

APPENDIX I

IRANIAN ELEMENTS IN MONGOL

On the preceding pages, as well as in my "Loan-Words in Tibetan," I had occasion to point out a number of Mongol words traceable to Iranian; and, as this subject has evoked some interest since the discoveries made in Turkistan, I deem it useful to treat it here in a coherent notice and to sum up our present knowledge of the matter.

1. Certain relations of the Mongol language to Iranian were known about a century ago to I. J. SCHMIDT,¹ the real founder of Mongol philology. It was Schmidt who, as far back as 1824, first recognized in the Mongol name Xormusda (Khormusda) the Iranian Ormuzd or Ahuramazdāh of the Avesta. Even Schmidt's adversary, J. KLAPROTH, was obliged to admit that this theory was justified.² Rémusat's objections were refuted by SCHMIDT himself.³ At present we know that the name in question was propagated over Central Asia by the Sogdians in the forms Xūrmaztā (Wurmazt) and Ōharmīzd.⁴ What we are still ignorant of is how the transformation of the supreme Iranian god into the supreme Indian god was effected; for in the Buddhist literature of the Mongols the name Xormusda strictly refers to the god Indra. Also in the polyglot Buddhist dictionaries the corresponding terms of Chinese, Tibetan, etc., relate to Indra.

2. Esroa, Esrua, or Esrūn, is in the Buddhist literature of the Mongols the designation of the Indian god Brahma. The Iranian origin of this word has been advocated by A. SCHIEFNER.⁵ Although taken for a corruption of Sanskrit *īśvara* ("lord"), it seems, according to Schiefner, to be in closer relation to Avestan *graosha* (*sraoša*) or *gravañh*. Certain it is that the Mongol word is derived from the Uigur

¹ *Forschungen im Gebiete der Bildungsgeschichte der Völker Mittel-Asiens*, p. 148.

² "Cette hypothèse mérite d'être soigneusement examinée et nous invitons M. Schmidt à recueillir d'autres faits propres à lui donner plus de certitude" (*Nouveau Journal asiatique*, Vol. VII, 1831, p. 180).

³ *Geschichte der Ost-Mongolen*, p. 353.

⁴ F. W. K. MÜLLER, *Die "persischen" Kalenderausdrücke*, pp. 6, 7; *Handschriftenreste*, II, pp. 20, 94.

⁵ In his introduction to W. RADLOFF's *Proben der Volkslitteratur der türkischen Stämme*, Vol. II, p. XI. Schiefner derives also Kurbustu of the Soyon from Ormuzd.