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On the Turkic etymology of the Hungarian word *dara*

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In a monograph on Turkic loanwords in Hungarian, the word *dara* ‘grist; rubble; mush; ice pellet’ is listed among entries with a definite Turkic origin although the authors also indicate various problems with this etymology. This article checks the former etymologies and comes to the conclusion that the word *dara* cannot be related to the Old Turkic word *tarıǵ* ‘grain, millet’ since it never referred to whole grain in Hungarian; it only denoted some ground form of grain. The new etymology is backing on the historical sources, and it can perhaps be assumed that the word in Hungarian constitutes part of the Ottoman loanwords—ultimately of Persian origin—which found their way into Hungarian through Southern Slavic mediation.

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2011 saw the publication, by András Róna-Tas and Árpád Berta, of a comprehensive monograph on Turkic loanwords in Hungarian—the language which represents the most important source of information on Western Old Turkic (WOT). In this two-volume dictionary, 418 words are discussed with entries separated into three categories: words with definite etymologies, possible borrowings and words with uncertain origins. The word *dara* is listed among entries with a definite Turkic origin although the authors also indicate various problems with this etymology. As an expression of my esteem for Professor Róna-Tas and having reconsidered the etymology of the word *dara*, I would like to offer a new recommendation in this article.

The etymological dictionaries (TESz and EWUng) date the first appearance of the word *dara* to 1522, citing a personal name, Gregorius Dara, in a tithe record (Szabó 1954: 28).¹ The earliest references to a common word date back to the 16th–

1 There are two earlier mentions of the proper name *Dara*. One is a Latin contract of sale from 1277–1279: “Das Kapitel von Eisenburg bestätigt, daß Opud, Sohn des Dara (Opud filius Dara), und seine Söhne Chepanus und Johannes, sowie Lydguer, Sohn des Luprecius von Kér, ihren erblichen Besitz in Kér im Umfang von 6 Hufen an Dionysius von Veszékény um 18 Mark verkauft haben, wozu Obulganus von Bozty seine Zustimmung gibt”. Urkundenbuch II: 106. On the same transaction, see 1279–1283 “a nobilibus Opud

17th centuries. These are, in most cases, compound words: *semle-dara* ‘bread-crumbs’ (1545, 1553), *árpa-dara* ‘grits’ (1636) and *búza-dara* (1638) ‘semolina’. The word also appears as a simple noun: *dara* ‘mush’, ‘hulled barley’ (1565), and *dara* ‘grainy ice’, ‘ice pellet’ (1565, 1590). Despite its late appearance, Turcologists and Hungarian linguists from Vámbéry (1870) and Gombocz (1912) on have regarded the word *dara* as a pre-conquest (prior to 895) loanword in Hungarian related to agriculture and have tied it to the word *tariġ* ‘crop, cultivation, agriculture, cultivated land, grain, millet’, which they believed to be a noun formed from the verb stem *tari-* ‘to cultivate (the ground)’ and the deverbal nominal suffix $+(X)g$ (WOT I: 287).

At the same time, these researchers have all been aware of the various problems of the origin of this Hungarian word: we find a word-initial *d-* instead of *t-*; the word ends in *-a* instead of the anticipated *-ó*, which appears in the place of the suffix $+(X)g$; and further chronological and semantic problems also emerge in connection with the Old Turkic origin of the word. Let us examine these one by one.

1. Each word derived from the Old Turkic verb *tari-* appears with an initial *t-* in the Turkic languages; the words thus entered the Hungarian and Mongolian languages this way (cf. Hung. *tarló* < **tarlag* < **tarılag* < **tarıglag* ‘a cultivated field’ < *tari-* ‘to cultivate; Chuv. *tırǎ* ‘Getreide, Korn’; Mong. *tariy-a* ‘grain, corn, wheat, crop, field, farm, inoculation, vaccination’, *tariyalang* ‘arable land, plough land, field, plantation, agriculture’ (WOT 2: 865)). Various explanations have been offered on the initial *d-* in the Hungarian word *dara*.
 - 1.1. Among the Turkic loanwords in Hungarian, and sporadically in some Middle Turkic languages, we find a few examples of a word-initial *d-* instead of the Old Turkic *t-*, e.g. *dél* ‘noon, south’ < OT *tüs* ‘midday, noon’, *dől* ‘to lean, topple over, stream down’ < *tüš-* ‘to fall, settle down’ (WOT 1: 291, 299).

filio Dara” Urkundenbuch II: 130. This item is cited by Fehértói (2004: 236). The register illustrates well the names of foreign origin used by the nobility. I therefore think that Kázmér (1993: 280) might be right when he proposes that the proper name *Dara* is a nickname for Dárius and thus this item should not be considered here. The second item chronologically is from 1458: a *jobbágy* (approximately ‘serf’) with the surname *Dara* is mentioned among the inhabitants of the village of Piskolt in Bihar County (Jakó 1940: 326). Kázmér regards the name as signifying an occupation possibly meaning ‘a miller who grinds grist’ (1993: 280). The surname *Daray* (and its variants) cannot be discussed here either because they developed out of the place name *Drah/Darah* in Szatmár County (present-day Szamosdara/Dorolț in Romania). These items have no bearing on the etymology of the word *dara* and may only assist us in dating the appearance of the proper name to the mid-fifteenth century.

- 1.2. Lajos Ligeti considered the initial *d-*, which occasionally appeared in the Kipchak languages, an Oghuz peculiarity (Ligeti 1986: 115–116).
- 1.3. Meanwhile, Lóránd Benkő regarded it as an internal Hungarian development (TESz, EWUng).
- 1.4. Turcologist Gerard Clauson maintained that the voicing of the initial consonant in the Turkic languages resulted from a confusion with the Persian word *dārū*, which originally meant ‘medicine, drug’ and later ‘gunpowder’ (1972: 532, 537–538). The authors of WOT did not agree with the assumption that the initial voiced consonant was influenced by Persian.
2. As for the word ending, with the borrowing of an Old Turkic word *tarī-* *+(X)g*, one would expect the same sound change that occurred with the Hungarian word *tarló* < **tarlag* < **tarīlag* < **tarīglag*. Still, we can find examples among Old Turkic loanwords in Hungarian where this phonological correspondence did not take place: *āk-* ‘to sow (seed)/säen’+*-(A)γ* > *eke* ‘plough/Pflug’; **čapay* > *csipa* ‘secretion, mucus discharged from the eyes’ (WOT I: 246, 313).
3. The agricultural terms in Hungarian include numerous borrowings from Old Turkic which can be found in various linguistics sources from the fourteenth century onward: *árpa* ‘barley’ (1321), *eke* ‘plough’ (1331), *arat* ‘to mow’ (1372), *búza* ‘wheat’ (1395), *tarló* ‘a cultivated field’ (1397), *sarló* ‘sickle’ (1395), *őröl* ‘to grind, mill’ (1416) etc.,² but the word *dara* only appeared in the mid-sixteenth century. In order to resolve this chronological problem, Ligeti suggested that the word *dara* may form part of the Cuman group of Turkic loanwords in Hungarian and suggested the form **darī* (1986: 289). Although the authors of WOT considered this possible, they did not regard the word *dara* as one of the Hungarian loanwords of Cuman origin.
4. Even if we accept the phonological arguments and set aside the problem with chronology, this etymology still seems problematic in terms of semantics. It is not clear based on what arguments the authors of WOT considered the word *dara* among the words associated with agriculture. Do they share the opinion in EWUng (1993: 244) that the original meaning of the word might have been ‘grain, millet’ and became ‘flour’ and then ‘millet mush’ through a semantic shift? How is it possible then that the word *dara* in Hungarian does not mean ‘millet’ or ‘grain’ but ‘grist, rubble’? Moreover, the presumed meaning ‘millet’ is not only missing from the Hungarian form, but also from the Chuvash and Mongolian ones³ (WOT I: 290). This is particularly thought provoking since millet was the least demanding type of grain grown by nomadic tribes and therefore very popular. They planted it in the spring in their winter headquarters and harvested it after their return, that is, if it was not consumed by locusts.

2 For the complete list, see WOT 2: 1161; Ligeti 1986: 287–294.

3 In Chuvash, it means ‘corn, grain, seeds, bread’; in Mongolian, it only exists as a verb (WOT I: 289–290).

Since *boza*,⁴ the national drink of the Cumans, was produced out of fermented millet or wheat, we can rightfully expect the word **dari* > *dara*, meaning ‘millet’. However, this is not the case. Therefore, the solution to the chronological and semantic problems must be found elsewhere.

The idea for my etymological suggestion came from the *Mühimme Defterleri*, the records of the imperial council. Here, among the orders issued by Suleiman the Magnificent regarding his last campaign in Hungary in 1566, the bey of Akkerman (Belgorod Dneprovskij, Ukraine) was commanded as follows:

Since Devlet Giray, the khan of Kaffa [*sic!*], is to send his son Mehmed Giray into the campaign in accordance with the imperial order, in order to defend the country he has requested that when [his son] has reached the fort of Or, the bey of Akkerman should provide him [i.e. the khan] with artillerymen, *top oti*, specialists in firearms from among the defenders of the castle, arms, ships and riverboats in order to fight the enemy and provide him with all other aid that he desires.⁵

Except for *top oti*, everything in the order was clear to me: it ordered the preparation and shipment of guns, experts in firearms, weapons, riverboats and ships, but what could *top oti* mean and what are the segments of the compound word: *top+ot+ı* meaning ‘cannon’+‘grass’+the third person singular possessive suffix or ‘cannon’+‘fire’+the third person singular possessive suffix. Thinking of cannon fire in connection with the meaning ‘fire’ seemed obvious, but because the vowel in the original Old Turkic word is long, the consonant should have become voiced and thus the compound should have been *top odti*. However, according to the *Tarama Sözlüğü* (1971: 3824), the word *top oti*, in the form ‘cannon’+‘grass’, means ‘gunpowder’.

4 The first mention of *boza* can be dated to after 1422 with the meaning ‘eine Art von Bier’ (EWUng 1993: 132). TESz dates the emergence of this word in Hungarian to a later year, 1519 (I: 356).

5 *Kefe Hanı Devlet Giray Han’ın kendisine gönderilen emr üzerine oğlu Mehmed Giray’ı sefere göndereceği fakat memleketin korunması için Or ağzı’na geldiğinde düşmana karşı kendisine tüfekçi, top oti, hisar erenlerinden silah kullanabilen er, vs. silah, gemi ve şayka yardımında bulunmasını istediğinden kendisine her türlü yardımın yapılması ve ne isterse verilmesi*. MD 5. No. 1199. Kefe, or Caffa in Italian, was the most significant of the Genoese trading towns located in the southern part of the Crimea. It fell to the Ottomans in 1475 along with the entire Genoese colony. The Ottomans later made it a seat for a sanjak and later for a vilayet. The order naturally makes mention of Devlet Geray I, the khan of the Crimean Khanate (1551–1577). The Fort of Or (Perekop in Ukrainian) was located on the thin isthmus that linked the Crimean peninsula with the mainland and was the gateway to the khanate and its most important fortification.

Its earliest appearance in Ottoman texts dates back to the fifteenth century.⁶ But why was gunpowder ‘cannon grass’? Another entry in the *Mühimme* assisted me here: it was ordered that the *dārū kulleleri* be guarded:

Order to the bey of Mentеше and the commander of Peçin: you who are the commander (*dīzdār*) of the fort, having sent a letter, you reported that ten tax-exempt soldiers (*müselleme*), who serve and in return pay no extraordinary (*avâriz-i dīvānīyye* and *tekâ-lif-i örfiyye*) taxes, were appointed to guard the treasury, powder towers (*dārū kulleleri*) and fort gates. When some of these *müsellems* died, their sons became the fort soldiers; some of them, however, went to a different *kaza* (jurisdiction) and did not carry out the service required of them. ...⁷

The meaning of the Persian word *dārū* was ‘grass, medicine; gunpowder’.⁸ This is how it became clear to me that the order referred to the defence of the powder tower and that the segment *ot* in the compound *top otu* is a calque of the Persian word *dārū*. In sixteenth-century Ottoman Turkish, therefore, there were several words that denoted ‘gunpowder’: Turkish *ot* and *top otu* as well as Persian *dārū* and the Greek loanword *bārūd*, the latter two used sporadically. By the late sixteenth century, the word *bārūd* had completely displaced the other words.⁹ It must be noted that ‘gunpowder’ was expressed with the word *dārū* in Middle Turkic sources from contemporary Eastern Turkic peoples. In the service of Zahirreddin Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire, Ustad Ali Kuli had mortars cast for the *dārū-hana*, the powder house, and an order was issued to meet the army’s need for weapons, cannons and gunpowder.¹⁰ It is worth noting one of the comments about the Mongol tribes in

6 In Ottoman Hungary, it was known both as *ot* and as *top otu* (Dávid & Fodor 2005: 12, 68, 418, 602; 625).

7 *Menteşe beyine ve Peçin dizdârına hüküm ki: Sen ki dizdârsun mektûb gönderüp kal'a-i mezbûrenün hazîne ve dârû kullelerine ve kapu beklemesine on nefer müselleme ta'yin olunup avâriz-i dīvānīyye ve tekâlif-i örfiyyeden mu'âf olmak üzere hizmet ederler iken zikr olunan müsellemlerün ba'zı fevt olup oğulları birer tarikle hisâr eri olup ve ba'zı müselleme âhar kazâya gidüp hizmet-i lâzimelerin edâ etmezler deyü bildirmişsin...*3 numaralı *Mühimme defteri* (966–968/1558–1560) No. 1276. In the original written in Arabic script, this is طارو. The Persian word-initial *d-* is often written with the Arabic letter ط (Stachowski 1977).

8 *dārū*, ‘A medicine, drug; remedy; oxymel, a preparation of vinegar and honey; spirituous liquors; gunpowder; an inferior order of priests (amongst the fire-worshippers); *dārū zadan*, To make up a medicine; *dārū kardan*, To apply a remedy; to cure’ (Steingass 1981²: 497).

9 *bārūd* 1596, from the Greek *pyritēs liṭos* (*pyr* ‘fire’ *liṭos* ‘stone’) Tietze (2002: 284). The item comes from the chronicle by *Ta'likizāde* (1983: 149). Colin & Ayalon 1960.

10 Firearms (1995: 135). Ustad Ali Kuli, that is, Master Ali Kuli, was made available to Babur by Ottoman Sultan Selim I (1512–1520). *Cerig yarağığa va top u tufakçining dārū*

Abu'l-Ghazi's *Şecere-i Türk* (The Genealogy of the Türks), the proper interpretation of which is as follows: "Telengüt, Orasut, Köstemay: these three tribes are brothers to one another. They are good at weapon masonry, and they know gunpowder (*dārūlarını*)".¹¹

It is interesting that it was not only in the Muslim East that the semantic change herb (grass) → medicine → (gun)powder occurred. 'Gunpowder' was signified in medieval German with the word *Donnerkraut* 'thunder grass',¹² and it is still called *krut* 'grass' in modern-day Swedish.¹³ How is this possible? The clues lead to China, where gunpowder consisting of a mixture of potassium nitrate (saltpetre), charcoal and sulphur was known as early as the seventh or eighth century but was only used for military purposes as of 1236. Its early name in Chinese was *huoyao* 'fire grass', which was first used to denote 'fireworks' and later signified 'gunpowder' as well. The compound was shortened to *yao* 'grass' in the early thirteenth century. In all

va jaydağığa [...] farmān boldı... 'In order to meet the requirements for the army's weapons, artillery and gunpowder ...' Baburnama (1993: 302b; 345a).

- 11 *Telengüt, Orasut, Köstemay bu üç uruğ el birbirine qarındaş bolur. Yaraqçılığını yağışı bilürler ve dārūlarını tanurlar* (Ölmez 2003: 42). Ölmez used the two most complete manuscripts from Göttingen, identified as G1 and G2. In his book, he published a facsimile of the corresponding sections of both manuscripts as well as Messerschmidt's German translation from 1780. He used G1 for the transcription and footnotes to indicate variations in G2. However, he did not consider these in translating the text into contemporary Turkish. The line above in Ölmez's contemporary reading is as follows: *Telengüt, Orasut, Köstemay bu üç uruğ el birbirine qarındaş bolur. Silahçılığı iyi bilürler ve ilaçlarını tanurlar*. 'Telengüt, Orasut, Köstemay: these three tribes are brothers to one another. They are good at weapon masonry, and they know its medicines'. This translation makes no sense. Perhaps Ölmez was influenced by the additional sentence that appeared in manuscript G2: *Telengüt, Orasut, Köstemay bu üç uruğ el birbirine qarındaş bolurlar. Buların içinde tabib köp bolur. Yaraqçılığını yağışı bilürler ve dārūlarını tanurlar*. This additional sentence translates as follows: 'There are many doctors among them'. The word 'medicine' would indeed fit the notion of 'doctors'. At the same time, it has nothing to do with weapon masonry. Neither Messerschmidt nor Desmaison understood the word *yaraqçılık* (*yaraq+çı+lık* 'weapon+mason+ry'). This may have been the case because they understood *dārū* to mean only 'herb, medicine'. Messerschmidt provided the following explanation: *In der Arzneykunst waren diese Leute sehr fertig, haben aber auch grosse Zauberer*. 'These people were highly skilled at preparing medicine and also had great magicians among them' (Ölmez 2003: 254). Similarly, Desmaison (19702: 46) noted: *Il y avait chez eux beaucoup de medecins. Ils connessaient bien l'art de traiter et les simples*. 'They had many doctors. They were well aware of the art of healing and of herbs.'
- 12 Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart <http://de.academic.ru/dic.nsf/grammatisch/11350/Donnerkraut>, accessed 05.06.2013.
- 13 The Swedish word *krut* originates in the Low German *krüt* (German *Kraut*), which meant 'grass'; see *Svenska Akademiens Ordbok* spalt: K2974; tryckår: 1938. I owe a debt of thanks to Éva Csató for the Swedish translation.

likelihood, the Arabs and Persians became familiar with gunpowder independently in approximately the same time period and used a calque of the Chinese in their own respective languages to name it. The use of gunpowder among the Arabs can be traced back to 1240, and its most important component, saltpetre, was called “Chinese snow” (*thalj šīnī*).¹⁴ ‘Gunpowder’ was called *dawā*, the primary meaning of which was also ‘grass, medicine’.¹⁵

We may think that the Mongols learnt the word for the ‘gunpowder’ used in sieges of castles from Chinese masters conscripted into the Mongol army, but this is not the case. The Mongolian word *dari* and the Halha Mongolian word *dar*’ (дарь) ‘gunpowder’ indicate that they became familiar with it through the mediation of Persian masters in the mid-thirteenth century. It is possible that it was directly from Persian that the word entered the language of the Turkic peoples living in various parts of the former Mongol Empire and that the word-final vowel became illabial in accordance with Turkic vowel harmony:

- Mongolian *dari* ‘gunpowder’ (L 233)
- Chuvash *tar* ‘poroh’ (Chuv 445)
- Tatar *dari* ‘poroh; porohovoj’ (Tat 124)
- Bashkir *dari* ‘poroh; porohovoj’ (Bashk 156)
- Sib. Tatar –
- Kirgiz *dari* ‘poroh; porohovoj’, *ok dari* ‘boevye pripasy’ (Kir 187)
- Kazakh *oq dāri* ‘boepripasy; zarjad; ognepripasy; poroh’ (KazB 349)
- Karakalpak *dāri* ‘poroh’, *oq dāri* ‘boepripasy’ (Kklp 165)
- Nogay *mīltik ot* ‘poroh’, *mīltik* ‘ruž’e, vintovka’ (Nog 230)
- Crimean Tatar *barot* ‘poroh; porohovoj’ (CrTat 33)
- Karaim *barot* ‘poroh’ (Kar 103)
- Kumyk *tūbek ot* ‘poroh/Büchsenkraut’, *tūbek* ‘ruž’e, vintovka’ (Kum 247)

14 *Borhān-e qāṭe*, a seventeenth-century Persian dictionary compiled in India, refers to gunpowder (*‘namak-e cīnī*) as ‘Chinese salt’ under the heading *Bārūt*, while it identifies its second meaning as *dārū-ye tofang* ‘gunpowder’ (*tofang* ‘gun’). <http://www.iraniconline.org/articles/barut>. I am grateful to Benedek Péri for this item.

15 “As Wang Ling has pointed out, the Chinese term *huoyao*, ‘fire drug’, was an early name for fireworks and later became one of the terms for gunpowder, which, by the early thirteenth century, had been shortened to *yao*, ‘drug’. Indeed, in one of the earliest and most noted confrontations involving gunpowder, the siege of Kaifeng in 1232, the Jin forces used bombs and rockets filled with *yao* against the Mongols. It seems, therefore, reasonable to conclude that *dawā*’ and *dārū*, whatever their linguistic relationship to one another, are calques on the Chinese term *yao*, a further indication that Muslims learned of gunpowder and gunpowder weapons directly from Chinese artillerymen, who, we have seen, were a regular and integral part of the Mongolian armies operating in the West” (Allsen 2002: 279).

- Karachay-Balkar *škok ot* ‘poroh’ *škok* ‘ruž’e, vintovka’ (Krch-Blk 751)
 Türkmen *dāri* ‘poroh, porohovoj’ (Tkm 301)
 Azerbaijani *barūt* ‘poroh, porohovoj’ (Az 51)
 Modern Turkish *top otu* ‘charge of gunpowder’ (Tt 1181), *barut* ‘gunpowder’ (Tt 132)
 Ottoman Turkish *top otu* ‘charge of gunpowder’ (Tt 1181), *dārū* ‘gunpowder’, *barut* ‘gunpowder’ (Tt 132)
 Gagauz *barut* ‘poroh, porohovoj’ (Gag 73)
 Halaj –
 Üzbek *dorī* ‘poroh’, *miltiq dorī* ‘poroh’ (Uzb 132)
 Uyghur *dora* ‘poroh’, *miltiq dorisi* ‘ruž’ejnyj poroh’ (MUyg 446)
 Tuvai *darī* ‘poroh’ (Tuv 149)
 Yakut *buorah* (< Rus. *poroh*) ‘poroh’ (YS 85)

By projecting the data onto a map, we can clearly identify the zones of cultural influence. Persian influence can be detected everywhere among the peoples of the former Mongol Empire; Ottoman Turkish influence among the peoples of the Black Sea; that of Turkish and Russian in the Caucasus; and that of the Russians in Siberia. Why were the Turkic word forms of the Persian word *dārū* used to denote ‘gunpowder’? In his study on Mongol military technology, Thomas Allsen argued that this was because of the primary meaning of the word, which is ‘grass; medicine’, which could also be understood as a recipe, that is, the way medicine was made from various materials (herbs and minerals) from various recipes, not unlike gunpowder.¹⁶

My recommendation also proceeds from the original meaning. In this period, medicine was made by pulverizing or grinding the various materials, herbs, minerals and perhaps gems. This is well illustrated by the Azeri item in WOT (I: 288): the word *darī* ‘dry, powdered medicine’. I presume that the meanings ‘grass’, ‘medicine’ and ‘gunpowder’ were not related through the recipe but through the identical production technique: grinding and crushing. This idea came to me when I was translating *Dāftār-i Ćingiz-nāmā*.¹⁷ The last chapter contains the following information about the siege of Kazan in 1552:

16 “There is the well known fact that around 1240 the Arabs began to call saltpetre, a critical ingredient in gunpowder, Chinese snow (*thalj šīnī*). Less appreciated but equally helpful are two other words for gunpowder in West Asia, the Arabic *dawā* and the Persian *dārū*. Unexpectedly, both terms have as their primary meaning ‘drug’ or ‘medicine’, understood in this context as ‘recipe’” (Allsen 2002: 279).

17 *Dāftār-i Ćingiz-nāmā* is a collection of six historical narratives written in the literary language of the Volga Turks (Turkī or Chagatay, by an earlier name) in the seventeenth century. Some of the stories date back much earlier than that, to the second half of the fifteenth century. It is unknown who compiled the texts (Ivanics & Usmanov 2002).

*Şağālī Hān Urusqa gāmmazlıq qilib Urus Hānī birlä müslüman-lardın örütin bildür-mäy birikib dārūlarğa suw qoydurdı şähr-i Qazan-nī Urusqa berdi.*¹⁸

And then Khan Şağālī (Shah Ali) was spying for the Russians. [He made an agreement] with the Russian khan; he collected the gunpowder (*örüt+in* Acc.) from the Muslims in secret and had water added to the gunpowder (*dārū+lar* Pl.+*ğa* Dat.). He handed the town of Kazan over to the Russians [in this way].

The gunpowder is referred to with two words within the same sentence: Turkish *örüt* and Persian *dārū*.¹⁹ The word *örüt* has not appeared in other sources and is unknown in contemporary Turkic languages. A word with the same sequence of phonemes can be found in the Chagatay dictionary *Sanglah*: *örüt/ürüt* ‘stroke of lightning’.²⁰ The word may belong to the word family *ört/ürt* ‘flame, fire, steppe fire’, which can also be found in the Siberian Turkic languages as well as in Kazakh, Kirgiz, Kumyk and Troki Karaim (Radloff I: 1233, 1842).

It is very difficult to decide whether the word *örüt* ‘gunpowder’ belongs here or not. It would appear to, but I think because of the semantic parallel related to the word *dārū*, it should rather be tied to the Old Turkic word family *ābir- *āvīr- *evīr-* ‘to turn (something Acc.)’, which can be found in the Kipchak languages of the Volga region with a labial initial vowel, while in Chuvash it carries a special meaning, which is ‘to flour, grind’. Because of the identical meaning, research on the Hungarian verb *öröl-* (*ör-* with suff. *-(V)l*) ‘to grind, mill’ presumes a Chuvash type of mediating language (WOT 2: 672–675). I believe that a similar situation exists in the case of *örüt*: we need to presume a Chuvash-type (Bulgar Turkic) verbal stem *ōr-* > *ör-*, to which a deverbal nominal suffix *+(X)t* was added, and the primary meaning of the noun thus formed might have been ‘grist’.²¹ The word *örüt* thus preserved the meaning of a phase in the production of gunpowder, out of which the meaning ‘gunpowder’ developed. Therefore, we have a Middle Turkic word that denotes ‘gunpowder’, which demonstrates the same semantic development as the Persian *dārū*, although they have different starting points:

18 Şah ‘Alī ibn Şah Allahyār, who was backed by Czar Ivan IV, sat on the throne of Kazan three times (1518–1521, 1546, 1551–1552). Russian troops occupied the city of Kazan on 2 October 1552. Ivanics & Usmanov 2002. Ms. “O” fo. 46v 17–19 (اوروت); Ms. “B” fo. 34r. 10 اوروت

19 The latter word appears in the plural form as it also does in the work of Abu’l Ghazi.

20 *Sanglah* 1960: 66v. This meaning is marked with a question mark in the Zenker dictionary (1866: 119). The Budagov dictionary lists it in the form *Ürüt* but with a different meaning based on *Sanglah*: ‘палы огня, обжога, пламя по полу от ветра’ (1869: 121–122).

21 Although this suffix is not very common, we have examples of its use from the Old Turkic period: *ögüt, kurut, okut* (Erdal 1991: 308–309); and *orut* ‘reaped, which has been reaped and left on the ground to wither’ (Clauson 1972: 202).

dārū ‘grass’ → ‘(pulverized/powdered) medicine’ → ‘gunpowder’
ōr- > *ōr-* ‘to grind’ → *ōrūt* ‘grist’ → ‘gunpowder’.

I believe that, in terms of semantics, Hungarian *dara* also belongs to the same group. It cannot be related to the Old Turkic word *tarīg* ‘grain, millet’ since it never referred to a whole grain in Hungarian; it only denoted some ground form of grain. Its meaning developed through simplification: *búza-dara* ‘semolina’ > *dara* ‘grist’ and *jég-dara* ‘ice pellet’ > *dara* ‘grist’. Based on these items, the word *dara* should not be considered among the Cuman loanwords; it should rather be seen as part of the third group of loanwords listed above. Hungarian might have borrowed the Ottoman Turkish word *dārū* ‘grist’. The Hungarian verb *darál* ‘to grind’, which developed out of *dara*, also supports this supposition. The word *dārū* in Hungarian did not mean ‘gunpowder’ because Hungarians had become familiar with gunpowder much earlier and not through the Ottoman Turks.²² Thus, it can perhaps be assumed that the word in Hungarian constitutes part of the Ottoman loanwords—ultimately of Persian origin—which found their way into Hungarian through Southern Slavic mediation. Its existence as a proper noun in the Partium (historical Bihar County) and in Bácska within Hungary point to a Southern Slavic borrowing.²³

The author of this article is aware of the fact that the new etymology of *dara* would only be complete if

1. an etymon for ‘grist, powder, gunpowder’ could be found in contemporary Southern Slavic sources or collections of dialects since current dictionaries only contain the word *barut*,²⁴ and

22 In European battles and especially in castle sieges, gunpowder was already used at the beginning of the fourteenth century, while the Ottomans made use of it as of the 1380s (Ágoston 2010: 46). In Hungary, it was first used by the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Hungary Sigismund of Luxemburg (1387–1437) in battles against the Ottomans (Veszprémy 2008).

23 *Gregorius Dara* was listed in the tithe record in Tótcserég, which was a village in the western part of Bács County, located where Veprőd was later situated, a place known today as Kruščić in Serbia (Rácz 2011: 186).

24 Gunpowder was known as *barut*, an Ottoman loanword, in Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Albanian and Macedonian (Škaljić 1965: 121). As a consequence of Russian military influence, Bulgarian also started using the word *prah* (< Rus. *poroh* ‘gunpowder’), while in Romanian the word was replaced by a calque of a Russian and a Hungarian word *praf de pușcă* (< Rus. *poroh* + Hung. *puska* ‘gun’ = ‘gunpowder’). Certainly, the word *dara* must also be examined from the perspective of Slavic Studies because the possibility of an Indo-European etymology may also be considered. Perhaps the Southern Slavic word *tara2* ‘slag’ (*troska*); ‘marc’; ‘broom, bottom of something’ (*trop*) can be considered. The nominal is thought to be a derivative of the verb *triti*, which means: (1) ‘rub’; (2) ‘break

2. there were more undoubtedly Ottoman forms that mean ‘gunpowder’ available since the word *darī* ‘millet’ appears sporadically in the forms *dārū/ārū*. Fortunately, unrelated forms could easily be determined if, for example, the word were listed along with other types of grain or if it were accompanied by a specific measurement of weight (*kile*). I have automatically ruled out all of these forms from my investigation.²⁵ In all other cases, I have understood the word *dārū* to mean ‘gunpowder’.

Despite all the difficulties, it has been useful to rethink the etymology of the Hungarian word *dara* and to clarify its cultural history in the hope that, as additional data emerge, the new etymology recommended here can be borne out further.

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somebody on the wheel’; (3) ‘swingle’ (e.g. flax); (4) ‘run over’; (5) ‘scour’; (6) ‘grate’. Therefore, it may have come to mean ‘break something into tiny pieces’ by expansion. According to Skok (1880–1882: 107), the word is of Indo-European origin. It definitely existed in the ancient Slavic period (My thanks for this information to Slavist Ágnes Kacziba).

- 25 A different measurement was used for gunpowder (*okka, kantar*); it was also measured in sacks (*varul, kise*). MD 7 No. 2060 [...] *yüz kırk varul barutdan kırk elli varul barut kalup, [...] tokuz bin kile farayı hısâr-erlerine kîlesin on beşere virüp...diyü bildürmişsin...* ‘You have reported that 40–50 sacks of gunpowder have remained out of 140 [...] and that he sold 9,000 kile of millet to the defenders of the castle for 15 *akçes* per kile’. I am grateful to Gábor Ágoston for this item. On the Ottoman measurements of weight, see İnalçık & Quataer 1997.

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