

# CHINESE SCHOLARS ON INNER ASIA



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## TURKS IN THE GAOCHANG PROVISIONING TEXTS

Wu Yugui 吳玉貴

Six of the nine provisioning texts excavated from the number 307, 329, and 517 Qu 麴 family Gaochang 高昌 era tombs in Astana 阿斯塔那 Turfan had content related to the Turks. The people to whom provisions were provided included Turkic emissaries of Abo Kehan 阿博珂寒 (Apa Qaghan 阿波可汗), Tanhan Kehan 貪旱珂寒 (Tanhan Qaghan 貪汗可汗), Shuluo Kehan 恕羅珂寒 (Chuluo Qaghan 處羅可汗), Nanxiang Kehan 南廂珂寒 (the Qaghan of the Southern Wing), and Beixiang Kehan 北廂珂寒 (the Qaghan of the Northern Wing). A “nephew” is also mentioned, along with the names of iron and gold masters of the Turkic Qaghan. Such records in these texts are not without value to the study of Turkic history and the relationship between Gaochang and the Turks. This paper aims at making preliminary explanations of issues related to the Turks found in these texts.<sup>1</sup>

### 1

In the second, third, and fourth volumes of *Documents Unearthed in Turfan* 吐魯番出土文書 there are over twenty texts whose contents are related to provisioning,<sup>2</sup> but there are great differences amongst those being provisioned, the contents of the provisioning, and the record-keeping formats. As many parts of the texts are missing, a clear categorization cannot be made. According to my preliminary investigations, the provisioning texts can be divided into two general categories. The first category of those being provisioned is complex, and, apart from guest emissaries, it includes those being provided with “shangxian” 上現 [meaning unknown], those provided with “material for constructing steles,” those provided with “garrison troops,” etc. Many kinds of food were provided, and, apart from the staples of wheat flour, common millet, broomcorn millet, and wheat bran, the texts also include foods such as meat, meat from animals not slaughtered, liver, lungs,

<sup>1</sup> See Wang Su 王素, “Documents Unearthed in Turfan, Evaluation of the First Three Books” 《吐魯番出土文書》前三冊評介 in *The Study of Chinese History* 《中國史研究》, 1983, no. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Documents Unearthed in Turfan* 《吐魯番出土文書》 (Beijing, 1981).