to the parents of his intended.⁵

The terms *aradsa*, *xoradsa* or *xuradsa*, *širadsa*, and *boradsa*, are all provided with the same ending. The first is given by KOVALEVSKI⁶ with the meaning "very strong koumiss, spirit of wine." A parallel is offered by Manchu in *arčan* ("a liquor prepared from milk"), while Manchu *arjan* denotes any alcoholic drink. The term *xoradsa* or *xuradsa* may be derived from Mongol *xuru-t* (*-t* being suffix of the plural), corresponding to Manchu *kuru*, which designates "a kind of cheese made from fermented mare's milk, or cheese prepared from cow's or mare's milk with the addition of sugar and sometimes pressed into forms." The word *širadsa* has been adopted by Schmidt and Kovalevski in their respective dictionaries as "wine distilled for the fourth time" or "esprit de vin quadruple;" but these explanations are simply based on the above passage of Geser, in which one drink is supposed to be

¹ *T'oung Pao*, 1914, pp. 448-453.

² Ramstedt's tentative rendering of this word by "beaver" is a double error: first, the beaver does not occur in Mongolia and is unknown to the Mongols, its easternmost boundary is formed by the Yenisei; second, *bor* as an animal-name means "an otter cub," and otter and beaver are entirely distinct creatures.

³ Text, ed. I. J. SCHMIDT, p. 65; translation, p. 99. Schmidt transcribes *arasa*, *chorasa*, etc., but the palatal sibilant is preferable.

⁴ Cf. H. H. RISLEY, *Gazetteer of Sikkim*, p. 75, where also the preparation is described.

⁵ JÄSCHKE, *Tibetan Dictionary*, p. 364.

⁶ *Dictionnaire mongol*, p. 143.