

A EURASIAN ETYMOLOGY:
SARMYSAK < **K'IRMUS(V)/KERMUS(V)/KARMUS(V)* ‘GARLIC’

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In this article a new etymology is presented for an important cultural “Wanderwort”, “garlic”. The author uses the earlier elaborated etymologies of Turkic, Mongolic and Indo-European languages by explaining the well-known Turkic *sarmysak* ‘garlic’ as an Indo-European loan word. This explanation is based on Iranian data which were not used by the linguists before.

Key words: linguistics, Turcology, Mongolian and Indo-European studies, history of languages, etymologies.

In this article I intend to discuss the etymology of a well-known word of Turkic and Mongolic peoples, mentioned in the title, in honour of Louis Ligeti, my teacher, the excellent scholar of Inner Asia and connected territories and languages. This important spice in Eurasian cooking is a plant, belonging to *Liliaceae*, a native to Asia, growing wild in Central Asia. From there it spread throughout Eurasia as a cultivated plant (cf. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* V, p. 126c, *Brockhaus* XII, p. 124a). Its name occurs in the following languages:

I. Turkic languages

The word and its variants in Turkic languages are to be found in the etymological and thematical dictionaries:

Middle Turkic *sarymsak*, *sarumsak*, *samursak*, Turkish *sarymsak*¹, Chagatay *sarimsak*, Karachay *sarsmak*, Codex Cumanicus *sarmysak* ‘Knoblauch’ (Räsänen 1969, 404a), Azeri *sarymsag*, Bashkir *harymhak*, Gagauz *sarmysak*, Karakalpak, Nogay, Tatar, Turkmen, Kumyk, Karaim, Kazakh *sarymsak*, Uzbek *sarimsog*² (Hauen-

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¹ Turkish dialectal *çeremuş* ‘*Allium ursinum*’ (Hauenschmid 1989, p. 15, no. 59) is borrowed from a Slavic language, see III.B.

² Persian *Sarymsok* was borrowed from Uzbek (TMEN III, pp. 247–248).

schild 1989, p. 15, no. 56)³. Eren (1999, p. 357a–b) has given a similar survey of its spreading in Turkic languages.

The semantic difference in Kirghiz: *sarymsak*, *sarmysak* ‘česnok (glavnym obrazom dikij)’ (Judaxin 1965, pp. 636b, 637b) can be explained by the fact that the plant grows wild in this territory.

Doerfer (TMEN III, pp. 247–248) has rightly rejected the idea of Zajęczkowski that *sarmisak* was developed from Turkic *sar-* ‘winden, umwinden’ and pointed out that *sarmusag* must be the primary form because *-mu-* became *-my-* in Turkic. He has correctly connected this word to Mongolian *sarimsag* ‘garlic’. At the same time he also correctly rejects the idea that this could be an ancient common word of the presumed Altaic language.

Recently Tenišev (2001, p. 144) meant that this word developed from Turkic *sary* ‘yellow’, a relatively late form. He suggested that this word was not referring to the fresh plant but its marinated root as used in cooking, because garlic is not yellow but white. However, the Russians learnt how to marinate vegetables mostly from German and Dutch settlers and such conserving techniques were unknown among the nomads. Thus, this etymology is not acceptable.

Some rather unusual Turkish dialectal words must be mentioned here:

- (a) *sir* ‘*Allium sativum*’;
- (b) *syrym* ‘a plant which has hard leaves and which grows on muddy riversides and in marshes’ (DS X, p. 3616a);
- (c) *sirmo* ‘wild garlic’ (DS X, p. 3646b), ‘*Allium victorialis*’ (Hauenschild 1989, p. 15, no. 59);
- (d) *sirmik* ‘*Allium* (Wildarten)’, which the Kazakhs in Sinkiang call *tay sarymsak* ‘mountain garlic’ and the Turkmens *gargy sarymsak* (op. cit., p. 13, no. 49).

It is noteworthy that Chuvash, Altai-Turkic, Khakass, Tuva and Yakut has other words for garlic and various sorts of onions⁴. By other means, *sarymsak* is only known in Turkic languages which are or have been in direct contact with Central Asia.

³ The word is used in different Turkic languages as the name of other species of garlic, onion or root crops as well, often combined with words meaning ‘wild’, ‘mountain’, etc. E.g.:

‘*Allium* (wild species)’: Kazakh *tay sarymsak*, Turkmen *gargy sarymsak* (Hauenschild 1989, p. 13, no. 49),

‘*Allium carinatum*’: Turkish *dağ sarmysag* (op. cit., p. 14, no. 51),

‘*Allium ursinum*’: Kazakh, Kirghiz *žabajy/žapajy sarymsak* (op. cit., p. 15, no. 59),

‘*Lycoris radiata*, *Amaryllidaceae*’: Kazakh in Sinkiang *jabaye/taw saremsak* (op. cit., p. 105, no. 704),

‘*Teucrium scordium*, Wasserknöblau’: Turkish *sarmysak otu*, *susarmysağ* (op. cit., p. 158, no. 1082), etc.

⁴ E.g. ‘*Allium ursinum*’: Altai-Turkic, Teleut *kalma* (Baskakov 1964, p. 833b), Tuva *xylba* (Pal'mbay 1953, p. 674b), Lebedinskij-Tatar, Shor, Khakass *kalba*, which was borrowed into the Russian dialects in Siberia as *koloba*, *kalba* (Vasmer 1953, I, p. 507, Räsänen 1969, p. 227a), ‘*Allium victorialis*’: Modern Mongolian (Xalx) *xaliar* (Darijmaa 2000, p. 107), etc.

II. Mongolic languages

Already Ramstedt (1935, p. 319a) and Räsänen (1969, p. 404a) mentioned that Mongolian *sarimsag* ‘garlic’ was borrowed from Turkic (cf. TMEN III, pp. 247–248). The following variants are to be found in the Mongolic languages:

Classic Mongolian and Modern Mongolian (Xalx) *sarimsag* (Cevel 1966, p. 471a), Ordos *sarimsak* (Mostaert 1944, p. 563a) ‘garlic’; Kalmuck *särmsäG* ‘auf der Steppe wachsender Knoblauch’ (Ramstedt 1935, p. 319). The Kalmuck word shows the same semantic difference as Kirghiz does.

Apart from the longer word, borrowed from Turkic, Mongolian has two shorter variants:

(a) Xalx *sarmis*, *sarims* ‘*Allium sativum L.*’ (Lamžav – Doržžancan – Cerenbalžir 1971, pp. 330–334, Kara 1998, p. 382a), Dariganga *sarmis* ‘garlic’ (my own informant);

(b) Classic Mongolian *sarmuy* (Lessing 1982, p. 676b), Xalx *sarmag* ‘turnip’ (Cevel 1966, p. 471a) is another variant, which is used as the name of this root crop. This is the exact equivalent of Turkish dialectal *sirmik*, except that Mongolian has a velar form while Turkish has a palatal one. However, these two words can hardly be palatal/velar doublets, even less so because Turkish also has a velar variant (*syrym*). They are more probably results of two borrowing processes from two different languages, but of a common origin. Such borrowing processes often have resulted in different evaluations of phonetically mixed, palatal/velar words from languages which did not have a vocal harmony system or only a common *i*, instead of both palatal *i* and velar *y* (cf. Tatár 1984).

The parallels of these words are to be found in the Iranian languages.

III. Indo-European languages

III.A. Iranian

The usual word in Persian for garlic is *sir*. However, there were several other forms known before:

Middle Persian *sir*, *sīr* ‘*Allium sativum*’, *sir jangali* ‘*Allium ursinum*’ (Mo’īn 1982, p. 1976b), Persian *sir* ‘garlic’, *sirmu* ‘mountain garlic’ (Steingass 1995, pp. 715b–716a)⁵, Tadzhik *sir* and *sarimsok* ‘česnok’ (Asimov 1985, p. 1202b), *siri* (*sarimsoki*) *dašti* ‘čeremša’ (op. cit., p. 1200a). *Sarimsok* is borrowed from Turkic.

Sir was explained as a development from Persian *zaígra-çi* (Geiger – Kuhn 1895–1901, I/1, p. 85, Bartholomae, 1904, p. 786b). This etymology is not accept-

⁵ Persian *umsir* ‘*Muscari comosum*’ /hair + leek/ is a kind of onion which tastes like garlic but does not smell like that (Dehkhodâ 1993–1994, VIII, p. 12243). It got the name after appearance, probably as a folk-etymology. Cf. its Latin name, mentioned above, and the English one, namely “feather hyacinth” (Hauenschild 1989, p. 112).

able, and here the excellent Iranist, Finn Thiesen (University of Oslo) has confirmed my suspicions.⁶

Turkish dialectal *sir* is undoubtedly a borrowing of Persian *sir*, so is Turkish dialectal *sirmo* of Persian *sirmu*. This fact confirms the existence of the form *sirmu* in Persian, in spite of the scepticism some linguists have about the dictionary of Steingass.

However, Khotan Saka had a word which possibly belongs here, namely *sarme/sarmā* ‘a plant name’. It is said that fish should not be eaten with this plant. Bailey (1979, p. 424b) suggested that this plant is Sanskrit *potaka* (by him *potikā*), Tibetan *upodaka*, ‘*Basella cordifolia*’⁷. It is very difficult to determinate a plant. *Basellaceae* are tropical plants, which, as far as I know, do not grow as far north as Khotan. Some plants in this family have big roots which could be the reason why the name of another root crop was used in the translation. This root crop can be identical with Persian *sarm* ‘artichoke’ (Steingass 1995, p. 677b). Mongolian *sarmag* ‘turnip’ originates in an Iranian language, e.g. in Saka, mediated perhaps by Turkic to Mongolian.

The word-ending presents both a problem and a possibility to explain the connections between Turkic, Mongolic and Iranian languages. Turkic and Mongolian have the following forms:

1. Monosyllabic *sir* in Turkish dialects, an equivalent of Persian *sir*.
2. Two-syllabic *sirmo* in Turkish dialects, an equivalent of Persian *sirmu*.

Turkish dialectal *syrym* was developed from this root by a metathese. Khotan Saka *sarmā*, the oldest documented form, and Persian *sarm* have a different vocalism, which need further investigation.

3. Two-syllabic Turkish *sirmik* and Mongolian *sarmuy*. These words have no direct equivalents in Persian. However, from understanding that *-k* is a formant, both these forms can be connected to Khotan Saka *sarmā*, Persian *sarm* and *sirmu*. In the first case, Turkish accepted the Iranian *i* and made the word palatal. This development must have happened recently. In the second case, the vocalism of the Khotan Saka and the monosyllabic Persian word can probably be explained by a development in Iranian languages.⁸ The word was again borrowed into Mongolian, retaining the original *-u* in the second syllable. The formant *-k* can be a Turkic element, cf. di-

⁶ I wish to express my gratitude here to F. Thiesen for his friendly help when dealing with the Persian material.

⁷ Bailey (ibid.) meant that these *Basella cordifolia*, *lucida* or *rubra* semantically suit to New Persian *sarmak*, *sarmaj*, *sarmah* and Arabian *sarmaq* ‘orage, mountain spinach’. It is possible that the name of various plants are mixed here. Persian *sarmaq* ‘a herb’, *sarmaj* ‘orage, a kind of ivy’ and *sarma* ‘orage, galangale’ (Steingass 1995, p. 678a) denote another plant or other plants. ‘A kind of ivy’ is a different plant from Arabic *sarmaq* ‘atripex, orache, andronaeum’ (Hava 1964, p. 319), which is probably a loan word in Arabic. The word is more common in Persian than in Arabic.

⁸ Or, because of the *-u-* of the second, stressed syllable, *-i-* in the first syllable became an *-y-* in Turkic, which again became an *-a-*. This usual *y/a* change was based on dialectal differences in Old Turkic (cf. Räsänen 1949, pp. 59–60, Tenišev 1984, pp. 57–58). If this was the case, this borrowing is considerably older than the first one and was borrowed back into Iranian (Khotan Saka and Persian) again.

minutive formants *-Ik*, *-Ak* (cf. Erdal 1991, I, pp. 40–44). However, Iranian not only has a similar adj. suff. *i(g)*, used e.g. in the Turfan texts (Tedesco 1943, p. 219), but also a nominal suffix which occurs in Khwaresmian and Sogdian as well. E.g.:

- (a) Pehlevi *darzik* 'Schneider', cf. Persian *darz*, *darza* 'Naht' (Pokorny 1959, I, p. 750);
- (b) Khwar. *krb'syk* 'Gecko', cf. Persian *karbasa* 'id.' (Benzing 1983, p. 360);
- (c) Khwar. *tcyk* 'Eile', cf. *tncy-* 'eilen' (op. cit., p. 611);
- (d) Khwar. *cDrcyk* 'Fasan, Frankolin', cf. Persian *taðruçak*, cf. Arabian *taUdruj* (op. cit., p. 217);
- (e) Sogd. *murzak* 'kurz' IE *mreghu-*, *mr̥ghu-* 'kurz sein' (Pokorny 1959, I, p. 750).

In this case the function of the nominal suffix seems to be similar to the second and the fourth examples. It is a denominational formant, marking minor semantical changes as the difference between two sorts of plants or between the wild and the cultivated variant of the same species.

4. Two-syllabic Mongolian *sarims/sarmis* contains a formant *-s*. This occurs in several Indo-European languages, see III.B.

5. Three-syllabic *sarmusak* must have been the primary form and *sarmysak* the secondary one in Turkic, as Doerfer established it. Most probably, the development *-a-/y-* happened on Iranian basis, however, a Turkic explanation is possible as well (cf. note 8). The suffix *-sak* functionates sometimes as a denominational formant in Turkic, e.g. *er* 'man' *ersek*, 'nymphomaniac', but in several cases it is difficult to describe its exact function (Clauson 1962, pp. 147, 202). One should also bear in mind that the most known example, namely *ersek*, is a Cuman word (cf. Räsänen 1969, p. 46a), which easily could be influenced by Khwaresmian. The Turkic functional and locative formant *-čUk* (cf. Erdal 1991, I, pp. 106–108) is even less probable here, among other things for phonetical reasons. However, the nominal/adjective formant *-cyk* of the Iranian languages, which also exists in Khwaresmian and Sogdian, corresponds exactly to *-sak/-sag* in Turkic and Mongolic languages. Iranian *c* became Turkic (and Mongolic) *s*. Some examples developed with this Iranian suffix are as follows:

- (a) Khwar. *'wšnycyk* 'junger Stier', cf. Avesta *varšni-* 'mannlich' (Benzing 1983, p. 111),
- (b) Khwar. *'skyck*, Sogdian *'skyčyk* 'oberer' < *'sk* 'oben' (op. cit., pp. 85, 87),
- (c) Sogdian *frwmcyq* 'römisch, Römer' < *frwm* 'Rom' (Davary 1982, p. 192), etc.

-cyk is perhaps a composita of suffixes IE *-s/c* (which is mentioned in point 4 above) and *-k*, as examples Khwar. *krb'syk* and *cDrcyk* indicate and as Räsänen (1969, p. 46a) suggested by analysing *ersek* as *er-se-k*. Originally, *-sak* in *sarymsak* probably marked the semantic difference between the wild and the cultivated species, because in Turkic and Mongolian it means primarily the cultivated plant, while other variant of the word (*sir*, *sirmo*, *syrym*, *sirmik*, *sarmuy*) meant wild sorts or other root crops.

III.B. Western Indo-European

Several times, Indo-European linguists have dealt with a word which, in my opinion, is connected to the Iranian name of the garlic. I cite here the most important etymological works in chronological order to show all forms (which are not included in one work) and to show how different original forms were reconstructed of them:

(a) Slavic *čremož*, Serbo-Croatian *sríjemuša*, *sríjemuža*, Polish *trzemucha*, *trzemcha*, Russian *čeremša*, *čeremica*, Lithuanian *kermuše*, Anglo-Saxon *hramsa*, Irish *creamh*, Greek *kromion*, which Miklosich (1886, p. 33b) connected to Turkic *sarmusak*.

(b) IE **kramsan*, Middle Low German *ramese*, *remese*⁹, New High German *Rams*, *Ramsch*, Anglo-Saxon *hramsa*, English *ramson*, Lithuanian *kremusze*, Russian *čeremša* ‘*Allium ursinum*’, Irish *crem*, Greek *krómyon*, *kremyon* ‘løg’ (onion) (Falk – Torp 1903–1906/1999, p. 630b).

(c) Russian *čeremša*, *čeremica*, *čeremuška* ‘*Allium ursinum*’, Slovenian *čremoš*, Polish *trzemucha*, Serbo-Croatian *sríjemuš*, *sríjemuša*, *sríjemuž*, *sríjemuža* ‘wilder Knoblauch’, Greek *krómyon*, *kremyon* ‘Zwiebel, Gartenlauch’, Irish *crem*, Kymr *craf* ‘Knoblauch’, Anglo-Saxon *hramse*, *hramesa*, High German *ramsen* ‘Zwiebel, Barenlauch’ (Vasmer 1958, III, p. 321).

(d) IE **kerem*, *krem*, *krom*, *kerm*: Pokorny (1959, I, pp. 580–581), understanding that -s is a formant, reconstructed this form from the same words as mentioned in (a) and (b).

(e) IE **kremuson* ‘ail’, Greek *krémuon* ‘sorte d’ognion’, Irish *crim* ‘ail’, Anglo-Saxon *hramsan*, Old High German *ramusia* ‘ail sauvage’, Lithuanian *kermuše* ‘id.’, Polish *trzemucha*, Russian *čeremša* ‘*Allium ursinum*’ (Delamarre 1984, p. 157).

(f) IE **keromuso-* (*kremus-*, *kormus-*) ‘garlic’, Greek *krómuon* ‘onion’, Middle Irish *crem*, *crim*, Irish *creamh*, Welsh *craf*, Old English *hramsa*, *hramse* ‘garlic’, English *ramson*, Russian *čeremica*, *čeremina* ‘wild garlic’, Lithuanian *kermuše* (Mann 1984–1987, pp. 490–491). Cf. also IE **kremuso(n)*, *kromuso(n)* ‘onion, garlic’ (ibid., p. 548).

(g) IE **krem/kram*, Russian *čeremša*, Bulgarian *čaramša*, Slovenian *čremoš*, Serbo-Croatian *sremuš/sríjemuš*, where *s-* < IE *k'-*, ‘*Allium ursinum*’ (Černyx 1994, II, p. 382a)¹⁰.

⁹ It is noteworthy that *Allium ursinum* does not look like garlic but its leaves smell very much the same. In Norwegian, the word *rams* is used in the name of three plants:

1. *Ramslauk/ramsløk* ‘*Allium ursinum*’ (Landrø – Wangsteen 1993, p. 416a), Danish *ramsløg*, Swedish *rams*, *ramslök*. It grows in Southwest Norway, between Oslo and Trondheim (Faegri 1958, I, p. 31). It occurs in place names as well, e.g. *Ramsli* (Wischmann – Faarlund – Lauritzen 1986, p. 331).
2. *Geiterams* ‘*Chamaenérion angustifolium*’ (Landrø – Wanfsteen 1993, p. 168b), Danish *ge-derams* ‘goat’s rams’ (Faegri 1958, II, pp. 52–55, 179 t.).
3. *Rams*: this is the popular name of ‘*Convallaria majalis*’, called so, because its leaves are similar to the leaves of onions and leeks (Faegri 1958, I, p. 39).

¹⁰ Russian *čeremuxa* has been believed to belong to the same root since Berneker (1903–1913), who thought that both plants got the same name because of their strong smell. Vasmer did not

After Miklosich, the Turkic connection was not cited any more, apart from Pedersen (1976, I, p. 121). In his opinion, it is a Slavic loan word in Turkic, with a surprising phonetical change. However, it cannot be a Slavic loan word, not only for phonetical reasons, but also because of its geographical and historical spreading. At the time, when Miklosich worked, the IE connection was obvious, but without the Iranian link it was impossible to explain.

Most linguists ment that -s is part of the root, in spite of the fact that it only occurs in Slavic and Germanic languages, while Greek, Irish and Welsh have forms without it. In my opinion Pokorný’s view that the -s being a formant, is correct. This is proved by the Saka *sarma*, the Persian *sirmu* and Turkic *sirmo*, *syrym*, *sirmik* and also by the Mongolian *sarmug*. It is reasonable to suggest that even -mu- is a formant, which lacks in *sir*. If this is the case, then perhaps *sarana*, the name of different species belonging to the *Liliaceae* is possible to explain as a word of the same IE root. This word is known in the following languages:

Kazan-Tatar *sarana* ‘lukovica’, Chuvash *sarane* ‘sarana, lilija’ (Ašmarin 1936, XI, p. 63), *sarana* ‘obšeje nazvanie rjada s’edovnyx lukovičnyx rastenij’ (Skvorcov 1985, p. 345c; Egorov 1964, p. 179), Bashkir *haryna* ‘saranka, krasnaja sibirskaja lilija kudrevataja’ (Uraksin 1996, p. 728b), Altay Turkic and Xakass *sargaj* ‘sarana, pionija’ (Dmitrieva 2001, p. 103), Classic Mongolian *sarana* ‘der wilde Knoblauch’ (Schmidt 1835), ‘*lilium tenuifolium*’ (Lessing 1982, p. 675a), Xalx *saraana* ‘species belonging to the *Liliaceae*’ (Kara 1998, p. 381b), Buryat *haraana* ‘koren’ (ili lukovica) sarany, saranka (sibirskaja krasnaja lilija)’ (Čeremisov 1973, p. 676a), Cheremis *sarana*, Udmurt *sarana* ‘lilija’ (Dmitrieva 2001, pp. 103–104), Russian *sarána* (Vasmer 1957, II, p. 579, Räsänen 1969, p. 403a), Persian *saran* ‘the white lily’ (Steingass 1995, p. 678b). The Cheremis, the Udmurt, the Persian and the Russian words are borrowed from Turkic (cf. op. cit. of Vasmer, Egorov, Räsänen and Dmitrieva above).

Ramstedt (1957, p. 195) tried to explain this word from *sara* ‘white, bright’. But *sara* does not mean ‘white’ either in Turkic or in Mongolic languages. According to Vasmer (1957, III, p. 560), this word developed from Turkic *sary* ‘yellow’ by the Turkic suffix -gan, or the Mongolic suffix -gana, often used in names of animals and plants. But this flower is usually red (cf. Žamsran – Ølzijxutag – Sančir 1972, pp. 72–73). Probably that is why Dmitrieva (2001, pp. 103–104) suggested that this plant was called after its yellow root, citing the Tatar dialectal name of the plant, namely *sary sogan* ‘yellow onion’ as a parallel. However, this flower is called *sardaga*, *sardaya*, *sardanga* ‘sarana lesnaja, sarana želtaja’ in Yakut (Dmitrieva, ibid.). While adding the suffix -gVn-/gVnV etc. to a word meaning a colour, a name of a plant can be developed (cf. Erdal 1991, I, pp. 85–89), the suffix -dVŋ is never added to a noun meaning a colour. It denotes appurtenance (op. cit., pp. 155–156), i.e. it means in this case ‘something with a *sar, something belonging to *sars’. The

argue against this view, which was generally accepted according to Černyx. However, Mann established a different etymology for this word, connecting it with Greek *kerasos* ‘cherry’, etc. (Mann 1984, pp. 490–491). Also Delamarre (1984, p. 150) accepted the same difference by connecting this Russian word to the names of species of *cornaceae* and *prunus*.

suffix *-gVnV* can mean similarity, e.g. *arpagana* ‘a plant with the appearance of barley (*arpa*)’ (op. cit., p. 86), so *sara/ga/na* possibly means ‘a plant like a **sar*’. Indeed, the Tatar dialectal word meaning ‘yellow onion’ is a parallel, like Turkmen *sogangül* ‘onion flower’ (Hauenschild 1989, no. 672, p. 100) is, if the root of this word was **sar* ‘onion, garlic, root crop’. Not the name of this usually red flower, but the Modern Mongolian name of the *Barbarea R. BR.* family, namely *sarmag* (Žamsran – Ølzijxutag – Sančir 1972, p. 137) developed from Turkic *sary* ‘yellow’ by adding the Turkic suffix *-mVk*. This plant (not the same as turnips!) has big, yellow flowers and the suffix forms names of creatures or objects for which the colours are characteristic (cf. Erdal 1991, I, pp. 100–102).

IV. Hungarian

There is a dialectal word in Hungarian which must be dealt with when elaborating an etymology of *sarymsak/ceremša*. This is *sárma* ‘Milchstern, *Ornithogalum*’ (Csapody – Priszter 1966, p. 167, *Magyar Füvész könyv* 1807, p. 29, read *šárma*). It was originally used in the dialects of the Debrecen region. According to the EtW (1995, p. 1308a), it occurs in place names and is otherwise of unknown origin. It cannot be of Slavic origin because of the first consonant, the vowels and the lack of the final formant -š. It cannot be of Turkic origin either, because of its first consonant and the short form. (It is noteworthy that Chuvash, from which Hungarian has borrowed several words beginning with š-, does not have this word at all.) However, it is logical to look for a Turkic connection, also because this plant (*Ornithogalum*) often has names meaning ‘onion, garlic’ in Turkic languages (cf. Hauenschild 1989, p. 119b).

The following place names are developed from *sárma*, all (except no. 4) with the adj. suff. -š:

1. *Sormás*: village in Zala county, mentioned in 1347: *Saramas* (Ördög 1981, p. 8, Kiss 1988, II, p. 491a). Probably identical to *Sármásszeg*, mentioned in 1360 in Zala county (Pais 1942, p. 39): *sárma* + adj suff. -s + szeg ‘corner, part of a village’.

2. *Sormás*: rivulet in the territory of villages Vép, Pecöl, Megyehíd and Csénye, Vas county (Balogh – Végh 1982, pp. 250, 252). Its bridge is called *Sormás* in Vép, and the surroundings of the rivulet are called *Sormásd* (op. cit., p. 126), -d being a Hungarian formant, usual in place names (cf. Kristó 1976, pp. 85–88).

3. *Kis* and *Nagy Sormás*¹¹ ‘Little S.’ and ‘Great S.’, two villages close to each other in Kolozs county, Transylvania, now Romania. They were mentioned in 1311

¹¹ They are called *Şarmaşel* and *Şarmaşu* in Romanian. According to Iordan (1963, p. 460), the Romanian names must be the primary ones and the Hungarian name the secondary one. This is impossible, because the name has a meaning in Hungarian dialects, while it is otherwise unknown in Romanian. It is developed with a Hungarian adj. suff. -s. Furthermore, Lipszky, who collected every variant of place names in Transylvania, also in Romanian, have not mentioned any non-Hungarian variants of this name. The publication of the Romanian place names was made so extensively at that time that Gy. Sinkai, the well-known cultural personality was asked to establish a Romanian orthography in Latin script for this purpose. The chronology of the place name proves its Hungarian origin as well. Place names were not regulated centrally conforming them to the gov-

and 1348 as *Sarmas*, and in 1329 as *Saramas* (Doc. Trans. XIV/4, 681, Györffy 1967–2000, III, p. 369).

4. *Sarmáság*: village in Szilágyság, Közép-Szolnok county, now Romania, mentioned in 1355 as *Sarmasagh*, and in 1806 as *Sármáság* (Lipszky 1987, p. 8, Q 53). According to Kiss (1988, II, p. 453a), it means *sárma* ‘*Ornithogalum*’ + *ság* ‘hill with forest’. More probably, it contains the same suffix as the Turkic *sarmysag*.

5. *Sarmás*: rivulet and its surroundings in Zilah, Közép-Szolnok county, now Romania. It was mentioned in 1854. According to Szabó (1936, pp. 36–37), this name originates of Hungarian *sár* ‘mud’ + dim. suff. *-más*, as it occurs e.g. in *vérmes* ‘full-blooded, sanguineous’ (*vér* ‘blood’ + *-mes*). This suggestion is less probable, among others because of the semantics (cf. no. 7, which is situated on the top of a hill).

6. *Alsósármás* ‘Lower S.’ and *Felsősármás* ‘Upper S.’: arable land in Hadad, Közép-Szolnok county, now Romania. They got this name because of the quality of the land, according to the informant (Székely 1986, pp. 10, 25, 39).

7. *Sármás*: arable land, top of a hill in Domokos, Belső-Szolnok county, now Romania, mentioned in 1807 (Szabó 1932, p. 7).

8. *Sármás*: place name in Désakna, Belső-Szolnok county, now Romania. It was mentioned in 1816 (Szabó 1932, p. 6).

9. *Saramás*: place name in Kisborosnyó, Háromszék, Székely-land, Transylvania, now Romania. It was mentioned in 1770 (Bogáts 1958, p. 63).

10. *Sármás*: place name in Tiszakarád, Zemplén county (Román 1979, III, p. 124a).

11. *Sarmaspathakfeu*: ‘source of the rivulet S.’, place name in Egerszeg, Temes county. The place is not identified. It was mentioned in 1369 (Pesty 1884, II/2, p. 92).

Furthermore, there are four place names, which probably are phonetical variants of *sármás*:

12. *Solomás*: rivulet in Erdőfüle, Udvarhelyszék, Székely-land, Transylvania, now Romania (Janitsek 1980, p. 102).

13. *Salamás*: rivulet and its vicinity in Csíkszentdomokos, Csíkszék, Székely-land, Transylvania, now Romania (Csomortáni 1986, p. 76).

14. *Salamás*: rivulet in Gyergyóremete, Gyergyószék, Székely-land, Transylvania, now Romania (Szabó 1940, p. 51).

15. *Solomás*: place name in Székelypálfalva, Székely-land, Transylvania, now Romania (Tibád 1978, p. 95). According to Tibád (1980, p. 216), the place was called so because this plant grows there.

These 11 + 4 place names are unevenly spread in the country: two are in Western Hungary (nos 1 and 2), five in Székely-land (nos 9 and 12–15), four more in Transylvania (nos 3, and 6–8), two in Szilágyság (nos 4 and 5), one in Zemplén

erning people’s language either in the 14th (when it was first mentioned) or in the 18th century (when Lipszky collected his material). The territorial spreading contradicts Iordan’s theory as well: the place name occurs also in Western Hungary. There were no Romanian settlers. Therefore Kiss (1988, II, p. 208b) is right: these place names are of Hungarian origin.

county (no. 10), and one in Southern Hungary (no. 11). There is no space for a detailed discussion of the history of the population in these places. However, the following place names, which are identical to ethnonyms and to the names of well-known personalities in the 10th and at the beginning of the 11th century, bear witness to the ancient population. Therefore, they must be taken into consideration:¹²

(a) Vas county in Western Hungary belonged to the home-land of *Kál* and *Bulcsú*, descendants of *Tétény*, one of the leaders of the Hungarian conquest in 895–896 (cf. *Anonymus, Gesta Hungarorum* and *Györffy 1990a*), also attested by many place names like *Sajtoskál*, *Búcsú*, *Kám*, *Ölbő*, etc. They were the leaders of the Kabar clans, who followed the Hungarians to the Carpathian Basin. One of those clans was the *káliz*, i.e. Khwaresmians. In the nearby villages, *Söpte* and *Tömörd*, there is a *Kozárpatak* ‘Khazar rivulet’ (*Kristó – Makk – Szegfű 1973*, I, p. 12), and in *Csénye* itself a place named *Tevel* after a member of the Árpádian family in the 10th century (op. cit., II, p. 44).

(b) In the vicinity of Sormás, Zala county we have the rivulet *Kozár* in Báza-rekettye (1379; op. cit., I, p. 12) and the village *Kistolmács* ‘Little T.’ (1325: *Tolmach*, op. cit., I, p. 21), named after one of the Petcheneg tribes.

(c) No. 10 is situated in Bodrogköz, where archeologists have found the most luxurious specimen in a territory which probably was the first centre of leadership after the conquest. In its vicinity are *Tiszabercel* (cf. the Barsila clan) and *Törökér*, *Thevreker* (1239, *Thewreker* ‘Turkish rivulet’) in Viss (op. cit., I, p. 12), and many place names on the other side of the Tisza, in Rétköz, like *Zerind*, *Tét*, *Bogát*, *Zsombor*, *Vaja*, *Bő*, *Üllő*, etc. (cf. op. cit., II).

(d) Hadad, Sarmaság and Zilah are situated in the valley of the rivulets Zilah and Szilág in Körös-Szolnok county, where the village *Kusaly* (1325: *Kasal*) was named after *Cussal/Cussala/Curzan*, one of the leaders of the conquest (op. cit., I, p. 53) and *Haraklyán*, that is Hartyán, called after the *Horka*, i.e. judge *Kál* after the conquest (*Kiss 1988*, I, p. 567ab). The place name *Ladány* in Désháza (*Kristó – Makk – Szegfű 1973*, I, p. 40) also attests the presence of the *Lád* clan, which *Bulcsú* belonged to. There are *Gyulakuta* (1470: *Gywlakwtha*) in Somlyóújlak after another descendant of *Kál* (op. cit., 1973, I, p. 56), and places called *Böszörmény* ‘Musulman’ in Erked (op. cit., I, p. 22), *Bulyar* in Nyirsid and *Bulgar* which is identical to the village Nyirmon (op. cit., p. 15) in this vicinity, all witnessing some Bulgarian and/or Khwaresmian (Musulman) presence.

(e) Désakna in Belső-Szolnok county is close to Dés in the valley of the Sámos river. There are many interesting place names in Dés, e.g. *in fagum Kald* ‘Kál’s forest’ (mentioned in a mediaeval falsification, falsely dated to 1261, op. cit., I, p. 61), *Vz portus* ‘Oguz harbour’ (in the same diploma, cf. also 1367: *Wzdrewy* ‘id.’ in

¹² This analysis is based on place names which occur not farther than approximately 30 km from a Sormás, unless they continuously cover a larger territory. 30 km is the distance any nomad can easily ride a day. Any flock of sheep can graze as far from the home as well. I just mention here the well-known fact that the most ancient Hungarian place names are identical to the owner’s personal name, and the place names of the nomadic owners often follow the rivers, witnessing the nomadic routes or ownership of a family in the valleys.

Hungarian, op. cit., I, p. 26) and its vicinity, e.g. *Kozárvár* ‘Khwaresmian fortress’ (1202–1235: *Kozar*, 1261: *Kozarwar*) and villages *Alsó/Felső Kusaly* ‘Lower/Upper K.’ (1325: *Kasal rivulus* ‘K. rivulet’, 1405: *Kusaly*, op. cit., I, p. 53). There is a place name *Böszörök* in Szamosújvár as well (op. cit., I, p. 23). The village *Domokos* is situated in the same county. In its vicinity is *Debrecen*, a place name of Turkic origin (cf. Kiss 1988, I, p. 358b).

(f) The two villages called Sármás in Kolozs county are situated between Kolozsvár, the centre of Kolozs county and *Uzdiszentpéter* (1305: *Ozd Scentpeter*, Kristó – Makk – Szegfű 1973, I, p. 21) the centre of the Ózd canonry, in Mezőség. In the same valley is Nagycég, where the place name *Tarcal* (1359: *Torzaltelku* ‘the deserted place of T.’ (op. cit., II, p. 70) is attested. Tarcal was one of the famous warriors of the conquest, according to *Gesta Hungarorum*.

(g) The Székelys’ origin is disputed. Although they undoubtedly had settlements in other parts of Hungary apart from Transylvania (cf. Györffy 1990b), the direction of their spreading and the way it happened need a detailed discussion in each case. There is no space to do it here. However, it cannot be disputed that Transylvania and its easternmost border, the Székely-land have a lot of oriental influence, among others from the Petchenegs, the Cumans and the Tatars, who lived on the other side of the Carpathian Mountains, cf. villages like *Comanești* there. Historically older than these are the place names with *Úz* i.e. Oguz between Csík and Moldva. There was an Alanian population in their eastern vicinity as well, as the name of *Iași*, Hungarian *Jászváros* ‘the market of the Alans’ (1412: *Jaswasarhel*, ‘marketplace of the Jas, i.e. Alan people’ cf. Kiss 1988, I, p. 619a) and the medieval name of the Prut, namely *Alanus fluvius* show (cf. Tatár 1996). These groups influenced Gyergyó and Csík. In the vicinity of Kisborosnyó there are *Koroncza* ‘Khwaresmian’ in Sepsiszentgyörgy (Kristó – Makk – Szegfű 1973, I, p. 17), *Jásztó* ‘lake of the Jas’ in Komolló (op. cit., I, p. 18), *Leelfalua* (1361) ‘the village of Lél’, i.e. the present Nyén (op. cit., II, p. 55), and places like Zoltán, Étfalvazoltán, etc. Erdőfűle is a more isolated place. Closest to it is Bibarcfalva with Petcheneg settlers and Nagybacon with a rivulet called *Uzonka* < Turk. *uzun* ‘long’ and place names like *Csinód* (i.e. Csanád, the cousin of St. Stephan) and *Bő* < Turk. *beg* ‘head of a clan’ (op. cit., II, pp. 50, 68).

Of these seven areas, the dwelling-places of the early leadership are attested in four cases (Vas county, Bodrogköz, Désakna and Közép-Szolnok county), while the Székely territories are close to the centre around Étfalvazoltán, etc. Sármás in Kolozs county is situated in a rich agricultural zone. In four cases (a, d, e, g) there is no doubt of the presence of the Tétény–Kál–Bulcsú family, or their clans, the Lád and Gyula/Kán. As mentioned before, they were the leaders of the three Kabar clans, who joined the Hungarians before the conquest. Therefore it is not surprising that the ethnonym Kazár ‘Khazar’ (a, b, e), Koronczó ‘Khwaresmian’ (g), Bulgarian (d), Böszörök (which meant Muslim Bulgars, Khwaresmians and Petchenegs, d, e), *Bercel* (a Bulgarian tribe, c) and Jász (Alans, g) occur in six cases, in the same places, where place names based on *sorma/sárma* is attested. Therefore it is not unlogical to count on an oriental, more exactly Khwaresmian (and Alanian?) – Khazar – Bulgarian.

ian influence. The language from which Hungarian could borrow this word must have had the shorter form, without the formant *-s*, and velar vowels, like Bulgarian and the Germanic languages. The most interesting, however, is the *š*-, which cannot originate from Slavic *č*. Still, some language on the Pontic steppes must have had an IE *k'*, witnessed by the Serbo-Croatian *srijemuš*. (About the development of IE *k*, *kw*, *k'* cf. Harmatta 1999). Its *ij* is rather interesting when one compares it to the Persian *sīr*. From *s-* *š-* could be developed, or *č- > š-* could have been developed in another language. It is very difficult to say anything about a language which no longer exists. Let me just mention here that already Harmatta (1997, p. 77) meant that Hungarian must have had contacts with an Iranian language, probably an Alanian dialect, which had a *č*. This consonant did not exist in the Alanian dialects of later times.

V. Conclusions

The name of garlic is an ancient cultural word in the Indo-European, most Turkic and Mongolic languages and in place names, and at least in one dialect of Hungarian. It spread throughout a large territory in Eurasia, but its shortest and simplest form is to be found in Central Asia, where the plant (and many other vegetables, e.g. spinach) also originates. It is in Central Asia and connected territories that we have found most variants, developed from this root as well, which indicates the starting point of its spreading. In Turkic, Mongolian and Hungarian it is undoubtedly of Indo-European origin. The following survey can be elaborated:

IE * <i>k'ir/k'er/k'ar</i>	IE * <i>ker/kar</i>
Pers. <i>sir</i> (> Turk.)	
	+ -M(V)
Khotan Saka <i>sarmā</i> , > ? Pers. <i>sarm</i> ,	Gr. <i>kremyon</i> , <i>krómyon</i> ; Ir. <i>crem</i> ;
/š-/č- > / Hung. <i>sárma</i> ;	Welsh <i>craf</i>
Pers. <i>sirmu</i> (> Turk.)	
	+ -S(V)
/Iran. <i>sirmus</i> > / Mong. <i>sarmis</i> ;	Sl. <i>čremuš</i> ; Germ. <i>hramsa</i> ;
Srb-Cr. <i>srijemuš</i>	Lith. <i>kermuše</i> ; Russ. <i>čeremša</i>
	+ (-SA)K
/Iran. > / Turk. <i>sarmysak</i> > Mong. <i>sarymsag</i>	
	+ (-MU)+ -K
/Iran. <i>sirmu -k</i> > / Turk. <i>sirmik</i>	
/Saka <i>sarmu -k</i> > / Mong. <i>sarmuy</i>	
	IE* kVr + -GAN(A)? -DAN?
Turk., Mong., Russ., Pers. <i>saran(a)</i> .	
Yakut <i>sardanga</i> .	

As this survey shows, a dialectal difference can be assumed between the – geographically speaking – Western (Germanic, Celtic, Greek and Slavic) and Eastern (Iranian, which influenced Serbo-Croatian) languages already at the common IE stage. It is also noteworthy that the same endings occur in both groups. Any further chronology must be elaborated by the Indo-European linguists.

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